

# **Service Quality and Customer Choice of Mobile Telecommunication Service Providers in Ghana**

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## **Abstract**

The competition for customers among telecommunication firms in Ghana is increasingly becoming fierce. This fierce competition raises growing concern among firms of the significance of delivering and managing service quality, which leads to customer satisfaction in the telecommunication industry. However, the position of customer satisfaction with service quality in Ghana is not so clear, as to what extent customers are satisfied with the service quality they are delivered. The objective of the study is to investigate how customers' perceptions of service quality inform their choice of mobile telecommunication service providers in Ghana. . The study employed both descriptive and explanatory approach in its design. A structured questionnaire involving SERVQUAL dimensions of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, was developed to solicit information for the study from 250 customers. Convenient sampling was used to select customer respondents. The study revealed a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, and tangibility as the most influential service quality dimension in the choice of telecommunication service providers. It also revealed that the majority of the customers of the telecommunication service providers intend to continue the use of their current network for a long time; although they expect better service conditions existing elsewhere. It is therefore recommended that providers should enhance their tangibility, empathy levels, and responsiveness to customers, and improve their assurance level by using various activities and also establish the value of their offers as superior to others.

**Keywords:** Service Quality, Customer Choice, Mobile Telecommunication, Ghana.

## **Introduction**

The dramatic advancement made in telecommunication technology over the past few decades has had far reaching implications for human communication and interaction. As consequence, telecommunication service providers are of paramount importance to any economy across the globe; in that the use of telecommunication modes are frequently employed in all spheres of human endeavors including social, economic, political, cultural, trade etc. Thus, the nature of a country's

telecommunication industry affects the pace of economic and productive activities (Agyapong, 2011). Characteristic of today's telecommunication market is an ever intense competition among suppliers; a process which Beard and Hartmann (1999) attribute mainly to liberalization of the sector.

Ghana adopted a deregulation policy in 1994 to accelerate development and to promote competition in the industry through innovation, efficiency and quality control tailored to meeting the needs of customers. To this end, the influx of prominent telecommunications corporations into Ghana was seen as a positive development. Currently in the telecommunication subsector, there are six registered firms which are operational. They include: Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN), Millicom Ghana Ltd (Tigo), Ghana Telecom (now Vodafon Ghana), Kasapa, Western Telesystems (Westel now Airtel) and Globacom. The competition that has emanated is good for the final consumer in that it improves consumer sovereignty and value for money.

Obviously in a competitive environment such as the telecommunication industry, delivering high quality service is key for a sustainable competitive advantage. Indeed no business organization can survive without building its customer satisfaction or brand loyalty. Markovi'c and Raspor (2010) remark that customers are likely to view services as a variety of attributes that may, in different ways, contribute to their purchase intentions and perceptions of service quality. There is therefore a growing realization among businesses that delivering and managing service quality leads to customer satisfaction. In Ghana, the telecommunication industry has witnessed a tremendous increase in subscriber growth rate for all the telecom operators (ITU, 2008). But is the phenomenal growth indicative of satisfaction among customers as far as service quality delivery is concerned? The position of customer satisfaction with service quality is not so clear, as to what extent customers are satisfied with the service quality they are delivered. The study is driven by the need to empirically measure service delivery of mobile telecommunication operators in Ghana. The overall objective in this research is to understand the customers' choice criteria for a mobile phone operator in the Ghanaian mobile telecom market. This paper contributes to literature in several ways; for one there is no evidence from documentation or any previously done research in measuring customer satisfaction with service quality in mobile telecommunication industry in Ghana. Research on this subject has mostly been conducted in industrialized countries. This implies that there is limited relevant literature on emerging economies such as Ghana (*See, Nimako et al., 2010*). Secondly, we employ the use of SERVQUAL methodology to measure customer satisfaction as typified in most empirical works. At the end of the survey it is identified that a positive relationship exist between service quality and customer satisfaction, whilst tangibility has the most influential control, as a service quality dimension, in customers' choice for a telecommunication service provider. The rest of this paper is outlined as follows: section two looks at the review of relevant literature whilst the method of study is exposed in the section three. Section four and five follow up with the analysis of data and conclusions respectively.

## Literature Review

### Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has been paid much attention among theoretical literatures and practical researches. It is also an expected outcome of implementing marketing activities, as providing satisfying products or services to customers equates success in today's tensely competitive world of business. Customer-centered companies have emphasized a better understanding of customers' needs and wants, and then translated them into the capability to give customers what they really need and want. Fornell (1992) defined satisfaction as an overall evaluation dependent on the total purchase and consumption experience of the target product or service performance compared with repurchase expectations over time. In relationship marketing literatures, customer satisfaction has also been thought to be a key performance indicator for evaluating the quality of a relationship between service provider and customers. Customers' expectations regarding costs and benefits of the relationship

mainly depend on past experience, and satisfying experiences increase the motivation and the likelihood that an individual stays in the relationship (Mouri, 2005).

Satisfaction is therefore regarded as a short term emotional state that results from an intrapersonal comparison of the customer's expectations with the evaluation of a single product or service encounter. It is also conceptualized as an individual's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations (Oliver, 1981; Brady and Robertson, 2001; Lovelock et al, 2001). That is; it is the end product of an individual's cognitive and affective evaluation, where the actual perceived performance is weighed on an expected benchmark. If the perceived performance is less than expected, customers will be dissatisfied. On the other hand, if the perceived performance exceeds expectations, customers will be satisfied. Otherwise, if the perceived expectations are met with performance, customers are in an indifferent or neutral stage, (Kotler & Armstrong, 2003).

Generally, there are two broad conceptualizations of satisfaction, namely, transaction specific satisfaction and cumulative satisfaction (Jones and Suh, 2000; Yi and La, 2004). Transaction-specific satisfaction is a customer's evaluation of his or her experience and reactions to a particular service encounter (Boshoff and Gray, 2004), and cumulative satisfaction refers to the customer's overall evaluation of the consumption experience to date (Cook, 2008). Overall customer satisfaction is therefore not a static process but keeps on changing when the customer gets an experience with the service provider, (Jamal and Nazer, 2002; Veloutsou et al, 2005). Abdulla and Rozario (2009) also accentuate that the level of customer satisfaction may be influenced by various internal and external factors. This suggests that the determination of satisfaction is very difficult; yet a customer's satisfaction with a company's products or services is often seen as the key to a company's success and long-term competitiveness. The reason is that an unhappy customer will tell seven to twenty people about their negative experience whilst a satisfied customer will only tell three to five people about their positive experience. Meanwhile, a highly satisfied customer makes repeat purchases whilst at the same time acquaint others about their good experiences with the product. The key then is to match customer expectations with company performance. Smart companies aim to delight customers by promising only what they can deliver, then delivering more than they promise.

### **Service Quality**

Service is different from physical products. Compared with physical products, Service is thought to be intangible, heterogeneous, produced and consumed simultaneously, unable to be kept in stock, etc. It is a process consisting of a series of more or less intangible activities that normally, but not necessarily always, take place in interactions between the customer and service employees and/or physical resources or goods and/or systems of the service provider, which are provided as solutions to customer problems, (Grönroos, 2000). Hence, in a service context, there are almost always a relationship between customer and the service provider (Grönroos, 2000) and thus, service providers are commended to take advantage of these relationships by providing lasting customer care solutions objectivized to sustain brand loyalty for long-term profits to the firm. According to Zeithaml et al (1988), the interaction or the relationship between customers and service organizations induce perceptions of customers' quality. As a result, receptive attitude of workers is a key ingredient to giving customers a good impression; which invariably increases the probability of obtaining loyal customers. Parasuraman et al. (1988) thus defines service quality as the consumers' judgment about a firm's overall excellence or superiority. It expresses the degree to which a bunch of inbuilt features (relating to a product, a process or a system) meet requirements. The inbuilt features can be physical, sensory, behavioral, temporal, ergonomic or functional whilst requirements are the stated need or expectation be it implied or obligatory, (ISO 9000, 2005). What happens and perceived by customers in the interaction process will obviously have critical impacts on customers' evaluation of service quality (Grönroos, 2000). Parasuraman et al (1991), also note that quality involves meeting the needs and expectations of customers. Therefore, the

yardstick for determining service quality is the expectations of customers and not the policy of the organization.

Due to the peculiar attributes of service, the evaluation of service quality is a complex process. Indeed various methodologies are found in literature aimed at measuring service quality with the famous measurement model being SERVQUAL developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988). The authors measure the differences between customer expectations and perceptions across five determinants as follows:

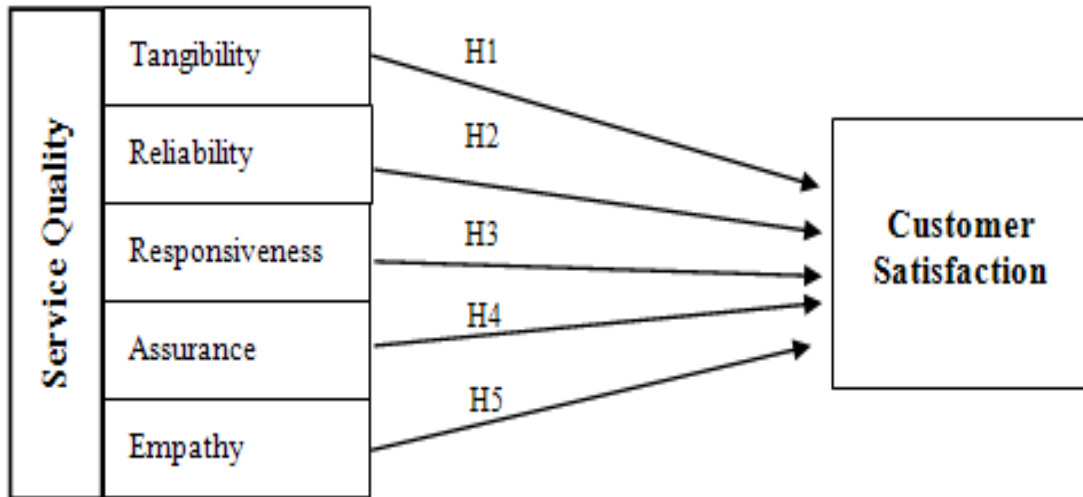
1. *Tangibles*: Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, employees and communication materials from a service company.
2. *Reliability*: A service company's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
3. *Assurance*: employees' knowledge and behavior about courtesy and ability to convey trust and confidence.
4. *Responsiveness*: A service company is willing to help customers and provide punctual services.
5. *Empathy*: A service company provides care and individualized attention to its customers, as well as having convenient operating hours.

The ability of a firm to enhance its service by providing products perceived by customers quality is enormous. According to Venetis and Ghauri (2000), service quality is noted as one of the few means for service differentiation and competitive advantage that attracts new customers and contributes to the market. It also enhances customers' intention to repeat purchase, to buy more, to buy other services, to become less price-sensitive and to tell others about their favorable experiences. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) argued that a high level of satisfaction lead to an increase customer loyalty eventually.

### **The Conceptual Framework: Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction**

Many researchers have showed that service quality perceived by customers are or will directly influence customers' satisfaction, as well as their trust in the service firm (See, Parasuraman et al, 1988; Aydin and Özer, 2005; Ismail et al, 2006; etc.). Customer trusts also emerge when customers perceive positive service quality from a firm, and believe the service firm would bring preferable outcomes for them. Hence there is enough theoretical grounding to support the notion that service quality is an important indicator of customer satisfaction (Spreng and Machoy, 1996). As a consequence, attention to service quality can make an organization different from other organizations and gain a lasting competitive advantage. In other words, high service quality is key for success in a competitive service markets. Ojo (2010) notes that service quality, a two-way flow of value, helps in cementing the relationship between customers and the organization. This means that customer derives real value from the market relationships and this also translates into value for the organization in the form of enhanced profitability and sustainability over a long period of time. In the mobile telecommunication industry which belongs to service industry, service quality is an important indicator to assess a service provider's performance.

## Servqual Model and the Relationship between Quality Service Delivery and Customer Satisfaction



Offering a high quality service is therefore considered to be a visible way to create customers trust and satisfaction, as well as obtaining competitive advantages and building a long-term relationship with customers. Hence, service quality dimensions should have an explicit and definite positive impact on customer satisfaction.

### Empirical Review

For some time now a lot of literature has surface given the growth of the mobile telecommunication services around the world, and many researchers have tried to empirically investigate customer satisfaction with service quality in the mobile telecommunication sector. In a study by Gerpott et al (2000) carried out in Germany through a structural equation modeling approach, researchers found that customer retention, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction are important goals for the telecommunications operators in the German mobile telecommunications market. Findings also showed that network quality, assessment of price and personal benefits had positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. But mobile service price, personal service benefit perceptions and number portability had the strongest effects on customer retention as well.

Kim et al (2004) carried out a research in the Korean mobile telecommunication services sector. They investigated the effect of different service features and switching barriers on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The results indicated that customer satisfaction is significantly and positively affected by call quality, value added services and customer support. They also found that customer satisfaction and switching barrier had a significant and positive impact on customer loyalty. Aydin and Ozer (2005) used the SEM technique (structural equation modeling) to study the impact of service quality, perceived value, customer expectations and complaint handling on customer satisfaction in the Turkish mobile telephone market. The results showed that service quality, customer expectations and complaint handling had positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. Service quality had the strongest effect than other constructs in their model.

Rahman (2006) used a sample of 1008 questionnaires to measure customer satisfaction in Indian Cellular Telecommunication industry. He established that customer contact employees play an important role in influencing customer perception of service quality. The study revealed tangible dimension as an aspect of service quality extremely important to customers; particularly the employees' neat and professional appearance; whereas empathy received low ratings, particularly service providers' interest differences. The SERVQUAL model was also used by Lai et al (2007) in China's mobile telecommunication. They used exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis to test communication industry. The results indicated that the SERVQUAL instrument is a valid means for

measuring service quality. "Service convenience" was also identified as an important additional dimension of service quality in China's mobile services sector.

Negi (2009) attempted to identify the role of service quality as perceived by mobile users while determining their overall satisfaction. He collected primary data through structured questionnaires from 250 mobile subscribers of Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation. Service quality gaps were computed and found to be negative for all the service quality dimensions ranging from as low as -2.02 for Tangibles to as high as -3.23 for the added dimension of Network Quality. Overall service quality was found to be significantly associated with and contributed significantly to the overall satisfaction of mobile subscribers.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Data Collection Tools and Procedures**

The use of descriptive and explanatory methods was employed in this study. The purpose of using the descriptive method was to help the researcher provide an accurate profile of the current service quality strategies being implemented by the mobile operators in Ghana. Primary data were mainly used in this study. The primary data were derived from the responses given by the various categories of respondents in the self-administered questionnaire prepared by the researcher. In order to reduce the possibility of getting incorrect answers and ensuring an efficient data collection tool, a pilot test was conducted. The structured questionnaire was adopted from Boshoff and Gray (2004) which was based on the literature related to the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuman et al (1996). The pilot test was then conducted using some prepaid mobile subscribers that were not considered to be part of the sampled respondents for the study. Appropriate changes and modification were made based on the feedback obtained from the pilot testing. The final questionnaire were then developed and administered to the respondents to elicit responses.

The sample size for the study was 260 with 250 customers and 10 employees at management level. Four out the six service providers in Ghana were selected (MTN, AIRTEL, VODAFONE AND TIGO). The sampling techniques adopted in this study were non-probability sampling techniques. At the management level, the respondents were purposively selected and interviewed. This involved mainly officials at the customer service unit. At the customer level, prepaid mobile subscribers of the selected companies were conveniently sampled on the basis of proximity to the customer and willingness on the part of the customer to take part in the survey etc. The revised questionnaires were distributed among the sampled mobile subscribers of the selected telecommunication companies. MTN being the largest mobile operator in Ghana in terms of market share received the largest number of questionnaires. Specifically, 100 respondents were surveyed from the prepaid mobile subscribers of MTN Ghana. The remaining three mobile companies in the study (Tigo, Vodafone and AIRTEL) each received 50 set of questionnaires. Thus, 50 respondents were each served from Tigo, Vodafone and Airtel mobile operators.

### **Reliability Analysis**

Reliability coefficient was tested by using Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) analysis. In order to measure the reliability for a set of two or more constructs, Cronbach alpha is a commonly used method where alpha coefficient values range between 0 and 1 with higher values indicating higher reliability among the indicators (Hair, *et al.*, 1992). In accordance with the Cronbach alpha test, the total scale of reliability for this study varies from 0.521 to 0.708 indicating an overall higher reliability factors. The total scale reliability for this study of 0.708 is not comparable to Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) study, which had a reliability factor of 0.92. However, reliability of this study is substantial in every perspective; as Cronbach's values of 0.70 or greater is deemed to be indicative of good scale reliability (O'Leary-Kelly and Vokurka, 1998).

**Table 1:** Reliability Analysis of Data

<b>Service Quality</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Tangibility</b> <i>Modern looking equipment</i> <i>Visually appealing telecommunication facilities</i> <i>Neatness of service providers</i> <i>Materials appealing</i>	0.697	4.320
<b>Reliability</b> <i>Provision of services in time</i> <i>Sincere interest in customers problems</i> <i>Performance of service right the first time</i> <i>Service providers insist on error free records</i>	0.602	4.290
<b>Responsiveness</b> <i>Inform customers of time of service provision</i> <i>Offering of prompt service to customers</i> <i>Willingness to aid customers</i> <i>Services providers should not be too busy to respond to needs</i>	0.617	4.198
<b>Assurance</b> <i>Employee behavior instill confidence in customers</i> <i>Customers feel safe in transactions</i> <i>Employees are consistently courteous</i> <i>Employees have knowledge to answer questions of customers</i>	0.708	4.088
<b>Empathy</b> <i>Giving customers individual attention</i> <i>Presence of operating hours convenient to all customers</i> <i>Employees should give personal services</i> <i>Customers best interest at heart</i> <i>Understanding of the specific needs of customers</i>	0.521	4.052

Source: field survey, 2012

## Data Analysis and Results

### Customer Expectation

The SERVQUAL model is used as a diagnostic tool for the measurement of customer service and the satisfaction of service perception. Parasuraman *et al.* (1985) developed a conceptual framework for the SERVQUAL model. The results of the analysis based on customer expectation in the choice of a service provider are displayed on table 2.

**Table 2:** Customer Expectations

<b>Service Quality Expectation</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Tangibility	3.33	1
Responsiveness	3.29	2
Assurance	3.15	3
Reliability	2.76	4
Empathy	2.47	5
N		250
Kendalls W		0.092
Chi-square		92.074
Df		4
Assymp. Sig.		0.000
Monte Carlo sig.		0.000 <sup>b</sup>

Source: Field survey, 2012

Based on the Kendall W Rank test, it is revealed that the majority of the customers of telecommunication service providers in Ghana look out for tangibility (3.33) in their choice of a service provider. The tangibility's considered encompasses possession of modern equipment, visual

appealing of physical facilities and many others. Tangibles involve issues in the physical environment, as well as the comeliness of the appearance of company equipment and materials that convey and external image of what is “inside” to consumers ( Zeithmal and Bitner, 2000). This is followed by the responsiveness level of the telecommunication service providers with a mean rank of 3.29. The study considered responsive variables like informing of customers service time, promptness of service providers, willingness of service providers to aid customers and others. The least considered preference is Empathy with a mean rank of 2.47. The chi-square value of 92.074 shows a significant difference in the choice variables.

### Customer Perception

After the expectations of the customers of the telecommunication service providers were ascertained and subsequently ranked, the next step was to measure the perception of the service consumed. Customer perceptions of the quality of a service are traditionally measured immediately after the person has consumed the service. In fact, consumer’s perception of service quality at the time he or she next decides whether or not to buy the service may better explain repeats buying behavior (Plamer and O’Neill 2003). Quality has been defined as a characteristic that goods or services must possess in order to be perceived as useful. Hence, what is a quality product to one group may not necessarily be a quality product to another (Praxiom, 2005) and thus the necessity to access the experiences of the various customers of the numerous telecom service providers in Ghana.

**Table 3:** Customer Experiences with Telecommunication Service Providers

Service Experiences of Customers	Mean Rank	Rank
Responsiveness	3.27	1
Assurance	3.27	1
Tangibles	3.23	3
Empathy	2.63	4
Reliability	2.61	5
N		250
Kendalls W		0.073
Chi-Square		72.920
Df		4
Asymp. Sig		.000
Monte Carlo Sig.		.000 <sup>b</sup>

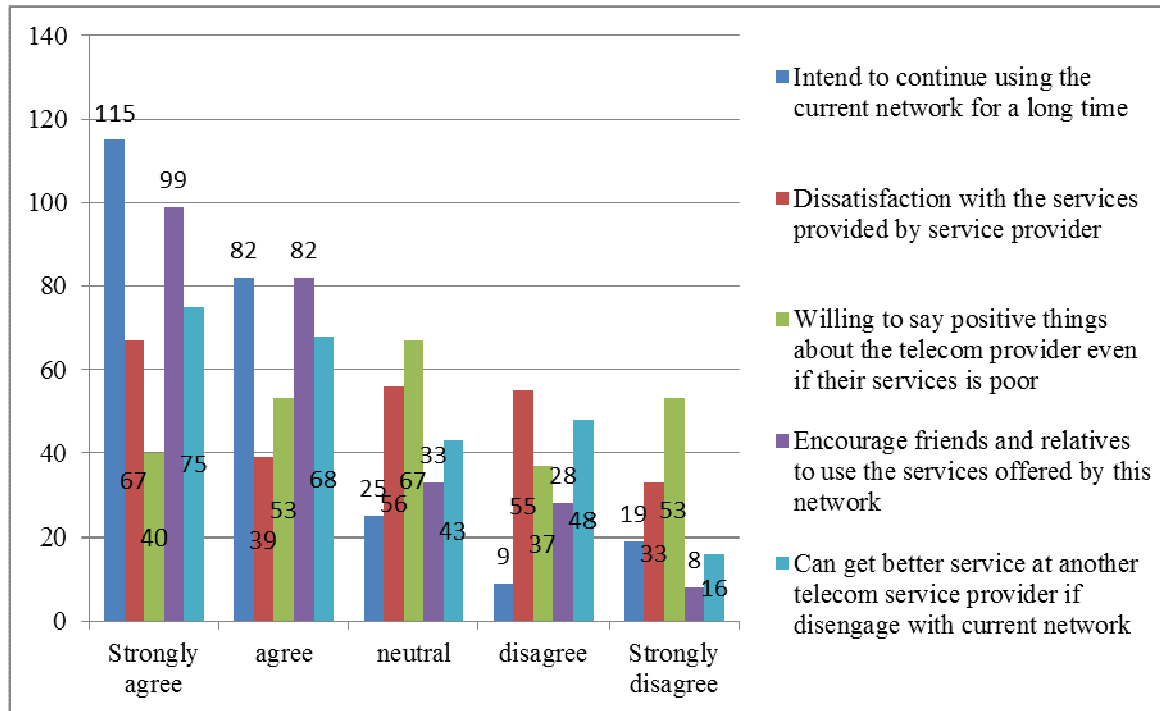
Source: Field survey, 2012

The service providers’ responsiveness to customers and their assurance level are ranked high by customers after their experiences. It can therefore be inferred that the service providers in Ghana are good in the provision of those services. This level of perception is followed by tangibles with a mean rank of 3.23. It can be inferred from tables 2 and 3 that there is satisfaction gap with respect to telecommunication service providers’ tangibility’s levels. However, the reliability and the empathy services expectations of customers of the telecommunication service provider seemly equate experiences and therefore leaves little gap.

### Brand Loyalty

Irrespective of the high loyalty of customers of telecommunication service providers, it should be emphasized that a high degree of gap between customers’ expectation and experience could force a switch to a different telecom firm. The survey therefore attempted to explore this inquiry by finding out level of switching intentions of customers in order to ascertain their loyalty to the service brand. The results showed very interesting conclusions.



**Figure 1: Level of Customer Loyalty**

From the graph, it revealed that a total of 115(46.0%) and 82(32.8%) strongly confirmed (strongly agreed) and confirmed (agreed) respectively their intention to continue using their current network for a long time. However, 25 of the total respondents (10.0%) were indifferent or at the neutral stage. This assertion reinforces the loyalty of the telecommunication providers' customers.

Consequently, with regard to the dissatisfaction of the services provided by the telecommunication firms, 67(26.8%) strongly agreed, 39(15.6%) agreed and 56(22.4%) were indifferent. However, 55(22.0%) disagreed and 33(13.2%) strongly disagreed with the statement. Yet, asked whether customers desire to encourage friends and relatives to use the services offered by the network, the majority of about 99(39.6%) strongly agreed and 25(10.0%) agreed to the statement whilst about 48(19.2%) disagreed. Also, considering the question of whether customers would obtain better service at another telecom service provider if they disengage the services of their current telecom service providers, the majority of about 75(30.0%) strongly agreed and 68(27.2%) agreed. These results confirms with the assertion made by Wang and Hing-Po Lo, (2000) that dissatisfied customers may still be forced to remain loyal to an organization, a kind of forced loyalty by implication. For example, in mobile telephony context, a customer who gives his or her mobile number to many social and or business associates may feel reluctant to actually switch though they may have strong switching intentions. The conclusion drawn is that the majority of the customers of the telecommunication service providers intend to continue to use their current network for a long time; although they expect better service conditions existing elsewhere. It is therefore imperative that telecom services be courteous about their service quality level in addition to other factors to ensure high level of customer retention.

### **Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction**

To test the hypothesis that dimensions of service quality have an explicit and definite positive impact on customer relationship, the use of both correlation and regression analysis were employed. The correlation analysis was utilized to examine the direction of impact whilst the use of simple regression analysis was employed to examine the extent of relationship between the two observed variables.

### Correlation Analysis

Saunders *et al.*, (2007) posit that where a change in one variable is accompanied by a change in another variable but it is not clear which variable caused the other to change, a correlation test is used to quantify the strength. Therefore, to identify the various strength of influence of the five dimensions on overall satisfaction, correlation analysis was conducted and the result is shown by table 4 below.

**Table 4:** Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction (Spearman correlation)

Service Quality	Overall Satisfaction
Tangibles	0.285***
Reliability	0.011
Responsiveness	0.186***
Assurance	0.040***
Empathy	0.193***

Source: field survey, 2012

\* implies significance level at 10%

\*\* implies significance level at 5%

\*\*\* indicates significance at 1%

Table 4 examines the relationship between service quality and overall satisfaction using spearman rank correlation. From the table, it is evident that there is positive correlation between overall satisfaction and all the service quality dimensions. Indeed all the dimensions had a strong impact on customer satisfaction expect reliability which had a correlation coefficient not different from zero. The result of the correlation therefore confirms the hypothesis that service quality is positively related to customer satisfaction.

### Regression Analysis

The results of the regression analysis also confirm the hypothesis of a positive linkage between service quality and customer satisfaction. This display is found on table 5 which shows the estimated impact of the quality dimensions on the customer satisfaction

**Table 5:** Regression Analysis

Model	Coefficients	Std. error	t-ratio
Constant	3.185***	0.340	9.370
Tangibility	0.312***	0.071	4.419
Reliability	0.057	0.078	0.731
Responsiveness	0.281***	0.067	4.173
Assurance	0.136*	0.076	1.784
Empathy	0.396***	0.070	5.669
R-square	0.250		
Adjusted R-squared	0.209		
Std. error of estimate	0.712		
Durbin Watson	1.749		

Source: field survey, 2012 Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

\*\*\* indicates significance level at 1%

\*\* indicates significance level at 5%

\* indicates significance level at 10%

The adjusted R-squared of the regression model of 0.209 indicates that about 20.9% of the changes in the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) is explained by the five explanatory variables combined. Results also show that apart from reliability dimension, all the dimensions are significantly positive; confirm the early result obtained from the correlation analysis. The regression results also revealed that tangibility and empathy dimensions had a strongest impact on satisfaction. This is consistent with many previous studies on satisfaction and quality (*see*, Oliver, 1997). Thus in the

mobile telephony industry, customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by the Tangible element of the service provider such as the ambiance of buildings, provision of visually attractive offices, equipment, materials, neat and pleasant appearance and uniforms of employees (Zeithmal and Bitner, 2000).

Overall, it is evident that there is positive relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. This study is in consonance with many existing literature that indicates that there is positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Kim et al., 2004).

## Conclusion

This study was undertaken to examine the effects of service quality on customers' choice of mobile phone telecommunication service providers in Ghana. As a general notion, consumers' perception is widely varied in accordance with the service quality, price, availability of product, and promotion, etc. Hence the service provider companies are characterized by the engagement in competition with each other to attract and acquire the potential consumers. Historically, the competition among the mobile phone service providers in Ghana is more intense now than ever before. They compete not only for networking quality by a large amount of investment in network quality, network extension and upgrading, but also for the acquisition of new customers and retention of old customers by direct and indirect price reduction. Network quality is one of the important factors of overall service quality. The major factors influencing the selection of telecom service providers include tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, reliability and empathy in their degree of importance to the customer. From the study, there is evidence of positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

Therefore, this research recommends that providers enhance their tangibility, empathy levels, and responsiveness to customers, and improve their assurance level by using various activities. To successfully compete in today's value conscious environment, mobile phone operators in Ghana must establish the value of their offers as superior to others through better and improved service offering. It is therefore, necessary for mobile company to strive at offering reliable and dependable service to customers. The mobile company can further strengthen this relationship through lower service charge and efficient provisions of extra services such as regular promotions, prize bonanza, free call etc.

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