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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

MASTERS OF ARTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

**CORPORATE BRAND IMAGE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION. AN EMPIRICAL
STUDY OF EXPRESSO GHANA**

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**A RESEARCH SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
RESEARCH OF THE GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIRMENT FOR THE AWARD OF ARTS DEGREE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS**

NOVEMBER, 2017

DECLARATION

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I do here by declare that this project work is a result of my own original research conducted and that no part of it has been presented for any academic award in this or any university. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged. I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

Candidate Signature



Date

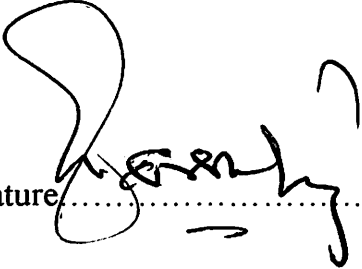
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SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

I hereby certify that the preparation and presentation of the project work were supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of project work laid down by the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

Signature 

Date 12-12-2017

Professor Joseph Emmanuel Allotey-Pappoe

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God who gave me divine guidance and strength to be successful.

I also dedicate this work to my parents, Patience Lartey and Ato Haizel, and my children Godbless Benjamin Amankwah and Patty-Daisy Amankwah. I also dedicate it to those special people who supported and inspired me in diverse ways throughout this course.

Finally, I dedicate this work to all organizations engaged in corporate brand image and customer satisfaction in the telecommunication industry hoping to increase customer loyalty.

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ABSTRACT

The study made an assessment on the Corporate Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction of Espresso Ghana within Accra. The main objective of this study was to determine how corporate branding impacts on consumer purchase preference in the Espresso Ghana Telecommunication services and products. The qualitative research design was employed as well as purposive sampling to select respondents for the study. Interview schedules and questionnaires were used for respondents from Espresso Ghana staff and subscribers of the network. The study revealed that Espresso Ghana corporate branding had nothing to do with the purchase decision of the customers but it is the main source of communication with customers about the marketing mix of a product. Respondents in the study indicated their disappointment in the services and products of Espresso Ghana. However, they also indicated the interest in purchasing Espresso's products and services only if they carry creativity, innovation and consistency. The study also recommends that Espresso Ghana should consult its' customers through surveys and also use the mystery shopping technique to ensure customers are satisfied with products and services rendered.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Brand image is the key driver of brand equity, which refers to consumer's general perception and feeling about a brand and which has an influence on consumer behavior. Looking through extant researches, the most widely used predictors of consumer's behavioral intention are customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction has been widely accepted as an important issue for many communication and marketing managers. It is commonly used as a marketing benchmark of a company's performance (Bennett and Rundle -Thiele, 2004). Furthermore, it is generally believed that a satisfied customer is more likely to display loyalty behavior, i.e. repeat purchase and willingness to give positive word of mouth (Bennett and Rundle -Thiele, 2004; Schultz, 2005). Although this is the case, Taylor (1998) stated that "companies began to notice that they often were losing customers despite high satisfaction" (p. 41). According to Hinson and Narteh (2004), competition affects the development of international marketing plans. In developing international marketing plans, the firm needs to have a clear international competitive focus, and develop effective relationship strategies with customers, employees and suppliers ensuring that strategies are in place to manage the organization well with a culture of learning.

Mobile telecommunication is becoming one of the fastest growing industries worldwide. There are 4.7 billion mobile customers across the globe with growth of around 20% per annum over the last three years (Vodafone Group Plc, 2010). The majority of customers are in emerging markets

such as India and China (Vodafone Group Plc, 2010). Mobile networks, particularly 3G communications networks, are becoming critical infrastructure and major factor in driving substantial economic growth in developing countries across Africa.

According to Armstrong and Kotler (1999) today's companies must also focus on retaining current customers and building profitable, long-term relationships with them. The key to customer retention is superior customer value which is necessary for a sense of personal validity. Loyal customers repurchase the same service or brand, provide positive word-of-mouth and are willing to pay a premium price (Kwon and Lennon, 2009).

Nowadays, brand image has become a powerful tool to entice new customers by influencing their behavior with various strategies that would make them loyal to one brand. Brand loyalty is a "marketers' Holy Grail" (Kapferer, 2005) and it ideally measures the health of the company (Bennett and Rundle -Thiele, 2005). Studies have reported a 5% increase in 25–95% over 14 industries the effectiveness of brand loyalty, for example in auto service chains, software, brand deposits and credit card industries (Reichheld and Detrick, 2003). Additionally, those loyal customers are more likely to advocate for the brand and recommend it to relatives, friends and other potential consumers (Schultz, 2005).

According to Xie and Boggs (2006), corporate branding is defined as “the strategy in which a brand and corporate name are the same”. They also stated that corporate brand simplifies communication with government, the financial sector, the labour market and society. Examples of corporate brand according to Xie and Bogg (2006) are IMB, Nike, Virgin and Sony. The basis for corporate branding consists of organizational values, core values and added values (Xie and Bogg, 2006).

In Hinson et al. (2009) a brand in commercial essence is a name that influences buyers. What really makes that name become a brand is the saliency, differentiability, and intensity attached to those associations (Kapferer, 2004). The role of the marketer is to create frames for the development of a brand in the minds of customers, by providing an appropriate physical product, service process and supportive communication (Gronroos, 2000). Corporate branding enables the company products and services to share the same brand value and identity.

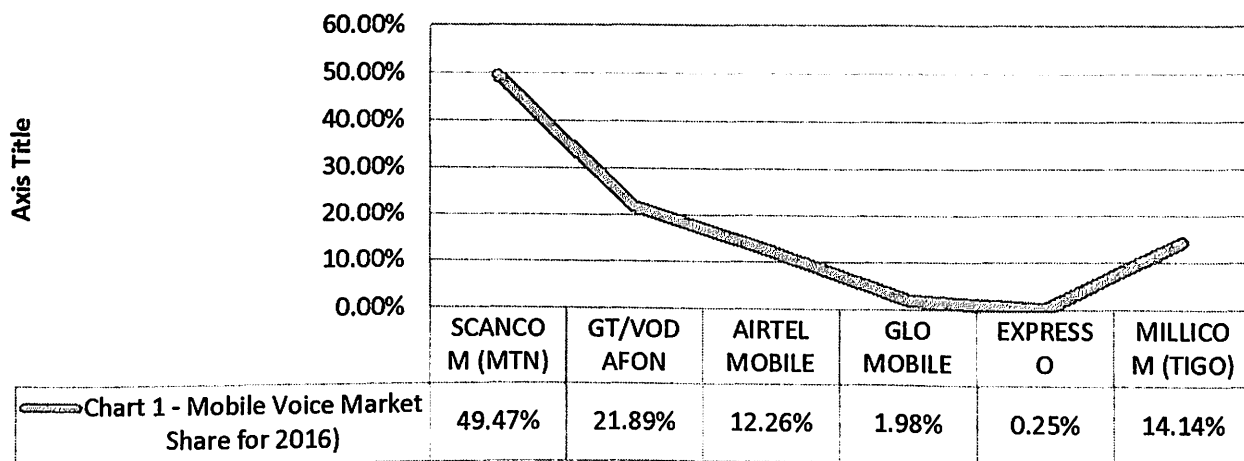
Among the changes that businesses make as they move toward globalization is a shift in marketing emphasis from product brands to corporate branding (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001) and achieving customer satisfaction. This is usually ascribed to the difficulties of maintaining credible product differentiation in the face of imitation and homogenization of products and services, and the fragmentation of traditional market segments that occurs as customers become more sophisticated and markets more complex. Customer satisfaction is the primary mental state of a customer which comprises expectation before purchase and perception about performance after purchase (Oliver, 1997). However, according to Levesque and McDougall (1996) satisfaction is conceptualized as an overall, customer attitude towards a service provider.

The Ghanaian telecommunication industry had been virtually monopolized by a single national operator until 1990 when the Government of Ghana embarked on a comprehensive restructuring and liberalization of the industry. In accordance with the reform program, licenses were issued to private operators in the field of cellular communication and data networks. The industry has become one of the fastest growing industries over the past few years. There are already six

competitors in the industry, namely, Mobile Telecommunications Network (MTN), Tigo, Vodafone Mobile, Airtel, Expresso and Globacom. The Total Cellular/Mobile Voice Subscriber Base in Ghana as at April 2017 stood at 35,984,280. The total penetration rate for the month under review was 127.06%. Compared to the year before 2017, the total Cellular/Mobile Voice Subscriber Base in Ghana as at April, 2016 stood at 36,395,116. In view of the figures on the market share, a comparison will be drawn between the networks based a two years market share research for both cellular/mobile voice and data subscriptions.

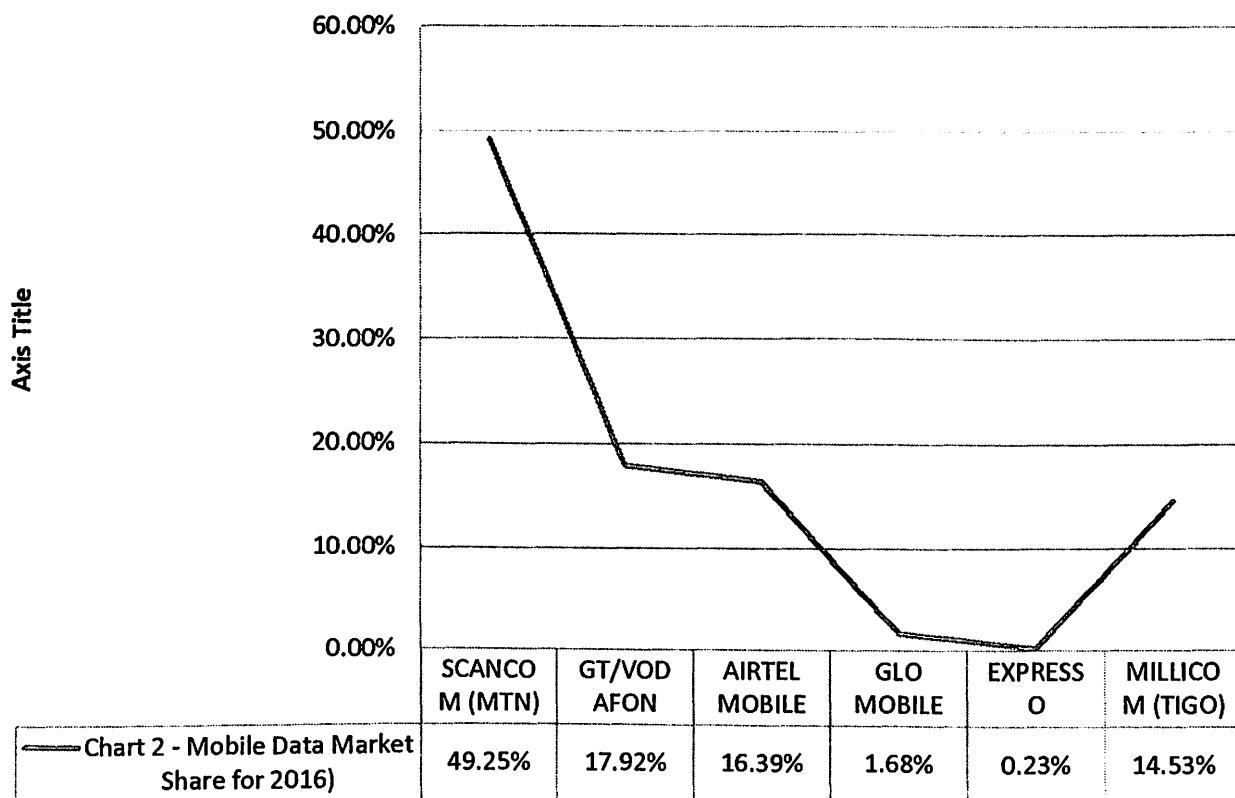
In the year 2016, MTN was the market leader in subscriptions, with a market share of 17,192,543 representing 47.24% of total market share (NCA-Subscriber Base Information, 2016). Vodafone's subscriber base increased to 7,976,348 which represent 21.92% of total market share. Tigo had a marginal subscriber base increase, closing at 5,213,398 which represent 14.32%. Airtel decreased its subscriber base to 4,942,197 representing 13.59% of the total market share. GLO decreased its subscriber base; its current subscriber base of 962,338 represents 2.64% of the total market share. Expresso though, decreased its subscriber base to 108,292 represents 0.30% of the total market share.

Chart 1 - Mobile Voice Market Share for 2016)



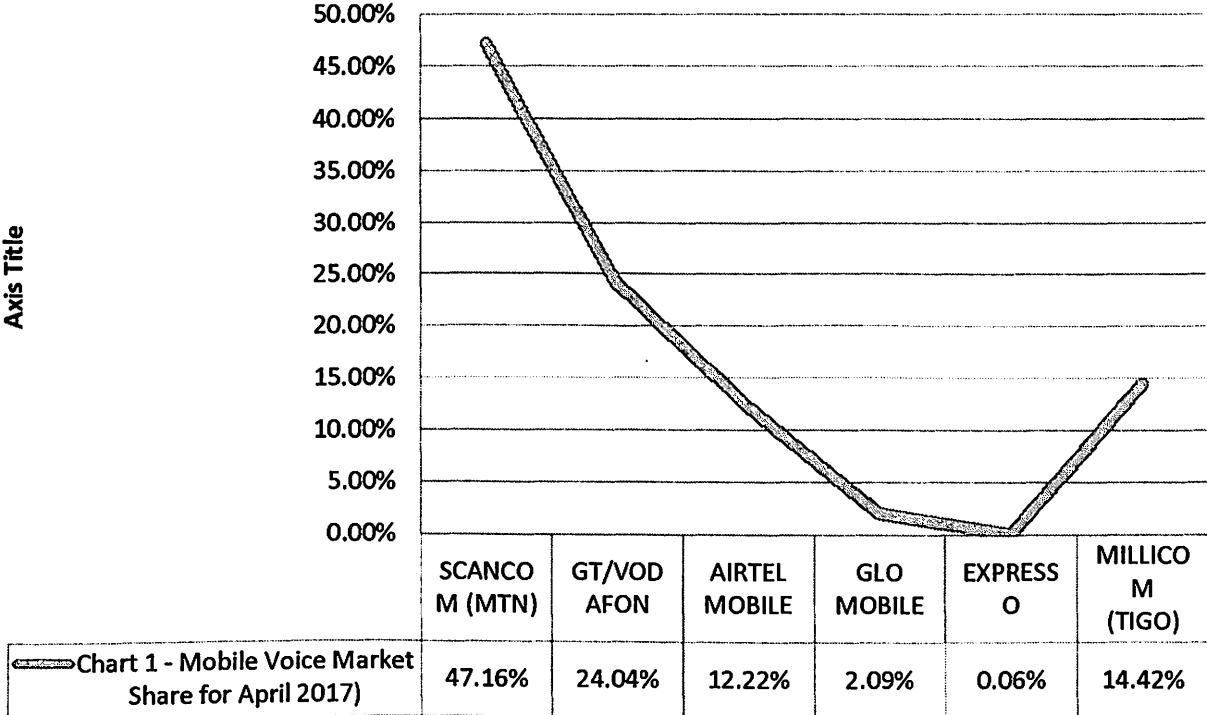
At the end of April 2016, total subscribers of cellular mobile data in the country were 18,605,236 with a penetration rate of 67.29% for the month under review. MTN's mobile data subscribers for April 2016 were 9,163,083. Their market share for the month under review was 49.25%. The total number of subscribers for Vodafone's mobile data in April 2016 was 3,334,093. This is reflected in their market share of 17.92%. Airtel's mobile data subscribers for April 2016 were 3,048,954. Their market share for the month was 16.39%. Tigo's data subscribers for April 2016 were 2,703,106. Tigo's market share for the month under review was 14.53%. Glo recorded data subscriber figures of 312,746 at the end of April 2016. This reflects a market share of 1.68%. Expresso's mobile data subscriber figures as at the end of April 2016 were 43,254. This represents a market share of 0.23% for the month under review.

Chart 2 - Mobile Data Market Share for 2016)



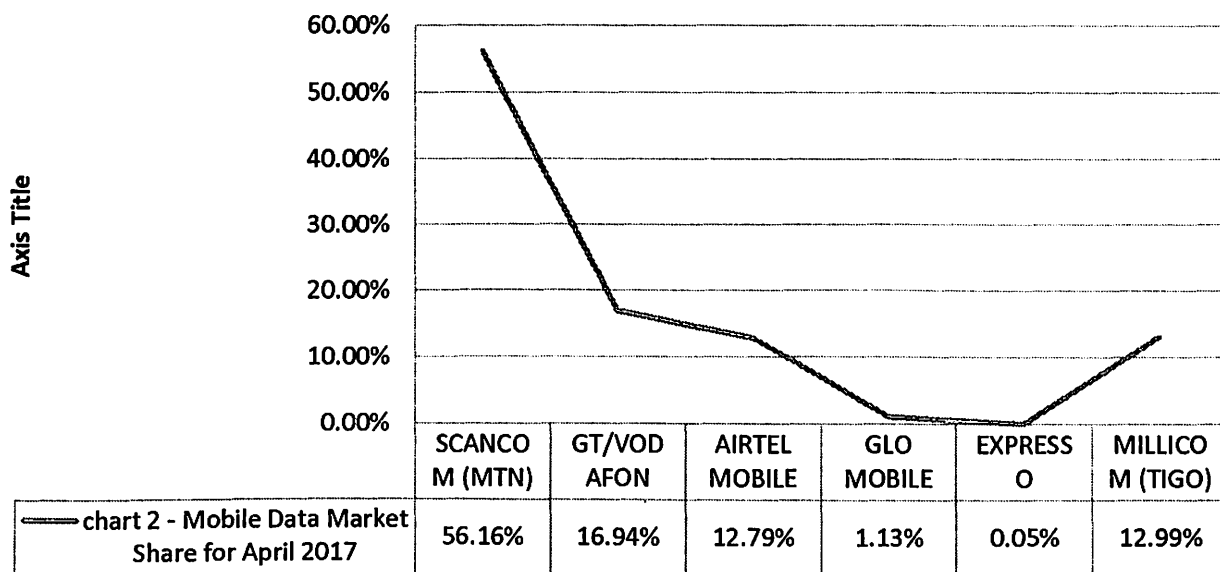
A look at 2017s review shows the total number of mobile voice subscriptions at the end of April 2017 which was the last recoded research for the Espresso network under review as well. April 2017 showed that MTN was the market leader in subscriptions, with a market share of 16,969,311 representing 47.16% of total market share (NCA-Subscriber Base Information, 2017). Vodafone's subscriber base increased to 8,651,515 which represent 24.04% of total market share. Tigo had a marginal subscriber base increase, closing at 5,187,936 which represent 14.42%. Airtel decreased its subscriber base to 4,398,913 representing 12.22% of the total market share. GLO decreased its subscriber base; its current subscriber base of 753,341 represents 2.09% of the total market share. Espresso though, decreased its subscriber base to 23,267 represents 0.06% of the total market share.

Chart 3 - Mobile Voice Market Share for April 2017



A look at the end of April 2017 shows that the total subscribers of cellular mobile data in the country were 21,584,899 with a penetration rate of 76.22% for the month under review. MTN's mobile data subscribers for April 2017 were 12,110,284. Their market share for the month under review was 56.11%. The total number of subscribers for Vodafone's mobile data in April 2017 was 3,657,020. This is reflected in their market share of 16.94%. Airtel's mobile data subscribers for April 2017 were 2,761,521. Their market share for the month was 12.79%. Tigo's data subscribers for April 2017 were 2,802,950. Tigo's market share for the month under review was 12.99%. Glo recorded data subscriber figures of 242,973 at the end of April 2017. This reflects a market share of 1.13%. Expresso's mobile data subscriber figures as at the end of April 2017 were 10,151. This represents a market share of 0.05% for the month under review.

Chart 4 - Mobile Data Market Share for April 2017



- The comparison between the above charts reveals that, Expresso's mobile voice and data subscription has seen a drastic decline between a period of two years compared to the other networks.

Ghana was actually one of the first countries in Africa to liberalise and deregulate its telecommunications sector. Following the privatisation of Ghana Telecom in 1996 there was very rapid growth in market competition across the mobile, internet and fixed-line sectors, with a number of new players being licensed to offer services. Ghana Telecom was acquired by the Vodafone Group in 2009 and rebranded as Vodafone Ghana. It is the principal fixed-line provider and also the second largest player in the mobile services sector. The second national operator, Westel, was also re-privatised, in 2007, becoming a member of the Zain Group, one of Africa's leading mobile operators, before being sold to Bharti Airtel in 2010. The arrival of two submarine fibre optic cables in 2012 and 2013 significantly increased international bandwidth and led to a reduction in the cost of broadband access. These developments, combined with the roll out of national fibre backbone networks by a number of players, are continuing to revolutionise the country's broadband market and pave the way for the convergence of technologies and services.

Overview of Expresso Ghana

Expresso Ghana, then known as Kasapa Telecom Limited provided mobile and fixed-line telecommunications services in Ghana. Its' Ghana operations has been in existence since 1995, operating under the name of Celltel; it was the second mobile operator in the country at the time. It also offered value added services such as prepaid, voice-mail, data transmission, ISDN, internet and other wide band services. Kasapa Telecom Limited was also formerly known as Celltel Limited and was re-branded to Kasapa Telecom Limited in 2003, the only locally branded telecoms operator in the country, with 9,000 subscribers. Kasapa Telecom Limited was incorporated

in 1993 and is based in Accra, Ghana. By July 11, 2008, Kasapa Telecom Limited operated as a subsidiary of Expresso Telecom Group. Kasapa experienced significant growth and in September 2005, the company made a switch from an analogue network to a CDMA network to further strengthen its market position.

Expresso is an African telecommunications services company. It provides telecommunication services in five African markets: Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, and Ghana. Expresso offers a wide range of products and services to meet the needs of customers. Expresso is a key player in the implementation of the Africa Coast to Europe (ACE) submarine cable. Sudatel owns 75% of the total Expresso shares.

In 2006, Mauritania's Chinguitel was Expresso's first 'green field' operation, acquiring a licence to operate as a telecom operator. Sudatel share in Chinguitel is 68%. By August 2007, Chinguitel established a CDMA network, providing full coverage across the country. In November 2007, Expresso Senegal became Expresso's second 'green field' operation, licensed to operate as a telecom operator in Senegal. Sudatel share in Expresso Senegal is 75%.

In July 2008, Expresso Telecom acquired 100% of Ghana's Kasapa Telecom Company. Sudatel share in this company is 75%. As of April 2016, 18% of Expresso Ghana (Kasapa Telecom Limited) was sold to an unidentified buyer for \$US5M. The remainder of the shares was transferred to an escrow agent and by the close of 2017 Sudatel owned 100% shares of Expresso Ghana. After the acquisition, the company worked on many strategic initiatives and, had an operational transformation project and network expansion programme which increased Expresso's coverage from 40% to nationwide coverage.

Within marketing, branding and corporate identity, studies found out a growing awareness that corporate brands can increase the company's visibility, recognition and reputation. On the basis of the above considerations, a compelling case is made for this study that examines the corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on loyalty. The focus on customers' perspectives provides a better insight with respect to the relationships between corporate brand image and customer satisfaction.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The astronomical growth in the subscriber base of the mobile networks has led to intense and cut-throat competition in the *Global System for Mobile (GSM)* market of Ghana. The competition is exacerbated by the lower switching costs among the subscribers of the various networks, which manifest in the frequency with which they (subscribers) freely enter and leave the networks. In terms of financial outlay it costs subscribers as low as one to two Ghana cedis to acquire a SIM (Subscriber Identification Module) and this makes it cheaper for subscribers to traverse from one network to another.

With the competition becoming tough, service providers realized that retaining one's existing customer base is important as much as the acquiring of a new customer (Coyles and Gokey, 2005). There is also a problem of the declining growth in the Expresso subscriber base in Ghana making it more difficult to attract new subscribers and necessitating again the need to retain the acquired customers while the other telecommunication networks gain customers, prospects and retain their customers. Regardless of the company's beliefs and goals of being a source of competitive advantage, a branded culture separating an organisation from its competition and places it in a league of its own, the company seems to almost be in extinction. Again, the

company claims its core values to be a critical component of their approach to employee engagement and customer engagement which will encourage customers and employees to join and to stay with Espresso, thus, helping build a sustainable business. These values serve as a framework with which to assess and monitor, as well as provide the ability to communicate with distinct culture to a broad range of stakeholders, prospective employees and customers, yet the company sees a decline both in voice and data subscription monthly as quoted by the NCA. The decline in customer loyalty has brought about decrease in brand equity. The situation, according to Long and Chun (2004) makes mobile telecommunication companies not only to promote their service quality, but also change their marketing core strategy to holding their existing customers by enhancing and optimizing the customer loyalty.

In the light of this intense competition, the major challenge confronting the Espresso operator in Ghana, therefore is the determination and execution of various marketing initiatives that would not only lead to attraction of new subscribers, but also retention of the existing ones who would then become loyal customers. There are overwhelming arguments supporting that it is more expensive to win new customers than to keep existing ones (Harmozi and Giles, 2004; Pfeifer, 2005). It is against this backdrop that the researcher wishes to look into the availability of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on the loyalty of Espresso subscribers to improve on the current situation.

Ganyaglo (2009) postulates that measuring customer satisfaction leads to identification of ways of improving product/service quality, which in turn leads to increasing a company's competitive advantage. Is it only the brand name customers consider when making a purchase decision or other factors come to play? (loyalty, price or any other reason). The study would uncover whether it is because of the corporate brand name, the packages offered to customers or it is

because of the way the services are rendered to the clients of Espresso telecommunications Ltd, Accra (Head office Branch). The study is also to assess customers' perception of the services of Espresso to see whether they meet the quality expectations of majority of its customers, which ultimately affects loyalty. The primary contribution of this study is to examine the tools of corporate brand image can use to improve its customer satisfaction to maintain their trust and loyalty.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

- i. To identify the factors that affect purchase decision of Espresso subscribers.
- ii. To determine the relationship between Espresso's corporate brand image and customer satisfaction.
- iii. To assess the relationship between Espresso's customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.
- iv. To analyze the effect of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty of Espresso subscribers.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following questions would be asked by the researcher.

- i. Is there a relationship between Espresso's brand image benefits and customer satisfaction?
- ii. What is the relationship between Espresso's customer satisfaction and customer loyalty?

- iii. What are new marketing strategies for Expresso?
- iv. What is the effect of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty from the Expresso customer perspective?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Undoubtedly, Expresso is almost gone out of business per the findings from NAC 2016 as compared to its competitors; hence this research is significant in a number of ways.

- It is anticipated that this research will unfold the lapses of Customer Satisfaction in the telecommunication industry of Ghana.
- By identifying these lapses, the management of Expresso Ghana Ltd may consider the suggested recommendations to improve on its corporate brand image and customer satisfaction.
- Furthermore, it is hoped that this study will fill a gap in the literature on the effects of Corporate Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction on the loyalty of Expresso subscribers from its customers' perspective.
- Moreover, the research will be of significance to marketing professionals. The findings and recommendations will be used as a benchmark for enhancing other similar researches and also serve as a secondary source of information to other researches.
- Also, it will provide recommendations for practice to those engaged in providing improved Corporate Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Research Design

The qualitative research provides the researcher with the possibility to get close to participants and to penetrate their realities and interpret their perceptions (Shaw, 1999). The study uses the logic of abduction where the theory is developed over time according to what is discovered through empirical fieldwork, as well as through analysis and interpretation (Dubois and Gadde, 2002). The case study method was chosen as it produces detailed information about the phenomenon. A single case study was chosen for the study since the phenomenon required investigation from two aspects: to explore the thoughts and opinions inside and outside the Espresso organization.

Through the use of qualitative methods, this study attempted to explore and identify possible meaning to improve Corporate Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction public for the growth and reputation of the organization. This method enabled the identification and exploration of the variables at play as well as confirms existing theories and epistemological philosophy related to the research. According to Huberman and Miles' (1994) the use of the qualitative method is best suited when the research has to do with relationships; moreover, the use of this method gave the opportunity to collect data appropriate for the study.

1.6.2 Research Population

The population for this study targeted Espresso employees (*the dominant coalition, management and junior staff*) and some available subscribers of Espresso service.

1.6.3 Sample

Due to the nature of the research design, its aims and objectives, not more than one hundred and twenty-six (126) were used. The target population was Expresso Telecommunication Ltd. Head office branch and some subscribers (users) of Expresso service.

1.6.4 Types And Sources Of Data

Two types of data have been used in this study to obtain information and these are the primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source has been made up of the respondents at Expresso such as the communication and marketing practitioner, customers and some selected junior staff because they will provide data specific to the problem/issue under study.

Since the materials for the secondary data were already available, a few selections were made. A good use of quality data from books (Published/Unpublished), journals, magazines, newsletters, blogs, press release, websites etc. has been used to elaborate and explain certain frame works and procedures related to the study.

1.6.5 Data Collection Instrument(S)

In this qualitative research, the use of questionnaires was more appropriate because it provided the opportunity to evaluate the study and findings, in-depth and in detail. It also afforded the opportunity to be flexible in the choice of both the primary and secondary resource data. Questionnaires as mentioned above enabled the collection of appropriate data in a particular framework which suites the study. Interviews was another tool which helped to add up information especially from the dominate coalition and some customers of Expresso. This process actually allowed the collection of every necessary data for the finding of the case study;

though; there were encounters of some few challenges due to unreliability and inconsistency of some correspondents, similarities in the accounts given per the information gathered are accurate and appropriate for the study.

1.6.6 Data Collection Procedures

The standard official rule was followed in terms of data collection by obtaining permission with the help of an introductory letter acquired from the Ghana Institute of Journalism. A phone call was made to the head office of Expresso Ghana to book an appointment which was almost impossible, followed by a submission of a cover letter attached to the proposal at Expresso Ghana to seek their permission and acknowledgment for the study intended.

In this field research, data was collected through interviews, questionnaires and documented analysis as these further explained the phenomena. Members of the sample were contacted a day before the distribution of the questionnaires. On the day of distribution, their confidentiality was assured as well as guidelines were given to them with regards to answering the questionnaires and where possible, some of the questionnaires were collected on the same day; others were given a time frame with a maximum duration of two (2) days for collection. Some of the top management as well as some of the dominant coalition at Expresso Ghana gave further information in the form of interviews. This research is focused and has brought accuracy in terms of findings to the topic despite the fact that the fear of bias may defeat the objectives of the study.

The interviewees were chosen with discretionary logic to represent the different viewpoints of the organization and its stakeholders. The participants chosen for the study was on the grounds

that they had been with the organization for several years. The thematic interviews were pursuing free discussion and in this way the knowledge accumulated about the phenomenon was also deepened with the interviewees' own opinions and thoughts. All the interviews were recorded for later transcription. In addition, some basic information about the organization was revealed during the conversations with some of the internal stakeholders of the case company.

1.6.7 Treatment Presentation And Analysis Of The Data

The data has been categorized into various themes that were captured in the questionnaires and interviews. These data has been presented in the form of diagrams and probably a table for a better understanding and interpretation of the findings. The data was analyzed using the computer and manually in comparison with other existed works. Thus, the use of thematic analysis approach has been used for this qualitative study of research.

1.7 Scope And Limitations Of The Study

Any research on corporate brand image and customer satisfaction will be a very broad spectrum due to its roles and theories involved both in academia and in practice; hence the purpose for the case study. The scope was set to establish boundaries and only areas related to the case study. The study was limited to the communication and marketing department at Espresso Ghana and some of the subscribers of Espresso Ghana. The scope of the study was confined to establishing the impact of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction as it also investigated and explored the activities/relationship between Espresso Ghana and its customers and practices. The

main limitations of this study included financial resources constraints, access to data and time constraints.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into six chapters. Chapter one (1) is focused on the introduction of the research under study. Chapter two (2) has been done to cover the literature review of the research topic. Chapter three (3) is also focused on the methodology whilst Chapter four deals with the research Data Analysis and Findings. Chapter five (5) covers the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on the concepts of corporate branding, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. It looks at how trust and corporate image or identity affects customer perceptions of quality and impact on their purchase behaviour. The chapter also looks briefly at the overview of the telecom industry of Ghana.

2.2 Defining concepts

2.2.1 Corporate Branding

According to Xie and Boggs (2006), corporate branding is defined as “the strategy in which a brand and corporate name are the same”. They also stated that corporate brand simplifies communication with government, the financial sector, the labour market and society. Examples of corporate brand according to Xie and Bogg (2006) are IMB, Nike, Virgin and Sony. The basis for corporate branding consists of organizational values, core values and added values (Xie and Boggs, 2006). According to Ind (1997), a corporate brand is not just a logo, a name or a visual presentation; it is also the value that defines it. Ind (1997) posited a corporate brand can be defined by three areas of intangibility, complexity and responsibility. What distinguishes the corporation is its complexity; “it is larger, more diverse and has several audiences that it must interact with” than a brand. It is important to effectively communicate the values of the core brand and build relationships with the stake holders to meet their needs (*ibid*).

2.2.2 Characteristics of Corporate Brand

There are many characteristics of corporate branding but the key is to create one that the consumers and existing customers want or need and can relate to since the brand needs to be managed closely throughout its product life cycle because of the need to streamline them for a longer existence.

According to Kay (2004), corporate branding is characterized by the way a company communicates its identity. A corporate brand according to Knox and Bickerton (2000) is “the visual, verbal and behavioral expression of an organization’s unique business model”. Blamer (2001) outlines five characteristics of corporate brands which include:

- **Cultural:** Corporate brands have a cultural root that arises from sub-cultures which are contained within the corporate brands.
- **Intricate:** Corporate brands are intricate because they are multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary, have a range of stakeholders, both internal and external, they also have controlled or uncontrolled communications.
- **Tangible:** Corporate brands “encompass tangible elements such as business-scope, geographical coverage, performance-related issues, profit margins, pay scales, recruitments etc.”
- **Ethereal:** The stakeholders of the corporate brand are subjective and emotional when judging the brand; this can be for example, country-of-origin or the type of industry.
- **Commitment:** The total organizational commitment is very essential and the CEO and the board-level is the prerequisite for corporate branding. Commitment is hence the core and the cornerstone in corporate brand management.

According to Jerry McLaughlin, “brand is the perception someone holds in their head about you, a product, a service, an organization, a cause, or an idea. Brand building is the deliberate and skillful application of effort to create a desired perception in someone else’s mind.”

Apart from the above characteristics, other related common characteristics of successful brands are as follows:

1. Audience Knowledge

The best brands have a thorough understanding of the demographics of their target market, what their interests are, and how they communicate. Most businesses have a specific target audience they’re pursuing. Understanding the target market is critical for a communication company because of competition as it provides direction for the tone and reach of a marketing campaign, along with the overall identity of a brand, while helping to create an organic, human connection between a business and its audience.

2. Uniqueness

Establishing a brand identity requires something distinctive. For instance, Espresso Ghana started with SIM Cards attached with phones for customers unlike its competitors who basically sold SIM Cards first.

Creating an identity within a niche doesn’t demand a revolutionary idea. It simply needs to have one special thing that separates it from the competition. In reality, it’s possible to be “a one trick pony” as long as that trick is really good. Once a company figures out what that is, it can concentrate on it and should gain recognition in time.

3. Passion

While it's certainly possible to build a brand in the short-term without passion, it's almost impossible to sustain it in the long run. When one examines massively the competition on the market, they all have a serious passion that keeps propelling them to work hard and continually deliver greatness through innovative product ideas and services. That passion leads to enthusiasm and genuine joy, which is infectious; allowing consumers to become just as enthusiastic about a product or service, leading to word of mouth advertising and referrals.

4. Consistency

The consistency in a product and service encourages consumers to come back to a business for repeat sales, thus; they usually expect to receive the same level of quality as they did the first time. The idea of them to rely on a company for consistency who adhere to a certain quality standard with a product or service regardless of the industries being saturated with competitors is what makes a consumer want to comeback. This often leads to brand loyalty; on the contrary, inconsistency is often enough of a reason for consumers to take their business elsewhere.

5. Competitiveness / Exposure / Leadership

For a brand to make a name for itself, team members should thrive on competition and constantly strive to improve and gain an edge in the industry. When it comes to the major players in any industry, none simply sit back and hope that their consumers will do the work for them. Instead, they tend to be the movers and shakers who work tirelessly toward building and

optimizing their brand, going above and beyond consumer expectations. The end result tends to be a brand that is continually on the cutting edge of its industry.

Another big part of being recognized as a distinctive, successful brand is the ability to reach consumers through multiple channels. Obviously, larger companies have an advantage gaining exposure because they usually have a bigger marketing budget and more existing connections. They can pay for television commercials, be featured in globally-recognized magazines, and rank highly in search engine results pages but a good brand can also make with through referrals as well.

However, the Internet and social media have narrowed the gap between competitions. There are more tools than ever before which offer any companies the chance at establishing their brand by developing a presence on networks like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, whatsapp etc.

There's typically an influential leader behind every successful brand in any thriving organization. To coordinate the efforts of team members and guide a strategic vision for a brand, the leader resolves complications and acts as a liaison between different departments to keep everyone on the same page severing as an expert motivator and maximizing the strengths of different team members. This check helps in maintaining the brand image of the organization.

2.2.3 Different types of Corporate Brands

A good brand doesn't only work as a handy means of identification for customers to recognize ones company. It helps define the business, and strong branding builds on this. Branding mostly expresses the organization's corporate vision as much as its operations. It's this sense of vision

and identity that separates competitors; so a strong brand identifies that the company is more sophisticated, more budget-friendly, more innovative or otherwise different from the competition. In terms of defining one's brand, a definition of the customers and how to build an identity that appeals to them must be considered to retain customers.

According to David Aaker, "The corporate brand defines the firm that will deliver and stand behind the offering that the customer will buy and use." The reassurance that provides for customers comes from the fact that "a corporate brand will potentially have a rich heritage, assets and capabilities, people, values and priorities, a local or global frame of reference, citizenship programs, and a performance record".

Kapferer (1997) proposes the umbrella strategy which means that a company has different products that share the same brand name. For example, 'Yamaha', which sells both motor bikes and guitars and all the products are branded with the 'Yamaha' brand. Even though the products have different communication tools, they still have the same umbrella brand. The advantage with this strategy is that the company can take advantage of economies of scale on an international level. This simplifies the entering into different markets since the brand is well known and is also reduces the costs.

Kapferer (1997) further states that this strategy is useful where the products need little marketing investments. The drawback of this strategy is that if one product under the umbrella brand is damaged, the whole brand is affected (ibid). Van Gelder (2003) states that corporate, umbrella, and banner brands are master brands and "drive consumers' purchase decisions and transfer brand value to new product or service sub-brands". These brands provide a structure and a brand value that is supposed to infuse trust among the customers and this is in general difficult to

accomplish with individual brands (ibid). Ind (1997) suggests that within corporate branding, there are monolithic corporate brands, i.e. all products are branded with the corporate name. He further stated that a monolithic structure should be suited when:

- i. An emphasis is on organic growth
- ii. A need to emphasize the points of commonality within an organization
- iii. The need to communicate globally
- iv. A tightly defined identity is built around closely related businesses or a clearly defined idea
- v. There is a potential for economies of communication
- vi. The parent brand has a strong reputation

According to Balmer (2001), a corporate brand and its relationships can be explained as “a corporate brand involves, in most instances, the conscious decision by senior management to distill, and make known, the attributes of the organization’s identity in the form of a clearly defined branding proposition. This proposition underpins organizational efforts to communicate, differentiate, and enhance the brand vis-à-vis stakeholders groups and networks. As such, a corporate brand proposition requires total corporate commitment from all levels of personnel. It particularly requires CEO, and senior management loyalty as well as financial support”. He furthermore stated that there are three virtues that should help manage the corporate brand which should:

- i. Communicate clearly the promises of the corporate brand
- ii. Differentiate the corporate brand from its competitors

- iii. Enhance the esteem and loyalty of the organization that is given by the customers and stakeholders

Hatch and Schultz (2001) outlined three key aspects of corporate branding; vision (managers), culture (employees) and image (stakeholders). They further stated that these three namely vision, culture and image outlined above have to be aligned in order to have a strong corporate brand. The vision which is put up by the managers of the company has to be clearly communicated to the stakeholders, the stakeholders goals also have to be defined, and their expectations have to be outlined. This has to do with the associations of the brand, how the stakeholders and employees interact and if the employees care about how the image is perceived by the stakeholders (*ibid*).

According to Ind (1997), corporate brand is the image that the stakeholders get of the corporation that includes the communication, behaviors and the values of the company. McDonald *et al*, (2001) stated that corporate branding focuses on the brand's positioning and is consistent with its activities which also facilitate the understanding of the organization's activities and communicates a clearer message to the customers. Knox and Bickerton (2000) stated that corporate branding strives to create differentiation and preference for a product or service in the mind of the customer which relates to product marketing. Urde (2003) stated that corporate brand might have a role of building relationship with the government, the financial sector, and the rest of the society.

2.3 Mobile Telecom Landscape in Ghana

Mobile Telecom Industry is one of the highly visible and successful industries in Ghana. The growth of mobile telecom in Ghana has profound effects on the economic development of the country. The mobile phone industry in Ghana is a highly competitive and innovative industry.

The Ministry of Communication was created in 2002 in response to global development in the telecommunications industry. Its major function is to develop policies and initiatives aimed at promoting telecom growth and economic development. Number Portability and SIM card registration are two of the projects it initiated and this has made a big impact to the wireless industry. Ghana also has the National Communications Authority (NCA) which is responsible for regulating communications by wire, cable, radio, television, satellite and similar means of technology. The NCA is also the national body that represents Ghana internationally in respect of communications. To create and maintain an efficient, transparent and business-friendly environment, the NCA, among other roles, ensures the compliance of regulations, grants licenses for the operation of communications systems, assigns, allocates and regulates the use of radio frequencies, provides guidelines on tariffs, and maintains a register of operators in the telecommunications and IT industry

2.3.1 Ghana Telecom Industry Players

As of the time of the study (2017) there were six cellular (mobile) phone networks in Ghana, namely: Millicom Ghana Ltd (TIGO), Vodafone Ghana, Scancom Ghana Ltd (MTN), Airtel, Glo and Expresso.

The following companies define the competitive landscape of Ghana's mobile telecom industry.

- **MTN (Mobile Telephone Network)**

MTN, headquartered in South Africa is the leader with 53% of the market share in Ghana. MTN Operates in 21 countries in Africa and the Mideast. Its vision is to be the telecommunication leader in emerging markets. Launched in 1994, the MTN Group is a leading emerging market operator, connecting subscribers in 22 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The MTN

Group is listed on the JSE Securities Exchange in South Africa under the share code: “MTN.” As of 30 June 2013, MTN recorded 201.5 million subscribers across its operations in Afghanistan, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Cyprus, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Republic, Iran, Liberia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville), Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia. MTN’s brand is the most valuable in Africa, and is ranked in the top 100 brands worldwide. MTN’s shares constitute the biggest primary listing on the JSE – Africa’s largest stock exchange.

In Ghana, its challenge is to maintain market share among aggressive competitors. Currently, it uses Mobile Money, zone offering and various pricing plans to differentiate itself. There are over 4.3million customers using Mobile Money MTN is also facing regulation differences in different countries; for example some countries register SIMs and others do not.

- **Vodafone**

Vodafone Ghana, formerly Ghana Telecom, is the national telecommunications company of Ghana. Vodafone in Ghana is an operating company of Vodafone Group Plc., the world's leading mobile telecommunications company, with a significant presence in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific and the United States. Vodafone is the only total communications solutions provider - mobile, fixed lines, internet, voice and data - and is currently unmatched in providing fixed line and internet services - the leader and the first choice for Ghanaians. Vodafone is the second ranked operator in mobile with a huge potential to take over the market. As a corporate body, Vodafone values its customers and constantly build key relationships with the private sector and government.

- **Tigo**

Millicom International Cellular (MIC) S.A., operators of Tigo, is a leading international developer and operator of cellular telephone services worldwide primarily in emerging markets operating across Latin America and Africa. The company provides affordable, widely accessible and readily available cellular telephony services to more than 30 million customers in 13 emerging markets in these continents. The success of Tigo is based on the triple 'A' business model which stands for Affordability, Accessibility and Availability. This guarantees that our subscribers experience the best services at the most affordable rates throughout our 10 regions of Ghana and beyond.

- **Airtel**

Originally known as "MSI Cellular Investments", the company began operating in 1998. In January 2004, the company name was changed to "Celtel International". In April 2005 the company was acquired by and became a subsidiary of Zain (formerly the Mobile Telecommunications Company). At the time it was purchased by Zain in April 2005, Celtel had about 24 million subscribers in 14 African countries. On 8, June 2010 the company was purchased by Bharti Airtel from Zain. By 22 November 2010, it was rebranded as 'Airtel' and provides services and products such as data, voice and smartphones.

- **Globacom**

Globacom Limited (or GLO) is a Nigerian multinational telecommunications company headquartered in Lagos. GLO is a privately owned telecommunications carrier that started operations on 29 August 2003. It currently operates in four countries in West Africa, namely Nigeria, Republic of Benin, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. As of June 2009, the company has

employed more than 2,500 people worldwide. GLO has an estimate total of over 34 million subscribers (April 2016) of which 26 million are internet subscribers.

- **Expresso Telecom**

Expresso is an African telecommunications services company. It provides telecommunication services in five African markets: Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, and Ghana. Expresso offers a wide range of products and services to meet the needs of customers. Expresso is a key player in the implementation of the Africa Coast to Europe (ACE) submarine cable. Sudatel owns 75% of the total Expresso shares. In 2006, Mauritania's Chinguitel was Expresso's first 'green field' operation, acquiring a licence to operate as a telecom operator. Sudatel share in Chinguitel is 68%.

In July 2008, Expresso Telecom acquired 100% of Ghana's Kasapa Telecom Company. Sudatel share in this company is 75%. As of April 2016, 18% of Expresso Ghana (Kasapa Telecom Limited) was sold to an unidentified buyer for \$US5M. The remainder of the shares was transferred to an escrow agent.

2.4 Customer Satisfaction in the Telecom Industry

Hanif, Hafeez and Riaz (2010) identified that Customer satisfaction is defined as an "evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the product". Satisfaction of customers with products and services of a company is considered as the most important factor leading towards competitiveness and success. Customer satisfaction is actually how a customer evaluates the ongoing performance (Gustafsson, Johnson and Roos, 2005). Kim, et al. (2004) mentioned that customer satisfaction is customer's reaction to the state

of satisfaction, and customer's judgment of satisfaction level, thus, very important in today's business world. To Deng et al., (2009) the ability of a service provider to create high degree of satisfaction is crucial for product differentiation and developing strong relationship with customers.

Customer satisfaction makes the customers loyal to one telecommunication service provider, for instance at Espresso Ghana, previous researchers found that satisfaction of the customers could help the brands to build long and profitable relationships with their customers (Eshghi, et al., 2007). Though it is costly to generate satisfied and loyal customers, the fact of it proving to be profitable in a long run for a firm cannot be ignored (Anderson, et al. 2004). Therefore an organization such as Espresso Ghana should concentrate on the improvement of service quality through Corporate Brand Image and charge appropriate fair prices in order to satisfy their customers who would ultimately help to retain its customers (Gustafsson, et al., 2005).

It is a common phenomenon that the services a brand offers and the price it charges actually determine the level of satisfaction among its customers, than any other measure (Turel et al. 2006). Customers' involvement is also important; especially when a buyer considers the product important and invests time to seek information then it ultimately enhances the satisfaction level (Russell-Bennett, et al., 2007). This satisfaction may influence the concerned company by repurchase, purchase of more products, positive word of mouth and willingness of customers to pay more for the particular brand. Any business is likely to lose its market share, customers and investors if it fails to satisfy customers as effectively and efficiently as its competitors is doing (Anderson, et al., 2004).

Malik, et al (2012), postulate that Corporate Brand image has a significant role in creating the satisfaction of the customers. Foxall and Goldsmith (1994) proposed that the perception of the customer about the characteristics of the product and service is influenced by the perceptions about the brand and branding. The vital aim of the brand and product management is to build a strong brand image which in turn generates the huge short term and long term profit (Aaker, 1997). The brand image is negatively influenced by the brand extensions (Arslan and Altuna, 2010).

So there is a positive impact of brand image on the customer loyalty and commitment towards the offerings of the market (Malik, et al., 2012). In recent years, the Ghanaian telecommunication industry had shown a tremendous growth rate. Numerous new competitors including Expresso Ghana, which has existed for a long time in this sector, has to gather the advantages of this rising sector. This has created the situation of intense competition among the main Pakistan's cellular service firms. So, every company is now striving hard to launch attractive and innovative products and services in order to attract the new customers. Those telecommunication firms such as MTN Ghana and Vodafone Ghana which have a large number of customers are trying to retain their customers.

Therefore the main issue of firms is not only to attract the new customers and earn huge profit but also to retain their existing customers for the longer period of time. And this retention is possible when the customers are satisfied by their service providers.

Balmer (2009) highlights the importance of corporate image, asserting that a link exists between an individual's image of the organization and that person's behaviour towards it. In line with this, Minkiewicz et al. (2011), found positive image to be related to customer satisfaction. Drawing on the disconfirmation paradigm (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982), Minkiewicz et al. (2011) suggests that satisfaction will occur when individual expectations are confirmed and that it is reasonable to expect that a positive image and expectation of a leisure experience prior to consumption, if met or exceeded, would result in customer satisfaction.

On the other hand, the possibility that a positive corporate image may negatively influence satisfaction cannot be discounted, particularly where the image has created unrealistic expectations for customers. Where these expectations are not met, customers are likely to be very dissatisfied (Minkiewicz et al., 2011). On the basis of the above submissions, this study conjectures that a mobile telecommunications provider's brand image, Expresso Ghana would impact the level of mobile subscriber satisfaction.

Furthermore, it was confirmed in the study by Almosawi (2012) that there was indeed a positive correlation between dissatisfaction and switching using analytical techniques to predict the three dissatisfaction responses of complaining, negative word of mouth, and brand switching. He found that complaining (and negative word of mouth) are positively associated with brand switching. Maute and Forester (1993) also used Hirschman's concept but in the airline industry and found that higher levels of dissatisfaction led to increases in exit and decreases in loyalty. Ping (1993) studied the effects of dissatisfaction in supplier-client relations and found a positive relationship between dissatisfaction and exit.

For instance, Kasper (1988) found a similar result for TV owners. Those who had no problems re-bought the same brand of TV while those who had experienced problems switched to another brand. The relationship among satisfaction, retention, and loyalty has been widely researched. A noticeable number of studies have found that customer satisfaction leads to repurchase (i.e., retention) and positive word of mouth (Almossawi, 2012).

2.5 Loyalty in the Telecom Industry

Oliver (1999) defined loyalty as “a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same brand purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour”. Loyalty has also been described as “an unspecified number of repeat purchases from the same supplier over a specified period” (Egan, 2004). Numerous researchers (Wieringa and Verhoef, 2007; Jones et al., 2007) have tried to find relevant antecedents and their role in creating customer loyalty.

Service quality, customer satisfaction, corporate image, word-of-mouth communication, and perceived value have all been proposed as antecedents of loyalty (e.g., Wieringa and Verhoef, 2007; Jones et al., 2007) and these variables are also taken as a driving force of competitive advantage and corporate success (Landrumand Prybutok, 2004; Wang, Lo, and Yang, 2004).

Ogba and Tan (2009) argued that the behavioral study reveals that there is a positive effect of brand image on the customer loyalty and dedication towards market offering. Pina, et al., (2006) proposed that the supposed quality of the expansion is being affected by the degree of the

relationship between the corporate brand and service extension which as a result affect the corporate image particularly for those corporate brands which have very high rated images.

In the telecom industry, customer loyalty plays a very crucial role for achieving the competitive advantages (Lin and Wang, 2006). It is important to analyze it in the context of customer retention and customer satisfaction, these two variables are of immense importance to analyze the customer loyalty. Organizations can maximize level of profitability by providing safe and sound products and services to their loyal customers (Rauyruen and Miller, 2007). Telecom industry has grown rapidly in Ghana over the last decade and there is great competition among the existing service providers with respect to loyal customers.

Customer loyalty has been defined earlier that it is normally the willingness of a customer to maintain their relations with a particular firm or service/product (Kim and Yoon, 2004). In reality loyalty should be explained as a customer's commitment to dealing with a particular firm, buying their products and services and referring it to colleagues (McIlroy and Barnett, 2000). In recent times, customer loyalty is divided in to two components one is based on behavior and the other is based on attitudes (Guillén, Nielsen, Scheike and Marín, 2011).

Rauyruen and Miller (2007) also explain customer loyalty as a merged concept of behavioral loyalty (willingness of customers to repurchase from and continue relationships with the company) and attitudinal loyalty (emotional attachments and advocacy of customers toward the company). Customer loyalty is a focal point for numerous business organizations (Vesel and Zabkar, 2009). The success of a company sales are ensured by customer loyalty, which can be

influenced by management action (Gerpott, Rams and Schindler, 2001). In emerging business competitions the loyalty of customers had shown as a main feature in getting continue competitive advantage (Lin and Wang, 2006).

Customer respect for an oriented business organization will attract and develop loyal customers (Chang and Chen, 2007). It is crucial to understand the customer psyche for building competitive policies to succeed in differentiation and winning of customer loyalty in the competitive market (Chen and Hu, 2010). A firm can develop long lasting, jointly profitable associations' with customers by developing customer loyalty (Pan, Sheng and Xie, 2011). More so, customer loyalty is a vital element for the continued existence and operating of firms business (Chen and Hu, 2010). Loyalty can be measure by the intention of repurchase, recommending the product/service to others and patience towards price (Kim and Yoon, 2004).

2.5.1 Factors affecting customer loyalty

Satisfaction, trustworthiness, image were mentioned by Jessy (2011) as the factors affecting customer loyalty in the telecom industry. Several studies (An example here may be unsatisfied MTN customers moving to Expresso services) have revealed that there exists a direct connection between satisfaction and loyalty; satisfied customers become loyal and dissatisfied customers move to other telecom vendors. A clear example here may be unsatisfied MTN customers moving to Expresso services.

Trust is a key variable in the development of an enduring desire to maintain a relationship in the long term, for example with a brand. The consideration of trust in the brand domain derives some important and interesting implications. It was proposed that the relationship between the brand

and the consumer implies that the brand possesses some characteristics that go beyond its consideration as a mere product. The idea of looking at a brand as a person has already been suggested by authors such as Aaker (1991), Chernatony and McDonald (1998) and Fournier (1998). Trust is related to the ability and capacities attributed to a business to perform some activities and accomplish its obligations and promises. In addition, Morgan and Hunt (1994) hypothesize that trust is a major factor that influence relationship commitment in continuum brand trust leads to brand loyalty. According to Chauduri and Holbrook (2001) brand trust is directly related to both purchase and attitudinal loyalty. Based on previous discussion it was argued that brand trust is a feeling of security held by the consumer; that the brand will meet his/her consumption expectations. Trust shown by the customers is an important factor that helps the organization to sustain even during the time of uncertainty (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006). Other researchers identified that Brand trust exerts a stronger influence on customer commitment than does overall satisfaction (Délgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán 2001).

Consciously or unconsciously customers use their preferences to project their own self-image. According to the Belk's theory of extended self, people define themselves by the possessions they have, manage or create (Aydin, and Özer, 2005). Consumers prefer brands with personality traits that are congruent with the personality traits that represent their self-schemas (Aaker, 1999). Brand loyalty is also influenced by attractiveness of the brand personality (Kim et al., 2001) and the extent to which it enhances the self-image (Tidwell and Horgan, 1993). Oliver (1999) argues that for fully bonded loyalty the consumable must be part of the consumer's self-identity and his or her social-identity.

According to Hoek *et al.*, (2000), Firms position their brand using the organization's attributes such as innovation, a drive for quality, and a concern for the environment. A firm can position its brand with respect to a competitor. They suggested that brands should develop distinct images and that these images will attract specific consumer segments. Consequently, the consumer segments will see the brand as being valuable to them. Basically, in marketing an organization, business leaders need to consider four components to develop its brand positioning in the supply chain:

Its overall reputation.

Product/service performance.

Product and customer portfolio.

Networks (Knox and Maklan, 1998b)

According to Morgan and Hunt (1994) brand trust leads to brand loyalty because trust creates exchange relationships that are highly valued. Chauduri and Holbrook (2001) found that brand trust is directly related to both purchase and attitudinal loyalty. Moorman *et al.*, (1992) argued that loyalty is a desire to retain a valuable or important relationship, in this manner the establishment of loyalty is predetermined by the importance of relevant relationships. The significance of customer loyalty is that it is closely interrelated to the company's continued existence and future development (Fornell, 1992). Customer loyalty is the key characteristic that has to be developed if the companies want to mature and to improve its profitability in a saturated environment.

Consumers' familiarity and confidence with product or service offerings from specific service provider increases, as the relationship between them go into depth and that ultimately refrains customers from switching. Such tendency may be because of the unwillingness to incur additional expenses for establishing new relationship, close affinity or due to the offering of financial or other incentives by the service provider (Simon, et al .,2005). Customers become more sensitive about additional cost or investment for making a new decision as the relationship with the existing provider grows overtime and that, in turn make them more efficient in evaluating service performance of different companies involved. The building of trust and confidence in certain brands comes in exchange of investment (time, effort, money) and such investment act as switching cost in situations where customers try to change their patronage to another company (Burnham, Frels and Mahajan, 2003).

Enduring relationship between understanding of current product or services they are using and also equip them with information on competitive offerings (Simon et. al., 2005). Although this may vary from customer to customer, it is quite expected that learning takes place with regular and recurring purchase of a specific product category (Burnham, et al. 2003). Prolonged relationship boosts confidence among customers in their expectation of receiving the best form the service provider.

Long term relationship provides customers the opportunity of knowing their service provider from close, bringing down the stress level associated with current purchase and thereby staying with the old friend since perceived switching cost puts their interest at stake (Jones, Mothersbaugh and Beatty, 2002). Long lasting relationship influences buying more of current services, encourage using complimentary services and make people reluctant to switch.

According to Dick and Basu (2008), although this relationship between high switching cost and loyalty is falsely assumed, evidence suggests creating and imposing switching cost is an effective possible customer retention strategies

An argument by Amine (1998) thinks that the repurchasing of products/ services from telecom companies cannot be indicated as customer loyalty. He puts forward that: (1) consumers' repurchasing may be due to the consumers' tendency to reduce or avoid search efforts. There is a high probability of interrupting this consistent buying and switching to another brand at the first opportunity or inducement to do so (price increasing, new brand launching or brand out of stock). This kind of repurchasing can be called inertia purchasing. (2) When there is a narrow choice in a product category, the repeat purchasing improves too. This consistent brand buying may express more inertia or constrained repeated behavior rather than loyalty with commitment to that brand. Finally, Amine identified that consumer commitment purchasing (behavior loyalty) of same brand doesn't mean he/she is a loyal consumer.

2.6 From Product Brands to Corporate Branding

Corporate branding differs from product branding in several respects (see Table I). First, and most obviously, the focus of the branding effort shifts from the product to the corporation. Of course product and corporation are related in that corporate brands add economic value to the variety of products and services offered by the company (Keller, 2000b). But the broader scope of the corporate brand pushes brand thinking considerably beyond the product and its relationship to the consumer or customer. In particular, because it focuses attention on the corporation in ways even endorsed product brands never did, corporate branding exposes corporations and their members to far greater scrutiny (Knox et al., 2000).

This means that organizational behaviour, even at the level of everyday employee interactions, becomes visible (and sometimes newsworthy) so that, for example, the organization becomes more transparent than ever before. This, in turn, elevates the importance of a healthy (i.e. non-cynical, non-repressive) organizational culture. This difference between product and corporate branding is further emphasized by the shift in managerial responsibility, as product brands typically remain part of the middle management marketing function, whereas corporate brands entail a strategic perspective, based in the executive office.

A third contrast between product and corporate branding is a difference in who the brand relates to in terms of both attraction and support. While product brands mainly target consumers or customers, corporate brands also contribute to the images formed and held by organizational and community members, investors, partners, suppliers and other interested parties (i.e. all company stakeholders). Instead of relating to consumers through a variety of individual products and services with distinct product brand names, the corporate brand relates the entire organization's multiple stakeholders and its products and services to each other through their relationship with the corporation.

A fourth difference between product and corporate branding involves defining who is responsible for the branding effort. Corporate branding requires much more complicated and sophisticated organizational practices than did product branding (Balmer, 2001a; deChernatony, 2001). Whereas product branding could be handled within the marketing department of accompany, corporate branding requires organization-wide support.

The whole organization from top to bottom and across functional units is involved in realizing the corporate brand, along with the audiences the brand is meant to attract and engage. As we

will argue next, this is because a successful corporate brand is formed by the interplay between strategic vision, organizational culture and the corporate images held by its stakeholders. As this range of issues significantly overextends the expertise of the typical marketing department, we believe that successful corporate branding involves the integrated efforts of all organizational departments (e.g. operations, marketing, strategy, communication and human resources).

For example, Balmer (2001a, b) argued that deliberate and orchestrated communication of corporate brands depends on the total corporate communication mix because corporate branding requires integration of internal and external communication, as well as creating coherence of expression across a multiplicity of channels and news media. The temporal dimension constitutes another difference between product and corporate brands. Product brands live in the present. They are short term in their ambitions to attract potential customers and help deliver sales.

When product brands have been around for some time, like Tide or Budweiser, marketers feel a strong need to freshen them with innovative ad campaigns and to update their iconography. Corporate brands, by contrast, live both in the past and the future for, as Olins (1989) indicated, corporate brands stimulate associations with heritage and articulate strategic visions of what is to come. As a symbol of the company's heritage and the vision of its leaders for the future, the corporate brand has a much broader temporal base than does a product brand.

Finally, because of the greater reach of corporate brands relative to product brands in terms not only of relating past and future, but also of the number of stakeholder groups targeted and the use of the whole company to support the brand; we believe is that corporate branding takes on strategic importance relative to the functional (marketing and sales) importance typically

accorded a product brand. The strategic importance of corporate branding of Espresso Ghana Ltd lies not only in its positioning of the company in its marketplace, but in creating internal arrangements (e.g. organizational structure, physical design and culture) that support the meaning of the corporate brand (Balmer, 2001a).

Table 1: Differences between Product Brands and Corporate Brands

	Product brands	Corporate brand
Focus attention on	The product	The company
Managed by	Middle manager	CEO
Attract attention and gain support of	Customers	Multiple stakeholders
Delivered by	Marketing	Whole company
Communications mix	Marketing communications	Total corporate communication
Time horizon	Short (life of product)	Long (life of company)
Importance to company	Functional	Strategic

Source: *Balmer (2001a)*

2.7 Organizational or Corporate Crisis Management

According to Coombs and Holladay (2002) Crisis management, as it relates to corporate reputation, brand, and image management, is increasingly important in the wake of billions of dollars lost to organizations (e.g., corporate, non-profit, government and education) due to reputation and brand erosion, as well as declining stakeholder (e.g., investor, customer, and donor) confidence due to such scandals.

Although organizations, their leaders, and spokespeople will attempt a wide range of actions and messages as symbolic appeals to an organization's constituent publics, there is little certainty about what types of actions and messages are persuasive (Kim, Ferrin, Cooper and Dirks, 2004).

2.7.1 Characteristics of Organizational or Corporate Crisis

When organizations and leaders find themselves in crises that thrust them under scrutiny and criticism that challenge their legitimacy or social responsibility (Hearit, 1995), their public response is an important factor in recovery (Coombs and Holliday, 2002; Fearn-Banks, 2001; Seeger and Ulmer, 2003). Communication activities involved in responding to a crisis, including determining the optimal timing, response priorities, specific messages conveyed to the media and/or to individuals, source(s) of messages, and priorities of crisis management, have implications for the organization and for crisis managers. In the context of the study, Expresso Ghana Ltd as a telecommunication organization faces misjudgment, miscommunication from the public's and sometimes competitors. It is therefore important for the leadership to quickly respond to this to recapture the damaging corporate image.

2.7.2 Crisis and Post-Crisis Corporate Communication

Crisis management encompasses the overall strategic planning to prevent, mitigate, respond, and recover routine operations during a crisis or negative occurrence. This is a process that removes some of the risk and uncertainty, promotes long-term viability, and allows the organization to be in greater control of its destiny (Fearn-Banks, 2001; Seeger and Ulmer, 2003). Crisis communication is a broad area of research and application that includes pre-crisis, crisis

response, and post-crisis decision making, training, planning, teamwork, goal setting, and crisis communication plans (Coombs, 2007a).

Public crisis communication focuses on the verbal, visual, and/or written interaction between the organization and its publics (sometimes directly and sometimes mediated through the news media) before, during, and after the crisis event and “is designed to minimize damage to the reputation of the organization” (Fearn-Banks, 2001, p. 480) and to maintain stakeholder confidence. While public crisis communication must include conveying the facts surrounding the event (e.g., the presence of an explosion, or the occurrence of a crash), it also focuses on questions of context, cause, responsibility, blame, relative harm and remedial action, which usually are disputed during and following a crisis (Coombs and Holladay, 2002; Kim, Ferrin, Cooper and Dirks, 2004).

Coombs’ Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) begins with the assessment of reputational threat presented by a crisis. Threat is described as “the amount of damage a crisis could inflict on the organization’s reputation if no action is taken” (Coombs, 2007a, p. 165). According to SCCT, the level of threat to reputation is determined by whether or not stakeholders believe the organization caused the crisis, the organization’s crisis history, and the organization’s prior relational reputation, or how well stakeholders believe the organization has treated them in the past (Coombs, 2007a). SCCT research has shown that the threat to an organization increases as stakeholders’ believe that the organization was responsible for the crisis intensified (Coombs, 1998).

Coombs and Holladay (2004) argue that the relevance of crisis and post-crisis communication research to public relations practitioners lies in its utility in identifying factors that influence

stakeholders' perceptions before, during, and after organizational crises, and in identifying processes and strategies that are effective in maintaining or restoring the organization's reputation and image and which rely on effective use of language, persuasive message strategies, and symbolic actions.

2.7.3 Image Repair Strategies

Research of message strategies has helped develop the response strategy approach "from a prescriptive set of procedures to the recognition that crisis communication can be initiated from a variety of rhetorical perspectives" (Olaniran and Williams, 2001, p. 488; Seeger and Ulmer, 2003). One rhetorical perspective on organizational responses to crisis or accusations of wrongdoing focuses on the organization's image restoration strategies, much of which is grounded in the study of apologia (Hearit, 2001; Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer, 2001). Corporate apologia focuses on "how corporations in the midst of public relations crisis respond to criticism in the defense of their carefully crafted images in order to deal with the problem of guilt" (Hearit and Brown, 2004, p. 460).

2.8 Importance of Corporate Brand in the Telecom Industry

Recent studies revealed that corporate brands are adored, venerated and coveted by customers and organizations alike, and, therefore, represent one of the most fascinating phenomena of the business environment in the twenty-first century (Newman, 2001; Simoes and Dibb, 2001; Balmer and Greyser, 2003). Their importance is irrefutable. Brands, in their various guises, are integral to our everyday existence (Sherry, 1995). There is an increasing realization that corporate brands serve as a powerful navigational tool to a variety of stakeholders for a

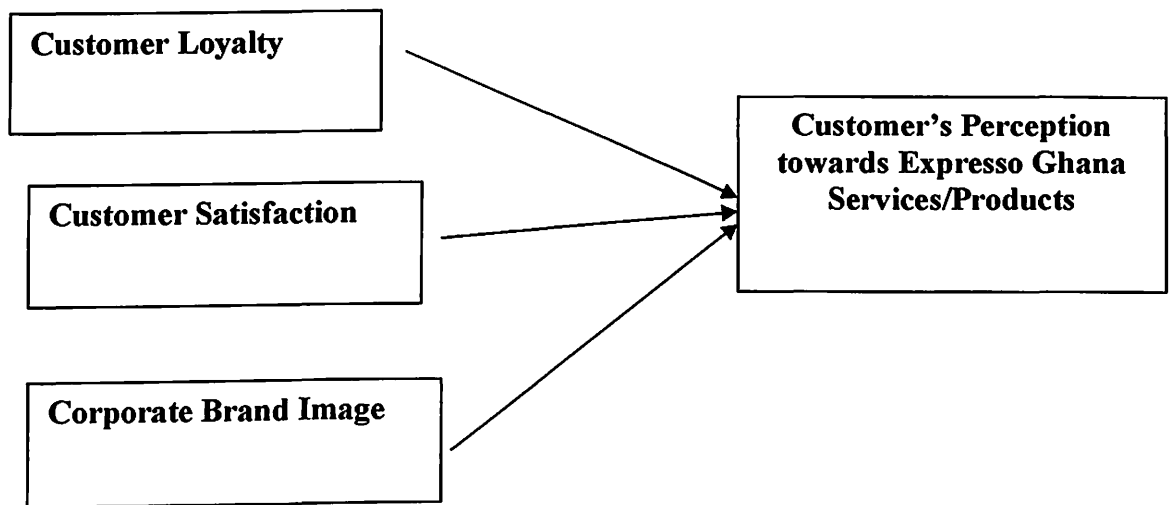
miscellany of purposes including employment, investment and, most importantly, consumer buying behaviour (Balmer and Gray, 2003). Corporate branding is generally perceived as: symbols associated with key values (DeChernatony, 1999; Tilley, 1999; Urde, 1999). As such, corporate brands are seen as a guarantee of quality, as an insurance against risk of poor performance or financial risk.

It can be inferred, corporate brands have a utility in several regards: they communicate the brand's values (often seen as a promise), they afford a means of differentiation from their competitors, and they enhance the esteem and loyalty in which the organization is held by its stakeholder groups (Balmer, 2001b). McDonald, de Chernatony and Harris (2001) identified one of the reasons for the increased interest in corporate branding in the 2000's as being the increased role of the services sector in the economy. Basically, corporate branding is a manifestation of the features that distinguish an organization from its competitors. It is a reflection of the organization's ability to satisfy consumer's needs namely: trust in the company to deliver a consistent level of product/service, quality of the product/service at a reasonable price and the reduction of risk of making an unwise purchase decision (Bick, *et al.*, 2003).

2.9 Conceptual Framework

With a well-known brand name, consumers would appear to be more likely to purchase the products in much higher prices. As far as the same level of product quality is concerned, consumers would prefer buying brand-name products (Bello and Holbrook, 1995). This phenomenon spells out the concept of corporate brand image.

The researcher found that there is very limited literature focusing on consumer's perception in the choice of a mobile phone operator (Expresso Ghana) where corporate image, customer loyalty and customers' satisfaction play a significant influence. Based on the literature review; this study proposes a conceptual framework of studying dynamics of consumers perception and their behavior towards selection of an operator. This framework emphasizes on the following independent variables like corporate image and customers satisfaction towards customers perception of selecting Expresso Ghana products or services. The schematic diagram is presented below:



The conceptual framework provides important insights into the provision of customer loyalty and customer loyalty in Expresso Ghana and by extension, all the telecom companies in Ghana. Using this framework, the subscribers of Expresso Ghana, were considered as the subjects of the study, to help achieve goals and objectives of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty by the help of the mediating tool known as corporate brand image. As applied to this study, the independent variables were corporate brand image, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty

and the dependent variables include customer's perception towards Expresso Ghana services/products.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology is a plan for collecting, organizing and integrating collected data so that an end result can be reached (Merriam, 1994). The methodology adopted for the study covers research design, population of study, sampling techniques and sample size, instrumentation, mode of data collection, pre-testing and data analysis and presentation of results.

3.2 Research Design

Research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Cooper and Schindler, 2001). Merriam (1994) contends that the research strategy undertaken depends on how the problem looks, what questions the problem leads to and what end result is desirable. This study adopted the survey approach to ascertain the impact of Corporate Brand Image and Customer Satisfaction on Loyalty of Espresso subscribers. The study adopted a survey procedure and data gathered by giving out questionnaires to the Espresso subscribers in Accra head office.

Survey research is a method used to obtain information needed by giving out questionnaires to the related population. Survey research can be used for exploratory intention, explanatory or confirmatory, evaluation, prediction, operational research and development of social indicator. It allows the collection of data about subjects that are exclusively internal to the participant, such as attitudes, opinions, expectations and intentions, and data on these areas are important for the

study. Furthermore, it is often obtained by using a questionnaire; these data are standardized allowing easy comparison (Saunders *et al*, 2009).

The survey approach type called cross-sectional study was used for the study. This involves the use of different groups of people who differ in the variable of interest but share a common characteristic. It allows the collection of information from the respondents at a single period in time and also identifies the relationship between two variables (how corporate brand image affects customer satisfaction at Expresso Ghana). Hence to achieve the purpose of the study, the cross-sectional survey method was deemed as the appropriate design to use considering that the study is explanatory in nature.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The study obtained data from Expresso subscribers using the customer service as the unit of analysis. Expresso Ghana is chosen because customers do have some weird perception about their services, consequently been subscribed by a fewer group of people and ranked sixth among the six mobile networks in Ghana.

3.4 Population of the Study

Retail customers of Expresso Telecommunication were used as the population for this study. This research adopted sampling, which according to Newman (2006) is a set of cases a researcher selects from a larger pool and generalizes to the population. Using sampling in this way reduces cost and makes it possible to gather useful information quickly and where the samples are properly selected accurate result are guaranteed. Due to the focus of this study, the

actual population for the study was the Expresso subscribers within the Accra metropolis. In the Annual report (2010) of Expresso Ghana, the population size for the Expresso users within Accra were estimated about 2,000.

3.5 Sample Size

Aforo (2004) states that the first step in selecting a sample was to consider a sampling design. It denotes all stages of the process involved in reaching the respondents of the study. The design clearly indicates the characteristics of the population. The main interest in sampling will be to extend the results of analysis based on the sample to the population from which the sample will be drawn. The characteristics of the sample must therefore, closely reflect those of the population (Kumekpor, 2002).

Taking a cue from the questions raised by Aforo (2004) the sample and sampling procedures used, sought to ensure the representative of the sample and the dependability of the sampling process. One hundred and twenty- six users of Expresso are sampled for the study.

3.6 Sampling Technique

There are basically two types of sampling techniques in research; probability sampling and non-probability sampling. This study uses the non-probability type called convenience sampling technique.

The convenience sampling technique is used for the study. As the name implies, the sample is selected because the respondents of the study are convenient. Here, the researcher visited the

premise of Expresso headquarters, Accra and administer questionnaires to the subjects present at the visit. Questionnaires are administered to subjects who are willing and available to participate until the 100 questionnaires to the Expresso users are reached. By convenience, subjects were selected to answer the questionnaire for this study. It was a method that involves simply 'taking what was convenient' to the researcher (Denscombe, 2007). Here, the researcher visits the premise of Expresso Ghana Ltd and administer questionnaires to the subjects present at the visit.

The purposive sampling technique was also a much better and appropriate technique to apply in this research because it is intended to guide a qualitative research design. It focused on the population of interest which brought forth appropriate answers to the research questions. It was also cost effective and time effective; moreover, due to its non-probability nature, the samples were selected based on the characteristics of the population and the objective of the study. The corporate communication affairs department, marketing department, the subscribers of Expresso service were sampled to represent the population study. The in-depth knowledge, job function and experience of the respondents aided with a finding of a normative relations theory of integrative internal (all units) and external organizational relationship as the proposed by the study.

3.7 Instrumentation and Data Collection Procedure

Due to its effectiveness for collecting factual information about practices and conditions and for enquiring into the opinions of people, questionnaires are widely used in educational research (Kerlinger, 2000). The researcher used the structured technique in order to get the appropriate information needed to meet the objectives of this study. This made use of structured

questionnaire. The questionnaire is the main research instrument used in collecting the data for the study in order to achieve the specific objectives, and taking into consideration the sample size. Kumar (2005) views questionnaire as written list of questions which are given to the respondents and responses are then provided by the researcher.

It is on this basis that the study uses the self-administered questionnaires for collecting data in the study. The questionnaire for the study contains questions to establish the effects of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on loyalty. For an easy understanding and reading, the questionnaire designed into three parts. The first part of the questionnaire looks at the demographic factor of the respondents. The second part of the questionnaire looks at corporate brand image and customer satisfaction. The third part looks at the contribution of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on loyalty.

This is administered by firstly, informing the Director in charge of Customer Service of Espresso Ghana, Accra and granting the distribution of the questionnaire. Where there is a need for clarity and explanation to respondents, the researcher will assist. Self-administering type of questionnaire is preferred to the other methods namely mailed, individual, group and digital.

A self-administered questionnaire is developed and given to the users of Espresso network. This instrument will be deployed in gathering information needed to satisfy the demands of the stated objectives. The questionnaire is attached as part of the appendices after the final report.

The questionnaire is self-designed and includes both close ended and open ended questions in order to get specific and general responses from respondents respectively. Fraenkel and Wallen

(2000) stated that, close-ended questionnaires are known to provide control over the participant's range of responses by providing specific response alternatives. Besides, it facilitated interpretation of data by standardizing alternative responses. A Likert scale-typed questionnaire is used with responses ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. This makes it easier to analyze and summarize the responses. In addition to the close-ended questions, respondents may express themselves as fully as they wished when the open-ended questions are used.

3.8 Sources of Data

Both the primary data and secondary sources are used for the research. The primary data consists of data gathered from questionnaires administered to users of Expresso. The survey study uses the questionnaire to gather relevant primary data for the study to give specific responses to research questions.

The secondary sources of data include research reports, annual reports, textbooks and electronic resources from emerald, SAGE publications, Science Direct and many more. These sources provide the researcher a sense of direction and information on what has been done in relation to the concept of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction.

3.9 Pre-Testing

Data collection begins with a pilot test during which the questionnaires is pre-tested. The pre-testing exercise is used to decide on the suitability of the data collection instruments. The pilot

study is conducted using five (5) randomly users of TiGo and Vodafone, to determine whether questions in the questionnaires are clear enough to elicit the appropriate responses. It consists of both close and open ended questions. This enables the researcher to make necessary changes in the questionnaires. Tigo and Vodafone were chosen for the pretesting exercise because both networks existed before the entry Espresso and secondly, they provide similar services and product like Espresso Ghana.

3.10 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis refers to deriving meaning from the data that has been collected in a study. Data analysis assumes many forms. In data analysis, a researcher may use a summary description of the data collected from the field. Quantitative data analysis involved the use of statistical methods to assemble, classify, analyze and summarize the data to derive meaning. This type of analysis is employed because of the nature of the research which is survey and using the questionnaire as the main instrument, which consisted of mostly closed ended questions.

The data collected from the questionnaire is analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The completed questionnaires are individually checked to ensure that they had been filled correctly. The questionnaires retrieved from the field are counted to ensure that they were up to number who took part in the study. The closed-ended items are coded. The SPSS is then used in analyzing the coded closed-ended responses to generate frequency tables, and percentages with chi-square and correlation tools applied. The results is organized according to the objectives of the research but presented under themes.

3.11 Operational Definition Of Terms

A lot of terms and theories were available and were also related to exploration of this study but a few relevant ones were concentrated upon for this case study since most of the definitions did not identify the core concepts such as communication or relationship or brand image. Mention has been made of the numerous definitions but selected and appropriate definitions have been used for this research that equally relates to the theories and philosophies applicable for the research.

Congruity theory is oriented to communication and persuasion of the information flow to the individual. This theory predicts the attitude of the customer is being provoked by the source. It was believed that using this theory would be useful for the investigation of individual's attitude affected by the social groups. It must be stressed that, however, that consumer's purchase behaviour is not described only by the influence of the information provided by the social groups. Thus, Congruity theory will not be included in this thesis.

Customers are more likely to associate with a well-known brand as opposite to a product which is not known to them. According to D. Bello and M. Holbrook (1995), customers tend to buy brand-name products where the quality of the product is important determinant as well. This could be explained by the Brand Equity concept described by D. Aaker (1991). Brand Equity consists of four elements: Brand awareness; Brand loyalty; Perceived brand equity and Brand associations. In this thesis the brand image was considered as a factor which influences a consumer to make purchase. The Brand Equity concept was analyzed through the perspective of purchase decision making that is influenced by consumer behaviour. To analyze the intentions of consumers while buying certain product, the theory of Consumption Values will be presented. According to J. N. Sheth et al. (1991), this theory is mostly used for predicting consumption behaviour as it describes and explains this phenomenon. To add, approaches of consumer

behaviour has been discussed as an additional tool. It is believed, it would be useful to know what approaches consumers have when applying the consumption criteria to make purchase.

These theories can be used separately to investigate brand image and consumer behaviour. To sum up the Brand Equity concept, theory of Consumption Values and approaches of consumer behaviour is expected to improve the deeper understanding about consumer's purchase behaviour affected by the brand image.

The Contingency Theory, which also focuses on the ability of the leader to lead on contingent various situational factors, will be applied. It is basically how the decision and style of the leaders affects situational success or failure as they influence the organization. In situation like this, all hands must be on deck for the success of the organization with the leaders implementing policies that will influence the growth of the organization.

3.12 Ethical Issues

The ethical issues are considered in the fieldwork experience are: informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality and respecting the privacy of respondents.

To ensure that respondents are provided with informed consent, the researcher dialogues with each respondent. During the dialogue each respondent is informed of the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality and anonymity (Bell, 2008). The respondents is assured of informed consent via providing adequate information on goals of the research, the possible advantages and disadvantages of participating in the study and the credibility of the researcher

It is envisaged that by providing respondents with accurate and complete information they understand the purpose and procedures of the research and voluntarily decide to participate.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to present and discuss the findings of the study. The section is divided into five sections. The first section covers the background information of the respondents of the study. Data is analyzed using the Pearson correlation, mean and standard deviations statistical tool. The results of data analyzed have been presented in the form of tables only.

4.1.1 Response rate

One hundred and twenty six (126) respondents were used for the study representing 83.3% of the entire response rate. Babbie (2005) points out that for a survey a response rate of at least fifty percent (50%) was adequate for analysis and reporting. He further added that a response rate of sixty percent (60%) is good while that of seventy percent (70%) is very good. Therefore a response rate of ninety percent (83.3%) raises no question for the analysis.

4.2 Background Information

This section sought to determine the background information of the respondents. The core items covered were gender, age, educational qualification and designation.

4.2.1 Age of Respondents

Though the main aim of the study was not to determine the age distribution of the respondents, an evidence of it was an important element for analysis. Table 5.1 captures the results obtained.

Table 4.1: Age Distribution

Age distribution	Frequency	Valid Percent
Under 21	24	19.0
21 to 34	50	39.7
35 to44	23	18.3
45 to 54	23	18.3
55 or older	6	4.8
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

The results obtained indicated that out of the total participants 50 (39.7%) were within 21 to 34 age group, 24 (19%) were within the distribution age of under 21. In conclusion, it can be said that majority of the clients are within their youthful age group of 21 to 34.

4.2.2 Gender of Respondents

The aim was to determine the gender of the respondents. Table 5.2 shows the results obtained.

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Male	83	65.9
Female	43	34.1
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

A total of 83 males and 43 females representing (64.8%) and (33.6%) respectively participated in the Espresso Ghana study. The result indicates that the majority of the respondents were males while the females' were the minority. The results show that in Espresso, there were more males customers than female customers.

4.2.3 Educational Qualification of Respondents

The educational qualification became necessary because the researcher wanted to know the academic level of the clients. Table 4.3 illustrates the results obtained

Table 4.3: Educational Status

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Diploma	66	52.4
Degree	12	9.5
Masters	24	19.0
Others, specify	24	19.0
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

It could be observed that, on the question of the educational qualification of the respondents 66 (51.6%) respondents were diploma holders while 24(18.8%) respondents had their masters. In this study, the results revealed that, higher proportion of the customers as related to their educational qualification were those with at least diploma. In connection to the educational data it was also noted that most corporate institutions also used the Espresso network as their main official network.

4.2.3 Length of Use of Espresso Network by Respondents

Table 4.4: Length of use of Espresso network

	Frequency	Valid Percent
less than 1 year	42	33.3
1 year to less than 2 years	18	14.3
2 years to less than 4 years	18	14.3
4 years to less than 6 years	48	38.1
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

On the question of length of use of Espresso Ghana, it is clear from the results that, majority (38.1%) of the respondents indicated the longest length of use which ranged between 4-6 years while 14.1% of the respondents identified the shortest length of use indicating one year to less than two years.

4.3 Corporate Brand Image

There was the need to find out the perception of corporate brand image for Espresso Ghana as directed towards customers of Airtel Ghana. Respondents were required to use a 5-point Likert scale anchored on *Strongly Disagree (1)*, *Disagree (2)*, *Neither Agree Or Disagree (3)*, *Agree (4)* and *Strongly Agree (5)* to measure the construct of perception of Corporate Brand Image for Espresso network. The Means and Standard Deviations are presented in table 5.5.

Table 4.5: Perception of Corporate Brand Image

Questionnaire Item	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Brands of Espresso Ghana as a signal to the level of quality.	126	3.67	0.90
Using brands enables me to facilitate purchase quickly.	126	3.00	1.14
Brand positively offers legal protection to Espresso Ghana	126	4.20	1.20
Using brands facilitates a powerful means to securing a competitive advantage.	126	3.28	1.11
Brands increase the difficulty of other competitors to copy Espresso Ghana.	126	3.35	0.73
Corporate brands increase the chances of attracting higher and quality employees.	126	4.00	1.37
Espresso Ghana rely on corporate brands to perform the strategic function of positioning	126	3.80	1.54
The brand of Espresso Ghana is popular and well admired by many	126	3.50	0.75
I appreciate the social responsibility programs offered by Espresso Ghana	126	3.17	1.12
People love to be associated with the brand of this operator	126	3.00	1.04
Espresso Ghana is open and responsive to consumers	126	3.76	0.81

Expresso Ghana does business in an ethical way.	126	3.77	1.34
Expresso Ghana is successful and self-confident	126	3.50	1.40
Overall, I think brand image has impact on the services delivered to me	126	3.80	1.23

Source: Field Work, 2017

The results in Table 5.5, shows that amidst perception on corporate brand image, what the respondents strongly perceived as affecting corporate image of Expresso was the brand positively offers legal protection to Expresso Ghana with highest Mean (4.20).

From the values of means generated, it can be concluded that ‘use of brand positively offers legal protection to Expresso Ghana’ with the highest mean (4.20) per respondent was *significant* in the telecommunication company. This is followed by the ‘corporate brands increase the chances of attracting higher and quality employees’ (mean, 4.00), Expresso Ghana rely on corporate brands to perform the strategic function of positioning (mean, 3.80). However, using ‘brands enables me to facilitate purchase quickly’ as perceived by respondents was identified as *not-significant* to influencing consumer purchase.

4.4 Customer Satisfaction

The subjects of the study responded to the overall ability of Expresso Ghana, using *Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5)*

Table 4.6: Overall Ability of Expresso Ghana

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	6	4.8
Disagree	21	16.7
Neither disagree or agree	39	33.3
Agree	42	31.0
Strongly agree	18	14.3
Total	126	100.0

A glance at the results shows that 42 (31.0%) were of the agreed opinion. However, a few (4.8%) strongly disagreed to the assertion that the overall ability of Expresso Ghana to satisfy my wants and needs is high. The conclusion is that majority (31.0%) of the customers have a strong conviction that Expresso Ghana is able to satisfy their wants and needs.

Table 4.7: Staff's Ability to Listen

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	17	13.5
Neither disagree or agree	20	15.9
Agree	49	38.9
Strongly agree	40	31.7
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

On the question of whether the employees of Espresso Ghana listens to customers and speak in the language they understand , 38.3% indicated 'agree' while 13.3% indicated 'disagree'. The result shows that, the majority of the customers confirmed that staffs were able to listen and speak to customers of Espresso Ghana.

Table 4.8: Effort to understand Customers' Needs

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	6	4.8
Disagree	11	8.7
Neither disagree or agree	32	25.4
Agree	41	32.5
Strongly agree	36	28.6
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

From the total number of the respondents, 41(32.5%) agreed that the staff of Espresso Ghana, makes the effort to understand the needs of customers. Contrary to this, 11(8.7%) do not agree that the employees understood them. It can be implied that there is a greater proportion of understanding between employees and customers.

Table 4.9: Appearance of Both Physical Facilities and Employees

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	10	7.9
Disagree	10	7.9

Neither disagree or agree	37	29.4
Agree	48	38.1
Strongly agree	21	16.7
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

Questionnaires were administered to respondents to indicate whether the physical facilities and employees of the Espresso Ghana are neat and clean. From table 5.9, 38.1% respondents indicated 'agree' while a small proportion (7.9 %) indicated 'disagree'. This result reveals that the majority of the respondents agreed that both the physical facilities and employees of Espresso were neat and clean.

Table 4.10: Overall Performance of Espresso Ghana

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Disagree	16	12.7
Neither disagree or agree	37	29.4
Agree	49	38.9
Strongly agree	24	19.0
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

From Table 5.10 the results indicated that out of the total participants, 49(38.9%) responded "agree" when asked of the overall performance of Espresso Ghana. While 16(12.7%) on the other hand indicated disagree'. The result shows at least an appreciable number of customers are satisfied with the overall performances expected of Espresso Ghana.

Table 4.11: Ideal Product or Service in Espresso Ghana

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Strongly disagree	6	4.8
Disagree	39	31.0
Neither disagree or agree	29	23.0
Agree	22	17.5
Strongly agree	30	23.8
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

It could be observed from Table 5.11 that a higher proportion (31.0%) disagreed that the ideal product or service is Espresso network while 17.5% of the respondents also disagreed to the statement. This implies there majority of customers did not consider Espresso network as their ideal product or service.

4.5 Customer Loyalty

This section was to determine extent of customer loyalty for Espresso network. The respondents answered questions within the ranges of '*Strongly disagree and Strongly agree*'.

Table 4.12: Intentions to use Mobile Services from Espresso Ghana

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	16	12.7
Disagree	8	6.3
Neither disagree or agree	20	15.9

Agree	63	50.0
Strongly agree	19	15.1
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

From the total number of the respondents, 63 (50.0%) of the respondents agreed of the intention of using mobile services from Espresso Ghana for a long time, that is, if it will upgrade its services and give the best customer care. However, 8(6.3%) do not agree to continuous use mobile services from Espresso Ghana. It is obvious the majority of the respondents intended using Espresso Ghana, for quite a long time.

Customer loyalty and profitability are themselves the outcome of a combination of various elements or attributes such as service quality, customer satisfaction. Other factors that may affect customer loyalty could be trust and corporate image or identity. According to Barich and Kotler (1991), corporate image is the overall impression made about the physical and behavioral attributes of a firm such as business name, architecture, variety of products/services, and interaction with the firm’s clients (Nguyen and Leblanc, 2001). Because of the nature of services which are highly intangible, corporate image attributes are considered important in the customer evaluation process of services (Aydin and Ozer, 2005).

Table 4.13: Willingness to Continue Selecting Espresso Network

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	15	11.9
Neither disagree or agree	17	13.5
Agree	62	49.2

Strongly agree	32	25.4
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

A glance at the results shows that 62(49.2%) indicated agree, while 15 (11.9%) on the other hand disagreed to the willingness to continue selecting Expresso Ghanas' network. The conclusion is that majority of the respondents are willing to continue selecting Expresso Ghana, in case they needed an additional telecom service.

Table 4.14: Competition with Expresso Ghana

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	6	4.7
Disagree	6	4.7
Neither disagree or agree	27	21.1
Agree	56	43.8
Strongly agree	31	24.2
Total	126	98.4

Source: Field Work, 2017

On the issue of whether customers willing to continue using Expresso Ghana even if another operator's price is lower, 44.4% indicated 'agree' while 4.8% indicated 'disagree'. It can be implied that, majority of the respondents are willing to use Expresso Ghana even if another operator's price is lower.

A similar study by Kognuu (2012) showed that price was not a major factor for customers of telecoms to switch networks. Out of the total sample 16% were willing to switch due to promised breakage, 41% will switch if less service quality is offered while 38% said they will switch if high price is charged for less quality. Finally 5% said their decision to switch may be influenced by other factors.

Table 4.15: Positive Things about Espresso Ghana

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	12	9.5
Neither disagree or agree	52	41.3
Agree	14	11.1
Strongly agree	48	38.1
Total	126	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2017

The dominating reactions by respondents were those who indicated ‘neither agree nor disagree’ (41.3%). On the other hand, respondents who indicated ‘agree’ scored (11.1%) for stating positive things about Espresso Ghana. It is obvious the larger proportion of customers, neither agreed nor disagreed to willingly say positive things about Espresso Ghana.

Table 4.16: Encourage Friends to use Espresso network

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	49	27.0
Neither disagree or agree	34	38.9
Agree	11	8.7

Strongly agree	32	25.4
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

In this study, respondents were of the neutral opinion on their willingness to encourage friends and relatives to utilize the services offered by Expresso Ghana. However, (25.4%) of the respondents are in support of encouraging friends and relatives on using Expresso Ghana. This result reveals that, higher proportion of the customers were not willing not encourage friends to use Expresso Ghana to use the network.

Table 4.17: Expresso Ghana Provides Best Service

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	31	24.6
Disagree	32	25.4
Neither disagree or agree	32	25.4
Agree	25	19.8
Strongly agree	6	4.8
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field work, 2017*

On the question on as to whether Expresso Ghana provides best service, it is clear from the table that, majority 25.4% of the respondents were not in agreement while 19.8% respondents indicated the agreed opinion. It can be implied that a greater proportion of the respondents clarified on the insufficient services provided by Expresso Ghana.

Table 4.18: Espresso Ghana as a First Choice Telecom Company

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	6	4.8
Disagree	58	46.0
Neither disagree nor agree	5	4.0
Agree	51	40.5
Strongly agree	6	4.8
Total	126	100.0

Source: *Field Work, 2017*

The majority 58(46.0%) disagreed on the issue of considering Espresso Ghana as their first choice telecom company. Contrary, clients (40.8%) agreeing to the same issue. It can be concluded that most of the respondents do not consider Espresso Ghana as their first choice telecom company but other Ghanaian networks like MTN, Vodafone among others.

The above table 5.18 shows that loyalty is very important in gaining Espresso Ghana market share in the Ghanaian mobile phone industry. The result by Rosemond and Gloria (2010) was consistent with the findings in this study by proving that 80% of company's cash flow comes from 20% of loyal customers. Rosemond and Gloria discovered that loyal customers attach more importance to service offering than the brand name. Although brand name is important, emphasis should be placed on availing more service offering if the Espresso intends to gain more market share.

Table 4.19: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Customer Satisfaction	126	16.12	3.27
Customer Loyalty	126	13.00	3.39
Corporate Image	126	9.98	1.20

Table 5.19 shows that customer satisfaction has a Mean of 16.12 and the Standard Deviation of 3.27. Customer Loyalty has the Mean of 13.00 and Standard Deviation of 3.39. Finally, corporate image has the Mean of 9.98 and the Standard Deviation of 1.20. It has been observed in the table 5.19 that almost all the Mean are similar. High Standard Deviation means that the data are wide spread, which means that customers give variety of opinion and the low standard deviation means that customers express close opinion.

Table 4.20: Pearson Product Moment Correlations

		Customer Satisfaction	Customer Loyalty	Corporate Image
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.600**	.423**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	126	126	126
Customer Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.058	.168*	.232**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.449	.000	.000
	N	126	126	126

Customer Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	2	1	0
	Sig. (2-tailed)	66.7%	33.3%	.0%
	N	5	5	0
Corporate Image	Pearson Correlation	.423**	1	.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	126	126	126

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

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed).

Table 5.20 shows the Pearson Product Moment correlation for the three ordinal scaled variables. The sample size (N) is 126 and the significant level is 0.01 ($p < 0.01$) and 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). In the table, it can be seen that the correlation of Customer Loyalty is 0.300 and the significant level is 0.01 ($p < 0.01$). The table shows that the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.01. We therefore conclude that there is a high positive (0.600) relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction in Expresso Ghana market.

The table 5.20 shows that corporate image is 0.423 and p value is 0.000, which is less than 0.01. Therefore, there is a positive correlation between corporate image and customer satisfaction and loyalty in Expresso Ghana market.

(Note: Due to the current position of the company, the above data/information was very difficult and almost impossible to gather.)

Corporate image is the most correlated construct with customer satisfaction and loyalty in the Ghana's GSM market. It has a positive correlation of 0.423. This confirms some of the findings of the earlier researchers (Groholdt *et al.*, 2000; Chen, 2002; and Liu, 2008). Since corporate image is concerned with the perceptions of an organization reflected in the associations held in consumer memory (Keller, 1993), it could be said that corporate image is perceived by customers of Expresso Ghana.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Introduction

The chapter looks at the summary of the finding, conclusion based on the finding and a recommendation. It also contains limitations encountered during the study and direction for future research.

5.2. Summary of Finding

The study was conducted for the purpose of addressing the following main objectives. To determine how corporate branding impacts on consumer purchase preference in the Expresso Ghana. Specific objectives include the following:

- i. Identify the factors that affect purchase decision of Expresso subscribers.
- ii. To evaluate the relationship between corporate brand image and customer satisfaction.
- iii. To assess the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.
- iv. To analyze the effect of corporate brand image and customer satisfaction on customer loyalty of Expresso subscribers.

To achieve the objectives of the study, the study used a survey methodology that involved self-administered questionnaires to solicit data from 126 respondents of Expresso Ghana by the use of the convenience sampling method.

5.2.1. Background Information

It was identified that 39.7% were within the ages of 21 to 34 and (19%) were within the distribution age of under 21. About males (64.8%) and (33.6%) females were participants of the

study in Espresso respectively, Ghana. It was revealed that (51.6%) of the clients had obtained diploma certificates while (18.8%) had their masters.

5.2.2 Corporate Brand Image

In this study, the results show that amidst perception on corporate brand image, what customers of Espresso Ghana strongly perceived corporate image of Espresso was that the brand positively offers legal protection to Espresso Ghana with highest Mean (M). It can be concluded that 'use of brand positively offers legal protection to Espresso Ghana' with the highest mean (4.20) per customer was significant in the telecommunication company. However, using 'brands enables me to facilitate purchase quickly' as perceived by customers was identified as *not-significant* to influencing consumer purchase.

5.2.3 Customer Loyalty

In this study, the respondents (44.4%) were willing to continue using Espresso Ghana even if another operator's price is lower. Significantly, the majority (46.0%) disagreed on the issue of considering Espresso Ghana as their first choice telecom company but other Ghanaian networks like MTN, Vodafone among others. The study further showed that clients of Espresso Ghana (38.9%) were not certain on their willingness to encourage friends and relatives to utilize the services offered by Espresso Ghana.

5.2.4 Customer Satisfaction and Corporate Brand Image

Table 5.19, it can be seen that the correlation of customer loyalty is 0.300 and the significant level is 0.01 ($p < 0.01$). The table shows that the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.01. We therefore conclude that there is a high positive (0.600) relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction in Espresso Ghana market. The table shows that corporate image is 0.423 and p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.01. Therefore, there is a positive correlation between corporate image and customer satisfaction and loyalty in Espresso Ghana market.

5.3 Conclusion

This study aimed to identify how corporate brand image and the availability of excellent customer satisfaction can provide the frame to influence success at Espresso Ghana. The study revealed progress and elements with an impact on the corporate brand equity, which as such, have been connected to corporate brand equity of the organization of the study. These are the name and the actions of the organization, personnel, manager, customer perception, corporate core values, organizational culture and the product and/or services of the company. The empirical research supported the conclusions made in the theoretical part of the study and also confirmed the importance of the stakeholder perspective related to corporate brands. The role of the elements is important in the organization as through them the company is able to influence its corporate brand equity.

Mobile telecommunication is becoming one of the fastest growing industries worldwide. There are over 5.7 billion mobile customers across the globe with growth of around 20% per annum over the last three years (Vodafone Group Plc, 2012). The study indicated that corporate

branding is imperative in providing information to the customers about services but it is not an influencing factor for the customers rather satisfaction of the customer as shown in the analysis. Customers were asked about their expected switching from existing Espresso brand and even loyal customers replied that they will switch in future; if they think that company if customer satisfaction (quality) was compromised for price. Customers can therefore switch if they feel that good quality services are being offered from any other service provider with cheap rates. It was therefore found that majority of the customers in this industry are not price sensitive, thereby will continue to use the network.

It was found that corporate branding had nothing to do with the purchase decision of the customers but it is main source that communicates with customers about marketing mix of a product. Corporate brand promotes different factors and these different factors were considered important for customer's purchase. As a whole, services offered are almost same for every company; companies just differentiate them by corporate brands. Customer loyalty is another big issue in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. Gaining customer loyalty is one of the most important issues for many firms today; and the cost of ensuring that a customer stay with the firm is lower than the cost of acquiring a new one (Dick and Basu, 1994). Indeed, as Reichheld (1996) pointed out, acquiring a new customer costs five times what it takes to keep an existing one. Enhanced customer loyalty in service firms will lead to greater profitability.

It means corporate branding cannot influence the customer but works as a medium of communication between company and customer. Customers can only have information from different sources e.g. from print media or broadcast media, about any particular corporate brand. But customers do not go for purchase until or unless certain specific purchase influencing factors

like price, service and quality etc are not highlighted with the corporate brand as well. Thus, the finding indicated that although corporate branding provide useful information regarding the product mix of the service provider, there exist other factors that consumers place more emphasis when deciding a network connection. The findings also indicated that, the respondents have not closed the chapter on Espresso Ghana yet. They would patronize if Espresso Ghana delivers innovative services and products.

5.4 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

5.4.1 Treat internal stakeholders well

It must be noted, the Management of Espresso Ghana should treat internal stakeholders as they want them to treat their external stakeholders. Motivate employees, train them, care about them, and make winners of them because the way employees are treated by their management has a direct impact on the way those employees treat the businesses' customers. If we treat our employees correctly, they will treat the customers' right. And if the customers are treated right, they will be loyal to Espresso network and will wish to come back.

These may be small problems which easily resolve larger issues which may require organisational changes. Establishing a way to communicate with the company's stakeholders might be through a simple monthly dashboard or in the regular newsletter, regular information about customer feedback, shared internally etc... The progresses made towards a better experience for the customers will drive positive changes to customer loyalty and improve customer retention. It costs less to retain an existing customer than to obtain a new one and price

is not the main reason for customer churn; it is actually due to the overall poor quality of customer service (Accenture global customer satisfaction report 2008).

5.4.2 Orientation and Training for Internal Stakeholders

Again, the management of Espresso Ghana must place great emphasis on instilling a customer-first culture throughout their branches by training new employees and reinforcing a customer focus with current employees. After a candidate is offered a job, new employees go through division training, which will introduce the employees to their particular jobs. Management of Espresso Ghana must make it a clear commitment to train the employees who are in the frontline and interact with the public, whether they provide service by telephone or in-person. Training programs should include formal classroom instruction that focuses on job skills and attitudes and the expectations of management, as well as on-the-job training that allows staff to learn about the organization and the work from interaction between co-workers. Through training and role-playing, they learn basic operating policies, how to calm angry customers, and how to help customers who need immediate assistance.

Customer Loyalty is required for profitability in today's corporate environment. Service needs to be provided as a daily consistent regimen to attract and retain customer loyalty. The consumer has a vast choice from which company to purchase, so the front line staff has to be empowered with tools, input from the customer and information and solutions when necessary. Leadership needs to be customer focused and to concentrate on the pre-requisites for excellence. They must always be focused on Customer Relations and satisfaction, product or service excellence, corporate stature, brand awareness and price.

5.4.3 Recognizing and Rewarding Customer Performance

The management of Expresso Ghana must constantly recognise, reward and praise employees who provide outstanding customer service. This can take many forms and it does not always need to be expensive to be effective. Also, each month employees who went “above and beyond” targets assign them must be praised in front of co-workers and managers and given certificates and gifts as a way of appreciation. This will in turn increase the organization's focus and commitment to their customers and enhance overall customer satisfaction and loyalty and determine which areas need improvement and provide an internal loyalty measurement and overall corporate management program.

5.4.4 Ensuring Service Quality

Network quality is one of the important factors of overall service quality. According to this study the mobile phone operators in Bangladesh must put their attention on service quality, corporate image to influence the current and potential customers. Above all, an understanding of direct effect by the key factors like (corporate image, customers’ satisfaction, and service quality) affecting the customers perception in mobile phone operators (service providers) will put the practitioner in a better position to design appropriate strategies to deal with marketing practices that will enhance the benefit of the operators.

With the growing competition in Ghana’s telecom industry, telecom analyst, Fouad Chalabi has urged Expresso to concentrate on a section of the market or face extinction by market forces. According to him, the company can direct its investment into providing data while it looks for investors to upgrade its technology from CDMA to GSM and this can absolutely be agreed with.

With the competition and where they are and what is happening in the market, Ghana has more than one operation using 4G. The majority of people in Ghana now prefer GSM so it will be hard for Espresso to really do anything, unless they want to have a system by which they provide only data and incorporate other things so they establish their niche market. When a unique idea comes up, Espresso Ghana must go all out with this uniqueness by planting receivers especially in the rural areas more than the urban communities. Espresso Ghana basically concentrates on the urban areas with intense competition and even at that, the receiver poles are limited; this limits the uniqueness of the idea and product.

The competition is now too advanced for Espresso to survive without investment, it is important that the company get investors, competent hands, innovative ideas and a powerful brand strategy in order to be competitive and relevant. Technology has also improved over the years, changing the preferences of consumers. To look more attractive to investors, the company can specialize in a market area of the industry to attract investors. An example is the use of data in an area that has seen significant growth over the years with more growth expectation.

5.4.5 Striving for Customer Loyalty

In today's economic climate consumers are scrutinizing their purchases and attempting to cut their spending. Severe pessimism of the economic climate and spending instability has triggered a shift toward thrifty consumer spending and strengthened expectations of customer satisfaction of products, goods and services. It is the ultimate goal of any business organization, irrespective of product, to increase their profits. This is best created with a steady stream of loyal customers

who have a propensity to engage in on-going repeat business and will do so from their perceived high value of the products, goods and services being offered.

The degree of customer loyalty has a tendency to be higher when perceptions of corporate image, customer satisfaction and switching cost are strongly favorable. For Expresso, before setting loyalty programs, managers should focus on every determinant of customer loyalty such as corporate image, customer loyalty and switching costs. Consumers consider two basic criteria...price and availability. Customer loyalty in this situation occurs usually when prices are low and / or better options by adding perceived value to the consumer are not available.

A customer will become an advocate or a repeat customer if the company is performing well on adding perceived value to the basic commodity / service for the consumer. Expresso need to identify the consumers questions, action them and deploy front-line personnel and management to filter consistent personal service and satisfaction to the consumer. Consistency, product and service quality are the value fundamentals for the consumer.

5.5. Limitations and Recommendation for Future Research

The first limitation was time and resources. As a result the sample size was compromised. The initial size was only 30 but later extended to 126 clients, reporters, employees of Expresso Ghana located in the Central Business District (CBD) of Accra, head office which was almost always closed. Contact numbers were difficult to get and most appointments were cancelled several times because most of the sources didn't want to divulge information. Hence there is a need to caution the generalization of the finding. The sample size also means that data reliability was compromised to a larger extent. It is thus recommended that the sample size may be increased to

a representative size and customer opinions taken across the entire 10 regions of Ghana. This will give a much clearer picture about the immediate factors determining consumer purchase decision which will be more generalizable.

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QUESTIONNAIRE ON CORPORATE BRAND IMAGE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
OF EXPRESSO GHANA.

1. Sex Male / Female

2. Age

Please tick where applicable

Under 21 21 to 34 35 to 44 45 to 54 55 or older

3. Educational Qualification of Respondents

Please tick where applicable

Diploma Degree Masters and Above Others, specify

4. How long have / (did) you use(d) Espresso Network

Please tick where applicable

less than 1 year 1 year to less than 2 years 2 years to less than 4 years

4 years to less than 6 years 6 years and more

Corporate brand image

For the following questions please tick if you (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Disagree Neither Agree, (4) Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree to the statements below.

5. Brands of Espresso Ghana has a signal to the level of quality
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
6. Using brands enables me to facilitate purchase quickly.
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
7. Brand positively offers legal protection to Espresso Ghana
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
8. Using brands facilitates a powerful means to securing a competitive advantage.
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
9. Brands increase the difficulty of other competitors to copy Espresso Ghana.
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
10. Corporate brands increase the chances of attracting higher and quality employees.
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
11. Espresso Ghana rely on corporate brands to perform the strategic function of positioning
(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*
12. The brand of Espresso Ghana is popular and well admired by many

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

13. I appreciate the social responsibility programs offered by Expresso Ghana

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

14. People love to be associated with the brand of this operator

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

15. Expresso Ghana is open and responsive to consumers

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

16. Expresso Ghana does business in an ethical way.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

17. Expresso Ghana is successful and self-confident

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

18. Overall, I think brand image has impact on the services delivered to me

Customer Satisfaction

19. Expresso Ghana can satisfy its customers by adding some value to its products and services.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

20. Employees of Espresso Ghana listen to customers and speak in the language they understand.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

Appearance of Both Physical Facilities and Employees

21. I feel comfortable visiting the Espresso office due to appearance of the physical facilities and employees of the Espresso Ghana.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

Overall Performance of Espresso Ghana

22. The general performance of Espresso Ghana is very impressive.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

23. Espresso Ghana delivers the ideal products and services customers requires

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

24. I intend to use the Espresso network for a long time should it be agraded.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

25. If I am to say Positive Things about Expresso Ghana I would have a lot to commend them on.

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

26. I would Encourage Friends to use Expresso network

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

27. Expresso Ghana Provides Best Service

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*

28. Expresso Ghana could be considered as a First Choice Telecom Company

(1) *Strongly Agree* (2) *Agree* (3) *Disagree Neither Agree,* (4) *Disagree*
(5) *Strongly Disagree*