

INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE: THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY.

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Abstract

The provision of social services (water) to individual households and industries is a key function of governments across the globe. Particularly for industrial customers, water is a key input factor for the operation of organizations. This study sought to investigate the effect of some product and service-related factors and how they affect the experience of industrial customers of the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL). Specifically, the study investigates the direct effect of product quality, product availability and service processes on customer experience as well as the moderating effect of perceived service quality on the relationship between product and service-related factors on customer experience.

The study adopted a sequential explanatory approach design. Thus, the study was designed in two main phases where the researcher collected data through field surveys and interviews. The population of the study constituted industrial customers of the GWCL in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) of Ghana. A total of 500 questionnaires were administered with 386 returned.

The results of the study revealed that out of three direct hypotheses, two were supported and one not supported. Specifically, product quality and service processes significantly positively affect customer experience, while product availability significantly negatively affect customer experience. In terms of the moderation relationship, it was found that perceived service quality significantly positively moderate the relationship between service processes and customer experience but significantly negatively moderated the relationship between product quality and customer experience and product availability and customer experience. The results imply that to achieve positive customer experience for industrial customers, the GWCL need to consider the quality nature of their product and the service processes customers go through to get their needs or grievances addressed. It is also imperative to note that perceived service quality is a significant contingent factor in enhancing the effect of service processes on customer experience.

Keywords: Perceived Service Quality, Product Quality, Product Availability, Service Processes, Customer Experience.