Customer Relationship Management Practices and Customer Retention at Ghana Commercial Bank (GCB) in Tamale: Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

With the recent increase in bank closures, attracting new customers and developing strong customer relationships in Ghana's financial sector has become difficult. As a result, customer retention in banking has become critical for fund mobilization and license maintenance. The study sought to investigate the effect of CRM practices and customer satisfaction on customer retention at GCB bank, Tamale. The quantitative research approach and the explanatory design were employed due to the purpose of the study. Structured questionnaire was used to gather data from all the 367 customers of GCB bank in Tamale. The data obtained were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 and analyzed using descriptive and inferential tools. The purpose of this study was to investigate and establish a comprehensive framework to identify customer relationship management practices on customer retention through the mediating role of customer satisfaction. The study discovered a significant positive relationship between customer relationship management practices and customer retention, as well as customer satisfaction playing a mediating role in this relationship. As a result, Ghanaian banks are implored to implement effective customer relationship marketing strategies in order to retain their customers.
Keywords: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Practices, Customer Retention, Customer Focus, Knowledge Management, Technology-based CRM, Customer Satisfaction.
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Introduction

Banks acts an intermediary role in socioeconomic growth throughout the globe by mobilizing funds from surplus sectors and providing new products (including credit) and services to entrepreneurs and deficit sectors for productive and sustainable economic activities (Daly & Frikha, 2016; Saksonova & Koeda, 2017; Türsoy, 2018). Other researchers have claimed that banks are crucial in improving industrialisation and establishing new economic paths. In many developing nations, like Ghana, the financial industry plays a critical role in economic development and poverty alleviation (Beck & Demirguc-Kunt, 2009).

Banks, on the other hand, have been in a constant battle to grow profits and satisfy minimum capital requirements in recent years. The Bank of Ghana (BoG), for example, published a guideline on new minimum criteria for regulating banks in 2018. As a result of this new development, banks are now competing fiercely for clients. In order to mobilize adequate funds and maintain their licenses, banks must attract new clients and develop strong customer connections. Customers are seen as stepping stones and the most essential intangible assets for any company, according to studies (Tauni et al., 2014; Khadka & Maharjan, 2017). Customers are the primary reason for an organization's survival (Gittell, 2002; Peltier et al., 2009), and they should be appreciated and handled well accordingly (Gupta & Lehmann, 2003). Many researchers (Tauni et al., 2014; Tseng, 2016) have stated that the most essential method for companies to retain greater profit and become highly competitive is to establish and manage effective customer relations.

Owing to its beneficial impact on customer satisfaction and company success, the idea of customer relationship management (CRM) practices have been adopted by companies all over the globe after Berry's (1983) work on relationship marketing (Kebede & Tegegne, 2018). CRM is a complete strategy and process for recruiting, keeping, and collaborating with chosen customers in order to provide better value for both the business and the customer (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2001). CRM techniques range from acquiring customers to providing excellent service and retaining them (Grönroos, 2004). Customer retention is defined by Kebede and Tegegne (2018) as a company's or organization's efforts and measures to minimize customer defections and maintain customer loyalty. Customer retention programs are designed to assist businesses in retaining as many customers as possible, usually via customer loyalty and brand loyalty efforts (Kebede & Tegegne, 2018). Customer retention is also a means of ensuring that a product's consumers do not patronize rivals or competing

businesses. Customer retention, according to Molapo and Mukwada (2011), is one of the most important elements affecting the success and continuation of companies. CRM has a major impact on customer retention in the banking sector, both from the viewpoint of management and customers (Kebede & Tegegne, 2018).

Despite the many advantages of CRM implementation, poor implementation of CRM practices remains a problem in many developing nations' banks. CRM practice, especially in the banking sector, faces a number of obstacles (Oogarah-Hanuman et al., 2011). Customers of various banks in Nigeria often complain about lengthy queue, a lack of tellers at the counters, improper conduct by certain bank staff, and inadequate knowledge management (Ogburu & Usman, 2012). Poor implementation of CRM has a detrimental impact on banks' ability to retain customers (Rouholamini & Venkatesh, 2011). The banking industry, according to Mishra et al. (2011), has tremendous difficulties in recruiting new customers and retaining old customers. Oogarah-Hanuman (2011) further emphasizes that it is getting more difficult for banks to establish and maintain solid and long-term connections with customers in recent years. This necessitates banks providing a broad customer base with distinct products and high-quality services (Lakhani & Smith, 2007).

It is against this backdrop of literature that this research seek to shed light on CRM practices at the commercial banking sector in Ghana, particularly in the Tamale Metropolis, and its effect on customer retention. The research will further investigate how the role of customer satisfaction can influence customer retention. The outcome of the research will offer a more accurate and scientific method for assessing an organization's satisfaction and retention rates of its customer base. The research objectives of the study are as follows; assess the effect of CRM practices at GCB on customer retention and examine the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention.

Literature Review

Customer relationship management (CRM) is the practice of meticulously recording individual customers and all points of contact with them in order to increase retention (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The utilization of CRM practices can positively impact customer retention, which have a strong link to it. Other factors that affect customer retention include business process structure, current technology, and knowledge management (Amir, et al., 2014). CRM practices are inextricably linked to customer retention, and they are becoming increasingly important in today's business climate. As such, employee behavior has a big impact on customer satisfaction, so the CRM elements of interaction management, relationship development, customer service, and employee conduct are all important (Long, et al., 2013).Customer satisfaction and retention are linked in CRM strategies, and a high level of customer satisfaction leads to customer retention (Shvydenko, 2011). Bashir (2017) further adds customer retention and CRM practices have a strong link (Bashir, 2017). Kalakota (2009), concludes that the goal of CRM practices is to improve customer management, enhance company profitability, and promote the process of constant sales to customers.

Typically, customer satisfaction is very important in establishing and improving customer retention and increasing profitability, according to Ganiyu (2017), however it is not always adequate in all situations. Consumers who have had positive experiences are more likely to make repeat purchases and become regular users of a particular product or service brand than customers who have had negative experiences (Pleshko and Heiens, 2015). According to Narteh and Kuada (2014), customer satisfaction in Ghana is determined by the relational, fundamental, and tangible dimensions of retail banking services. Customer satisfaction was shown to be a significant predictor or antecedent for consumers' tendency or desire to maintain their banking and patronage, (Tweneboah-Koduah and Farley, 2015). The findings from Tweneboah-Koduah and Farley (2015), also showed that, the capability of banks to guarantee service quality was also a vital determinant of customer satisfaction

Furthermore, customer retention has become essential to the financial success and sustainability of many businesses (Smith and Wright, 2004). Customer retention is defined by Kebede and Tegegne (2018) as a company's efforts and measures to minimize customer defections and retain loyal customers. They go on to say that the objective of customer retention programs is to assist businesses retain as many customers as possible, which they do through promoting customer loyalty and brand loyalty (Kebede & Tegegne, 2018).

According to many studies, customer retention helps businesses by increasing long-term profitability, reducing marketing costs, increasing referrals, and increasing customer growth (Anubav, 2010; Reichheld, 2006; Kent and Löfmarck, 2000). An empirical study by Hasanat et al. (2019) posits that customer satisfaction and retention may be accomplished through customer engagement process. According to Bashir (2017), satisfaction of customers mediates the link between CRM and customer retention in the banking industry, and customer happiness and fulfillment may be obtained through effective CRM practice. Gayathry (2016) stated that banks may completely accomplish CRM maintenance if they make efforts to improve customer engagement.

Another key variable of CRM is Knowledge Management. Customer knowledge management, according to Chua and Banerjee (2013), is an efficient tool for evaluating customer expectations, behavior, and preferences. Duwailah and Hashem (2019) verified that the utilization of customer knowledge management enables

businesses to increase its profitability through CRM practices. According to San and Hardjono (2017), customer retention is significantly linked with variables such as customer orientation and knowledge management,

Moreover, other researchers Radaideh and Al-Talafih (2017) and Ramaj (2015) indicated clearly that technology-based CRM also improves satisfaction of customers. Through their study, Abbas et al. (2017) verified that firms should focus on the performance factors for building a successful CRM in order to have a strong connection with the consumers, which enhances the attitude toward customer retention. According to Lam et al. (2013), when an efficient electronic-based CRM strategy is implemented through customer focus, awareness of the quality of the relationship between the firm and its customers may be improved. Every bank's performance, according to Kebede and Tegegne (2018), is dependent on innovative CRM technology.

From the review of literature, customers' retention is linked to CRM practices through customer satisfaction. This is confirmed by Rizan et al. (2014) through their research, which discovered that customer loyalty and satisfaction had a substantial impact on the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention. Also, Customer satisfaction has a positive mediation effect on the link between CRM and customer loyalty, according to research by Long et al. (2013) and Panjaitan and Laely (2017). This paper thus examines CRM Practices, customer satisfaction and customer retention on clients at Ghana Commercial Bank (GCB), Tamale. Detailed information will be outlined to investigate the effect of CRM practices on customer retention and the mediating role of customer satisfaction between CRM practices and customer retention.

Conceptual Framework

The framework was developed in order to determine the most likely relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Customer retention was the dependent variable, while customer relationship management practices were the independent variable. Customer relationship practices were categorized as follows, namely customer focus, knowledge management, and technology-based CRM. CRM based on technology focuses on CRM system automation, functionality, user acceptability, and system integration (Foya et al., 2015). Customer knowledge, customer engagement, customer requirement, and customer feedback were all highlighted (Lohan, Lang & Conboy, 2011). Knowledge management looked at the sharing of organizational knowledge and IT investment (Ali & Alshawi, 2020). The conceptual framework was presented in figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on CRM practices, customer satisfaction and customer retention
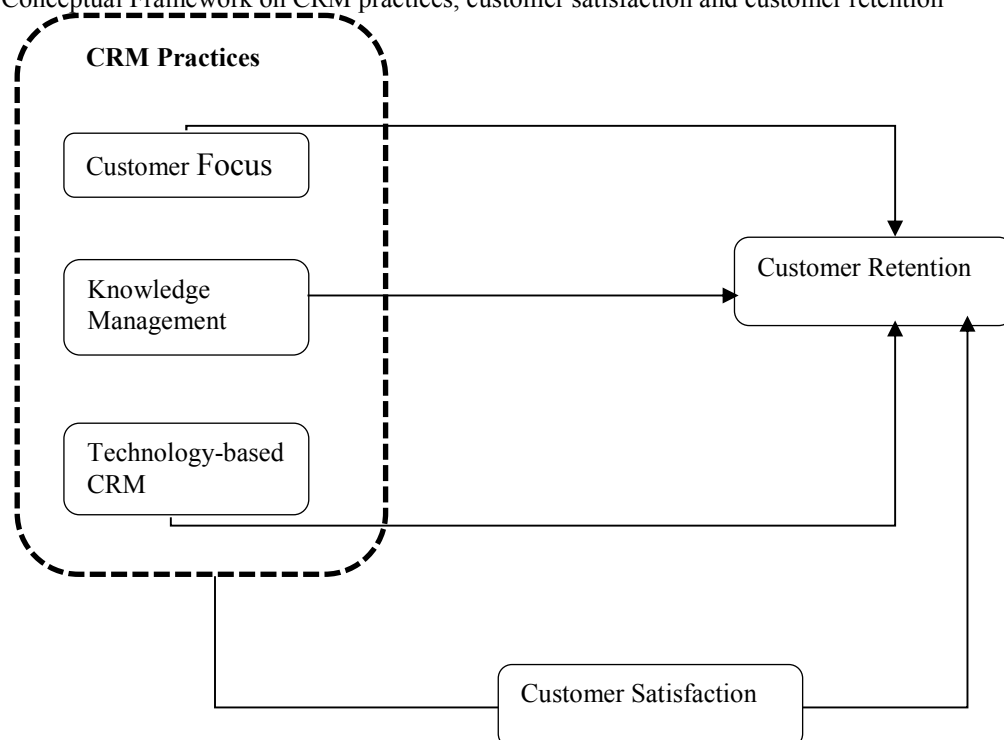
Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative and explanatory approach using self-administered questionnaires to collect information from the respondents. The study made use of this design because there was need to examine the relationship that exist among the variables of the study. Also, it was of necessity to generate deeper understanding on how the variables of the study relate. Further, the study adopted a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach surveys a large number of individuals and applies statistical techniques to recognize

overall patterns in the relations of processes. The quantitative approach was adopted because the study made use of statistical techniques in drawing its analysis. In the context of this study, the population was customers at the Tamale GCB bank. The bank has 8,552 clients. The sample size for the study was 367 clients. The clients were deemed best for the study because they are the ones that patronizes the products and services of the bank. This was determined through the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. The study employed the simple random sampling technique. This technique allows each individual to be chosen by chance and each member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. Every possible sample of a given size has the same chance of been selected. The technique was chosen to avoid bias in the sampling. This study made use of a structured questionnaire. The question assumed a five (5) point Likert scale where 1 was least agreed and 5 was strongly agreed. There was need to code the responses from the questionnaire that were administered to the clients in order to be inputted into the right structure for analysis. The coded data was inputted into the SPSS (version 26) for processing. All missing values issues were dealt with to ensure the appropriateness of the data for meaningful analysis. The reliability of the measures of the instruments was checked using the Cronbach's Alpha. Measures with Cronbach's Alphas less than .7 were declared not reliable and measures with Cronbach's Alphas more than .7 were declared reliable. This coefficient measurement evaluates the scale's overall consistency (Cronbach, 1951). The result was presented in Table 1.

Table 1 *Reliability co-efficient of Variables*

Questionnaire Items	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Technology-based CRM	5	.874
Knowledge Management	4	.741
Customer Focus	5	.896
Customer Retention	5	.892
Customer Satisfaction	5	.710

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The lowest and highest values for the variables examined are 0.710 and 0.896, respectively. This means that all of the variables utilized in the research are valid and reliable. Regression analysis was then conducted to test the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention.

Results/ Findings

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Of the respondents who participated in the data collection, 182 out of the respondents (representing 48.6%) were males and 185 of respondents (representing 50.4%) were females. With a male – female ratio of 1:.98, gender bias was greatly reduced. The distribution of respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 *Demographics*

Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Male	182	49.6
	Female	182	50.4
Total		**367**	**100**
Age	18 – 28 years	61	16.6
	29 – 39 years	111	30.2
	40 – 50 years	125	34.1
	51 – 61 years	40	10.9
	62 years and above	30	8.2
Total		**367**	**100**
Education	Certificate	145	39.5
	HND	113	30.8
	Bachelors	61	16.6
	Masters	36	9.8
	Others	12	3.3
Total		**367**	**100**
Years with the Bank	1 – 5 years	99	27.0
	6 – 10 years	113	30.8
	11 – 15 years	71	19.3
	16 – 20 years	33	9.0
	21 -25years	14	3.8
	26 years and above	37	10.1
Total		**367**	**100**

Respondents' View on CRM Practices

The results of the quantitative data of the five variables used in the study was investigated using mean statistics. With respect to customer focus, customers are of the view that the bank allows its staff to do whatever is in their best interests as seen in Table 3. This indicator's result was classified as "high" since it received a highest mean score of 4.15, which is between 3 and 5 on a Likert scale of 1 to 5. Customers believe the bank offers avenues for continuous and one-on-one interaction with important customers when it comes to knowledge management (see Table 3). This indicator's result was classified as 'high' since it had a highest mean score of 4.46, which is in the range of 3 to 5 on a Likert scale. Clients believe that the bank has the appropriate software to serve its customers when it comes to technology-based CRM. This indicator's result was evaluated as "high" since it had a highest mean score of 4.21. In relation to customer satisfaction in Table 3, the customers trust the bank to provide the finest financial goods and services to him or her. This practice achieved a 'high' rating since it had a mean score of 4.42, which is between 3 and 5. In relation to customer retention in Table 3, customers feel empowered by individualized communications that promote positive bank interactions. This indicator achieved a 'high' rating since the mean score was 4.20, which is between 3 and 5. All indicators under study achieved a mean score 3.91- 4.46, this score falls between 3-5 on a Likert of 1-5, indicating positive agreement. This suggests that the majority of clients are totally satisfied with their banks' services and its management methods.

Table 3 *Descriptive Statistics of Variables*

Variables		N	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer Focus	The bank empowers its employees to do whatever is in the best interest of customers	367	1	5	4.15	.997
	The bank meets with customers to listen and learn about their changing requirement	367	1	5	4.12	.957
	The bank's actions and behaviors are always consistent with their words regarding the importance of customers	367	1	5	3.98	.895
	Customer data and information are key to policy and strategy formulation in the bank	367	1	5	3.96	.981
	The bank meets with customers to discuss performance issues and to strengthen their relationship with the customers	367	1	5	3.91	.861
	The bank empowers its employees to do whatever is in the best interest of customers	367	1	5	4.15	.997
	The bank meets with customers to listen and learn about their changing requirement	367	1	5	4.12	.957
Knowledge Management	The bank provides channels to enable ongoing, two-way communication with key customers and us	367	1	5	4.46	.696
	Customers can expect prompt service from employees of my organization	367	1	5	4.45	.831
	The bank fully understands the needs of our key customers via knowledge leaning	367	1	5	4.13	1.043
	The banks' employees are willing to help customers in a responsive manner	367	1	5	4.01	.986
Technology-based CRM	The bank has right software to service its customers	367	1	5	4.21	.908
	Individualized information about each customer is available at all contact points	367	1	5	4.20	.908
	The bank has right hardware to service its customers	367	1	5	4.08	.863
	The bank is able to consolidate all information acquired about customers in comprehensive, centralized, up-to-date database	367	1	5	4.05	.895
	The bank's information systems are integrated across the different functional areas	367	1	5	4.03	.943

Variables		N	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer Satisfaction	I trust my bank to provide me with the best financial products and services	367	1	5	4.42	.764
	A complaint lodged by me is promptly attended and the problem was resolved as soon as possible	367	1	5	4.38	.797
	Bank charges for different services are fair	367	1	5	4.30	.785
	I am satisfied with the service quality	367	1	5	4.26	.801
	I am satisfied with overall interaction with the staff	367	1	5	4.23	.879
	There is proper space for sitting, waiting, writing and parking	367	1	5	4.22	.831
	I am satisfied with the features and benefits of the services of bank	367	1	5	4.20	.839
	I prefer this bank because of transparency & reliability in financial transactions and in other services	367	1	5	4.16	.850
	The bank maintains personal relationship with the customer	367	1	5	4.15	.920
	Bank is located at a convenient place	367	1	5	4.14	.828
	I use bank services quite often	367	1	5	4.06	.844
	Periodic feedback review is sought after raising complaint	367	1	5	3.99	.929
	Complaints are welcomed and individual attention is given to every customer complaint	367	1	5	3.94	.880
Customer Retention	I feel empowered through personalized messages which encourage healthy relations with my bank	367	1	5	4.20	.986
	The bank frequently organizes customer meets	367	1	5	4.17	.950
	The bank retains its customers by its branding strategies	367	1	5	4.16	.985
	The bank provides timely responses to its customer complaints	367	1	5	4.12	.960
	The feedback is taken from customers on regularly (weekly) basis	367	1	5	4.02	.893
	The bank retains its customers by building customer relationships	367	1	5	3.99	.895
	The bank provides reliable services to its customers	367	1	5	3.97	.988
	Bank has a culture where customer is given first preference	367	1	5	3.95	.988
	The bank provides unique product to retain its customers	367	1	5	3.92	.858
	The bank provides quality services to its customers	367	1	5	3.91	.867

Effect of CRM Practices on Customer Retention

With respect to the first objective of the study multiple regression analysis was performed. Using the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, a diagnostic test was, first, conducted to check for multi co- linearity among the independent variables. This was used to examine the possible undesirable situation where the correlations among the variables are strong. The PASW Version 21.0 was used to assess the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) that measures multicollinearity in the regression model, since multicollinearity misleadingly inflates the standard errors, thereby making some variables statistically insignificant, while they should otherwise be significant.

The VIF was used to measure how much the variance of the estimated coefficients increased over the case

of no correlation among the independent variables. All the VIF values for the independent variables were within the acceptable threshold. This shows that none of the values was greater than five (5), which means that there was no collinearity associated with the variables. The VIF values were also inversely related to the Tolerance values (VIF = 1/Tolerance). According to Sarstedt and Mooi (2019), large VIF values (a usual threshold is 10.0, which corresponds to a tolerance of 0.10) indicate a high degree of multicollinearity among the independent variables. In addition, under the collinearity diagnostics, condition index values of all the entered variables were less than 15, indicating that there was no problem.

The ANOVA and model summary in Table 4 indicates a sig. value of 0.000. The model summary also indicates an R square value of 0.753. The sig. value of 0.000 indicates that statistically there is a strong significant relationship between CRM practices and customer retention. The R square value of 0.753 indicates that 75.30 per cent of variations in customer retention is explained by CRM practices.

Table 4*Multiple Regression Analysis (ANOVA and model summary) on the effect of CRM practices on Customer Retention*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	122.805	3	40.935	368.149	.000[b]
Residual	40.362	363	.111		
Total	163.167	366			

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.868[a]	.753	.751	.33345

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Focus, Knowledge Management, Technology-Based CRM

Table 5 illustrates the distinct contributions of the various CRM elements to retention. It shows that customer retention is influenced by variables such as technology, knowledge management, and customer focus. The most crucial element is customer focus, Knowledge management, and technology-based CRM in that sequence. All the CRM practices have their p-values as less than 0.05 (p < 0.05) indicating a very significant effect on customer retention.

Table 5 *Coefficient of CRM practices of customer retention*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.025	.163		.150	.881
	Technology-Based CRM	.126	.025	.139	5.079	.000
	Knowledge Management	.140	.027	.142	5.225	.000
	Customer Focus	.720	.022	.852	32.145	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Retention						

Mediating effect of customer satisfaction in the relationship between CRM Practices and Customer Satisfaction

With regards to the second objective to assess the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between CRM practices (independent variable) and customers' satisfaction (mediating variable) were regressed against Customer Retention (dependent variable). The study revealed a positive path coefficient between CRM practices and customer satisfaction as dependent variable in Table 6. This suggests a significant linkage between CRM practices and customer satisfaction. Also, the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention with customer satisfaction being a mediating variable was found to be significant as the p-value was less than 0.05.

Table 6 *Coefficient of the Mediating Effect of CRM practices and Customer Satisfaction Variables on Customer Retention*

R^2=.049 F (1, 367) =18.914 ρ=0.000[b]					
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.745	.104		36.048	.000
CRM Practices	.110	.025	.222	4.349	.000
Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction					
R^2=.451 F (2, 364) =149.38 ρ=0.000[b]					
(Constant)	-1.449	.376		-3.858	.000
CRM Practices	.974	.059	.647	16.642	.000
Customer Satisfaction	.349	.066	.205	5.272	.000
Total Effect			.04551		
Dependent Variable: Customer Retention					

Further, the finding in Table 6 also revealed a positive path coefficient between CRM practices and customer satisfaction. Therefore, a regression (prediction) equation on the model above was adopted and formulated in line with the analysis model of Baron and Kenny (1986) and presented as follows;

If Customer Retention=CR, CRM = CRM practices, Customer Focus=X1, Technology-based CRM= X2, Knowledge Management= X3, and Error term=ε, then

$$CR = A_0 + \beta_1 CRM + \beta_2 CS + \varepsilon \text{ where (CRM = BX1 + BX2 + BX3)}$$
$$= -1.449 + .974 \text{ (CRM)} + .349 \text{ (CS)} + \varepsilon$$

If the test values for customer focus, knowledge management and technology-based CRM are ascertained, this model can be used to establish customer retention in the future.

Discussion

The first objective of the study was to **assess the effect of CRM practices (*such as customer focus, knowledge management and technology-based CRM*) at GCB on customer retention**. The results of the quantitative data of the different variables used in the study was firstly investigated using mean statistics. All indicators under study achieved a mean score 3.91- 4.46, this score falls between 3-5 on a Likert of 1-5, indicating positive agreement between variables. This suggests that the majority of clients are totally satisfied with their banks' services and its CRM practices. In order to ascertain the reliability of the variables under study, a reliability test was performed using Cronbach's Alpha. The finding from the test revealed all variables been investigated were in between the lowest and highest values of 0.710 and 0.896, respectively. This indicated all the variables under study were strongly reliable. Additionally, the findings from the Regression analysis (ANOVA and model) summary was presented in Table 3. The model summary findings presented on the R, R square, adjusted R square and the standard error in Table 3. The R value revealed a strong relationship (.868[a]) between the CRM practices and customer retention. The R square represents the coefficient of determination. The value of the R square (.753) communicates a strong relationship between the CRM practices and customer retention. This implies that 75.3% variation in the customer retention is explained by the CRM practices. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between CRM practices and customer retention. This revelation from the study is consistent with several studies, such as San and Hardjono (2017), Abbas et al. (2017), Bashir (2017), Hettiarachchy and Samarasinghe (2016), and Ramaj (2015), which also found that CRM and its practices had a positive and a significant impact on customer retention. This further suggests that banks' attempts to improve their CRM practices will help them retain customers. Moreover, the ANOVA results in Table 3 revealed the test significance for R and R square using the F-statistics. The F-statistics is computed by dividing the regression mean square by the residual mean square. The ANOVA results, showed a F-statistics significance value that is less than 0.01, meaning the CRM practices does well in explaining customer retention. The regression co-efficient for each of the CRM practices were captured in Table 4. The results include the standardized and unstandardized beta coefficients, standard errors and the significance level. Under the unstandardized coefficient beta column, we have the constant value of .025 which stands for the gradient/slope/intercept in the regression equation.

With respect to technology-based CRM, the beta coefficient was .126 which stands for a positive influence on customer retention. This suggest that a percentage change in technology-based CRM will result in 12.6% changes in customer retention. This relationship was significant since it has a ρ<.001. This suggest that technology-based CRM has a positive significant influence on customer retention. It was pointed that technology-based CRM helps companies focus on internet-based customer service links to the right customers so as to attain customer retention. The finding is consistent with other studies such Radaideh and Al-Talafih (2017) and Lam et.al. (2013) which indicated that the use of various Electronic-CRM technologies in banks helps to

retain customers

With respect to knowledge management, the beta coefficient was .140 which stands for a positive influence on customer retention. This suggest that a percentage change in knowledge management will result in a 14.0% change in customer retention. This relationship was significant since it has a $\rho<.001$. This suggest that knowledge management has a positive significant influence on customer retention. Knowledge is viewed as one of the important and high valued organization assets for customer retention (Chua and Banerjee, 2013). The findings from the study corroborates with that of Wang et. al., (2010) and Duwailah and Hashem (2019), which examined the impact of knowledge management on CRM approaches. This indicates strongly that knowledge management has a significant impact on customer loyalty, retention and satisfaction (Wang et al., 2010). Lastly, customer focus had a beta coefficient of .720 which stands for a positive influence on customer retention. This suggest that a percentage change in customer focus will result in a 72.0% change in customer retention. This relationship was significant since it has a $\rho<.001$. This suggest that customer focus has a positive significant influence on customer retention. Customer focus has been described as an employee's personal focus to provide excellent service to customers in order to retain them. An important condition that enables the organization to be truly customer-focused is the way in which it delivers value to its customers. As a prerequisite to organizational growth and success of its client base, customer engagements and interactions focus on managing the relationship between the organization and its present and future loyal customer base (Gebert et al., 2002). The findings support a previous study by So (2013) who discovered in his study that, customer involvement or interaction has a positive influence on loyalty and retention of brands. Consequently, the overall findings elucidated in this section also corroborates with a study of Martey (2014) which indicates that, when CRM is practiced successfully, organizations are able to meet customer expectations which automatically affect individuals" perspective in order to meet their expectations and retain them, promote customer retention. This indicates that CRM practices implemented effectively are intended to bring customer satisfaction and retention in service industries, thereby reflecting the business's revenue.

The second objective of the study was to examine the mediating effect of customer satisfaction in the relationship between CRM Practices and Customer Retention.

CRM practices (independent variable) and customers' satisfaction (mediating variable) were regressed against Customer Retention (dependent variable). The study revealed a positive path coefficient between CRM practices and customer satisfaction as dependent variable ($\beta = 0.222$, t value = 4.349, p-value = 0.000). The findings suggest a significant linkage between CRM practices and customer satisfaction. Also, the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention with customer satisfaction being a mediating variable was found to be significant ($\beta = 0455$, p-value = 0.000) as the p-value was less than 0.05. Therefore, the finding revealed there is a significant mediating effect of customer satisfaction in the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention. Customer satisfaction being a dependent variable and CRM practices as the independent variable, the beta coefficient was .222, which suggest a positive influence of CRM practices on customer satisfaction. It was also established that customer satisfaction has a positive path coefficient with customer retention. Customer satisfaction being a mediating variable, brought about a total effect of .0455 in Table 5. This confirms further that customer satisfaction mediates in the relationship between CRM practices and Customer retention. This is in tandem with previous studies of Long et al. (2013) and Panjaitan and Laely (2017), which also established that customer satisfaction has a positive mediation effect on the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention.

Conclusions

The revelations from the study, determined that CRM practices are vital in the Ghanaian banking industry in terms of strengthening long-term relationships with customers while also increasing business efficiency. The study revealed that CRM practices (customer focus, knowledge management and technology-based CRM) has a significant effect on customer retention. Further, the study also revealed that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between CRM practices and customer retention in the banking industry. This means that Ghanaian banks who fail to properly integrate CRM into their operations will struggle to retain their loyal customers. Customer satisfaction, per the study and literature, has a significant impact on customer retention. In light of this, banks that want to keep their loyal customers must develop customer satisfaction approaches, since customer satisfaction leads to retention. The findings from the study reveal that there is a strong correlation between CRM practices and customer retention, with the role of customer satisfaction as a mediating effect between them. The findings also reveal significant implications for the banking sector in Ghana in achieving customer satisfaction and customer retention. Firstly, to accomplish customer satisfaction, it is very critical for Managers in banks to integrate and adopt the use of cutting-edge technology, innovative and unique products in their service delivery to customers. This will ensure quick-service time in bank services, thereby reducing the waiting period of customers and enhancing customer satisfaction, which is a mediating factor to customer retention. Moreover, to

better serve their clients and establish a strong connection with them, Managers must educate and equip their staff with the most up-to-date skills and information.

Essentially, Managers should give their employees effective training on the significance of customer interactions (or engagements) and its influence on Customer Relationship Management practices and the retention of customers. Managers should also take a keen look at customer focus. From the findings, it was found to play a significant role in customer satisfaction and customer retention. Further, for staff of banks to build and sustain a healthy relationship with their clients, efforts must be made to know the types of customers they are dealing with, the demands and preferences of the customers. Consequently, Managers together with staff must meet with customers to address issues and to enhance their customer relationships. In addition, this will enable banks to ascertain first-hand information about their customer base in the formulation of strategic customer-defined retention policies.

Delimitations and Future Research

The study was delimited to variables such as CRM practices (technology-based CRM, customer focus and knowledge management), customer satisfaction and customer retention. This research was carried out in Ghana Commercial Bank, Tamale, and therefore may not be comparable to other region and branches. As a result, more Ghana Commercial Banks branches in Ghana, as well as a comparative study between a private bank and a state bank, must be investigated. It is also suggested that, future research integrate additional important variables such as internal marketing, and organisational culture to establish which aspects really influence customer retention.

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