

# COMPLAINING BEHAVIOUR IN JAMAICAN MILLENNIALS: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

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# Overview

- Rationale for the study
- Review of the literature
- Methodology
- Preliminary Findings
- Conclusions & The Way Forward

# Rationale for the Study

- Importance of complaints to businesses
- Absence of research on
  - Complaint behaviour in Jamaica and
  - Millennials born between 1980 and 2004 are one third of the population (STATIN, 2014)
- Unique characteristics of Millennials

# Review of the Literature

- Service failures are inevitable but organizations can recover from them if they are agile (Hart, Heskett, & Sasser , 1990)
- Organizations do not always know that they have failed and therefore may not know that they need to recover (Zeithaml, 1981, Berry and Parasuraman, 1991, Fisk, Brown, & Bitner , 1993)
- Further, customers may not always report dissatisfaction – their reporting is dependent on numerous individual and situational factors (Day, 1984, Barlow & Moller, 1996, Tax & Brown, 1998). Indeed most customers do not complain (Plymire, 1991, Dube & Maute, 1996)
- Customers have a choice of voice (Complaint) or exit (Hirschman, 1970)
- Complaints must therefore be solicited

# Review of the Literature 2

- Millennials in college are statistically different from previous generations with higher self-esteem and assertiveness and narcissism (Deal, Altman , & Rogelberg, 1999)
- Millennials are very savvy with social media and using various media simultaneously is their specialty (Geraci & Nagy , 2004) and they depend heavily on digital technologies. Peer reviews are more trusted, memorable and influential when it comes to decision making (Lee, 2014).
- Other characteristics associated with millennials include intimacy which includes the ability to establish and sustain close relationships over the internet; loyalty to their own closely guarded personal networks but not strongly towards brands; openness to frequent change and willingness to be open, flexible and mobile (Syrett & Lamminman, 2004)

# The Hypotheses

- **H1: Millennials will report low levels of all forms of traditional voice (directly reporting the concern to the company, a newspaper or governmental agencies)**
- **H2a: Millennials will report high levels of word of mouth**
- **H2b: Millennials will report high levels of usage of social media to voice complaints about an organization**
- **H3a: Millennials will choose to exit if they believe that they can purchase the same products or services elsewhere.**
- **H3b: Millennials will choose to remain with the organization if they believe that they have no choice but to purchase the products or services from that particular organization.**
- **H4: Millennials will indicate low levels of loyalty to organizations**
- **H5a: Millennials will be influenced to complain when it is easy to do so**
- **H5b: Millennials will be influenced to complain when they believe that they will receive a speedy response**
- **H5c: Millennials will be influenced to complain when the staff seem to take their complaint seriously**
- **H5d: Millennials will be influenced to complain when the organization has good follow up procedures**

# Methodology

- Survey Questionnaires administered in class time to MSBM students (45 responses). Likert scaled & open ended questions to identify
  - An incident of service failure
  - Response to the failure
  - Conditions that would enhance the making of complaints
  - Perception of organization's responsiveness to complaints
- Focus groups conducted with FSS students to probe
  - How they viewed the making of complaints
  - Their reasons for making or not making complaints

# Preliminary Findings 1

HYPOTHESIS	RESULT
<b>Millennials will report low levels of all forms of traditional voice (directly reporting the concern to the company, a newspaper or governmental agencies)</b>	SUPPORTED. Respondents did not utilize traditional media with highest response being (3.31) for speaking directly to mgt. & lowest (1.71) for writing to newspaper
<b>H2a: Millennials will report high levels of word of mouth</b> <b>H2b: Millennials will report high levels of usage of social media to voice complaints about an organization</b>	SUPPORTED. Respondents were very likely to tell friends (4.78) NOT SUPPORTED. Respondents indicated low levels of social media usage to voice complaints ( 2.98)
<b>H3a: Millennials will choose to exit if they believe that they can purchase the same products or services elsewhere.</b> <b>H3b: Millennials will choose to remain with the organization if they believe that they have no choice but to purchase the products or services from that particular organization.</b>	NOT SUPPORTED. Most respondents would remain out of convenience & price  SUPPORTED. Most respondents viewing themselves as having little choice (even in a competitive situation) would remain & not voice their dissatisfaction



# Preliminary Findings 2

<b>HYPOTHESIS</b>	<b>RESULT</b>
<b>H4: Millennials will indicate low levels of loyalty to organizations</b>	NOT SUPPORTED. Most respondents were loyal to organizations out of expediency and cost
<b>H5a: Millennials will be influenced to complain when it is easy to do so</b>	NOT SUPPORTED. (3.67)
<b>H5b: Millennials will be influenced to complain when they believe that they will receive a speedy response</b>	NOT SUPPORTED (3.42)
<b>H5c: Millennials will be influenced to complain when the staff seem to take their complaint seriously</b>	NOT SUPPORTED (3.42)
<b>H5d: Millennials will be influenced to complain when the organization has good follow up procedures</b>	NOT SUPPORTED (3.53)

# Understanding the Complaint Behaviour 1

- Participants indicated a reluctance to complain even in the face of extremely poor service for a number of reasons:

- Service in Jamaica is deemed to be generally poor

*Considering for the Jamaica service industry, it is sort of the norm when you go anywhere and get bad service so I guess at a certain point you just adapt to it and say “Whatever”*

- They had not seen the organization take any actions to fix the problems expressed by themselves or others
- They felt that they would be complaining to the wrong person and the right person was not accessible

# Understanding the Complaint Behaviour 2

- Social media was used strategically to vent or to get action depending on the likely response of the company. Respondents made their decision based on how they saw the organizations responding to others:

*The fact that a lot of people use social media to vent or even post it on their page and it continues to happen. If they had taken to what individuals were saying then there would be at least a slight change and there is not a change. So therefore we just believe that they are never going to change. Maybe if another phone company comes in ....*

# Understanding the Complaint Behaviour 3

- Respondent's **emotions** influenced their decision to complain or not
  - Fear – In the case of food establishments
  - Fatalism

*Sometimes we learn that even though we complain, complain, complain, we are not getting any resolution and they are the only ones who offer this service. So sometimes we learn that we are waiting not so much on the service itself, we are waiting on the productt.*

- Empathy

*A lot of persons when you complain face to face, they feel like you are attacking them even though it is not their fault. In the instance when she said about the food, the person who is cashing does not want you to attack her about what was served because she sent the ticket around and what was shared in the box – it was not her fault because she, most likely, typed up fried chicken & the ticket went around 'fried chicken'. The Chef probably did not have it so the server did not have fried chicken. So, the person who you are going to confront is not the person who had done it. So she's now feeling offended because of the way that you told her so she's thinking that "I didn't do it", so the responses are different depending on the level of the person who was responsible for the wrong service"*

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# Other Findings

- Complaints are viewed as being good for the organization and for customers if they are acted upon.
- People who travelled overseas had a greater awareness of their rights as consumers & were more likely to voice
- Managers would enhance the likelihood of getting complaints if they:
  - Responded to previous complaints by making changes
  - Made it easier to make complaints by using tablet/computer systems in the organization, giving forms that were shorter and easier to fill out
  - Avoiding dependence on suggestion boxes

**Key words were simplicity, speed of completion and convenience**

# Conclusions

- Jamaican Millennials are not satisfied with the service that they receive in many organizations but find current ways of providing feedback unfriendly and/or unwieldy
- Jamaican Millennials are slow to exit except in drastic situations
- Jamaican Millennials will voice their complaints to one another but hold back from expressing them to the organization because they feel that it is a waste of time
- Managers may be lulled into a sense of indifference to customer dissatisfaction. However as they become less price and convenience sensitive they may change. Also greater exposure to the customer service in other locations may decrease their zone of tolerance

# The Way Forward

- Understand the source of empathy towards service providers
- Understand gender differences in the making of complaints
- Broaden the sample to include working millennials and differentiate between those with overseas work experience and those without