

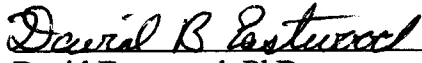
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Ronald Howard Tipper entitled "Consumer Complaint Behavior: An Empirical Investigation of Taxonomy, Influencing Factors, and Consumer Attitudes Towards Retailers & Manufacturers in Complaining Behavior." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Textile, Retail and Consumer Sciences.


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CONSUMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOR:
AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF TAXONOMY, INFLUENCING FACTORS,
AND CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS RETAILERS & MANUFACTURERS
IN COMPLAINING BEHAVIOR

A Thesis
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Ronald Howard Tipper
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and siblings

Mr. Howard Rufus Tipper

Mrs. Nellie Fae Tipper

Deborah Ann Tipper

Donna Kay Tipper

and

Pamela Lea Hardin

who have given me invaluable mental, emotional, and financial support in completing this educational process.

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Abstract

In the last ten years the focus of consumer complaint behavior research has shifted from the macro-perspective to a micro-perspective. In the 1970's and 1980's research focused on underlying taxonomies of complaint behavior in an effort to lay a foundation for further studies. In the last ten years these studies have focused on complaint behaviors specific to individual product classes and services. The result is a myriad of factors that influence not only the consumer's propensity to complain, but also which complaining activity he will engage in.

This study was instigated to examine the underlying construct of consumer complaint behavior in an attempt to affirm which, if any, of the commonly accepted taxonomies were still valid from the 1970's and 1980's. Also, the most commonly occurring factors in complaint behavior such as age, education, and gender that have been uncovered were examined in the underlying construct. This study also provides a look into the differing consumer attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers and their effects on complaining behavior.

The research questions proposed in this study began with an examination of the underlying construct of CCB. Following this first hypothesis, an investigation into the effects of gender, age, education, income, marketplace attitudes, consumer activity (such as voting), marketplace knowledge, and marketplace expectations was undertaken. The population of the State of Tennessee served as the sample base and MANOVA analysis was used to examine the hypotheses. Results from the study indicate that none of the

three prevalent taxonomies can thoroughly explain the underlying construct of consumer complaint behavior. Further, only two of the commonly accepted factors used in determining complaint behavior are significant in the revealed construct. The two factors were the consumer's expectation of the marketplace reaction to complaints and participation in consumer activities such as voting, membership in various organizations, and / or writing to elected officials. None of the demographic variables such as gender, age, income, and education were found to significantly influence CCB.

Literature examining the consumer movement often states that one of its primary goals is to educate the consumer. It is possible that this educational attainment by the consumer as well as the maturation of the consumer movement has shifted the foundation of complaining behavior creating a new taxonomy. Further, this "more educated" consumer may provide the answers as to why gender, age, income, and education are no longer significant in the underlying construct of consumer complaint behavior.

With regards to the consumer's attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers, this study suggests that the consumer is more comfortable with retailers and is more likely to resolve complaints on a one-on-one basis with the retailer. However, when the complaint involves the manufacturer, the consumer is more likely to choose some type of third party action.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Adam Smith argued that consumption is the goal of economic activities and that labor is an annoying exertion undergone for the sake of producing goods for consumption (Dameron, 1939). Most early economists developed the major part of their work around production following Smith's lead. One commonly accepted assumption of a developed market economy is that the consumer guides production. However, it may be more appropriate to state that production is guided by the choices of consumers.

Consumers have never been so free to choose as they are today in a market that provides a large breadth and depth of products and services (Dameron, 1939). These choices dictate, to some degree, what is available in the marketplace for consumption. The consumer is, none the less, bound by a standard of living that is controlled by market forces such as consumer knowledge (information) and product introductions. Consumer's choices, hampered by the amount and type of information available in the marketplace, often force the consumer to make a less than optimal choice while competition in the marketplace safeguards the consumer to the extent that it gives him a choice between price points.

Herrmann (1970) confirms Dameron's comments stating that competition works best if consumers are well informed and motivated to choose wisely. Today, sellers often neglect to provide the information necessary for informed choice emphasizing instead

trivial product differences and attributes focusing on emotional appeals in advertising to sway the purchase decision¹. In this context, consumer dissatisfaction is one possible outcome of consumption in an imperfect market.

Consumer Complaint Behavior (CCB) has been a field of interest for researchers since the mid-1970's. CCB is triggered by a consumer's feelings of dissatisfaction with a purchase (Singh & Pandya, 1991; Andreasen, 1977) which results from the difference between the expectation and the reality of a purchase (Hunt, 1991; Bearden & Oliver, 1985). Though dissatisfaction is necessary for CCB to exist, dissatisfaction itself is not a sufficient condition for complaining to occur (Singh & Pandya, 1991). Instead, CCB is a choice made by a consumer which is based on judgements that the outcome of the complaint will outweigh the time and costs involved in the process (Strahle & Day, 1984; Singh & Pandya, 1991).

Traditionally, dissatisfaction has been looked at within the context of a single purchase episode with the post-purchase evaluation being determined by whether or not the product or service exceeded, met, or did not meet the expectation of the consumer. Most research is concerned with why the dissatisfaction episode occurred and how the consumer determines an appropriate means of reconciling himself to the purchase. (Day & Landon, 1970). In order to qualify as a consumer complaint, the dissatisfaction must

¹For a detailed discussion on the use of competition as a marketplace safeguard, retailers roles in protecting consumers, the rationality of consumers, and price-quality relationships the reader is referred to The Frontier of Research In The Consumer Interest published by The American Council on Consumer Interests. In particular, competition as a marketplace safeguard is discussed in chapters 19 and 20. Retailers roles in marketplace protection and the rationality of consumers is discussed in Chapters 9 thru 14. And, the price-quality relationship is discussed in chapters 6 thru 8.

be expressed either by the consumer or on behalf of the consumer to either seek restitution, protect himself or others from future dissatisfaction, and/or to aid the manufacturer or seller in correcting a problem (Day, 1980).

The importance of consumer complaints in the marketplace is three-fold. First, from a macro-societal perspective, the society at large benefits when complaints act as a corrective mechanism to discourage unsatisfactory business practices (Verhage, 1987). Second, at the micro-level perspective, the relationship between the buyer and the seller can be improved. A successful complaint resolution may lead to a consumer's increased loyalty to the product, manufacturer, or service provider (Williams et al., 1993; Blodgett et al., 1993). Finally, consumers gain an increased confidence level in addition to the tangible outcome of redress, such as a refund or an exchange, when complaints are effectively and efficiently handled, which will further encourage their use of redress seeking (Blodgett et al., 1993).

A consumer's complaining action can take a variety of forms ranging from doing nothing to complaining to family and friends to taking legal action. In CCB, dissatisfaction is necessary for complaining action to occur, but is not, in and of itself, enough for complaining action to occur (Singh & Pandya, 1991). Likewise, in a consumer movement discontent is necessary for collective action to occur, but is not enough in itself to bring about change and cannot explain the cyclical nature of a consumer movement (Smith & Bloom, 1989).

In their beginnings, most marketplaces consist of those products that the individual is willing to produce for sale or barter. The consumer's choice is limited as-

well-as his ability to consume in quantity. As the marketplace matures, trade and specialization become more inherent. Products become more plentiful allowing a basic shift in the market from a producer-based economy to a consumer-based economy. Now, the consumer decides, with some restrictions, what and how much is to be produced (Garman, 1995).

As production expands, the economy expands - a nations GNP per capita expands allowing the average individual consumer to acquire a larger disposable income. The individual becomes more complex and sophisticated in the marketplace and his needs become increasingly harder to satisfy. It is this complexity in the marketplace created by increased consumer sophistication and an influx of products at an ever increasing rate that constructs a need for consumer protection, hence a consumer movement. A function of the movement is to create an avenue for dissatisfaction to be expressed resulting in distinguishable patterns of consumer complaint behavior (Dameron, 1939; Smith & Bloom, 1989; Herrmann, 1970).

There are four benefits that are associated with a consumer movement: (1) the movement will allow for the increase of product information; (2) it will lead to legislation that limits advertising expenditure which primarily affects business interest in market shares rather than the aggregate demand of consumers; (3) the movement will require manufacturers to endure more of the social costs imposed by their manufacturing operations and product design decisions; and (4) it reduces the number of unsafe or unhealthy products which result in more a satisfied, healthier consumer (Kotler, 1972).

From the retailers viewpoint, consumers' desires become a driving force in production and marketing. However, by producing to fulfill consumers' desires, there stands a realistic probability of hurting the consumer in the long-run. Examples include the production of large automobiles versus the amount of natural resources they require to function (gasoline) and the pollution they emit; the production of quick tasty foods that do not have the nutritional value needed for long-term health; and, the production of alcohol and tobacco products, both of which are considered enjoyable, but excessive consumption and long-run health risks are just now coming to the forefront. Sellers must bear in mind that by catering to consumers' desires they do not necessarily guarantee themselves satisfied consumers. The answer would seem to lie somewhere in a consumer oriented method of production that is tempered by long-term consumer welfare (Kolter, 1972). More specifically, from the retailer's perspective it is important that merchandise standards be raised, staff educated, and finally the consumer educated - all of which the retailer can achieve in cost effective ways (Dameron, 1939).

The trend toward educating the consumer is made stronger by a mature consumer movement which encourages a heightened awareness among business leaders (Waldrop, 1991). If consumers perceive a business as having their best interest in mind, they are more likely to patronize that business. Consumer education may benefit a company even if the topic does not have anything to do with the products the company sells. For example, Coca-Cola produced a pamphlet in 1983 which provided advice on how to complain and take action. Although the material contained in the publication did not directly relate to any of its products, consumers who read the pamphlet found the

information valuable, and their opinion of Coca-Cola was enhanced. These consumers stated a greater trust in the company and its products and stated that their future purchases of the company's products would increase.

The manufacturer, retailer, and the consumer all stand to benefit from a study of consumer complaint behavior and its relation to a consumer movement. For the manufacturer, producing products or providing services that not only satisfy the consumer, but encouraging long-run consumption without harm, allows for the most economical use of resources including earnings (Dameron, 1939). For the retailer, by providing those products and services that the consumer desires and that is good for the consumer, a positive image is promoted increasing selling opportunities (Waldrop, 1991). For the consumer, understanding the relationship between complaining action and improvements in marketplace choice frees him to choose wisely without limiting his choice options unnecessarily (Barkesdale & Darden, 1972).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is threefold. First, the underlying taxonomy of CCB is explored. Researchers tend to look at complaint behavior among product classes and between product classes and services. This paper examines three of the most commonly accepted CCB taxonomies and identifies the underlying structure of CCB.

Second, previous CCB research identifies several characteristics such as gender, age, education, income, marketplace attitudes, and consumer activity that influence

complaining behavior. This paper tests for the presence of these characteristics in the sample population in an effort to confirm the results from past research.

Third, most of the current literature explores CCB within certain product classes and between product classes and services. It is possible to identify retailers and manufacturers in part of this literature generally as the recipient of the complaint action. There exists, however, a lack of research looking at the retailer and the manufacturer simultaneously. This paper adds to the literature by exploring this void laying the groundwork for research in the relationship in CCB with regards to retailers and manufacturers.

This paper goes further by relating CCB with consumer activity and explores the retailers' role as moderator between consumers and manufacturers. It is evident from the literature that as an economy develops products enter the market at a rate that exceeds the consumer's ability to make wise choices, dissatisfaction occurs, and complaint behavior ensues. As complaints increase, groups are formed to correct marketplace injustices, hence a consumer movement. All the while, the retailer is in the middle attempting to please the consumer, bargain with the manufacturer, and make a profit.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

TAXONOMIES OF CCB

Though most researchers agree that consumer complaint behavior is a set of multiple responses (Singh, 1990; Singh and Widing, 1991; Day et al., 1981; Blodgett et al., 1993), there is disagreement on the classification of the responses. For instance, Hirschman's (1970) taxonomy of exit (viewed as active-destructive) and voice (viewed as active-constructive) is dependent on the consumer's action and intent for response classification. Exit is invoked when a consumer no longer purchases the product or service and is viewed as an economic complaint form allowing the dissatisfied consumer to shift to another product that can fulfill his need. Voice is invoked when the consumer expresses his dissatisfaction to management or another party who will place corrective measures into play. Voice is viewed as being political in nature ranging from a low grumble to an all out protest.

Day and Landon (1977) proposed a two-tier hierarchy classification of CCB with the first level distinguishing between behavioral or action responses and nonbehavioral or nonaction responses. The second level distinguishes between public action (seeking redress, complaining to either public or private agencies, and taking legal action) and private action (boycotting product, manufacturer, or seller and warning friends and

relatives).

Day (1980) classified CCB into three categories: redress seeking, complaining, and personal boycott. Redress seeking involves complaining to the manufacturer or taking legal action; complaining involves attempting to persuade others by negative word-of-mouth communication without necessarily seeking a remedy; and, personal boycott involves discontinuing purchase which may include the product, brand, store and/or manufacturer.

Singh (1988) proposed an alternate taxonomy by considering the object toward which responses are directed and that object's relation to the dissatisfaction experience. Three categories were defined: voice, private, and third party. Voice responses are external to the consumer's social net and are directly related to the dissatisfying incident, including complaint actions taken to the manufacturer, retailer, or service provider. Private responses are taken inside the consumer's social net, and the objects are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident such as complaining to relatives or friends. Third party complaints are directed to objects outside the consumer's social net and are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident such as a consumer agency or attorney.

Each of these taxonomies overlay specific periods in the consumer movement. Hirschman's 1970 taxonomy occurs at a point in time where the consumer movement was beginning to make a significant impact strengthening the consumer interest in the United States. Day's taxonomy became a better fit in the early 1980's, a time where the consumer movement in the United States had already gained considerable acceptance and was entering its maturity. And, Singh's taxonomy takes hold in the late 1980's, a point in

time where the consumer movement was considerably more mature in the United States. To get a better picture of this overlapping of taxonomy and consumer movement, a closer look at each of the three taxonomies is presented followed by a brief overview of consumer movements and then a look at the consumer movement within the United States. Finally, a discussion of the roles assumed by retailers as a mediator between the consumer and the manufacturer is presented.

Hirschman

Hirschman's (1970) taxonomy was constructed in response to economic concerns about marketplace inefficiencies and hoped to bridge the gap between economists and behaviorists in the area of consumer complaint behavior, although this terminology had not yet been introduced. Hirschman explains the situation of the 1970's as:

Under any economic, social, or political system, individuals, business firms, and organizations in general are subject to lapses from efficient, rational, law-abiding, virtuous, or otherwise functional behavior. No matter how well a society's basic institutions are devised, failures of some actors to live up to the behavior which is expected of them are bound to occur, if only for all kinds of accidental reasons. Each society learns to live with a certain amount of such dysfunctional or mis-behavior; but lest the misbehavior feed on itself and lead to general decay, society must be able to marshal from within itself forces which will make as many of the faltering actors as possible revert to the behavior required for its proper functioning (page 1).

Hirschman argues that two possibilities exist when consumers become discouraged with the current failure of business, they either exit or voice. Exit is defined as no longer purchasing the product or service which in turn drops revenues in the firm leading the management to either take corrective action or quit doing business. Viewed as an

economic complaint form, exit allows the dissatisfied consumer to shift to another product that can fulfill his need which improves his welfare forcing the firm to either take corrective action and increase its efficiency to survive or become extinct.

Voice is defined as the consumer expressing dissatisfaction to management or another party who will place corrective measures into play. Voice is not defined as complaining to friends and family, a distinction made in the two remaining taxonomies. Voice is seen as being political in nature since it can range from a low grumble to an all out protest. The consumer expresses himself publically without thought of retribution focusing attention on the loss of the firm's efficiency forcing change. While these two views appear to be opposites, Hirschman argues that the two categories of complaint behavior are contrasts to each other and not mutually exclusive.

Exit, by its nature, exists in non-perfect markets where there is competition but the firm is allowed some latitude in the pricing and level of quality of the product. For the exit concept to work, two variables must be considered: (1) quantity demanded must depend on quality changes instead of price since price does not drop when random lapses in efficiency produce inferior goods; and (2) the management of the firm must have a reaction relating to quality improvement from the drop in revenues as consumers move to other products. Exit response occurs post-opportunity in that the decrease in revenue is mathematically represented in accounting forms, the damage has been done.

Voice, on the other hand, occurs mid-opportunity since it insists on the consumer articulating his dissatisfaction to management or another authority in an attempt to change the current inefficiency. This articulation can come from one consumer or a

group of consumers with the intensity of the complaint behavior continuing to increase in volume until change occurs. In other words, as voice is repeated in an attempt to affect change, the tone and urgency of the voice behavior increases. Unlike exit, voice must allow a time frame for management to respond. After articulating the dissatisfaction, time must be given to management for corrective action to take place. Voice is the compliment to exit here - the less viable the exit option is, the more viable voice becomes.

Organizations can be classified by their members complaining actions. Figure 1 shows where organizations fit when its members' complaint behaviors are considered. Exit, voice, a combination of exit and voice, or neither exit nor voice are depicted.

Organizations whose members react strongly via	EXIT		
	Yes		No
Yes			
VOICE	Voluntary associations, competitive political parties, and some business enterprises, for example those selling output to a few buyers		Family, tribe, nation, church, parties in non-totalitarian one-party systems
No	Competitive business enterprise in relation to customers		Parties in totalitarian one-party systems, terroristic groups, and criminal gangs

Figure 1: Organization Classification. Hirschman, Albert O., Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970, p. 121.

Hirschman found embedded in these two classifications a third response behavior which is termed loyalty. From the exit classification, loyalty is defined as the opposite of voice, that being either indifference or acquiescence. Loyalty becomes more complicated from the voice classification. In a non-perfect market where a substitute item is available at a reasonable cost, loyalty invokes voice when the consumer does not exit to the substitute item. Loyalty has two distinct dimensions: (1) the consumer feels an obligation to the firm leading him to believe that his voice will effect change ridding the firm of its inefficiency; and/or (2) the individual feels it is his social obligation to effect change ridding inefficiency from the marketplace. Hirschman notes that loyalty also exists in exit since some individuals feel a responsibility either to the firm or to society working in much the same way as mentioned above with the exception that the outcome no longer directly affects him since he has exited the firm.

Loyalty forms its own paradox. From basic economics it is learned that when price rises it is the marginal consumer that drops out first. In the case of quality, however, the marginal consumer is the last to leave either because of the costs associated with exit or the lack of knowledge. In any event, this leaves the lesser quality conscious consumers inside the firm allowing the level of efficiency to fall even further before voice action is taken. Loyalty also, for whatever the individual's reasoning, keeps those with the greatest surplus inside the firm allowing for the voice option to become more effective since their quality level is higher than that of the marginal consumer and inefficiencies are noticed earlier.

Hirschman's taxonomy was proposed in theory and was not empirically tested until 1993. Maute and Forrester (1993) took issue that only the cognitive process that exists in the satisfaction outcome is defined by the disconfirmation paradigm. The disconfirmation paradigm does not account for the structure of the consumption experience nor does it allow for a theoretical framework to investigate dissatisfying consumption experiences since it is only concerned with the satisfaction outcome versus the entire consumption process. It was this void that led Maute and Forrester (1993) to perform a confirmatory factor analysis using Hirschman's taxonomy. This analysis placed the construct to a rigorous test and assessed its goodness of fit along with several competing models of CCB. Three factors were examined in the study: (1) the magnitude of the dissatisfaction, (2) barriers to exit, and (3) the attractiveness of substitutes. Three hypotheses were formed with regards to these three factors relating their effect on Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Maute and Forrester (1993) used a 2 X 2 X 2 between-subjects factorial design to test the relationships that existed between the three variables. The magnitude of dissatisfaction was defined as an increase in risk(s) to the interests of the buyer. Their results are as follows:

- 1) Exit and voice increased and loyalty decreased when the dissatisfaction problem was more severe.
- 2) Exit decreased, voice increased, and loyalty decreased when exit barriers were high.
- 3) Exit increased and loyalty decreased when substitutes were more attractive. Since voice was not found to be statistically significant, it was not formally tested.

In short, Maute and Forrester (1993) provided empirical support for Hirschman's taxonomy of Exit, Voice, and Loyalty suggesting that the topology might be valid for use in interpersonal, organizational, and employment dissatisfactions as-well-as in the consumer context. They, however conclude that the majority of consumers respond passively to their dissatisfaction episodes engaging in neither exit or voice. Limitations to this study included the sample, which was comprised of business students, not actual dissatisfied consumers. Although the participants were fully aware of the study, the point is made that since they were business students their responses may be biased. Further, behavioral intent, not actual behavior was measured. And, the study looked at intent from one dissatisfying experience and did not account for repeated offenses occurring over time. Since limited empirical proof is available for Hirschman's taxonomy, it remains largely theoretical.

In 1990, Singh altered Hirschman's taxonomy substituting negative word-of-mouth for loyalty. Singh's contention was that voice and exit are nonredundant, making the loyalty option operative only when a dissatisfied consumer neither exits or voices. That is, a consumer has a choice between exit and voice. Singh realized that any moderation between these two actions is a result of loyalty. By substituting negative word-of-mouth for loyalty, Singh constructed a third category for complaint behavior which becomes operative as an independent variable, decreasing when the perceived probability of a successful complaint increases. For example, if a consumer engages in voice and the action has a positive result, negative word-of-mouth is at the very least minimized if not negated. In the case of exit, negative word-of-mouth may be used as an

indicator of the extent of the dissatisfaction when its intensity is considered.

Although titled *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Hirschman (1970) identified a two-faceted CCB taxonomy - voice and exit. Loyalty is deemed as a moderating variable inside these two options. In other words, voice and exit are at the two extremes of the complaint response continuum with loyalty defining the exact point along the continuum where the individual consumer will fall. Maute and Forrester (1993) provided validity for this taxonomy. Singh (1990) also provided empirical proof of Hirschman's taxonomy, but identified a three-faceted taxonomy defining voice, exit and negative word-of-mouth (loyalty).

Day and Landon / Day

Day and Landon's (1977) two-tier hierarchy classification of CCB begins with the first level distinguishing between behavioral (take action responses) and nonbehavioral (take no action responses). The second level distinguishes between public action (seeking redress, complaining to either public or private agencies, and taking legal action) and private action (boycotting product, manufacturer, or seller and warning friends and relatives). (See Figure 2.) The first level is mutually exclusive, either the consumer elects to take a complaining action or does not. If the consumer opts no action, the dissatisfying experience is presumed to be forgotten. However, the second level in this proposed taxonomy is not mutually exclusive. If the consumer opts to takes action, he may either take public action or private action or both or any combination he chooses.

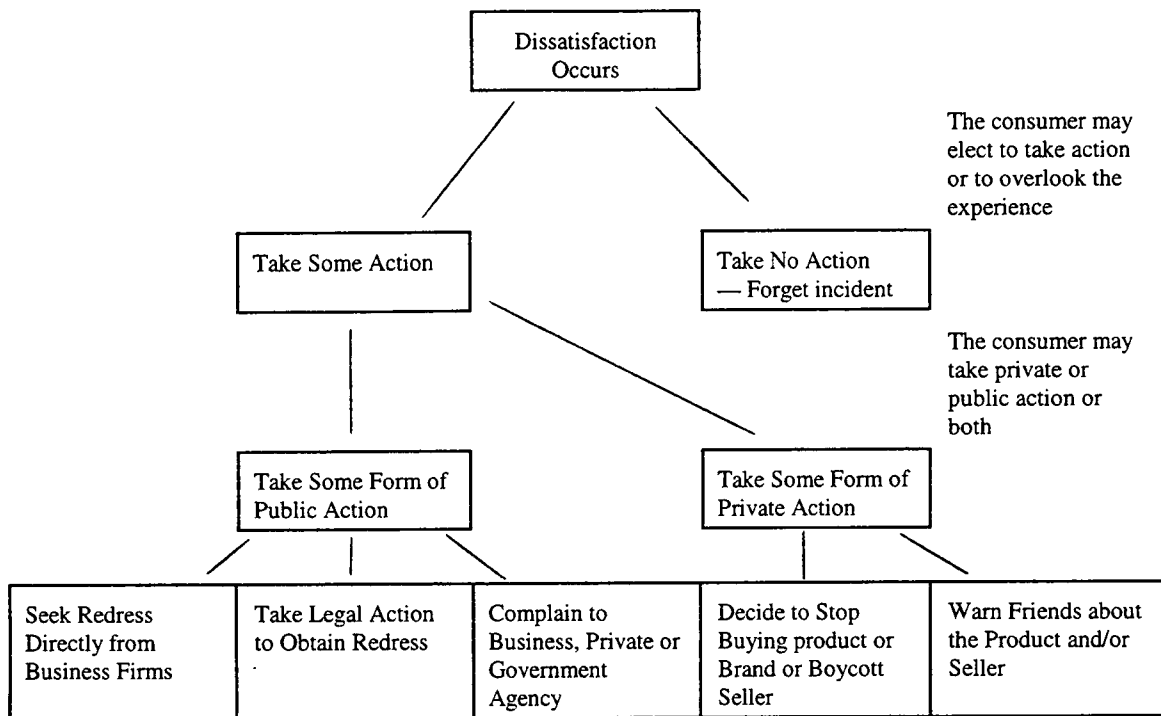


Figure 2: Taxonomy proposed by Day and Landon. Day, Ralph L., and E. Laird Landon, Jr., "Towards a Theory of consumer Complaining Behavior," in Consumer and Industrial Buying Behavior, Arch Woodside, Jagdish Sheth, and Peter Bennett, eds., Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1977, p. 432.

Which complaint option at each level can be determined by the type of product.

Day and Landon (1977) proposed that the more complex and expensive an item becomes, moving from nondurable products to durable products, the greater the chance public action will be taken. Even with complex, expensive durable purchases there is still a substantial chance the consumer will opt to take no action or only participate in private actions. With inexpensive, durable purchases Day and Landon (1977) comment that in approximately one-third of the cases no action was taken and private action was evident in approximately fifty percent of the cases.

Empirical support for this taxonomy is limited and the results vary. Day and Ash (1979) found that private actions (complaining to friends and relatives) were taken by 32.5% of their respondents when dissatisfaction occurred with a durable goods purchase and this response only increased to 33.3% in nondurable goods purchase episodes. Public actions (redress seeking) taken by respondents was found to be 48.8% and 57.9% for durable and nondurable goods respectively. These results do not tend to support Day and Landon's (1977) taxonomy. Other studies, such as Day et al.'s (1981) study of consumers' actions in Canada and Bloomington, IN, tend to support this taxonomy lending some validity to the structure. These conflicting findings created the need for further research efforts on the proposed classification schema of CCB.

Day (1980) redefined this taxonomy proposing that consumer's complain to meet specific objectives. He believed that a CCB classification based on these objectives would provide a better fit for researchers. Three categories were defined in this taxonomy- redress seeking, complaining, and personal boycott. Redress seeking involves complaining to the manufacturer or taking legal action seeking a specific remedy. Complaining involves attempting to persuade others by negative word-of-mouth communication without necessarily seeking a remedy affecting future behavior. And, personal boycott involves discontinuing purchase which may include the product, brand, store and/or manufacturer.

Singh (1988) offered another explanation of CCB. He proposed that the current taxonomies, while accommodating CCB actions, did not fully account for the CCB options currently available to the consumer. In forming his taxonomy, Singh (1988) used a two-step strategy. First, he analyzed consumer complaint intentions to resolve issues in the conceptualization of a CCB taxonomy. The prevailing belief is that the relative intensity with which the individual consumer views all possible CCB actions is as important and vital to a CCB taxonomy as the action that was or was not engaged in. Second, he placed the resulting taxonomy in a validation check using consumer complaint behavior data. The resulting taxonomy, comprised of a three-dimensional model (voice, private, and third party), provides proof that each dimension is distinct and has a discriminate validity.

Singh (1988) placed three considerations into his taxonomy. First, the number of variables should be large enough to reflect the broadness of the CCB phenomenon. Second, to resolve the dimensionality dispute of CCB, he confirmed that the number of items in the CCB scale that would be suitable for empirical assessment. And third, by conducting the study in a variety of complaint situations, he was able to place the proposed taxonomy to a rigorous test. Beginning with fifteen items from published research, Singh (1988) measured the diversity of the CCB construct. The pre-test later revised this scale to ten items. Respondents were asked to recall their last dissatisfying experience and record their responses in a dichotomous (yes/no) response. To decrease

the effects of memory retention, the respondents were asked about their intention if a similar situation occurred again with responses recorded on a 6-point Likert scale (most likely/least likely). By separating intention and behavior questions a control for response bias was introduced. Four different complaint situations were considered in the study: (1) grocery stores, (2) automobile repair shops, (3) medical care providers, and (4) banks/financial services.

Beginning with the data from the auto repair situation, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed with the null hypothesis of a three-dimensional, congeneric structure of CCB responses with the results giving weight to a reasonably good fit. The validity of the proposed taxonomy was investigated by subjecting the taxonomy to the remaining three complaint situations. With the exception of banks, the null hypotheses could not be rejected. And, in the case of banks, the chi square values (being compared to other taxonomies) suggested a reasonably good fit regardless of the CCB situation. Both the T-values for factor loading and the scale of reliability values indicated that the corresponding latent construct had been identified and that a reasonably good measurement of the latent construct had been obtained, respectively. The study also indicated that intention-behavior consistencies occur in each of the individual CCB dimensions, but does not occur across those dimensions.

Limitations of this study include a small response area, southwest Texas, which may not be representative of the whole population. And, only four prominent complaint situations were involved. The more complaint situations the taxonomy is placed into, the stronger its validity. Further, only ten items were used to reflect the nature of the

complaints and while these ten were proven valid in the pilot study, other items should be developed to represent the complexity of CCB more accurately. Even with these limitations, the larger result of this study proved that existing taxonomies and operational definitions of CCB could no longer be accepted as true representations of observed CCB responses.

The formalized CCB taxonomy was defined as a three-faceted phenomenon which considered the object toward which responses are directed and that object's relation to the dissatisfaction experience defining three categories: voice, private, and third party.

Voice responses are external to the consumer's social net and are directly related to the dissatisfying incident, including complaint actions taken to the manufacturer, retailer, or service provider. Private responses are taken inside the consumer's social net, and the objects are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident such as complaining to relatives or friends. Third party complaints are directed to objects outside the consumer's social net and are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident such as a consumer agency or attorney.

INFLUENCING FACTORS

Andreasen (1988) summarized factors which influence CCB actions. These factors include cost-benefit, personality/attitude, learning, and restraint variables. The cost-benefit model assumes the consumer weighs the cost against the benefit of complaining, taking into account the probability of a successful outcome, before making a

decision to act. Each dissatisfying experience becomes a unique opportunity forcing a rational and objective evaluation on the part of the consumer. The cost-benefit analysis takes place on an economic and psychological level. On the economic side, the consumer may decide that the cost (value) of the product is too small to warrant action or that the dissatisfaction is minimal and can be lived with. Objective costs such as a special trip for complaining including the time and effort required to complain and the costs associated with product absence are included on the economic side as well. And, the probability that complaining will result in one of any number of predetermined outcomes and the value of the outcome is considered too. Psychological costs include fear. Fear of: being treated badly, being blamed for the problem, being labeled a “complainer”, and/or feeling guilty. There is a positive side to psychological costs namely feeling. Feeling satisfaction: at being a good “consumer citizen”, not holding the complaint in, being assertive, and/or at having learned a skill that can be utilized in the future or passed on to others.

The personality model takes into account the personality/attitude characteristics of the consumer restraining his action response. Included in these characteristics are self-confidence, attitude(s) toward complaining, and assertiveness (Andreasen, 1988). In the case of assertiveness, however, the original study by Richins (1981) did not test for this variable independently. Therefore, it is more accurately stated that assertiveness has been measured in the outcome of a CCB response, but has not been measured as an indicator of possible response behavior.

The learning model contends that past successes or failures drive future complaining behavior if the dissatisfying experience occurs again (Andreasen, 1988).

This model stands regardless of the nature of the motivational force that drove the original complaining action. For example, if the cost/benefit model drove the first complaining action and its result was negative and the dissatisfying experience occurs again, the complaint behavior will be jaded by the first outcome even if another model (i.e. personality/attitude) is the motivational force in the second event.

Knowledge of marketplace helps consumers form certain attitudes toward business and government. That is, marketplace knowledge interacts with the personality model (expressed by the consumers attitude towards complaining) and the learning model (expressed in repeated actions within the marketplace). Attitudes towards both business and government have been found to impact complaining behavior. Warland et al. (1975) confirms that consumers taking complaint action tend to be more politically active and reported an overall general dissatisfaction with business practices. These respondents participated more in consumer issues and were more liberal in their views.

The restraints model suggests that complaining behavior is driven by the limitations of the consumer whether these limitations are physical (i.e. muscle loss preventing writing) or environmental (i.e. having no transportation to get to the seller) making complaint behavior a function of what the consumer is able to do, not what the consumer would like to do (Andreasen, 1988). This model also includes restraints imposed from the lack of information, the lack of income, and the success of the seller to thwart complaining behavior.

These models are not mutually exclusive. For instance, a consumer may evaluate the cost/benefit of a complaint, but their personality prohibits them from taking action

even if the cost/benefit analysis is positive for the consumer. Or, a consumer may engage in a cost/benefit analysis and determine a positive, beneficial outcome and may have the attitude to complain, but is limited by either income, health, or the seller (Andreasen, 1988).

In her notion of Learned Helplessness, Laforge (1989) gives credence to the attitude/personality model, the learning model, and the restraints model. The theory of Learned Helplessness refers to a mechanism where noncontingent reinforcement produces the expectation that events are uncontrollable. After repeated punishment or failure, persons become passive and remain so even after environmental changes make success possible. Based primarily on the perception that events are uncontrollable, and that the mere exposure to an uncontrollable outcome is not sufficient to inhibit responses and learning, Learned Helplessness contends that a consumer shows debilitating effects only when he has developed the expectation that outcomes are beyond his control. This often leads to attributing helplessness to a particular reason or cause once it is perceived that responding will not be effective in bringing about a highly positive outcome or in preventing a highly negative outcome. Learned Helplessness, in conjunction with the attitude/personality model, the learning model, and the restraints model may explain CCB especially in the older population since this groups formative years were spent in a relative inhospitable consumer environment reenforcing a non-complaining behavior. And, since the elderly often suffer from physical limitations, a convenient (perhaps legitimate) restraint is given to complaining behavior.

Along this line, research indicates that a consumer's expectation of marketplace response to complaining behavior is a deciding factor in whether he will complain and what type of complaining action he will engage in. Blodgett (1992) states that in the case of retailers, if a consumer expects a positive complaint resolution the likelihood of him complaining to friends and family decreases significantly. Further, if a positive outcome is expected, the consumer may not complain at all believing that from time to time a defective product will enter the marketplace.

Researchers agree that complaint behaviors differ among product classes and between product classes and services. Day and Landon (1977) proposed that the more complex and expensive an item becomes, moving from nondurable products to durable products, the greater the chance for public complaint action. Oster (1980) found complaint frequency increased when an item was infrequently purchased, the product had a low income elasticity, price of the product was high, or when the product was volatile in price level. More specifically, Duhaime and Ash (1979) found that consumers purchasing transportation items, financial services and/or insurance were more inclined to seek outside assistance in complaint resolution. Increases in public complaining were found by Best and Andreasen (1977) in the auto repair and medical industries, and Kolodinsky supported these findings in her 1990 research in an aggregated sample of services (Kolodinsky, 1995). There is a series of variables that research has empirically proven to remain constant in the complaining process. Among these variables are gender, age, education, and income.

Strahl and Day (1984) make an issue of gender by referring to Venkatesh's classification regarding internalized sex role norms and the extent to which these norms function allowing for the classification of behavior. Their research concluded that the gender of the respondent independent of age, income, and life circumstances was an important factor moderating satisfaction and complaining actions. Further, they found that males and feminists were more likely to take complaining action. Verhage (1987) found that males generally have more knowledge on consumer protection regulations than females suggesting males may take more complaining action than females. And, Duhaime and Ash (1979) detected underlying differences between male and female complaining behavior in transportation items and financial services. Conclusions from the literature would infer that complaint behavior occurs independent of gender, however, gender may dictate what type of action is taken by the consumer when dissatisfaction occurs.

Bernhardt (1981) proposed that older consumers would be more likely to seek redress since their extended market experience would reinforce their ability to confidently state dissatisfaction prompting a positive outcome. However, empirical research indicates that older consumers are less likely to complain at all (Bearden, 1983; Warland et al., 1975). LaForge (1989) attempts to explain these findings with her theory of Learned Helplessness expanding on the notion that after repeated failure in bringing about a desired outcome or in preventing a negative outcome, the learning process inhibits the consumer from complaining. Other explanations for the lack of complaining actions on the part of older consumers include economic constraints, a perception that the effort of

complaining is not worth the costs involved, or not knowing where to go to complain (Bernhardt, 1981). In fact, most research indicates that consumer's who take some form of complaining action tend to be younger (Dolinsky, 1994; Duhaime and Ash, 1979; Warland et al., 1975).

Education and income allude to social class and group membership, both of which tend to positively impact complaining action. Warland et al. (1975) found that consumers who voice dissatisfaction tend to be in a distinct socioeconomic group being well-educated, having a relatively high income, are above average in social class, and hold more group memberships. This group was also found to own more stocks and bonds which is also related to education, employment, and income. These findings have been supported by other research in CCB (Singh, 1990; Lee, 1996; Fornell and Didow, 1980).

The legal system in conjunction with the cultural influences in a society are apt to affect the individual's complaining behavior. From a consumer perspective, the laws and regulations governing a society act as a boundary for the individuals and businesses within that society (Verhage, 1987). These laws and regulations are often a reflection of the cultural beliefs and norms of the society. Since the collective actions of a consumer movement often form laws and regulations that are imposed on the society, it is rational to assume that the level of the consumer movement in a country may prove to be a valuable predictor of complaint actions taken by the individual consumer.

CONSUMER MOVEMENT

Dameron (1939) described the consumer movement as the collective of organizations, activities, and consumer attitudes concerned with the distribution of goods and services. Its primary focus is on consumer rights, especially those rights relating to information on prices, quality, and the efficiency of the distribution process. Smith and Bloom (1989) placed the word “evolving” into the definition of a consumer movement. This allows for the changes that occur in the movement over time, as economies and educational levels change, to be taken into consideration. Even with allowances for the evolution of a consumer movement, most researchers agree that a consumer movement is never a concerted effort. It is an aggregate of actions about different products, services, and concerns that sometimes overlap strengthening the position of all involved. A consumer movement provides for the aggregate efforts of action that result in government protection or self-imposed regulation by the business to protect the marketplace from unfair practices (Dameron, 1939; Smith & Bloom, 1989; Herrmann, 1970).

In the beginning, most marketplaces consist of those products that the individual is willing to produce for sale or barter. The consumer’s choice is limited as-well-as his ability to consume in quantity. As the marketplace matures, trade and specialization becomes more inherent. Products become more plentiful allowing a basic shift in the market from a producer-based economy to a consumer-based economy. Now, the consumer decides, with some restrictions, what and how much is to be produced. Based on the production-economic perspective, certain assumptions about the marketplace can

be made: (1) the consumer guides production for the purpose of consumption which becomes the end purpose of production; (2) competition becomes an adequate safeguard for the consumer; (3) sellers/businesses have a commitment to protect the consumer; and (4) consumers are rational and are aware of their own best interest (Garman, 1995).

The literature agrees that the basis of a consumer movement lies in the social fabric of the citizens. As marketplace discontent increases and remains persistent, it becomes widely shared producing a collective of actions (vs individual actions) imposing government regulation and/or self-imposed business regulation providing protection in the marketplace (Dameron, 1939; Smith & Bloom, 1989). Kotler (1972) insists that consumer action becomes inevitable when the conditions for a successful social movement come into place. He defines these conditions as structural conduciveness, structural strain, growth of a generalized belief, precipitation factors, mobilization for action, and social control. While the process appears complicated, it becomes simple with each condition feeding the next.

Structural conduciveness defines the base contradictions that develop within the society, such as an increase in income and educational levels. This structural conduciveness produces discontent on several fronts including economical, social, marketing, political, and exological discontent as the consumer becomes more affluent in the marketplace. As discontent increases, its causes become shared throughout society producing generalized beliefs. Precipitating factors such as a charismatic spokesperson, or public action taken by small groups ignite the movement allowing the mobilization for action to occur. Finally, social control (whether political, industrial, or a combination of

the two) either facilitates the movement by taking no action, or reduces its impact by taking corrective action (Kotler, 1972).

In any event, information is the key delineating factor in the consumer movement and becomes one of its primary aims. Scholars argue that it is the lack of education on the part of the consumer that allows him to be easily deceived on purchase factors such as quality, price, brand name, and size (Dameron, 1939; Nader, 1968). Education forms a paradox in the consumer movement. As formal education increases consumers become more active when marketplace dissatisfaction occurs strengthening the consumer movement (Dameron, 1939; Waldrop, 1991). However, as the consumer movement increases, the risk of marketplace dissatisfaction decreases producing a drop in consumer activity via consumer education (Waldrop, 1991). The consumer movement becomes a win-win opportunity for business, the consumer, and all involved in the consumption experience.

The level of the consumer movement within a society can be measured by the amount of activity and the perceived need for protection. The consumer movement goes through a life cycle much the same as a product life cycle. Continuing this analogy, the consumer movement becomes a staple good meaning that although activity levels may decrease, it never completely extinguishes itself. In fact, the cyclical nature of a consumer movement allows for continual increases in activity followed by continual decreases in activity.

The United States

The consumer movement in the United States can be seen in three distinct eras. The early 1900's, the 1930's, and the mid 1960's. The first wave was a result of rising prices, the writings of Upton Sinclair, and published marketplace infractions. Its result was the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act, both occurring in 1906, and the formation of the Federal Trade Commission in 1914. This wave subsided, and it was not until the Great Depression of the 1930's that consumerism again reared its head. As prices rose and consumers saw their real wage decrease, they became insistent on getting the most for their money. Housewives in Detroit participated in strikes against grocers, and these strikes were imitated in other parts of the country. The result of this wave was a strengthening of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 and the enlargement of the Federal Trade Commission giving it power to regulate against deceptive practices by business. And, again, the consumer movement returned to a hibernated state.

The third wave began in the mid 1960's and has yet to recede. Kolter (1972) argues that the movement did not have to occur, however, because of the conflict between the short-term goals of business (motivated by profit) and the long-term goals of the consumer (motivated by self-interest) it did occur. Furthermore, it is the continuing differences in these perspectives that allows the movement to endure.

Herrmann (1970) notes that the three periods of the consumer movement in the United States occurred during economic periods when the real incomes for a large

segment of the population began to decline in earnest when compared to rising consumer prices, suggesting this relationship plays an important role in consumer unrest. He notes that exceptions occurred especially during times of conflict such as World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. These exceptions are explained by shortages in consumer goods, the rising of incomes due to war-time jobs, and the patriotic fever that tends to overtake the population allowing for some type of suffering for the good of the cause to diminish the concern for consumer welfare. Herrmann (1970) observes that, in order for a consumer movement to go forward, it must provide a belief of a better future, ensuring that it can be obtained, and have the leaders that can develop enduring organizations which can attain the goals of the movement.

Smith and Bloom (1989) describe the 1960's as a time of great public discontent and frustration without means for the individual consumer to affect change. Several events occurred before collective social action was taken. These included writings by social critics, hearings and proposals submitted by a handful of Congressmen holding some hope for legislative remedies, the growth in the number and actions of consumer organizations, attention from the media, and politicians who saw the consumer movement as a vote getting mechanism. This is supported by the work of others as well including Kolter (1972). And, most research agrees that the messages of President Kennedy and President Johnson were instrumental in providing the framework for collective social action (Smith & Bloom, 1989; Swagler, 1994). President Kennedy's message in 1962 is, perhaps, most noted since it contained the four basic rights that all consumers should have. These include the right to choose, the right to safety, the right to be informed, and

the right to be heard (Garman, 1995). It is the premise formed by these four rights that consumer issues and organizations are based.

According to Herrmann (1991), there are four organizational types formed throughout a consumer movement . The first is volunteer-led organizations with beneficiary constituencies. They are the most common form of organization found and is generally local groups protesting such issues as price increases and consumer shortages relying heavily on boycotts and picketing. Because their labor is voluntary and funding is all but non-existent, these organizations mount short-lived protests aimed at embarrassing their target through attention, especially the media, forcing corrective action.

The second is volunteer-led organizations with conscience constituencies. These organizations focus primarily on one issue that has far reaching concerns such as product safety or misleading advertising. These organizations are generally formed at the state level (concerned with influencing legislation) and at the local level (focusing on delineating information, education, and aiding in seeking redress). These organizations rely heavily on volunteers and have a small, part-time paid staff.

The third group is professionally led organizations with a beneficiary constituency. These organizations are professionally led and have paid permanent staffs. They have the ability to undertake complex operations and are able to sustain these operations over long periods of time. The Consumers Union is an example of a professionally led organization with a beneficiary constituency.

And, the fourth group is professionally led organizations with a conscience constituency. These organizations generally depend on a charismatic individual for their

development and growth. The individual must be able to sell ideas and be able to generate funding for those ideas. Areas of concern for this type of organization are environmental protection, general representation of the consumer in government, and the monitoring of government and business response. These organizations require a full-time professional staff and requires a large flow of capital in the form of contributions. Due to the funding requirement, a large amount of time and energy are slated to induct new members, solicit grants, and obtain contributions. These organizations must continually act and must undertake a multi-issue program.

On a collective level Hendon (1975) notes that as a nation's economy increases, its GNP per capita increases allowing the individual consumer to acquire a larger disposable income. It is this increase in disposable income that facilitates an individual's affluence. The individual becomes more complex and sophisticated in the marketplace and needs become increasingly harder to satisfy. This complexity in the marketplace creates a need for consumer protection, hence a consumer movement, such is the case with the United States.

As noted before, a consumer movement provides for the aggregate efforts of action that result in government protection or self-imposed regulation by the business to protect the marketplace from unfair practices (Dameron, 1939; Smith & Bloom, 1989; Herrmann, 1970). There is an agreement in the literature that the basis of a consumer movement lies in the social fabric of the citizens and that during periods of economic or social dislocation, the rise of a consumer movement is inevitable.

RETAILERS

Retailers face a unique set of problems in the marketplace. They perform the final distribution function bringing manufacturers and consumers together facilitating the exchange of product attributes (Levy and Weitz, 1995). As stated by Aaker and Day (1970) this role is complicated by the lack of information in consumer markets. Ideally, if consumers kept track of pertinent information relating to products on the market, competition would be enough in itself to police the marketplace providing protection for the consumer. In reality, products are flooding the marketplace at an ever increasing rate and the consumer does not have the capacity to keep track of all pertinent information. This inability becomes even more apparent when the product being purchased is infrequently purchased and where technological change is rapid. Added to this lack of information is the increase of impersonal retailing formats which tend to compound the problem. Or, stated differently,

“... as a result of the character of contemporary retail establishments, the vastly increased number of consumer products, and the misleading, deceptive and generally uninformative aspects of advertising and packaging, the consumer simply lacks the information necessary to enable him to buy wisely.” Barber, page 1226.

Dameron wrote in 1939 that “the demands of the consumer movement should result in a redirection of retail activities” (page 285). The direct contact between the retailer and the consumer allows the retailer to continually monitor consumer complaint behavior and the consumer movement. Retailing has a long history of acting (at least superficially) in the best interest of the consumer by providing quality merchandise,

reasonable prices, information on products and prices, and to some degree providing protection for the consumer from unfair business practices.

As consumers continue to become more complex and products in the marketplace continue to grow, it is the retailer that will bear the responsibility of educating not only the consumer, but the manufacturer as well. The retailer becomes the distribution link from manufacturer to consumer; from the consumer to redress options, and from the consumer movement to the industry (Dameron, 1939; Berman & Evans, 1989). Kotler (1972) suggested that the retailer shoulders the burden of enhancing the well-being of the consumer by ensuring satisfaction with marketplace purchases. This burden does, however, have a payoff — “what is good in the long run for consumers is good for business” (p. 57).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

CCB - Taxonomy

Researchers agree that consumer complaint behavior is a set of multiple responses (Singh, 1990; Singh and Widing, 1991; Day et al., 1981; Blodgett et al., 1993). Singh (1990) formalized a CCB taxonomy defining a three-dimensional model (Voice, Private, and Third Party), providing proof that each dimension is distinct and has a discriminate validity. With the CCB options available to consumers in a mature consumer society, it is crucial to incorporate the relative intensity with which the individual consumer views

all possible CCB actions as important and vital to a CCB taxonomy as the action that was or was not engaged in.

H1: In a mature consumer society, Singh's three-dimensional construct will best fit CCB.

CCB - Factors

Duhaime and Ash (1979) found that both males and females experience dissatisfaction and engage in complaint behavior and that gender might indicate the type of behavior exhibited. Other research supports the conclusion that only the vehicle used in the expression of complaint behavior can be linked to gender (Bearden and Mason, 1984; Strahle and Day, 1984).

H2a: Gender will have no effect on whether complaint behavior is exhibited.

H2b: Gender will influence which type of complaint behavior is exhibited.

Although Bernhardt (1981) proposed that older consumers would be more likely to complain since their extended market experiences would reinforce their ability to confidently state dissatisfaction, empirical research indicates that older consumers are less likely to complain at all (Bearden, 1983; Warland et al., 1975). Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

H3: Younger consumers will tend to complain more than older consumers.

In her 1991 article, *Educating the Customer*, Waldrop states that more highly educated consumers are more likely to complain when dissatisfaction occurs with a purchase episode. This is attributed to findings that these individuals tend to seek consumer information allowing them to make informed purchase decisions. They have more realistic expectations about their purchases and are less likely to purchase products they do not want. This is consistent with other research that states that consumers who complain tend to be well educated (Warland et al., 1975; Bearden, 1983; Lee, 1996)

H4: More highly educated consumers will tend to complain more than less highly educated consumers.

Consumers who take complaint action have been found to be in the upper ranges in income distribution (Bearden, 1983; Warland et al., 1975; Duhaime & Ash, 1979). Dolinsky (1994) confirms that consumers who seek redress tend to hold professional jobs - an attribute often associated with income.

H5: Consumers with higher levels of income will tend to complain more than consumers with a lower level of income.

Warland et al. (1975) confirms that consumers taking complaint action tend to be more politically active and reported an overall general dissatisfaction with business practices. These respondents participated more in consumer issues and were more liberal in their views. Lee (1996) supports these findings stating that consumers with negative attitudes towards business take more complaining actions.

H6a: Consumers with more negative attitudes towards business will tend to complain more than consumers with more positive attitudes towards business.

Researchers agree that complaint behaviors differ among product classes and between product classes and services (Day and Landon, 1977; Oster, 1980). There has been no research undertaken to distinguish how consumers' attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers influence complaint actions when examining the individual product classes and between the product classes and services.

H6b: There will be no difference between consumers' complaining action(s) and the impact of consumer attitudes towards retailers and manufacturers.

Research has shown that consumers who are participate in consumer activities such as voting and writing letter to government officials are more apt to complain (Warland et al., 1975). Andreasen and Best (1977) found that consumers with less interest in consumer activities tended to complain less.

H7: Consumers who are more involved in consumer activity will tend to complain more than those consumers who are less involved in consumer activity.

Consumers who are aware of their marketplace rights under the consumer protection laws are more likely to take complaining actions (Verhage, 1987; Cunningham and Cunningham, 1976).

H8: Consumers with more knowledge of their marketplace rights will complain more than consumers with less knowledge of their marketplace rights.

Research has proven that a consumer's expectation of marketplace reaction to various complaining options dictates whether or not the consumer will complain (Singh, 1990; Blodgett, 1992).

H9: Consumers with higher expectations of marketplace reactions to CCB will initiate some form of complaint action more often than those with lower expectations of marketplace reactions to CCB.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

INSTRUMENT

To provide data to examine the proposed research objectives, an instrument was developed by adapting instruments from previous studies. The instrument was developed to identify dissatisfaction incidents and the resulting action, attitudes towards complaining, expectancy level in the marketplace, future complaining intent, activity in consumer issues, marketplace knowledge, and demographic information of the respondents. The instrument was divided into five parts. A discussion of the development of each part is provided as follows.

Part I consists of seven questions. *Question 1* aids the respondent in recalling a dissatisfying experience in the marketplace within the last six months. If no dissatisfaction is recalled, the respondent is asked when the last dissatisfying experience occurred. Empirical evidence suggests that the reliability of recall is directly related to time. The longer the time from the dissatisfying experience until the time of recall, the less the respondent is able to recall. If no marketplace dissatisfaction can be recalled, the respondent is asked to move on to *Part II*.

If dissatisfaction is recalled, in *Question 2* the respondent is asked with which product or service he was dissatisfied with. A list of possible products and services is

presented as well as an "other" option should the list fail to provide an acceptable response. The list of possible products and services are:

- purchase of a car
- car repair
- household appliance
- clothing purchase
- grocery purchase
- financial institution
- medical care
- insurance purchase
- telephone purchase
- television purchase
- dining out
- purchase via the Internet

The respondent was then asked in *Question 3* with whom he was dissatisfied, either the retailer (the store or person from whom the purchase was made) and/or the manufacturer (the product did not perform as stated or was defective). These steps were taken in an effort to refresh the dissatisfying experience and with whom the respondent was dissatisfied.

With recall evoked the respondent is asked in *Question 4* what action or actions he took to resolve the dissatisfaction. A list of eleven possibilities is given:

- Did nothing
- Contacted the RETAILER and complained
- Decided not to shop with the RETAILER again
- Decided not to purchase from the MANUFACTURER again
- Spoke with your FRIENDS and RELATIVES about the dissatisfying experience
- Convinced your FRIENDS and RELATIVES not to shop with the RETAILER
- Convinced your FRIENDS and RELATIVES not to purchase from the MANUFACTURER
- Complained to a CONSUMER AGENCY (i.e. Chamber of Commerce)
- Complained to the BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Reported the dissatisfying experience to a GOVERNMENT AGENCY
(i.e. FTC, FDA)
Took LEGAL ACTION

This list was adapted from a questionnaire by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) administered in a 1993 survey. The original AARP survey questions did not, however, differentiate between retailers and manufacturers. The CCB actions in the list can be grouped into four categories: (1) to do nothing, (2) to take private actions (addressing to friends and/or relatives), (3) to take public actions (addressing the retailer and/or manufacturer), and (4) to take third party actions (addressing consumer or government agencies, or taking legal action).

Questions 5, 6, and 7 concern themselves with the respondent's time allocation in CCB action(s). In *Question 5* the respondent is asked if he complained to the retailer did he (1) make an intentional trip, or (2) wait till his next visit. The length of time between the initial dissatisfaction and complaint action is asked in *Question 6*. The total amount of time spent in all complaining actions is asked in *Question 7* followed by a break-down of how much time was spent in private, public and third party complaint action. The respondent is given an open space to write in the times with minutes, hours, and days listed as possible time frame references.

Part II consists of two questions, 8 and 9. The two questions were adapted from a study conducted by Singh (1990) and provide insight into the respondent's attitudes toward complaining and their feeling of consumer alienation in the marketplace. This part is designed to indicate the respondent's current opinion of the marketplace in which they purchase products and services. In particular, *Question 8* is retailer oriented asking

respondents to indicate how strongly he disagrees/agrees with thirteen statements about retailers on a seven-point Likert scale. These statements are:

1. Shopping in a retail store is usually an unpleasant experience
2. Most RETAILERS care nothing at all about the consumer
3. Customers are unable to determine what products will be sold by RETAILERS
4. In general, RETAILERS are dishonest in their dealings with customers
5. RETAILERS should stand behind their products and guarantees
6. As soon as money is given to RETAILERS, most forget about the customer
7. People have a responsibility to tell RETAILERS when a product is unsatisfactory
8. It bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory retailer
9. It sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory RETAILER
10. I often complain about a RETAILER because I feel it is my responsibility to do so
11. Since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a RETAILER
12. By making complaints about unsatisfactory RETAILERS, the quality of RETAILERS will improve
13. By complaining about unsatisfactory RETAILERS, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction

Statements 7 through 13 measure attitudes towards complaining. In particular, statements 7, 8, 9, and 11 address personal norms of the respondent. Statements 10, 12, and 13 address social benefits perceived by the respondent. Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 depict the respondent's perception of alienation in the retail marketplace.

Question 9 contains twelve statements. These statements are identical to those in *Question 8* with the word manufacturer substituted for retailer except that statement 1 is deleted in *Question 9*. Since statement 1 looks at the shopping experience as a whole from a retail perspective, it is not applicable to the manufacturer. Again, the respondent is asked how strongly he disagrees/agrees with each of the twelve statements on a seven-

point Likert scale.

Part III contains eight questions. This part is designed to assess the respondent's perception of the results of his complaining actions. This part was adapted from a study conducted by Singh (1990) and was taken specifically from a series of questions used to measure respondents expectancy levels in the marketplace. In each of the eight questions the respondent is asked to indicate how likely it is that one of a series of possible outcomes would be if he took a specific complaint action. These actions were defined as:

10. If you complained to a RETAILER today about an unsatisfactory product or service, how likely is it that the RETAILER would:
11. If you complained to a MANUFACTURER today about an unsatisfactory product, how likely is it that the MANUFACTURER would:
12. If you complained to your FRIENDS and RELATIVES today about an unsatisfactory RETAILER, how likely is it that they would:
13. If you complained to your FRIENDS and RELATIVES today about an unsatisfactory MANUFACTURER, how likely is it that they would:
14. If you reported an unsatisfactory experience to a CONSUMER AGENCY (i.e. Chamber of Commerce) today, how likely is it that they would:
15. If you reported an unsatisfactory experience to a GOVERNMENT AGENCY (i.e. FTC, FDA) today, how likely is it that they would:
16. If you reported an unsatisfactory experience to a BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU today, how likely is it that they would:
17. If you took LEGAL ACTION today, how likely is it that it would result in:

Possible outcomes for *Questions 10 and 11* were:

Take appropriate action to take care of your problem
Provide you with better service in the future
Be more careful in the future so everyone would benefit

Possible outcomes for *Question 12* were:

Be more careful when shopping at the RETAILER
Stop shopping with that RETAILER altogether
Help you solve your problem

Possible outcomes for *Question 13* were:

- Be more careful when purchasing the MANUFACTURER'S brand(s)
- Stop purchasing the MANUFACTURER'S brand(s) altogether
- Help you solve your problem

Possible outcomes for *Questions 14, 15, 16, and 17* were:

- Make the RETAILER take care of your problem
- Make sure the RETAILER is more careful in the future
- Make the MANUFACTURER take care of your problem
- Make sure the MANUFACTURER is more careful in the future

In particular, *Questions 10 and 11* are concerned with voice actions — those relating to complaining to the retailer and the manufacturer. *Questions 12 and 13* are concerned with private actions — those relating to complaining to friends and relatives. *Questions 14, 15, 16, and 17* concern themselves with third party actions. Complaining to a consumer agency, government agency, the Better Business Bureau, and the process of taking legal action are considered, respectively, in these four questions.

Part IV looks at future complaining intent of the respondent, consumer activity of the respondent, the marketplace knowledge of the respondent, and asks a leveling question concerning “traditional” retailers and manufacturer’s outlets. *Question 18* asks, if faced with a similar dissatisfying experience, what action or actions would the respondent be inclined to take. The list of eleven possibilities is exactly the same as the list given in *Question 4*.

Question 19 lists seven activities seen as consumerist in nature and asks the respondent on a five-point scale (from never to always) how often he participates in each. These activities were adapted from a study by Warland, et al. (1984). These activities

include:

- Sign a petition to correct a problem
- Write to an elected official about a problem
- Write to a government agency about a problem
- Vote in elections
- Attend meetings on community issues
- Join organization(s) that take a stand on public issues
- Contact the media about a problem

Question 20 was developed to measure the respondents' marketplace knowledge and was adapted from a study by Verhage (1983). A range of marketplace rights including advertising, door-to-door selling, warranties, truth-in-lending, labeling, and claims/appeals is covered. The following ten true/false sub-questions were asked:

- If a RETAILER accidentally prices a product for \$12 instead of \$21 dollars, you need only pay \$12 for the product
- It is legal for a RETAILER to heavily advertise a product, then only stock enough for the first few customers
- If you receive a product in the mail that you did not order, you must return it to the sender
- If you purchase an item from a door-to-door salesman, then change your mind the next day, you can still cancel the purchase
- If you do not return the warranty card on a product, you lose the rights described by the warranty
- If you do not follow the instructions when using a product, you invalidate the warranty
- Banks and other lending institutions must state the true interest rate and costs involved in credit transactions
- If you agree to monthly car payments, you may change your mind and pay one lump sum
- If a food product spoils before the stated expiration date, you may return it for a full refund
- After purchasing an item, you discover it is damaged, you must accept a price reduction from the RETAILER

Question 21 asks the respondent's perception of manufacturers' outlet stores. It occurred to the researcher that the first statement in *Question 8*, "shopping in a retail store is usually an unpleasant experience", did not define a retail store. In an effort to discern

the respondent's perception of a retail store, he was asked in this question if he believed when shopping in a manufacturer's outlet if he were indeed shopping in a retail store. The question becomes 'does the respondent have the ability to distinguish a retail store without being deceived by that store's pricing policy or other format considerations?'

Part V contains eight questions. *Questions 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28* ask for demographic information from the respondent. Gender, age, marital status, employment, education, race, and total household income comprise these seven questions, respectively. *Question 29* asks the respondent how much of the total household income is represented by his contribution in an effort to distinguish the respondents' unearned income. *Question 30* asks the amount of time the respondent spends in the workplace on an average week. This question, when combined with *Question 29*, allows for a base wage to be established.

PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was conducted in order to test the reliability of the instrument. The convenience sample consisted of thirty individuals from a retail institution located in a south-eastern metropolitan city. The surveys were distributed on May 5, 1997 and returned by May 8, 1997. Of the sample, twenty-one surveys were completed and returned. The respondents ranged in age from 18 to 55. Of the respondents, 42.85% were male (57.15% female) and 80.95 % had at least some college education. Complaint issues were varied, 61.90% were product related, 28.58% were service related, and 9.52%

could not recall a dissatisfying experience.

Several changes were made to the instrument due to the pilot study. First, an editorial change was made in *Question 7* to include travel time as a portion of total time taken in the complaining action. Second, there was an inconsistency in the time references given in *Question 6 and 7*. *Question 6* listed hours and days while *Question 7* listed days, hours, and minutes. Time references were made consistent and a change was made to include months into the reference tables. The new time reference consisted of minutes, hours, days, and months for both questions.

Third, in *Question 4*, the respondent is asked what action or actions he took as a result of the dissatisfying experience. One of the possibilities was contacted the retailer and complained. Some confusion was indicated by the respondents in whether verbal or written complaints were being asked for. The resulting change was, contacted the retailer and complained (either verbally or in written form).

Finally, in *Question 5* the respondent is asked if he made an intentional trip to complain or waited till his next visit. Several respondents wrote in that they had complained immediately after the dissatisfaction which did not require an intentional trip nor another visit to take complaint action. As a result, complained immediately was added to the options available to the respondent for this question.

One interesting result was noticed. Responses to *Question 21*, asking if a manufacturer's wholesale outlet was a retailer, 52.38% of the respondents indicated "no" while 4.76% did not indicate a response. Initially, the researcher believed this question might be dropped from the final instrument since it reflected store format and was added

as an afterthought. The results from the pilot study indicate that more research in this area is needed since a large number of the respondents could not distinguish a retail store because of its format. *Question 21* was left in the final instrument.

The final instrument was edited from an 8.5" X 14" page size to a 8.5" X 11" page size and printed in a three-page (front to back) fold-out format. The instrument folded into its own reply envelope with the return address and bulk reply postage paid pre-printed. The respondent was provided with a tape seal to secure the survey before returning. In an effort to increase response, a drawing was held to award respondents with ten-dollar gift certificates from one of four state-wide retailers. The respondent was provided an entry form at the bottom of the cover page and was allowed to select the retailer he wished to receive the certificate from should his name be drawn. The entry form could be folded into the survey and returned at the same time allowing its removal without any loss of anonymity.

SAMPLE SELECTION

A random sample was of 1,500 Tennessee consumers was purchased from Experian (formerly TRW). Parameters for sample selection included age, gender, dwelling type, and dwelling location. The selection came from Experian's consumer database. While the inferred age ranges provided by Experian did not exactly match the instrument's ranges, they were within acceptable limits. Consumers under the age of 18 were excluded from the sample since they are not held in the consumer database of

Experian.

Dwelling type and location were considered in the sample. Dwelling type became important in attempting to reach the intended consumer. Since apartment dwellers and those with P. O. Boxes are considered more transient, they were excluded from the sample. Only those consumers living in single family dwellings were included in the sample. To accurately mirror the population of the state of Tennessee, it was necessary to distinguish between those consumers in a rural community from those consumers in an urban community. A rural community defaults at a population of 2,500 or less. This default concurs with data collection provided by the Tennessee Statistical Abstract 1996/97 which was used to mirror the population of Tennessee.

Experian provided four count sheets, one for each quadrant in the parameter. For example, a count sheet was provided for females in single family dwellings in a rural geographic location. A count sheet was provided for females in single family dwellings in an urban geographic location. Count sheets were provided for males in both categories as well. By using population figures from the Tennessee Statistical Abstract 1996/97 the corresponding number of consumers from each quadrant was selected and is presented as follows:

	MALE	FEMALE
URBAN	430	485
RURAL	275	310

Again, age defaults in the Experian system were used to ensure representative consumer selection from each age range. The resulting sample mirrored the state of

Tennessee in age, gender and dwelling location.

PROCEDURE

On July 10, 1997 the surveys were mailed. In an effort to increase the response rate, the respondents were offered a chance to participate in a drawing for ten-dollar gift certificates from one of four state-wide retailers. The respondents were provided an entry form at the bottom of the cover page and were allowed to select the retailer he wished to receive the certificate from should his name be drawn. The drawing date was set for August 10, 1997. The date was set to facilitate early return of the survey.

Of the 1,500 surveys mailed, 135 were returned undeliverable. Of the remaining 1,365 surveys, 108 were returned. This represents an effective response rate of 7.91%.

ANALYSIS

The following analyses were used to interpret the data. First, to assess the internal reliability of the data, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was calculated. The reliability was examined in four sub-sets: (1) *questions 8 and 9* measuring the respondent's attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers, respectively, with 25 statements; (2) *questions 10 through 17* measuring the respondent's expectation of the marketplace with 28 statements; (3) *question 18* measuring the respondent's future complaining behavior with 11 statements; and, (4) *question 19* measuring the respondent's activities as a consumer

with 7 statements.

Second, factor analyses were used to identify the underlying factors within the data set. In this analysis *questions 8 and 9* were tested independently to identify consumers' attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers. *Questions 10 thru 17* were tested as a sub-set identifying marketplace expectations. *Question 18* and *question 19* were analyzed as separate sub-set. The factor(s) from *question 18* were used to determine which of the three previously discussed taxonomies provide the best fit for the data. *Question 19* identifies consumer activity in the marketplace. The principal factor analysis was employed with varimax rotation.

Third, MANOVA's were used to test the dependent and independent variable structure. *Question 18* measuring the respondent's future complaining intent became the dependent variables. The factors determined for *questions 10 through 17* were used as an independent variable expressing the respondent's expectation of the marketplace. The factor determined for *question 19* became an independent variable measuring the respondent's consumer activity.

In addition, age and income were used as independent variables. For the purposes of this study both were restructured to become continuous variables. This was accomplished by taking the mean of each category and replacing the individual response with the mean. The independent variable education was collapsed allowing trade/specialty school to become integrated with some college. These changes in age, income, and education were taken to improve the degrees of freedom for MANOVA testing.

Marketplace knowledge was scored by the total number of correct answers made by the respondent and was used as an independent variable in this study. Gender, a dichotomous variable, was used as an independent variable in this study as well.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

A random sample of 1,500 Tennessee consumers was used in this study. Parameters for sample selection included gender, age, dwelling type, and dwelling location taken from the Tennessee Statistical Abstract 1996/97. Of the 108 responses 38% (41) were male and 62% (67) were female. This is fairly close to State figures at 47% male and 53% female.

The sample is slightly younger in age than the State population. Age responses showed 2.8% of the respondents were between the ages of 18-25 compared to the State at 14.41%. Sample age responses for the 26-35 range was 25.00%; 36-45 range was 25.90%; 46-55 was 21.30%; 56-65 was 15.70%; and over 65 was 9.30%. State figures are 22.19%, 20.24%, 14.38%, 11.87%, and 16.90% respectively.

Of the respondents, 51.90% stated they were married and 16.70% stated they were single and had never been married. Divorced respondents represented 21.30% while 8.3% were widowed. Two respondents (1.9%) did not indicate a marital status. State percentages were not available.

State percentages showed Tennessee with 94.8% of its population employed. Of the responses only 79.6% were employed (73.10% full-time, 6.50% part-time). The

remaining respondents indicated that they were either retired (13.00%), a house-parent (2.80%), unemployed but looking for a job (2.80%), or unemployed but not looking for a job (1.90%). The sample is 15.2% less employed than the population. If, however, unemployment figures are considered the difference is smaller. The sample indicates 5.60% of the respondents were unemployed while the State reported unemployment at 5.20%.

State figures show 67.10% of the population has a high school education or beyond and 16.0% have a college diploma or higher. This compares to the sample with 88% of the respondents stating an education of high school or beyond and 40.7% with a college diploma or more. Specifically, 20.40% were high school graduates; 26.90% had some college education; 19.40% were college graduates; 12.00% had at least some graduate studies; and, 9.30% had attended a professional or trade school. The remaining 12% responded they had less than a high school education.

White respondents comprised 93.50% of the sample compared to the population at 82.40%. Minority responses were black (2.80%), Asian (0.90%), Hispanic (0.90%), and no response (1.90%). The population shows minority figures at 16.2%, 1.0%, and 0.80% respectively. The sample is skewed with regards to the white versus black responses towards white responses. Other minority responses are well represented when sample and population percentages are compared.

The sample indicates that 4.60% of the respondents had an income of less than \$10 K; 14.80% had an income of more than \$10 K, but less than \$20 K; 16.70% had an income of more than \$20 K, but less than \$30 K; 13.00% had an income of more than

\$30 K, but less than \$40 K; 27.80% has an income of more than \$40 K, but less than \$50 K; 11.10% had an income of more than \$50 K, but less than \$60 K; 5.60% had an income of \$60 K or more; and, 6.50% did not indicate an income. The population indicates 27.2% have incomes of \$15 K or less; 52.7 % have incomes of \$50 K or less; and, 16.8% have incomes of \$100 K or less. Those with lower incomes by population figures are under-represented in the sample as are those with incomes between 50 K and 100 K. Those in the middle income range (more than 15 K, but less than 50 K) are slightly over-represented in the sample.

All respondents lived in single family dwellings. This was intentional in sample selection in due to a higher transient rate with apartment dwellers and those using P. O. Boxes. Urban and rural respondents were, however, selected according to population percentages. The sample indicates 70.40% of the respondents (43.52% female, 26.85% male) lived in urban communities while 29.60% of the respondents (11.11% female, 18.52% male). This compares to the population at 60.90% urban (32.21% female, 28.68% male) and 39.10% rural (20.68% female, 18.42% male). A complete comparison of the sample and the population is shown in Table 1.

RELIABILITY

The instrument was sub-divided into four parts, and Cronbach's Coefficient Alphas for each part were used to assess the internal consistency reliability of the data. The first part consisted of the 11 statements in *Question 18* regarding the future intent of

CCB actions of the respondents. This section was used to test the taxonomy structure represented by the data. The raw variable score for alpha was 0.88 indicating the reliability for this part is high.

Part two consisted of the 28 statements in *Questions 10 through 17*. These statements were designed to assess the respondents expectations of the current marketplace and what they believed would be the outcome of a series of complaint actions. The raw variable for the internal consistency reliability alpha was 0.97 implying this section was very reliable.

Question 19 was used as a proxy for consumer activity allowing the respondent to indicate how often he participated in a variety of consumer activities such as voting and is part three. The Cronbach alpha stated as a raw variable was 0.88 which is evidence of a strong fit for the variable.

Question 8 and *Question 9* comprise the fourth part. The two questions make identical statements indicating respondents attitudes towards retailers (*Question 8*) and manufacturers (*Question 9*). The Cronbach Coefficient Alpha was 0.87 showing a strong fit for this part.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis was used to collapse the statements in Questions 8, 9, 10 - 17, 18 and 19. The resulting factors, their variable names and descriptions are as follows and are presented in Table 2 as well.

Attitudes Toward Retailers

The first set of analysis deals with *Question 8* which seeks to gain insight into the respondents attitudes towards retailers. The 12 statements resulted in three relevant factors named ATTR1, ATTR2, and ATTR3 respectively. ATTR1 is comprised of three statements: (1) most retailers care nothing at all about the consumer; (2) in general, retailers are dishonest in their dealings with customers; and, (3) as soon as money is given to retailers, most forget about the customer. This variable suggests that the respondents feel alienated in the marketplace. That is to say close relationships, those needed by retailers to obtain loyalty from the customer, are not present. Customers regard retailers as a nuisance in the marketplace that must be dealt with in order to consume. This variable is personal in nature and somewhat passive since the attitude is formed without action statements.

Four loadings comprise ATTR2. The statements were (1) retailers should stand behind their products and guarantees; (2) people have a responsibility to tell retailers when a product is unsatisfactory; (3) by making complaints about unsatisfactory retailers, the quality of retailers will improve; and, (4) by complaining about unsatisfactory retailers, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction. This variable is public in nature with respondents becoming active in the retailer's function. CCB action becomes a corrective tool in the marketplace. The individual consumer becomes empowered to change retailers in the marketplace for his own good as well as that of other consumers.

ATTR3 contained four loadings as well. The corresponding statements were (1) it bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory retailer; (2) it sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory retailer; (3) I often complain about a retailer because I feel it is my responsibility to do so; and, (4) since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a retailer. The fourth statement loaded negatively into the factor meaning that respondents disagreed with the statement. This variable is personal in nature, but is active. Feelings and consumer responsibility are involved in this variable. Consumers get some amount of satisfaction from CCB actions that becomes subjective to the individual consumer. That is to say, resolution of a complaint has a residual effect on consumer satisfaction.

The statement 'customers are unable to determine what products will be sold by retailers' did not load into any of the previous factors. The conclusion is that consumers are aware of the offerings in the marketplace and are reasonably sure of which retailer will carry the offering they wish to consume.

Attitudes Toward Manufacturers

The second analysis deals with *Question 9* which contained the same 12 statements as *Question 8* except for 8A. In this question, however, the word manufacturer was substituted for retailer. Three factors emerged as being relevant. The first factor (ATTM1) loaded with 7 statements: (1) manufacturers should stand behind their products and guarantees; (2) people have a responsibility to tell manufacturers when

a product is unsatisfactory; (3) it bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory manufacturer; (4) it sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory manufacturer; (5) I often complain about a manufacturer because I feel it is my responsibility to do so; (6) by making complaints about unsatisfactory manufacturers, the quality of manufacturers will improve; and, (7) by complaining about an unsatisfactory manufacturer, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction. Respondent's generally believed that they were a corrective force in the marketplace having a responsibility to complain when a manufacturer erred. They did not, however, distinguish clearly between personal norms and the social benefits associated with taking CCB action towards manufacturers .

The second factor (ATTM2) contained four statements: (1) most manufacturers care nothing at all about the consumer; (2) in general, manufacturers are dishonest in their dealings with customers; (3) as soon as money is given to manufacturers, most forget about the customer; and (4) customers are unable to determine what products will be produced by manufacturers. The relationship between the customer and the manufacturer becomes even more complicated since the respondents indicated that not only do they have a basic mistrust of the motives of manufacturers, they do not have the ability to distinguish what product(s) a manufacturer will produce. The variable becomes personal in nature reflecting the alienation consumers feel towards manufacturers.

The third factor (ATTM3) is comprised of the statement 'since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a manufacturer'. The statement reflects a personal norm of the respondents and may be interpreted as saying

that the respondents felt there were other avenues of redress open to them where the distance between the individual and the receiver (the manufacturer) were not as far apart.

Expectations of Marketplace

The third analysis contains *Questions 10 through 17* which were designed to investigate the respondents current expectation of the marketplace. Four factors emerged from the data named EXP1, EXP2, EXP3, and EXP 4. EXP1 loaded with 12 statements concerning expectation with consumer agencies, government agencies, and the Better Business Bureau. The responses indicate the respondents believe that CCB actions taken with each agency either makes the retailer / manufacturer take care of their problem or makes certain the retailer / manufacturer is more careful in the future. Each of these agencies represents third party CCB action on the part of the consumer.

EXP2 loaded with 6 statements regarding retailers and manufacturers. The respondents indicated they believe complaints to retailers and manufacturers will result in either the retailer / manufacturer taking care of their problem, or ensuring the retailer / manufacturer will provide them with better service in the future, or that the retailer / manufacturer will be more careful in the future so that everyone will benefit. EXP2 takes on the identity of public complaining actions.

EXP3 loaded with four statements concerning the process of taking legal action. While this is a third party CCB action, it loaded separately probably due to the time and costs involved in pursuing such an activity. Respondents did indicate, however, that they

believe that initiating legal action would result in the retailer / manufacturer taking care of the problem, or in the retailer / manufacturer being more careful in the future.

EXP4 loaded with 6 statements regarding speaking with friends and relatives. Respondents stated that friends and relatives would be more careful when shopping with a retailer or purchasing manufacturer's brands if they were aware of problems in the marketplace with the retailer or manufacturer. Further, respondents believed that friends and relatives would stop shopping with the retailer or purchasing manufacturer's brands if they were aware of a problem. Respondents also stated that friends and relatives would help them in solving their complaints with retailers and manufacturers if they were aware a problem existed. EXP4 denotes private action on the part of the respondents with the basis of sharing information.

CCB Taxonomy

The fourth analysis contained *Question 18* which dealt with future CCB actions a respondent would take if faced with a marketplace problem similar to the one he recalled at the first of the survey. This question was designed to investigate the underlying taxonomy of CCB and is used in testing hypothesis 1.

H1: In a mature consumer society, Singh's (1988) three-dimensional construct will best fit CCB actions.

Two factors emerged from the data forming CCB1 and CCB2. CCB1 loaded with six CCB actions: (1) contact retailer and complain; (2) stop shopping with retailer; (3) stop purchasing from manufacturer; (4) speak with friends and relatives; (5) convince friends / relatives not to shop with retailer; and (6) convince friends / relatives not to purchase manufacturers brand(s). No clear distinction between public and private CCB actions as described by Singh's (1988) taxonomy was made.

CCB2 loaded with four factors: (1) complain to a consumer agency; (2) complain to a better business bureau; (3) complain to a government agency; and, (4) take legal action. These four actions are consistent with Singh's (1988) description of third party redress. Third party complaints are directed to objects outside the consumer's social net and are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident.

The results of the factor analysis is inconsistent with the taxonomy proposed by Singh (1988). In this study a two faceted CCB construct is revealed explaining the complaint behavior of the respondents. Therefore, H1 is rejected.

Consumer Activity

Finally, the fifth analysis occurred with *Question 19*. In this question, the respondent was asked how often he participated in each of 7 consumer activities. The analysis resulted in one factor emerging with all but one statement, 'vote in elections', loading in the factor. With this result, it became possible to turn consumer activity into a factor score variable (CACT) indicating whether the respondent was or was not active in

consumer activities.

MANOVA RESULTS

Using the results of the factor analysis from Question 8, two factors were found in the underlying structure of CCB in the data. These two, CCB1 and CCB2, became the dependent variables in the remaining analysis.

*CCB1: Active - the respondent initializes complaining behavior, either public or private, with a specific end result in mind.

*CCB2: Third Party - actions are directed to objects outside the consumer's social net and are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident.

The independent variables were:

*ATTR1: Consumer attitudes towards retailers indicate they regard retailers as a nuisance in the marketplace that must be dealt with in order to consume. This variable is personal in nature and somewhat passive since the attitude is formed without action statements.

*ATTR2: This variable is public in nature with respondents becoming active in the retailer's function. CCB action becomes a corrective tool in the marketplace. The individual consumer becomes empowered to change retailers in the marketplace for his own good as well as that of other consumers.

*ATTR3: This variable is personal in nature, but is active. Feelings and consumer responsibility are involved in this variable. Consumers get some amount of satisfaction from CCB actions that becomes subjective to the individual consumer.

*ATTM1: Respondent's generally believed that they were a corrective force in the marketplace having a responsibility to complain when a manufacturer erred. They did not, however, distinguish clearly between personal norms and the social benefits associated with taking CCB action toward manufacturers .

*ATTM2: The relationship between the customer and the manufacturer becomes even more complicated since the respondents indicated that not only do they have a basic mistrust of the motives of manufacturers, they do not have the ability to distinguish what product(s) a manufacturer will produce. The variable becomes

personal in nature reflecting the alienation consumers feel toward manufacturers.

*ATTM3: A personal norm of the respondent interpreted as saying that the respondent felt there were other avenues of redress open to them where the distance between the individual and the receiver (in this case the manufacturer) were not as far apart.

*EXP1: This variable indicates respondents belief that CCB actions taken with third party agencies would result in a positive result for the individual or the marketplace as a whole.

*EXP2: Takes on the identity of public complaining actions with respondents believing that CCB actions taken toward retailers or manufacturers would result in a resolution of their problem and both would be more careful in the future preventing another occurrence.

*EXP3: Respondents indicated that they believed that initiating legal action would result in the retailer / manufacturer taking care of the problem, or in the retailer / manufacturer being more careful in the future.

- *EXP4: EXP4 denotes private action (sharing information with friends and family regarding the dissatisfying experience) would effect their future behavior.
- *CACT: A continuous variable indicating whether a respondent was active or non-active in consumer activities.
- *AAGE: The categorical variable age was collapsed by using the mean of each category allowing the variable to become continuous.
- *NEDUC: A categorical variable. In NEDUC, some college and professional/trade school was collapsed into a single category.
- *INC: The categorical variable income was converted to a continuous variable by using the mean of each category and substituting the new value.
- *CORRECT: A continuous variable noting the number of correct answers given to a series of questions about the laws of the current marketplace.
- *GENDER: A dichotomous variable with male = 1 and female = 2.

Among the independent variables, the resulting construct did prove to be a good fit to explain CCB actions in this study (refer to Table 3). The R-square values for CCB1 and CCB2 were 0.40 and 0.32 respectively. MANOVA results indicated that two independent variables were significant. EXP4 with an F-value of 11.58 ($Pr > F = 0.0001$) and CACT with an F-value of 4.74 ($Pr > F = 0.0112$).

The results of the ANOVA (refer to Table 4) with the dependent variable CCB1 proved to be statistically significant with an F-value of 3.14 ($Pr > F = 0.0001$). Three independent variables proved significant. ATTR1 carried an F-value of 4.27 ($Pr > F = 0.0417$), ATTR3 carried an F-value of 4.18 ($Pr > F = 0.0439$), and EXP4 carried an F-value of 37.45 ($Pr > F = 0.0001$).

The dependent variable CCB2 proved to be significant with an F-value of 2.21 ($Pr > F = 0.0068$). Five independent variables were shown significant. ATTM3 had an F-value of 4.05 ($Pr > F = 0.0473$), EXP1 had an F-value of 4.41 ($Pr > F = 0.0386$), EXP2 had an F-value of 7.29 ($Pr > F = 0.0083$), EXP4 had an F-value of 5.57 ($Pr > F = 0.0205$), and CACT had an F-value of 4.28 ($Pr > F = 0.0414$). Further, EXP3 was found to be marginally significant with an F-value of 3.42 ($Pr > F = 0.0679$).

HYPOTHESIS

MANOVA results indicated that gender does not have a significant impact on overall CCB action (F-value 0.09, $Pr > F = 0.9186$). Therefore, H2a (gender will have no effect on whether complaint behavior is exhibited) results in a fail to reject while H2b

(gender will influence which type of complaining behavior is exhibited) results in a conclusion to reject.

With regards to age, the F-value for this independent variable was 0.38 ($Pr > 0.6853$). Contrary to previous research which found that individuals who complained tended to be younger, this finding does not support these conclusions. H3 (younger consumers will tend to complain more than older consumers) is rejected.

From the literature review the conclusion is that those consumers who complain belong to a distinct socio-economic group. These individuals are more highly educated and have a higher level of income. Results from this study do not support these conclusions. The independent variable education had an F-value of 1.17 ($Pr > F = 0.3180$), and the independent variable income had an F-value of 1.74 ($Pr > F = 0.1818$). Both H4 (more highly educated consumers will tend to complain more than less highly educated consumers) and H5 (Consumers with a higher level of income will tend to complain more than consumers with a lower level of income) were rejected.

Consumer attitudes toward business have been found to influence a consumer's propensity to complain. The resulting 6 independent variables measuring attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers in this study proved to be insignificant in the overall taxonomy (refer to table 4). H6a (consumers with more negative attitudes toward business will tend to complain more than consumers with more positive attitudes towards business) is rejected.

Interestingly, ATTR1 and ATTR2 did influence consumers' with regards to CCB1 (F-value 4.27 ($Pr > F = 0.0417$) and 4.18 ($Pr > F = 0.0439$) respectively). Further,

ATTM3 was found to significantly affect the dependent variable CCB2 (F-value 4.05, $Pr > F = 0.0473$). For these reasons, H6b (there will be no difference in consumer's complaining actions with regards to their attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers) resulted in a fail to reject decision.

Those persons who are more active in consumer activities have been found to take more complaining action in the marketplace. H7 (consumers who are more involved in consumer activity will tend to complain more than those consumers who are less involved in consumer activity) resulted in a fail to reject with an F-value of 4.74 ($Pr > F = 0.0112$). The independent variable CACT was found significant with regards to the independent variable CCB2 (F-value 4.28, $Pr > F = 0.0414$).

Previous research indicates that as awareness of marketplace rights increases, CCB increases. This result was not proven in this study. The independent variable CORRECT carried an F-value of 1.04 ($Pr > F = 0.3563$). Therefore, H8 (consumers with more knowledge of their marketplace rights will complain more than consumers with less knowledge of their marketplace rights) was rejected.

Expectations of marketplace reaction consisted of four independent variables. Since EXP4 proved to be significant in the overall model (F-value 11.58, $Pr > F = 0.0001$) H9 (consumers with higher expectations of marketplace reactions to CCB will initiate some form of complaint action than those with lower expectations of marketplace reactions to CCB) concludes with a fail to reject decision. EXP4 was significant in each of the dependent variables, CCB1 and CCB2, as well with F-values of 37.45 ($Pr > F = 0.0001$) and 4.28 ($Pr > F = 0.0414$) respectively. Interestingly EXP1 (F-value 4.41, $Pr >$

F = 0.0386) and EXP2 (F-value 7.29, $Pr > F = 0.0083$) were found to be significant with regards to the dependent variable CCB2. Further, EXP3 was found to be marginally significant with regards to CCB2 (F-value 3.42, $Pr > F = 0.0679$).

Because the components of the variables attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers (ATTR1, ATTR2, ATTR3, ATTM1, ATTM2, and ATTM3) are correlated (see Table 5), there was a need to check for the possibility of multicollinearity. Two additional MANOVA's were ran: one analysis excluded the three ATTM variables, and the second analysis excluded the three ATTR variables. There was no significant change in the results of the MANOVA. However, a significant difference was noted in the ANOVA results. Specifically, when the ATTR variables were excluded, the variable ATTM2 was found to significantly influence CCB1 with an F-value of 5.20 ($Pr > F = 0.0249$).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

CCB TAXONOMY

Previous research has uncovered several underlying taxonomies of CCB to explain complaint behavior with regards to specific product classes and services and the behaviors that exist between product classes and services. This study attempted to identify an underlying construct of CCB. While it did not lend proof to Singh's (1988) taxonomy, it did uncover a structure that warrants further investigation. This construct consists of two categories unlike Singh's taxonomy or Day's (1980) refined taxonomy of his and Landon's work. Both of these structures define CCB as a three-faceted phenomenon with some sort of public, private, and third-party actions. In this study two of Singh's categories (public and private) collapsed into one category. Since Day includes taking legal action in his definition of redress seeking, there is not a clear collapsing of categories within his taxonomy. Hirschman's (1970) taxonomy is present within the context of the resulting categories, but are not distinct. Exit and voice become blurred within this study's results, and voice is blurred between the uncovered categories.

The two resulting categories of CCB from this study are defined as Active and Third Party. In Active complaining behavior, the consumer may take a variety of actions including contacting the retailer to complain, personally boycotting the retailer or

manufacturer, and / or speaking with friends and relatives for the purpose of either informing them of the experience or evoking them to boycott the retailer or manufacturer. This category explained 40.42% of the variation in the independent variables tested in this study. Third Party action elicits an outside source to initiate corrective action. These outside sources include consumer and government agencies, the Better Business Bureau, and taking legal action. This category explained 32.35% of the variation in the independent variables tested in this study.

Hirschman's 1970 taxonomy implies that CCB is a continuum with a moderating factor that distinguishes where the individual consumer will fall. The resulting taxonomy from this study implies that CCB, while perhaps not continuous in nature, is a two-faceted

phenomenon. Further, it implies that there are factors that compel the individual to complain. Taking these facts into consideration, this study does not support Hirschman's taxonomy by definition, it does support the structure of the taxonomy.

The results from this study lend some support for the original work by Day and Landon (1977) noting that inside the construct, the variable "do nothing" did not load with either of the CCB factors identified. As proposed by Day and Landon, at the first level of CCB, the consumer has the option of taking some form of action or of taking no action. If no action is taken, the dissatisfying experience is considered to be forgotten. At the second level the consumer may opt public, private, or a combination of public and private actions. This study suggests that if a consumer chooses to take action he will either take an active (either public or private) action or a third party action. This is

opposed to public and private actions defined in Day and Landon's original work which implies that there is a distinct difference between public and private actions and that third party actions are imbedded within public action.

Hypothesis 1 was not supported in this study. This does not imply that Singh's 1988 taxonomy is not valid. On the contrary, the categories of complaint actions defined by Singh (public, private, and third party) are present in the resulting construct. They are not, however, in the three distinct categories defined by Singh's taxonomy.

The taxonomy uncovered in this study is presented in Figure 3. It shows CCB as a two-tier, two-faceted phenomenon. At the first tier, the consumer must decide if he will seek action or do nothing. If he chooses to do nothing, the dissatisfying experience is presumed forgotten. If he chooses to take action, then he will either take an Active or a Third Party action.

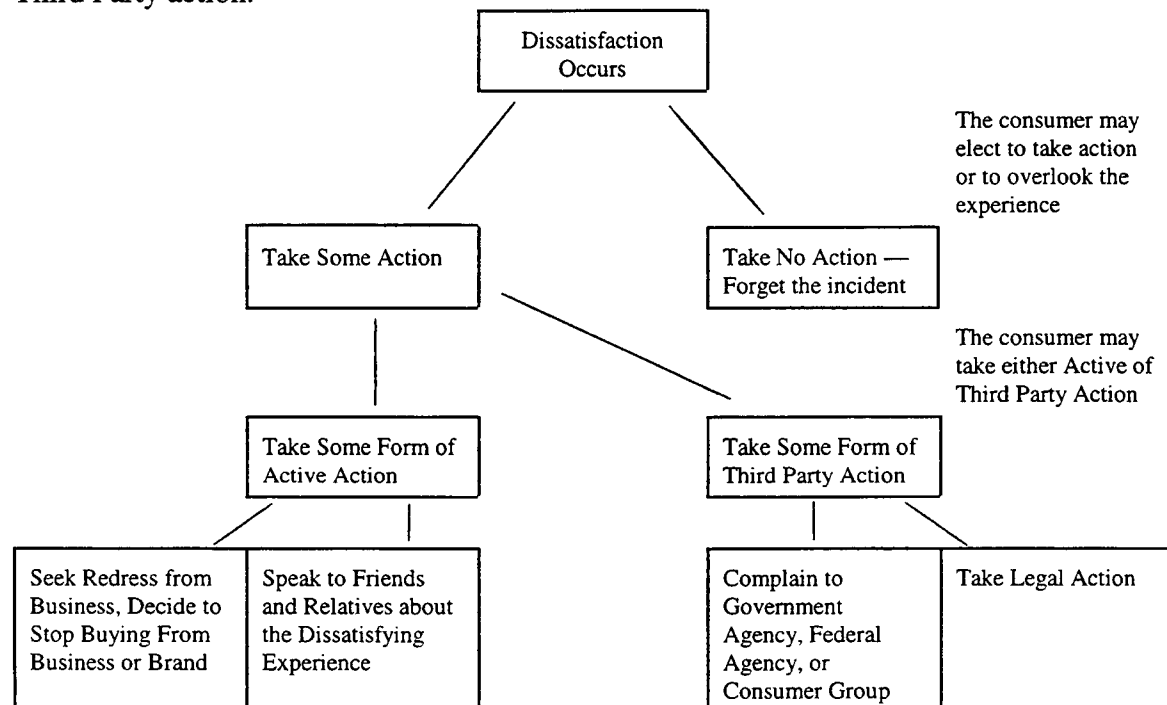


Figure 3: Resulting taxonomy from this study.

INFLUENCING FACTORS

Research into influencing factors (i.e. age, educational attainment, income, attitudes and expectation towards the marketplace, knowledge of marketplace laws, and consumer activity) of CCB has shown fairly consistent results over the past decades. Those consumers who complain have been defined as younger, better educated, higher in income, more negative in their attitudes toward business, have strong expectations (either positive or negative) of marketplace responses, and are more active in consumer activities. Of these factors, age, education and income have been consistent in most of the empirical research. None of these three factors showed significance in either the overall construct or in the categories which comprise the construct. Knowledge of marketplace laws and regulations proved to be insignificant as well.

In this study, however, two of these factors proved to be significant in the overall construct. The first factor was participation in consumer activities such as voting, belonging to various organizations, and / or writing to elected officials. Consumer activity was significant in Active complaining (F-value 4.28, $Pr > F$ 0.0414). This result does support previous findings that consumers who are involved with consumer activities are more likely to seek some sort of redress either public or private. The factor was not found to be significant when considering taking third party action.

The second factor proving significant in the overall construct was expectation of the marketplace with regards to reactions from friends and family. Consumers felt that the sharing of information with friends and family would result in those consumers either

being more careful when shopping at a retailer or purchasing a manufacturers brand(s), or would stop shopping with the retailer or purchasing the manufacturers brand(s) altogether. Consumers also indicated that friends and family would help them to resolve their complaint.

Expectation of the marketplace contained four variables and though only one of the four proved to be significant in the overall construct, the other three were also significant in the category of CCB defined in this study as Third Party. Results indicated that consumers believe that friends and family were instrumental when seeking third party redress. This support may be either moral or financial. Further, consumers believed that by initiating third party action retailers and / or manufacturers would be forced to be more careful in the future and would resolve their complaint. There was strong evidence that consumers were confident that third party agencies would be able to settle a complaint in favor of the consumer.

Two of the primary goals of this paper were to investigate the difference in attitudes of consumers toward retailers and manufacturers and to see if these attitudes influenced CCB. These attitudes resulted in 6 variables, 3 regarding to retailers and 3 regarding manufacturers. And, while these variables did not show significance in the overall construct, several were significant in the defined categories of CCB.

In the category defined as Active, two attitude variables toward retailers showed significance. ATTR1, defines retailers as basically uncaring about the consumer and are basically dishonest in their dealings with the consumer. It further shows that consumers feel that once the retailer has their money, they are apt to forget about consumers. In

essence, the consumer regards the retailer as a nuisance in the marketplace that must be dealt with in order to consume. This variable is personal in nature and is somewhat passive since the attitude is formed without action statements.

ATTR3 is personal in nature, but is active. The consumer gets some amount of satisfaction from his CCB action(s). This satisfaction is subjective in nature stating that the consumer is bothered when he does not complain about an unsatisfactory retailer or sometimes feels better when he does complain about an unsatisfactory retailer, often believing it is his responsibility in the marketplace to complain. Interestingly, in this variable, consumers like others who complain about retailers state that most complaints are reasonable.

In the construct category CCB2, Third Party, ATTM3 was significant. In this variable, consumers believed that most complaints toward manufacturers were unreasonable, and they showed disfavor with those who sought third party action towards manufacturers. This variable is a personal norm of the consumer and is interpreted as saying that the consumer believes there are other avenues of redress open to him when the distance between the consumer and the receiver of the complaint (in this case the manufacturer) is so far apart.

LIMITATIONS

This study does have a number of limitations. First, while there was a significant demographic match between the respondents and the population, the response rate was

low, therefore, conclusions from this study may not be representative of the population. Second, the survey was limited to one state in the mid-South region of the United States. For this reason, conclusions may not be generalized for the entire population of the United States or any other region in the United States.

Third, the parameters set for sample selection excluded apartment dwellers and those consumers with P. O. Boxes. Only single family dwellings were used for the sample. This may have introduced a bias into the sample since those who live in single family dwellings generally have higher incomes and are less apt to be included in a minority classification.

And fourth, there is the high correlation between the variables ATTR1 and ATTM2. It was necessary in this study to overlook this relationship to gain insight into the differences between consumer attitudes toward retailers and manufacturers in complaining behavior. There was, however, a significant relationship between ATTM2 and CCB1 when the ATTR variables were suppressed. This study does recognize this finding.

CONCLUSIONS

With respect to underlying CCB taxonomies, it is clear that research needs to be once again undertaken to identify the basic shifts in consumer complaint patterns. Complaint taxonomies have been refined and re-refined allowing for more consistent research results. These taxonomies had several influencing factors consistently show up

as being relevant such as age, education, and income. This study suggests that these factors are no longer relevant in the construct.

It would appear that in a mature consumer movement the general consumer has become more active in the marketplace and is more ready and able to share information in the marketplace. Consumer activity was shown to be highly significant in the construct presented in this study. It is this very activity in the marketplace that may offer the individual consumer the confidence to seek various redress options.

It is stated in the literature concerning consumer movements that one of the primary goals of the movement is the delineation of information to the consumer. With this in mind, it is possible to explain the shifts in the factors of CCB. Consumer education began in the classroom. The education of children would have transcended the boundaries of gender and income in the public school system. A trickle-up effect occurred with children leaving the classroom to educate their parents who in turn educated their parents. The total effect of the consumer movement over the past thirty years has been the education of the entire consumer population. Gender, age, educational attainment, and income would cease to be relevant in CCB since the same consumer education was enjoyed by all. Further, the effects of marketplace knowledge becomes insignificant since this knowledge is delineated by a variety of gatekeepers.

Consumers tend to believe that their presence in the marketplace offers an ability to correct marketplace inefficiencies. This study offers proof that consumers have a better understanding of redress options in the marketplace and are no longer lacking the gumption to use these avenues of redress. This is especially true in the area of third party

redress. We have seen taxonomies shift to accommodate these actions, and Singh (1988) was the first to classify these actions as a separate category. The categories defined in this study suggest that public and private actions, those directed at retailers, manufacturers, friends, and relatives, have become blurred and may no longer be seen as distinct categories of CCB. However, there is a marked distinction between these Active options and seeking third party redress. This may be the result of the increased time and money needed to pursue complaints in a court of law.

Regarding the time honored factors that show up in research into product classes and services and between product classes and services, this study produces evidence that these factors do not affect the underlying taxonomy of complaint behavior. If the underlying assumptions of CCB can be challenged, then the results of current research can be challenged with respect to these factors.

Retailers and manufacturers should take notice that although attitude variables did not show significance in the overall construct presented in this paper, they did show significance within the categories of the construct. Retailers should be especially concerned since results indicate a basic mistrust of retailers on behalf of consumers. Further, retailers should take note that consumers indicated they receive some sort of satisfaction from complaining about inefficient retailers. A basic shift in retail operations is needed to revive the confidence of the consuming public. And, by addressing the satisfaction issue of complaints, regardless of their validity to the retailer, the retailer has yet another opportunity to obtain and keep consumers.

It is interesting to note that a variable reflecting attitudes toward manufacturers may directly affect retailers. Consumers stated they believed there were avenues of redress that were closer than the manufacturer. This may well be the retailer. With this in mind, the retailer becomes a mediator between the consumer and the manufacturer. And, while the complaint may not be favorably settled from the consumer's perspective, it will be the retailer who will ultimately feel the repercussions not the manufacturer.

By the same token, the manufacturer needs to be aware that the consumer may feel somewhat distanced from him. Results from this study show that the consumer is apt to seek third party redress when trying to resolve a complaint with a manufacturer. Third party redress is expensive for the consumer and has proven extremely costly for the manufacturer. This results of this study suggests the manufacturer needs to make a conscious effort to familiarize the consumer with his products. The consumer needs to know which manufacturer is producing which product(s). And, the manufacturer needs to generate avenues of communication that shorten the perceived distance between him and the consumer. This avenue may include the retailer since the consumer indicated a basic familiarity with this institution.

Several implications in this study warrant subsequent investigation. The underlying taxonomy of CCB needs further study to confirm that a shift in behavior classifications has occurred. The factors that comprise the construct need to be corroborated as well. Empirical proof will allow future research to be grounded on an accurate construct. Furthermore, it is vital that research account for all aspects of CCB shifts, such as the consumer movement. An important question to answer is 'has a new

consuming public been created?'. If so, the implications for the marketplace (the manufacturer, the retailer, and the consumer) warrant further clarification.

In closing, it has been said by many researchers that consumer complaint behavior is a dynamic process with multiple factors. This researcher would agree with that statement. The marketplace is changing, manufacturing processes are changing, retailing is changing, and the consumer is changing. It is important to challenge past results so that current and future research can accommodate these changes.

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APPENDIX

Table 1
Demographics: Sample V.S. Population

Variable	Category	Sample Number	Sample Percentage	Population Percentage
Gender	Male	41	38.00%	47.11%
	Female	67	62.00%	52.89%
Age	18-25	3	2.80%	14.41%
	26-35	27	25.00%	22.19%
	36-46	28	25.90%	20.24%
	46-55	23	21.30%	14.38%
	56-65	17	15.70%	11.87%
	over 65	10	9.30%	16.90%
Marital Status	Married	56	51.90%	-NA-
	Single	18	16.70%	-NA-
	Divorced	23	21.30%	-NA-
	Widowed	4	8.3%	-NA-
	No Response	2	1.9%	-NA-
Employment	Full-time	79	73.10%	94.8%
	Part-time	7	6.50%	employed
	Retired	14	13.00%	-NA-
	House-parent	3	2.80%	-NA-
	Unemployed - looking	3	2.80%	5.2% unemployed
	Unemployed - not looking	2	1.90%	

Table 1 - Demographics: Sample V.S. Population, continued

Variable	Category	Sample Number	Sample Percentage	Population Percentage
Education	Less than High School	13	12.00%	-NA-
	High School Graduate	22	20.40%	67.10% High School+
	Some College	29	26.90%	-NA-
	College Graduate	21	19.40%	16.0% B.S.+
	Graduate Studies	13	12.00%	-NA-
	Professional/ Trade School	10	9.30%	-NA-
Race	White	101	93.50%	82.40%
	Black	3	2.80%	16.2%
	Asian	1	0.90%	1.0%
	Hispanic	1	0.90%	0.80%
	No Response	2	1.90%	-NA-
Income	Less than 10K	5	4.60%	27.2% (<15 K)
	10K < 20K	16	14.80%	
	20K < 30K	18	16.70%	
	30K < 40K	14	13.00%	52.7% (<50 K)
	40K < 50K	30	27.80%	
	50K < 60 K	12	11.10%	
	60 K < 100K	6	5.60%	16.8% (<100 K)
	No response	7	6.50%	

Table 1 - Demographics: Sample V.S. Population, continued

Variable	Category	Sample Number	Sample Percentage	Population Percentage
Domicile	Urban	76	70.40%	60.90%
	Female	47	43.52%	32.21%
	Male	29	26.85%	28.69%
	Rural	32	29.60%	39.10%
	Female	12	11.11%	20.68%
	Male	20	18.52%	18.42%

Definition of Variables

- CCB1: Active - the respondent initializes complaining behavior, either public or private, with a specific end result in mind.
- CCB2: Third Party - actions are directed to objects outside the consumer's social net and are not directly related to the dissatisfying incident.
- EXP1: Indicates respondents belief that CCB actions taken with third party agencies would result in a positive result for the individual or the marketplace as a whole
- EXP2: Public complaining actions with respondents believing that CCB actions taken towards retailers or manufacturers would result in problem resolution and both would be more careful in the future.
- EXP3: Initiating legal action would result in the retailer / manufacturer taking care of the problem, or in the retailer / manufacturer being more careful in the future.
- EXP4: Denotes private action (sharing information with friends and family regarding the dissatisfying experience) would effect their future behavior.
- CACT: A factor score variable indicating whether a respondent was active in consumer activities.
- AAGE: Continuous variable- age.
- NEDUC: A categorical variable-education.
- INC: Continuous variable-income.
- CORRECT: A continuous variable noting the number of correct answers given to a series of questions about the laws of the current marketplace.
- GENDER: A categorical variable with male = 1 and female = 2.
- ATTR1: Customers regard retailers as a nuisance in the marketplace that must be dealt with in order to consume. This variable is personal / passive since the attitude is formed without action statements.
- ATTR2: The individual consumer becomes empowered to change retailers in the marketplace for his own good as well as that of other consumers.
- ATTR3: This variable is personal in nature, but is active. Consumers get some amount of satisfaction from CCB actions that become subjective to the individual consumer.
- ATTM1: Respondent's generally believed that they were a corrective force in the marketplace having a responsibility to complain when a manufacturer erred. They did not, however, distinguish clearly between personal norms and the social benefits associated with taking CCB action towards manufacturers .
- ATTM2: The relationship between the customer and the manufacturer becomes even more complicated since the respondents indicated that not only do they have a basic mistrust of the motives of manufacturers, they do not have the ability to distinguish what products a manufacturer will produce creating a personal variable reflecting the alienation towards manufacturers.
- ATTM3: A personal norm of the respondent interpreted as saying that the respondent felt there were other avenues of redress open to them where the distance between the individual and the receiver (in this case the manufacturer) were not as far apart.

Table 2
Factor Analysis Results

Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
<i>Question 8 - Attitudes Toward Retailers:</i>	(ATTR1)	(ATTR2)	(ATTR3)
Most Retailers care nothing at all about the consumer	0.88881	0.08850	0.00631
Customers are unable to determine what products will be sold by Retailers	0.43834	-0.25186	0.42197
In general, Retailers are dishonest in their dealings with customers	0.85248	-0.08206	0.15650
Retailers should stand behind their products and guarantees	0.15683	0.76723	-0.07984
As soon as money is given to Retailers, most forget about the customer	0.80324	0.30982	-0.01770
People have a responsibility to tell Retailers when a product is unsatisfactory	0.22339	0.75810	0.23974
It bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory Retailer	0.19045	0.36718	0.60229
It sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory Retailer	0.13322	0.40781	0.67590
I often complain about a Retailer because I feel it is my responsibility to do so	0.09252	0.27824	0.68919
Since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a Retailer	0.06835	0.03404	-0.53398
By making complaints about unsatisfactory Retailers, the quality of Retailers will improve	-0.31890	0.60240	0.29680
By complaining about unsatisfactory Retailers, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction	-0.07494	0.72144	0.40358
Eigenvalue	3.7766	2.3552	1.1691

Table 2
Factor Analysis Results, continued

Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
<i>Question 9 - Attitudes Toward Manufacturers:</i>	(ATTM1)	(ATTM2)	(ATTM3)
Most Manufacturers care nothing at all about the consumer	-0.08940	0.82369	-0.02478
Customers are unable to determine what products will be produced by the Manufacturer	0.07626	0.66830	-0.04557
In general, Manufacturers are dishonest in their dealings with customers	0.09839	0.87661	0.07236
Manufacturers should stand behind their products and guarantees	0.63251	0.01278	-0.17349
As soon as money is given to Manufacturers, most forget about the customer	0.20356	0.80574	0.13097
People have a responsibility to tell Manufacturers when a product is unsatisfactory	0.69546	0.16153	-0.29410
It bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory Manufacturer	0.63496	0.20815	-0.20736
It sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory Manufacturer	0.65392	0.25154	-0.43646
I often complain about a Manufacturer because I feel it is my responsibility to do so	0.61534	0.30310	-0.29478
Since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a Manufacturer	-0.17882	0.22850	0.76153
By making complaints about unsatisfactory Manufacturers, the quality of Manufacturers will improve	0.71665	-0.26002	0.29201
By complaining about an unsatisfactory Manufacturer, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction	0.87478	-0.07858	0.17354
Eigenvalue	3.9250	2.6116	0.9831

Table 2 Factor Analysis Results, continued

Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
<i>Questions 10 through 17 - Expectations of Marketplace:</i>	(EXP1)	(EXP2)	(EXP3)	(EXP4)
Considering Retailers:				
Take appropriate action to take care of your problem	0.24735	0.76648	0.17973	0.10718
Provide you with better service in the future	0.39491	0.72257	0.10761	0.25898
Be more careful in the future so everyone would benefit	0.32339	0.71537	0.27043	0.27042
Considering Manufacturers:				
Take appropriate action to take care of your problem	0.07746	0.81410	0.21649	0.00723
Provide you with better service in the future	0.32307	0.81125	0.24812	0.16289
Be more careful in the future so everyone would benefit	0.27900	0.76666	0.30225	0.19583
Considering Friends and Relatives - Retailers:				
Be more careful when shopping at the Retailer	0.09358	0.12430	0.10837	0.81556
Stop shopping with that Retailer altogether	-0.02840	0.04271	0.27721	0.86739
Help you solve your problem	0.45233	0.09599	0.04238	0.70109
Considering Friends and Relatives - Manufacturers:				
Be more careful when purchasing the Manufacturer's brand(s)	0.17113	0.24585	-0.00096	0.78892
Stop purchasing the Manufacturer's brand(s) altogether	0.07473	0.13636	0.22316	0.83942
Help you solve your problem	0.49562	0.09863	0.04291	0.67005
Eigenevalue	16.1992	2.9771	1.8743	1.7351

Table 2 Factor Analysis Results - *Questions 10 thru 17* Expectations of Marketplace, continued

Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Considering a Consumer Agency:				
Make the Retailer take care of your problem	0.77684	0.33211	0.25972	0.05577
Make sure the Retailer is more careful in the future	0.79980	0.35200	0.25118	0.19939
Make the manufacturer take care of your problem	0.81441	0.28506	0.25280	0.19283
Make sure the Manufacturer is more careful in the future	0.81376	0.30747	0.23450	0.24033
Considering a Government Agency:				
Make the Retailer take care of your problem	0.67741	0.28697	0.54670	0.09513
Make sure the Retailer is more careful in the future	0.68714	0.27991	0.54094	0.14925
Make the Manufacturer take care of your problem	0.64473	0.34062	0.55515	0.08435
Make sure the Manufacturer is more careful in the future	0.6247	0.34356	0.58230	0.10641
Considering Better Business Bureau:				
Make the Retailer take care of your problem	0.86765	0.22844	0.25865	0.14046
Make sure the Retailer is more careful in the future	0.84759	0.21748	0.25818	0.22880
Make the Manufacturer take care of your problem	0.85317	0.30301	0.24178	0.15680
Make sure the Manufacturer is more careful in the future	0.84117	0.29097	0.21701	0.18534
Considering Legal Action:				
Making the Retailer take care of your problem	0.28067	0.27121	0.79916	0.11572
Making sure the Retailer is more careful in the future	0.37587	0.21919	0.79720	0.23662
Making the Manufacturer take care of your problem	0.24828	0.23962	0.83000	0.13632
Making sure the Manufacturer is more careful in the future	0.35145	0.21072	0.79443	0.23347
Eigenevalue	16.1992	2.9771	1.8743	1.7351

Table 2 - Factor Analysis Results, continued

Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2
<i>Question 18 - Future Complaining Intent:</i>	(CCB1)	(CCB2)
Do nothing	0.28386	0.41652
Contact Retailer	0.59816	0.06211
Stop shopping with Retailer	0.81768	0.20414
Stop purchasing from Manufacturer	0.78585	0.25166
Speak with Friends and Relatives	0.73949	0.04787
Convince Friends / Relatives not to shop with Retailer	0.82244	0.27478
Convince Friends/Relatives not to purchase from Manufacturer	0.76956	0.32712
Complain to a Consumer Agency	0.23987	0.90707
Complain to Better Business Bureau	0.16729	0.89300
Complain to Government Agency	0.24662	0.90379
Take Legal Action	0.04616	0.75345
Eignevalue	5.2416	1.9188

Table 2 - Factor Analysis Results, continued

Statement	Factor 1
<i>Question 19 - Consumer Activity:</i>	(CACT)
Sign a petition to correct a problem	0.77136
Write to an elected official about a problem	0.87340
Write to a government agency about a problem	0.84356
Vote in elections	0.44321
Attend meetings on community issues	0.84765
Join organization(s) that take a stand on public issues	0.83989
Contact the media about a problem	0.62838
Eigenvalue	4.0847

Table 3
MANOVA Results

Variable	Wilks' Lambda	F Value	Pr > F
ATTR1	0.959214064	1.84963	0.1634
ATTR2	0.990615487	0.41209	0.6635
ATTR3	0.99415826	0.25558	0.7750
ATTM1	0.999415496	0.02544	0.9749
ATTM2	0.981162878	0.83515	0.4373
ATTM3	0.998602725	0.06087	0.9410
EXP1	0.967916207	1.44191	0.2421
EXP2	0.966824032	1.49268	0.2305
EXP3	0.974496045	1.13846	0.3250
EXP4	0.789825814	11.5754	0.0001
CACT	0.90181186	4.73623	0.0112
AAGE	0.991350807	0.37952	0.6853
NEDUC	0.900283499	1.1729	0.3180
INC	0.961568099	1.73861	0.1818
CORRECT	0.976553286	1.04442	0.3563
GENDER	0.998049165	0.08503	0.9186

Table 4

ANOVA Results - CCB Taxonomy

Dependent Variable CCB1:

DF	F Value	Pr > F	R-Square
19	3.14	0.0001	0.404148

Independent Variable	DF	Type I SS	F Value	Pr > F
ATTR1	1	3.095369	4.27	0.0417
ATTR2	1	0.168665	0.23	0.6307
ATTR3	1	3.027734	4.18	0.0439
ATTM1	1	0.001036	0.00	0.9699
ATTM2	1	0.161425	0.22	0.6381
ATTM3	1	0.831321	1.15	0.2870
EXP1	1	0.208660	0.29	0.5929
EXP2	1	0.001445	0.00	0.9645
EXP3	1	1.421000	1.96	0.1649
EXP4	1	27.133521	37.45	0.0001
CACT	1	1.760114	2.43	0.1227
AAGE	1	1.450733	2.00	0.1606
NEDUC	4	2.619770	0.90	0.4653
INC	1	0.475877	0.66	0.4199
CORRECT	1	0.791471	1.09	0.2988
GENDER	1	0.095735	0.13	0.7171

Table 4 - ANOVA Results, continued

Dependent Variable CCB2:

DF	F Value	Pr > F	R-Square
19	2.21	0.0068	0.323466

Independent Variable	DF	Type I SS	F Value	Pr > F
ATTR1	1	0.6489316	0.79	0.3769
ATTR2	1	0.0019280	0.00	0.9615
ATTR3	1	0.0599281	0.07	0.7879
ATTM1	1	0.4823053	0.59	0.4459
ATTM2	1	1.3537495	1.65	0.2029
ATTM3	1	3.3300811	4.05	0.0473
EXP1	1	3.6288604	4.41	0.0386
EXP2	1	5.9948278	7.29	0.0083
EXP3	1	2.8096934	3.42	0.0679
EXP4	1	4.5828909	5.57	0.0205
CACT	1	3.5246949	4.28	0.0414
AAGE	1	0.7541576	0.92	0.3409
NEDUC	4	1.3106811	1.59	0.1832
INC	1	1.7840911	2.17	0.1444
CORRECT	1	0.4015202	0.49	0.4866
GENDER	1	0.0104415	0.01	0.9106

Table 5
Correlation Results

	ATTR1	ATTR2	ATTR3	ATTM1	ATTM2	ATTM3	EXP1	EXP2	EXP3
ATTR1	1.00000	0.00000	0.00000	-0.02458	0.74954	0.00389	-0.15594	-0.39590	-0.04996
ATTR2	0.00000	1.00000	0.00000	0.57013	-0.05513	0.04666	0.00213	-0.01085	0.01950
ATTR3	0.00000	0.00000	1.00000	0.42996	0.18638	0.04666	0.00213	-0.01085	0.01950
ATTM1	-0.2458	0.57013	0.42296	1.00000	0.00000	-0.40268	-0.12150	0.05305	0.11508
ATTM2	0.74954	-0.05513	0.18638	0.00000	1.00000	0.00000	-0.01052	0.08544	0.13775
ATTM3	0.00389	0.04666	-0.40268	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	-0.10421	-0.40541	-0.00432
EXP1	-0.15594	0.00213	-0.12150	-0.01052	-0.10421	1.00000	0.23701	0.12158	0.19886
EXP2	-0.39590	-0.01085	0.05305	0.08544	-0.40541	0.23701	1.00000	0.00000	0.00000
EXP3	-0.04996	0.01950	0.11508	0.13775	-0.00432	0.12158	0.00000	1.00000	0.00000

Instrument

The University of Tennessee

Retail and Consumer Science 230 Jessie Harris Building Knoxville, TN 37996

Consumer Complaint Behavior Survey

These definitions should be used for completing the following survey:

RETAILER: The store or person from whom you made the purchase

MANUFACTURER: The individual or company which produced the product for retail sale

PART I: The following questions assess what if any complaining behavior you have taken in response to a dissatisfying market experience and how much time you have spent in the complaining process. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer to the best of your recollection.

1 In the past six months, have you had a dissatisfying experience with the purchase of a product or service?

- ☐ YES.
☐ NO. If no, how long ago was your last dissatisfying experience in the marketplace? _____

[If you do not remember your last dissatisfying experience, please go to Part II]

2 Recalling this dissatisfying experience, what was the product or service you were dissatisfied with?

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| ☐ purchase of a car | ☐ car repair | ☐ household appliance | ☐ clothing purchase |
| ☐ grocery purchase | ☐ financial institution | ☐ medical care | ☐ insurance purchase |
| ☐ telephone purchase | ☐ television purchase | ☐ dining out | ☐ purchase via the Internet |
| ☐ Other, please list _____ | | | |

3 Were you dissatisfied with: ☐ The RETAILER (the store or person from whom you made the purchase)
AND/OR ☐ The MANUFACTURER (i.e. the product was defective or did not perform as stated)

4 Recalling this last dissatisfying experience, what action(s) did you take: (Indicate ALL that apply)

- A. ☐ Did nothing
B. ☐ Contacted the RETAILER and complained (either verbally or in written form)
C. ☐ Decided not to shop with the RETAILER again
D. ☐ Decided not to purchase from the MANUFACTURER again
E. ☐ Spoke with your FRIENDS and RELATIVES about the dissatisfying experience
F. ☐ Convinced your FRIENDS and RELATIVES not to shop with the RETAILER
G. ☐ Convinced your FRIENDS and RELATIVES not to purchase from the MANUFACTURER
H. ☐ Complained to a CONSUMER AGENCY (i.e. Chamber of Commerce)
I. ☐ Complained to the BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU
J. ☐ Reported the dissatisfying experience to a GOVERNMENT AGENCY (i.e. FTC, FDA)
K. ☐ Took LEGAL ACTION

5 If you contacted the store or salesperson to complain, did you:

- ☐ wait till your next visit to complain ☐ make an intentional trip to complain ☐ complain immediately

[For questions 6 and 7, please list the approximate numerical time and circle either minutes, hours, days or months]

6 If you were dissatisfied, how long did you wait to complain? _____ (minutes, hours, days, months)

7 What was the total time you spent complaining about the dissatisfying experience, including travel time? _____ (minutes, hours, days, months)

- A. How much of this time was spent complaining to friends and relatives? _____ (minutes, hours, days, months)
B. How much of this time was spent complaining to the retailer and/or manufacturer? _____ (minutes, hours, days, months)
C. How much of this time was spent complaining to a government agency, a consumer agency, and/or taking legal action? _____ (minutes, hours, days, months)

PART II: The following statements are designed to indicate your current opinion of the marketplace in which you purchase products and services. Please circle your response.

8	How strongly do you agree with each of the following statements concerning RETAILERS: (Please circle your response)	strongly disagree	neutral	strongly agree
A	Shopping in a retail store is usually an unpleasant experience	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
B	Most RETAILERS care nothing at all about the consumer	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
C	Customers are unable to determine what products will be sold by RETAILERS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
D	In general, RETAILERS are dishonest in their dealings with customers	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
E	RETAILERS should stand behind their products and guarantees	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
F	As soon as money is given to RETAILERS, most forget about the customer	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
G	People have a responsibility to tell RETAILERS when a product is unsatisfactory	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
H	It bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory RETAILER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
I	It sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory RETAILER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
J	I often complain about a RETAILER because I feel it is my responsibility to do so	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
K	Since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a RETAILER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
L	By making complaints about unsatisfactory RETAILERS, the quality of RETAILERS will improve	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
M	By complaining about unsatisfactory RETAILERS, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
9	How strongly do you agree with each of the following statements concerning MANUFACTURERS: (Please circle your response)	strongly disagree	neutral	strongly agree
A	Most MANUFACTURERS care nothing at all about the consumer	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
B	Customers are unable to determine what products will be produced by the MANUFACTURER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
C	In general, MANUFACTURERS are dishonest in their dealings with customers	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
D	MANUFACTURERS should stand behind their products and guarantees	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
E	As soon as money is given to MANUFACTURERS, most forget about the customer	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
F	People have a responsibility to tell MANUFACTURERS when a product is unsatisfactory	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
G	It bothers me a lot if I do not complain about an unsatisfactory MANUFACTURER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
H	It sometimes makes me feel better to complain about an unsatisfactory MANUFACTURER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
I	I often complain about a MANUFACTURER because I feel it is my responsibility to do so	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
J	Since most complaints are unreasonable, I do not like people who complain about a MANUFACTURER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
K	By making complaints about unsatisfactory MANUFACTURERS, the quality of MANUFACTURERS will improve	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		
L	By complaining about an unsatisfactory MANUFACTURER, I may prevent other consumers from experiencing the same dissatisfaction	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		

PART III: What is your general attitude about complaining and how do you currently perceive the results of your complaining actions? Please circle your response.

		not very likely			neutral			very likely
10	If you complained to a RETAILER today about an unsatisfactory product or service, how likely is it that the RETAILER would:							
A	Take appropriate action to take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B	Provide you with better service in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	Be more careful in the future so everyone would benefit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	If you complained to a MANUFACTURER today about an unsatisfactory product, how likely is it that the MANUFACTURER would:							
A	Take appropriate action to take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B	Provide you with better service in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	Be more careful in the future so everyone would benefit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	If you complained to your FRIENDS and RELATIVES today about an unsatisfactory RETAILER, how likely is it that they would:							
A	Be more careful when shopping at the RETAILER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B	Stop shopping with that RETAILER altogether	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	Help you solve your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	If you complained to your FRIENDS and RELATIVES today about an unsatisfactory MANUFACTURER, how likely is it that they would:							
A	Be more careful when purchasing the MANUFACTURER'S brand(s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B	Stop purchasing the MANUFACTURER'S brand(s) altogether	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	Help you solve your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	If you reported an unsatisfactory experience to a CONSUMER AGENCY (i.e. Chamber of Commerce) today, how likely is it that they would:							
A	Make the RETAILER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B	Make sure the RETAILER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	Make the MANUFACTURER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D	Make sure the MANUFACTURER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	If you reported an unsatisfactory experience to a GOVERNMENT AGENCY (i.e. FTC, FDA) today, how likely is it that they would:							
A	Make the RETAILER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B	Make sure the RETAILER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C	Make the MANUFACTURER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D	Make sure the MANUFACTURER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16	If you reported an unsatisfactory experience to a BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU today, how likely is it that they would:	not very likely			neutral		very likely
A	Make the RETAILER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
B	Make sure the RETAILER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
C	Make the MANUFACTURER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
D	Make sure the MANUFACTURER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
17	If you took LEGAL ACTION today, how likely is it that it would result in:						
A	Making the RETAILER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
B	Making sure the RETAILER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
C	Making the MANUFACTURER take care of your problem	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
D	Making sure the MANUFACTURER is more careful in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6 7

PART IV: Remembering the dissatisfying experience from Part I, if you are faced with a similar dissatisfying experience, how likely is it that you would:

18		not very likely			neutral		very likely
A	Do nothing	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
B	Contact the RETAILER and complain (either verbally or in written form)	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
C	Decide not to shop with the RETAILER again	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
D	Decide not to purchase from the MANUFACTURER again	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
E	Speak with your FRIENDS and RELATIVES about the dissatisfying experience	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
F	Convince your FRIENDS and RELATIVES not to shop with the RETAILER	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
G	Convince your FRIENDS and RELATIVES not to purchase from the MANUFACTURER	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
H	Complain to a CONSUMER AGENCY (i.e. Chamber of Commerce)	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
I	Complain to the BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
J	Report the dissatisfying experience to a GOVERNMENT AGENCY (i.e. FTC)	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
K	Seek LEGAL ACTION	1	2	3	4	5	6 7

19 Please indicate how often you participate in the following activities: (Please circle your response)

A	Sign a petition to correct a problem	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always
B	Write to an elected official about a problem	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always
C	Write to a government agency about a problem	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always
D	Vote in elections	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always
E	Attend meetings on community issues	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always
F	Join organization(s) that take a stand on public issues	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always
G	Contact the media about a problem	never	almost never	sometimes	almost always	always

A	If a RETAILER accidentally prices a product for \$12 instead of \$21, you need only pay \$12 for the product	True	False
B	It is legal for a RETAILER to heavily advertise a product, then only stock enough for the first few customers	True	False
C	If you receive a product in the mail that you did not order, you must return it to the sender	True	False
D	If you purchase an item from a door-to-door salesman, then change your mind the next day, you can still cancel the purchase	True	False
E	If you do not return the warranty card on a product, you lose the rights described by the warranty	True	False
F	If you do not follow the instructions when using a product, you invalidate the warranty	True	False
G	Banks and other lending institutions must state the true interest rate and costs involved in credit transactions	True	False
H	If you agree to monthly car payments, you may change your mind and pay one lump sum	True	False
I	If a food product spoils before the stated expiration date, you may return it for a full refund	True	False
J	After purchasing an item, you discover it is damaged, you must accept a price reduction from the RETAILER	True	False

PART V: I would like to know a little about you. This information will be used only for research purposes. Be assured that your responses are completely confidential.

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VITA

Ronald Howard Tipper was born in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee on March 31, 1963. He was raised in Smyrna, Tennessee and attended the public school system there. He graduated from Smyrna High School in May, 1981. He entered The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the fall of 1981 and left the University in the spring of 1984. He entered the workforce and spent ten years with General Mills Restaurant Group. In the fall of 1994, he re-entered The University of Tennessee, Knoxville where he received a Bachelor of Science in Human Ecology with a major in Retail and Consumer Sciences and a minor in Business. He entered the Master's program in Retail and Consumer Sciences at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in January 1996. He officially received the Master's of Science degree in December, 1997 with a concentration in Consumer Complaint Behavior and a cognate area in International Business.

Other areas of interest include human resource development and the development of the Eastern European market. In particular, he is interested in the development of human resource policy with regards to life-threatening illnesses such as cancer, heart attacks and strokes, and HIV / AIDS. He is also interested in the movement of the former Socialist countries' command economies to demand economies and the resulting effects on the consumer. He is currently pursuing a career in retail where he hopes to concentrate on consumer resolution processes.