

## CONSUMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOR: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SAUDI CONSUMERS AND FILIPINO MIGRANTS

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the consumer complaining behavior [CCB] of Saudi nationals and Filipino temporary migrants resident in Saudi Arabia, focusing on differences in preferred forms of complaining and whether cultural differences are the cause. Samples were drawn from Saudi and Filipino residents in Saudi Arabia. A survey instrument covering a wide range of CCB variables was developed, tested and administered to each group. Data were analyzed in SPSS using descriptive statistics, t-tests and chi square analysis. Significant differences were found between the two groups in their complaining actions. Temporary migrants portrayed a more careful and reticent approach to complaining. Demographic differences were excluded as causal, as was length of stay of the immigrant group. Significant differences in cultural values between the two groups were found but further analysis found no systematic association between the strength of a respondent's value dimension and the preferred complaint action within each nationality group. The temporary, work-permit based status of the immigrant group was left as the likely cause of differences. Although cultural differences between culturally diverse groups within a country may exist, we believe customer complaint management should not necessarily be tailored to address such differences. The status of migrants, the conditions under which they live and work, is a more important influence on how temporary migrants complain. To address a reticence to complain face-to-

face, retailers should look at online systems as well as more sensitivity training for frontline staff.

*Keywords:* Consumer complaining behavior; Saudi; Filipino, culture, temporary migrants, vulnerable consumers; differences

### INTRODUCTION

Customer complaint behavior (CCB) comprises customer responses to dissatisfaction experienced with the purchase of a product (Butelli, 2007). Dissatisfaction with a purchase can take alternative paths to resolution with individuals differing significantly in their perceptions of when and how to complain. Consumers may choose to complain privately by changing brands, switching suppliers, or warning family and friends; complain publicly, either directly such as by making a complaint to the supplier or indirectly such as by reporting to a legal authority, to the media or to a consumer group; or do nothing (Day & Landon, 1977; Singh, 1988).

Building on research comparing the CCB of different sub-cultural groups within one country (Blodgett, Bakir, Saklani, Bachheti, & Bhaskar, 2015; Meng, Wang, Peters, & Lawson, 2010), this study examines the CCB of Filipinos residing in Saudi Arabia. Instead of comparing them with another migrant group, their responses to service/product failure are compared with the CCB of the dominant cultural group, Saudi nationals. Given the wide scope of CCB issues (Butelli, 2007), our focus is on group

differences in complaining behavior with respect to whom they choose to complain to, focusing on cultural, demographic and situational differences as potential explanations.

There are three areas where this study seeks to contribute: first, comparing the complaint behavior of a migrant group with a dominant national group can provide insights on how migrants from a different culture adapt to the retail environment of their host country. Second, previous studies of CCB have primarily focused on advanced economies with some recent studies extending to (some emerging) East Asian and South East Asian nations. Studies of the CCB of sub-cultural groups within emerging economies and in countries with an Arab culture are lacking, a gap this study seeks to address. Third, we seek to examine whether any differences are attributable to cultural differences between a sub-culture and the mainstream. Blodgett et al. (2015) have offered argument and evidence that inter-country differences in complaining behavior can result from international differences in return and redress policies rather than from differences in cultural values. Comparing a sample of Indian residents in the United States with another sample residing in India, they confirmed that inter-country differences in return and redress policies can cause culturally similar purchasers to change their behavior in response to the different retail conditions. Whether the complaining behavior of Indian residents in the United States differs from the mainstream American population, and whether any differences are attributable to cultural differences between the sub-culture and the mainstream, is not examined. We seek to establish whether cultural differences between a sub-cultural group and the mainstream cultural group are associated with differences in complaint behavior within the same retailing environment. Further, while Blodgett et al. (2015) focused on the decision to seek redress,

our focus is on to whom each group chooses to complain, which may include redress as one off several options.

## BACKGROUND

Saudi Arabia is one of the largest and most prosperous countries in its region, and the largest member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC, consisting of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain). Migrant workers and their families legally residing in these countries are critical to these economies. They constitute approximately 36 per cent of the GCC population and a majority of the employed workforce (Baldwin-Edwards, 2011; Shah, 2009). Such workers supply critical labor skills and competencies, and their importance is well recognized. While the supply side of their presence is acknowledged (Naithani, 2010), understanding their role as consumers while residing in the host country appears neglected.

A temporary migrant population makes up around two thirds of Saudi Arabia's workforce (CDS, 2009). Differences between the CCB of Filipino residents and Saudi nationals are investigated because there are approximately 1.1 million Filipinos legally resident in Saudi Arabia (Commission of Filipinos Overseas [CFO], 2016; *Saudi Gazette*, 02 October 2012), constituting about 18% of the migrant workforce (CIA Factbook, 2013). Filipinos have resided in Saudi Arabia for several decades and come from a culturally distinct, non-Arab country (CDS, 2009). They cover a spectrum of educational levels and employment activities ranging from the professional to the unskilled.

The conditions under which guest workers reside can differ considerably between countries but Ruhs and Martin (2008) note the evidence that countries that admit large numbers of low-skilled guest workers tend to offer them relatively few rights. In the Saudi context, potential guest workers require a sponsor/employer

leading to work and residence permits usually valid for one year and for a specific occupation with that employer. They are not permitted to switch employers without the permission of their sponsor, and regardless of their length of stay are not entitled to permanent residency or citizenship (Atiyah, 1996). Such conditions may leave guest workers vulnerable to various forms of labour market exploitation (Ruhs and Martin, 2008; Atiyah, 1996).

Although permanent residency for guest workers is not available, many have lived in Saudi Arabia for decades (POEA, 2009), and this is reflected in the Filipino sample. Workers are able to extend their stay beyond a single contract period, resulting in relatively long-term residency (Badghish, Stanton, & Hu, 2015; Khoo, Hugo, & McDonald 2008). In this study, close to 50 per cent of the Filipino sample have lived in Saudi Arabia for more than six years, and 25 per cent for more than ten years.

From the above discussion, two questions are derived:

- R1:** What are the differences between Saudi and Filipino consumers living in Saudi Arabia in whom they prefer to complain to?
- R2:** Are these differences due to cultural, demographic or situational (residential status) differences?

The paper is organized as follows. The literature review outlines the reasons for expecting within-country complaint differences between migrant groups and the mainstream population. Next, we present the conceptualization and hypotheses development followed by the research methodology. Presentation of the analysis is followed by a discussion of the finding, future research, managerial implications and limitations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Individuals can differ significantly in their perceptions about when and to whom to complain. A decision to complain is likely to vary with the complexity of a service, its cost, and the extent of dissatisfaction (Bolfing, 1989). Choosing whom to complain to, or choosing not to complain, can vary significantly with the nature of the service (Singh, 1990a). In general, the importance of a product for everyday life significantly influences the action taken (Day & Landon, 1977).

### *Whom to complain to*

Complainants can be classified by their response style. Singh (1990b), used complaint intentions (drawn from Day, 1984 and Singh, 1988) as either a propensity to complain to the supplier (voice), to complain privately, to exit, or to complain to third parties. *Passives* were those below average in terms of the three complaint intention factors; they were the least likely to take any action and were consistent with non-complainers. *Voicers* were those most likely to voice their dissatisfaction and complain directly to the provider, but were below average in seeking to complain privately or to third parties. *Irates* were strongest in private complaining, including negative word of mouth, about average in voicing to the provider but less likely to go to third parties. *Activists* engaged in all three complaint activities but were particularly inclined to complain to third party agencies.

Singh's (1990b) typology identifies possible recipients of a complaint, similar to Goetzinger (2007), who categorizes complaints into voicing a complaint to the seller, privately complaining to family or friends, collectively complaining to the public through offline/online channels, and complaining to third parties. Others offer alternative perspectives. Day and Landon (1977) categorize complaining actions into public, private or none taken. Broadbridge and Marshall (1995) have a similar

approach. Public action covers both direct communication to a supplier/seller and indirect public action such as complaining through media. Private action involves boycotting or warning family and friends; the default is taking no action, a strengthened possibility if there is a sense of hopelessness (Andreasen & Manning, 1990; Singh, 1990b). Drawing from Broadbridge and Marshall (1995), Day and Landon (1977), and Singh (1990b), this study uses four alternative responses: a direct public complaint to the other party involved; an indirect, public complaint to a third party which could be a regulatory body or the media; a private complaint to family or friends, or no complaint at all.

### ***Cultural differences and CCB***

While some studies seek cross-country explanations of CCB based on general personality traits (Sharma, Marshall, Reday, & Na, 2010), others focus on cultural value differences using cross-country comparisons of Western and non-Western CCB to reveal different behaviors between cultural groups (Hernandez, Strahle, Garcia, & Sorensen, 1991; Liu & McClure, 2001; Ngai et al., 2007; Souiden & Ladhari, 2011). Few studies have sought to examine the CCB of different cultural groups residing within one country although cultural diversity is a characteristic of many countries.

The United States has so far been the main focus of these studies. Typical conclusions are that American consumers are more likely to complain than Mexicans (Villarreal-Camacho, 1983), while a more recent finding is that Mexican migrants react more strongly to dissatisfaction than do Chinese migrants (Meng et al., 2010). The focus of such studies has been on cultural differences between immigrant groups, or between immigrant groups and the mainstream population, with little regard to the status of the migrant, length of stay or conditions of residency, specifically whether they are permanent or temporary (Castles, 2002).

Non-Western studies of CCB in growing and emerging markets have been relatively few, with most focusing on East and South East Asian cultures (Fernandes & Santos, 2008; Han, Keng, & Richmond, 1995; Jin, 2010; Liu & McClure, 2001; Phau & Sari, 2004). These studies reveal differences in complaint behaviors between cultural groups. But as Liu and McClure (2001) observe, knowledge of consumer complaint behavior that operates in a Western cultural context may not apply to non-Western contexts.

Support for the contention that actions of complaint taken by a dissatisfied consumer are connected to the consumer's cultural background can be found in both between- and within-country studies (Baker, Meyer, & Johnson, 2008; Chiu, Tsang, & Yang, 1988; Hernandez et al., 1991; Liu & McClure, 2001; Meng et al., 2010; Ngai et al., 2007; Souiden & Ladhari, 2011; Villarreal-Camacho, 1983). A contrary view is that differences between countries in their retail market environment and consumer protection policies may account more for inter-country differences in CCB than do cultural differences (Blodgett, Hill, & Bakir, 2006; Blodgett et al., 2015), in that consumers are more likely to seek redress if the situation allows it (Blodgett et al., 2015). However, even this view may need qualifying: vulnerable consumers in a society (the relatively poor, or those perceiving they have restricted rights) are likely to differ in their complaining behaviors from mainstream consumers, and to be less inclined to complain (Andreasen & Manning, 1990). The situation of a sub-cultural group within a country as well as the group's cultural differences from the dominant or mainstream group may both influence how dissatisfied consumers in that group choose to complain (Broderick, et al., 2011).

### ***Cultural dimensions***

A number of different value dimensions have been employed in past research (Hofstede, 1980; 2005; Schwartz, 2006; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). In this study, we use Hofstede's (1980, 2005) five dimensions (i.e., power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation) because they are widely used in marketing studies and in studies of cultural differences in complaint behavior (Franchen et al., 2010; Meng et al., 2010; Ngai et al., 2007; Liu & McClure, 2001; Huang, Huang, & Wu, 1996). Although, Hofstede's (1980; 2005) dimensions originated from organizational setting, they have been found to provide significant explanatory value in other areas such as consumer behavior and cross-cultural studies (Manrai & Manrai, 2009; de Mooij, 2004). Additionally, we employ Hofstede's (1980; 2005) value dimensions to contest the findings of studies using Hofstede's dimensions since they are most commonly used to explain the effect of culture in consumer complaint behavior.

#### *Power distance (PDI)*

Power distance is the extent to which a cultural group accepts an unequal distribution of power as the norm (Hofstede, 1980). PDI is the extent to which power is unequally distributed and accepted by the less powerful members of an organization. Power distance in the context of consumer behavior is embedded in the concept of "face," which refers to professional and social self-image, position and reputation (Patterson, Cowley, & Prasongsukarn, 2006). Asian cultures with high PDI are less likely to complain (Ngai et al. 2007), as Asians are more likely to accept unequal distribution of power. Higher power distance consumers are likely to perceive unsatisfactory service as a fact of life and, accordingly, will not complain if they

appear to be "less powerful" (Huang, Huang, & Wu, 1996, p. 231).

#### *Collectivism (CI)*

Collectivism refers to the degree to which individuals are identified with, and expected to act as, members of a group. Huang et al. (1996) define collectivism as the degree to which a person identifies with a group. According to Liu and McClure (2001), individualistic and collectivist people differ in their complaint behaviors. When consumers from an individualistic culture are dissatisfied with a service, they tend to voice their complaint publicly. Collectivist cultures prefer to express complaints or dissatisfaction with services or products privately, as exemplified by countries like China, Japan, or South Korea, where consumers find it disturbing to air complaints (Li, 2010).

Complaints made by people from an individualist culture are likely to be made on their own behalf; consumers from a collectivist culture are likely to attribute blame to external causes (Ngai et al., 2007). Ngai et al. (2007) add that collectivist Asian cultures tend to engage in private complaint actions like word of mouth. Liu and McClure (2001) confirm that dissatisfied consumers in a collectivist culture are less likely to voice complaints openly, being more likely to complain privately than those in an individualistic culture. A decision to complain in a collectivist culture is usually for the benefit of the society or the group, not for individual redress. From the above discussion, we conclude that consumers from a more individualist culture will engage in making complaints more openly than consumers from a more collectivist culture.

#### *Masculinity vs. femininity (MAS)*

A masculine–feminine dimension explains the extent to which gender roles are strictly defined in a society (Wong, 2004),

although de Mooij (2004) defines this dimension's effect on cultures more with respect to values related to winning and success, arguing that the lower the score in the masculinity index, the more service-oriented the society. Masculinity places high value on success. By contrast, femininity refers to situations wherein the dominant values of the society pertain to caring for others and to quality of life (Hofstede, 1980). It is worth exploring whether this characteristic may lead to differences in complaining behavior if groups differ significantly.

Huang et al. (1996) find that guests from a culture with a high masculinity score are more likely to express complaints because they like things to be straightforward: the lower the score, the lower the likelihood of making a complaint. Li (2010) notes that for customers with a high masculinity score in a hotel setting, the option to "get things straight" and voice their complaints is dominant. This is deemed to contrast with a feminine response, which is less likely to lead to laying a complaint; instead, those from a culture with a high femininity score may choose to not confront a service provider about bad service.

#### *Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)*

Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and try to avoid situations where these may exist (Hofstede, 1980). It is the extent to which people, threatened by unclear circumstances, feel themselves forced to create institutions and beliefs as means to avoid such situations. People from cultures with relatively high uncertainty avoidance may show more resistance to change and be less likely to take risky actions. In contrast, people in cultures that score low in uncertainty avoidance tend to be more willing to take risks and to be more relaxed (Huang et al., 1996).

Some consumers from high uncertainty-avoidance cultures may not

complain because they fear losing face or that their complaint will be treated differently; or they may believe they will cause difficulties if they complain. As people from a higher uncertainty avoidance culture tend to be more resistant to change and less likely to take risks (Huang et al., 1996), based on this index it is expected that consumers from a higher uncertainty avoidance culture are less likely to complain.

#### *Long-term orientation (LTO) vs. short-term orientation (STO)*

This cultural dimension is also referred to as "Confucian dynamism". LTO indicates the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards, while STO signifies the fostering of rewards in the present (Hofstede, 2005). The implications of LTO are that there is a gradual acceptance of change, thrift and pursuit of peace of mind; conversely, short-term oriented people believe that current spending is more important than saving for the future. LTO is high in Asian nations but low in Anglo-Saxon societies (de Mooij, 2004).

People from long-term orientation cultures are less likely to complain (Liu and McClure 2001) because, according to Reisinger and Turner (1999), conflict or clashes can occur following complaints and the cultural trend is to seek harmonious relationships and consensus. While long-term versus short-term cultural orientation can directly influence attitudes towards complaining (Fanchen et al., 2010), attitude is not a variable examined in this research. Additionally, Arabic nations have not been covered in studies of the LTO dimension and its linkage to CCB, so this dimension is not used in this study.

### **HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

Likely differences in cultural values between Arabian and South East Asian cultures, as well as the potential for both demographic and situational differences between a temporary immigrant population

and the Saudi mainstream, may influence how each group chooses to complain. To ascertain any differences and possible contributing sources, the following hypotheses are proposed.

**H1:** Faced with an unsatisfactory shopping experience, Saudi and Filipino consumers differ in their preferred type of complaint behavior (defined as direct public complaint, indirect public complaint, private complaint, and not complaining).

The sample populations studied in in this research vary in educational levels, employment categories, age, income and gender differences. As members of the Filipino group have resided in Saudi Arabia for varying periods of time, they may vary in their familiarity with the Saudi retail environment. The second hypothesis seeks to exclude such differences as a cause of any found differences in type of complaint behavior between Saudis and Filipinos living in Saudi Arabia.

**H2:** There is no difference in type of complaint action according to age, education, income, or gender of respondents.

Recent studies of cultural value dimensions for these two countries are lacking. The Philippines has a high reported power distance (PDI) of 94 on Hofstede's index (2001). At-Twajri and Al-Muhaiza (1996) attempting to determine the scores of some individual Arabian countries and basing their work on Hofstede's composite Arabian score, report Saudi Arabia's PDI as 61. Arabs, according to Lewis (1996), have a collectivist approach; however, At-Twajri and Al-Muhaiza (1996) find the individualism score for Saudi Arabia to be 38, a little higher than that of the Philippines, which is 32 on Hofstede's (2001) original index. Hofstede's official

matrix rating Arabian countries higher on the individualism scale than the Philippines is affirmed in his later study (2007), which also finds that Arab countries are less collectivist and more individualistic than Asian countries. At-Twajri and Al-Muhaiza (1996) classify Saudi managers as risk avoiders, with a reported UAI of 90: significantly higher than Hofstede's UAI of 68. The UAI score for the Philippines, as found by Hofstede (2001), is 44. No values pertaining to the other two dimensions could be found.

Based on expectations that Filipinos will retain their cultural values and that these likely are different from Saudis' leads to:

**H3:** Saudi and Filipino respondents differ in terms of the cultural value dimensions of Power Distance, Collectivism, Feminine vs. Masculine, and Uncertainty Avoidance.

Based on prior research relating many of these cultural dimensions to differences in complaining behaviors between cultural groups, we expect:

**H4:** Differences between groups in their cultural dimensions are associated with differences in their preferred type of complaint behavior.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative study (Badghish et al., 2015) preceded and strongly influenced the design of this study. The qualitative study used separate Filipino and Saudi focus groups, as well as interviews and observation of complainants at in-store service points, both to obtain more insight into complaining differences between the two groups and to aid in developing the questionnaire in the present study. The earlier study helped to build the survey instrument in terms of product category and questions considered culturally appropriate for each group. The readability

of the survey was also evaluated. Saudi participants preferred the survey in Arabic, whereas Filipino participants preferred English. Translation from English to Arabic and back-translation by two independent translators, and testing each version with selected interviewees, was undertaken to ensure consistency in meaning of the survey items.

To narrow the focus and remove product category differences as a possible cause of differences in CCB (Hernandez et al., 1991), the survey was framed to apply to a particular product category in the Saudi Arabian retail environment (electrical goods). Saudi Arabia is an emerging economy marked by growing forms of Western retail shopping in its major cities (Marinov, 2007), where the vast majority of temporary workers reside (Othman, 2013). Consumer complaint resolutions such as the return and exchange policy of retailers is not bound by any specific consumer protection laws. Retailers with return policies have conditions similar to those in Western economies, but a lack of understanding by both consumers and sellers is claimed (Alqahtani, 2011). In order to remove novelty and ignorance as reasons for not complaining, respondents were screened to include only those with previous experience in purchasing consumer electrical goods in the Saudi retail market. Further, following Singh and Wilkes (1996), a modified critical incident approach was used, with respondents asked to recall a dissatisfying experience within this product category and then asked how they would respond if it were to occur again.

Section 1 of the questionnaire collected data on respondents, including occupation, income, gender, language, and time spent living in Saudi Arabia. Section 2 was based on the multi-item scale proposed by Day (1984) and widely used (Blodgett & Granbois, 1992; Fernandes & Santos, 2008; Hernandez et al., 1991;

Huppertz, 2003; Liu & Zhang, 2008; Oh, 2003; Stephens & Gwinner, 1998).

The list of complaint actions was adopted from Broadbridge and Marshall (1995), Day and Landon (1977), and Singh (1990b). The respondents' actions were used to categorize them: those who made a direct public complaint, indirect public complaint or private complaint were considered complainers; those who took no action at all were considered non-complainers (Han et al., 1995). Section 3 involved a cultural dimensions survey (See Appendix 1). Our specific focus was to examine the complaint actions and possible causes of differences between the nationality groups.

Non-probability sampling was used because random sampling of the whole population is difficult to employ in a country such as Saudi Arabia where communication with non-related females is restricted. A web-based survey was used for both groups, but the channels used to approach the samples differed. An online panel (Göritz & Wolff, 2007) and purposive sampling allowed the selection of Saudi participants from a qualified pool (Trochim, 2006). Although this approach offered adequate access to Saudis through the use of a national consumer panel organized by a Saudi market research agency, an alternative arrangement was needed to improve the Filipino response rate. Snowballing, using gatekeepers in the Saudi-based Filipino community, was used; this is a familiar method for accessing hard-to-reach participants (Heckathorn, 2002).

Descriptive statistics were employed to describe and check for normality of the data (Worcester & Downham, 1986). T-test and chi-square analyses were used to identify whether differences noted between Saudi and Filipino groups were statistically significant.

***Validity and reliability of quantitative survey***



Validity of the instrument was determined through previous studies as well as the use of two additional procedures. First, the validity of the new survey components (questions 1–20), which provide demographic data as well as complaint action data, was evaluated through focus group assessment. This assessment incorporated the use of a qualitative analysis of focus group data obtained from a sample of participants taken from the population under investigation, to establish the face validity of the survey components (Kitchenham & Pfleeger, 2002). Second, exploratory factor analysis was used to support evidence of validity of the scaled construct items (questions 21–28).

Internal consistency of the scaled items was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The values for each construct (survey components Q21–Q25) revealed satisfactory levels of reliability ( $> 0.6$ )

(Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Cronbach's alpha scores for each construct (survey item with various associated questions) were as follows: component Q21 inclusive of five scaled items (0.76); component Q22 with six scaled items (0.81); component Q23 with six scaled items (0.89); component Q24 with four scaled items (0.704); component Q25 with 10 scaled items (0.74). All items were found to be reliable, with scores over 0.6.

### *Sample characteristics and profiles*

The Saudi and Filipino samples are similar in terms of gender, age and educational achievement but with a group of Saudi on higher incomes (Table 1). The sample is diversified in terms of socioeconomic status.

**TABLE 1**  
Demographics of The Two Samples

	<b>Saudi population (n = 254)</b>	<b>Filipino population (n = 129)</b>
Male	109 (42.9%)	63 (48.8%)
Female	144 (56.7%)	65 (50.4%)
<b>Age</b>		
18–35	161 (63.4%)	54 (41.9%)
36–50	84 (33.1%)	47 (36.4%)
51–65	9 (3.5%)	27 (20.9%)
Over 65	0	1 (0.8%)
<b>Educational Achievement</b>		
Some high school	42 (16.6%)	21 (16.3%)
HS diploma	37 (14.6%)	29 (22.5%)
University degree or higher	174 (68.7%)	63 (61.2%)
<b>Monthly income</b>		
Under SR 2999	96 (37.8%)	51 (39.5%)
SR 3000–5999	43 (16.9%)	34 (26.4%)
SR 6000–7999	24 (9.4%)	21 (16.3%)
SR 8000–10999	33 (13.7%)	15 (11.6%)
Over 11000	58 (22.8%)	8 (6.2%)

More than 70 per cent of the Filipino sample had resided in Saudi Arabia for four or more years, approximately 50 per cent for more than six years, with more than a quarter for longer than ten years (Table 2). The purchasing history reported by participants was obtained in terms of types of purchase and a rating of overall

experience. All the respondents acknowledged a complaining experience concerned with the product category. Complaint action was assessed using questions related to when and how respondents complained, as well as to whom.

**TABLE 2**  
**Filipino Sample: Years Living in Saudi Arabia**

Length of residence	Filipino respondents
< 2 years	17 (13.2%)
2–4 years	21 (16.3%)
4–6 years	27 (20.9%)
6–10 years	30 (23.3%)
Over 10 years	33 (25.6%)
All my life	1 (0.8%)

**TABLE 3**  
**Type of Complaint Behavior by Nationality Group**

Type of Complaint Behavior	Saudis (n = 254) Mean (SD)	Filipinos (n = 129) Mean (SD)	Difference	
			<i>t</i> ( <i>d.f.</i> )	<i>P</i>
Direct public complaint	3.85 (1.49) (56.7%)**	2.73 (1.75) (42.6%)**	6.18 (22)*	0.00
Indirect public complaint	3.78 (1.20) (2.0%)	2.16 (0.77) (0%)	16.01 (36)*	0.00
Private complaint	3.72 (1.03) (27.2%)	4.19 (0.95) (27.9%)	-4.40 (27)*	0.00
Chooses not to complain	2.38 (1.41) (14.2%)	3.33 (1.53) (29.5%)	-6.048 (38)	0.00

Notes:

\*Equal variances could not be assumed; non-pooled data used for t-test analysis

\*\* shows percentage distribution between complaint actions, by nationality group

## FINDINGS

### *Differences in consumer complaint action types*

H1: Faced with an unsatisfactory shopping experience, Saudi and Filipino consumers differ in their preferred type of complaint behavior (direct public complaint, indirect public complaint, private complaint, and not complaining).

Three questions (Q8, 9 and 10) dealing with varying scenarios involving dissatisfaction with an electrical product were used to assess complaint action type. The constructs of complaining to the seller/retailer and manufacturer/agent were combined to form *direct public complaint*. Responses indicating a third-party agency or public (web, radio, newspaper) complaint were combined to form *indirect public complaint*. Complaints to family/friends were treated as *private complaint*, and the response of “none of the above” was re-coded as *choosing not to complain*; based on further explanation respondents were also asked to provide responses to further questions on how they would choose to complain faced with slightly different scenarios. Table 3 shows (in parentheses) the percentage distribution between complaint types for each nationality group. Compared with their Saudi counterparts, fewer Filipinos chose to complain publicly and a much a higher percentage chose not to complain.

Differences in type of complaint behavior between the Saudi and Filipino participants (H1) were analyzed via descriptive statistics and independent samples t-tests with the category (Saudi vs. Filipino) as the group defining variable (Table 3). Normal distribution could be assumed due to the large sample sizes (Saudi  $n = 254$  and Filipino  $n = 129$ ), as statistically, a sample size over 30 for each group can be assumed to be normally distributed (Ott & Longnecker, 2010). Because the *t*-test is based on an equal

variance assumption of the two independent samples, Levene's *F*-test statistic was performed to validate the use of pooled data for the *t*-tests. Where equal variances could not be assumed (Levene's test for equality of variances,  $p < 0.05$ ), non-pooled data were used for the analysis.

Results of the *t*-tests revealed significant differences between the Saudi and Filipino groups for each of the complaint behavior types ( $p < 0.001$ ), confirming Saudi respondents were more inclined to use direct or indirect complaining (public complaining) than their Filipino counterparts, while Filipino respondents were more inclined to complain privately or to choose not to complain.

### *Demographic Differences*

To examine the possible causes of these differences in complaining behavior, demographic differences between the two samples were considered in H2: There is no difference in type of complaint action according to the age, education, income, or gender of respondents.

Chi-square analyses supported that the two nationality groups (Saudi and Filipino) of the sample were demographically similar in terms of education level and gender, but had significant differences in terms of income and age.

Cross-tabulation using chi square analysis of the variables of complaint action type (direct complaint, indirect complaint, private complaint, non-complaint) and each of the demographic variables accounting for nationality was conducted. To facilitate the analysis, education was coded as lower education (HS/Diploma) and higher education (BS/postgrad), and income measured in Saudi Riyal (SR) was coded as  $<6000$  and  $>6000$ . The particular income split yielded

two groups of approximately the same size.

Results of the chi-square analysis of complaint behavior by age and nationality revealed no significant differences in complaint action by age within either the Saudi group ( $X^2 = 12.24$ ,  $df = 8$ ,  $p = .141$ ) or the Filipino group ( $X^2 = 8.841$ ,  $df = 9$ ,  $p = .452$ ); however, when looking at the sample as a whole without accounting for nationality, age had a borderline significance to complaint action ( $X^2 = 21.049$ ,  $df = 12$ ,  $p = .051$ ), supporting potential differences in complaint action by age in the overall sample, but not between nationality groups.

Similarly, results of the chi square analysis of complaint action by education (coded as lower/higher) and nationality failed to reveal any significant differences within either the Saudi group ( $X^2 = 6.766$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .149$ ) or the Filipino group ( $X^2 = 3.582$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p = .310$ ); however, without accounting for nationality, education had a significant relationship with complaint action ( $X^2 = 11.026$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .026$ ), supporting differences in complaint action by education, but not between nationality groups.

Finally, results of the chi-square analysis of complaint action by income (coded as <6000 and >6000) and nationality, as well as gender and nationality, revealed no significant differences by income or gender within either the Saudi group ( $X^2 = 6.418$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .170$ ;  $X^2 = 4.453$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .348$ ) or the Filipino group ( $X^2 = 1.079$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p = .782$ ;  $X^2 = .542$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p =$

.910). In addition, the overall group, without accounting for nationality, showed no significant differences in income ( $X^2 = 8.164$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .086$ ) or gender ( $X^2 = 3.502$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = .478$ ). Table 4 provides a summary of these results. The conclusion, therefore, is that differences in complaint action between nationality groups are not related to demographic differences of the groups.

Both the expatriate and acculturation literature point to recent migrants, whether temporary or not, requiring time to adjust or adapt to their new environment, including how to conduct themselves (Huijnk, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2012; Miglietta & Tartaglia, 2009). While this study included only Filipino respondents who had lived in Saudi Arabia for a sufficient time to be involved in complaining behavior for this product category, we examined whether length of stay (LOS) with regard to the type of complaint behavior (direct public, indirect public, private, or none) to determine if the LOS of Filipino participants affected how they complained. An independent samples t-test was conducted comparing LOS of 6 years or less (50.5% of the sample) with LOS of more than 6 years (49.5% of the sample). Normality could be assumed with a sample sizes of 65 and 63 for the two groups, and the equal variance assumption was met with Levene statistic results all greater than  $p = .05$ . No significant differences in any complaint behavior variables by length of stay were found.

**TABLE 4**  
Differences In Complaint Behavior By Demographics And Nationality

<b>Demographic variable</b>	<b>Saudi</b>	<b>Filipino</b>	<b>Entire sample</b>
Age	0.141	0.452	0.051
Education	0.149	0.310	0.026
Income	0.170	0.782	0.086
Gender	0.348	0.910	0.478

**TABLE 5**  
Testing Inter-Group Cultural Dimension Differences

<b>Research Hypothesis</b>	<b>Mean score</b>	<b>P value</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>Power distance (PDI) differs</b>	S: 10.62 F: 13.50	.000	Supported: Saudis have a higher PD than Filipino participants.
<b>Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) differs</b>	S: 22.16 F: 22.22	.887	Rejected: No significant inter-group difference in UAI found.
<b>Collectivism (CI) differs</b>	S: 22.45 F: 24.07	.001	Supported: Saudis have a lower CI than Filipino participants.
<b>Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS) differs</b>	S: 13.31 F: 13.07	.607	Rejected: No significant inter-group difference in MAS found.

### ***Cultural differences***

Hofstede's cultural dimensions drawn from Prasongsukarn (2009) were used to assess whether there were significant cultural differences between the two groups.

H3: Saudi and Filipino respondents differ in terms of the cultural value dimensions of Power distance, Collectivism, Femininity v Masculinity, and Uncertainty Avoidance.

Only two of the four dimensions showed significant differences (Table 5). As expected, Filipinos registered a significantly higher Power Distance and level of Collectivism compared with Saudi respondents. No differences in either

Uncertainty Avoidance or Masculinity v Femininity were found.

Based on the significance of these two dimensions, we examined within-group and between-group differences in the relationship between Power Distance (PDI) and type of complaint behavior; and between Collectivism (CI) and type of complaint behavior.

#### *Power Distance*

Power Distance in the context of consumer behavior is embedded in the concept of "face" (Patterson et al., 2006), thus Asian cultures with high PDI are expected to be less likely to complain (Ngai et al., 2007). According to Huang et al. (1996), higher

Power Distance consumers are likely to perceive unsatisfactory service as a fact of life and, accordingly, are expected to be less likely to complain if they perceive they are less powerful than the service provider.

Given that respondents coming from a high Power Distance culture are expected to be less likely to want to complain directly (accepting authority or a decision made more readily than those with low Power Distance), in terms of the complaining behavior categories of this study, those with higher Power Distance should prefer private complaining or choosing not to complain while those with lower Power Distance should prefer direct and indirect public complaint.

A descriptive analysis was undertaken to confirm whether respondents in the top quartile of Power Distance rankings preferred the predicted outcomes of choosing not to complain or privately complaining, while those in the lowest quartile preferred public complaining. H4 (a): Respondents with higher Power Distance (PD) prefer private complaining or not complaining; those with the lowest power distance prefer public complaining actions.

Analysis of the responses of respondents in the first and fourth quartile of Power Distance values is shown in Tables 6(a) and (b). Contrary to expectations, Filipinos with high PD have a stronger preference for direct complaint actions (45%) than for not complaining (29.3%). The complaint action preferences of those in the lowest Power Distance quartile are also contrary to expectations: the highest percentages of non-complainers are in this quartile (35.5%), while the percentage of those preferring direct complaint actions (42%) is less than those with a higher power distance. However, the chi-square analysis of the responses of Filipinos in the low power distance quartile compared with responses in the high power distance quartile show no significant difference ( $p > .05$ ). Saudi respondents (Table 6b), regardless of their Power Distance values, show a strong preference for direct complaint action, while a higher percentage of respondents with lower PD values choose not to complain than those with a higher PD, again contrary to expectations but again, Chi-square analysis shows no significant differences ( $p > .05$ ).

**TABLE 6 (a)**  
**Comparison of Filipino complaint behavior, LPD v HPD**

Type of Complaint	LPD n (%)	HPD n (%)	Chi-square value (df)	p-value
Direct public	13 (42)	26 (44.8)	.849 (3)	.838
Indirect public	0	0		
Private	7 (22.6)	15 (25.9)		
Chooses not to complain	(11) 35.5	17 (29.3)		

**TABLE 6 (b)**  
Comparison of Saudi Complaint Behavior, LPD v HPD

Type Of Complaint	LPD n (%)	HPD n (%)	Chi-square value (df)	p-value
Direct public	37 (52.8)	31 (55.4)	7.33 (4)	.119
Indirect public	0	4 (7.1)		
Private	20 (28.6)	15 (26.8)		
Chooses not to complain	13 (18.6)	6 (10.7)		

### *Collectivism*

Complaints made by people from an individualist culture are likely to be made directly while consumers from a collectivist Asian culture tend to engage in private complaint actions like word of mouth (Ngai et al., 2007). Liu and McClure (2001) also confirm that dissatisfied consumers in a collectivist culture are less likely to voice complaint openly, being more likely to complain privately than those in an individualistic culture. A decision to complain in a collectivist culture is usually for the benefit of the society or the group, not for individual redress. From this we can expect that Filipino consumers will engage in making complaints less openly than Saudis, as they have a more collectivist culture.

As respondents holding high collectivist values are *less likely* to want to complain publicly, in terms of the complaining behavior categories of this study, those with higher collectivism values (HCI) should prefer private complaining or choosing not to complain while those with lower collectivism values (LCI) should prefer direct and indirect public complaint. A descriptive analysis was undertaken to confirm if respondents in the top quartile of Collectivism values preferred the predicted outcomes of choosing not to complain or private complaining while those in the lowest quartile preferred

public complaining. H4 (b): Respondents in the highest quartile of the Collectivism (CI) scale prefer private complaining or non-complaint while those in the lowest CI quartile (higher individualism) prefer public complaining actions.

Analysis of the responses of respondents in the first and fourth quartile of Collectivism values is shown in Tables 7(a) and (b) for each nationality group. Contrary to expectations, Filipinos with high CI have a stronger preference towards direct complaint actions (52.7%) compared with not complaining (22.7%). Complaint action preferences of those in the lowest CI quartile are also contrary to expectations. The highest percentage of non-complainers are in this quartile, while the percentage of those preferring direct complaint action is less than of those with a higher CI. Saudi responses are more in accordance with expected patterns (Table 7b). Those with a low CI have a stronger preference for direct complaint, but private complaining is similar regardless of CI ranking.

The chi-square analysis of the responses of Filipinos in the low CI quartile with responses in the high CI quartile does not show significant differences ( $p > .05$ ). The same is true for the Saudi sample with no significant differences ( $p > .05$ ).

**TABLE 7 (a)**  
Comparison of Filipino Complaint Behavior, LCI V HCI

Type Of Complaint	LCI n (%)	HCI n (%)	Chi-square value (df)	p-value
Direct public	6 (22.7)	29 (52.7)	5.98 (3)	.113
Indirect public	0	0		
Private	9 (40.9)	14 (25.5)		
Chooses not to complain	8 (36.4)	12 (21.8)		

**TABLE 7 (B)**  
Comparison of Saudi Complaint Behavior, LCI V HCI

Type Of Complaint	LCI n (%)	HCI n (%)	Chi-square value (df)	p-value
Direct public	45 (59.2)	30 (46.1)	6.54 (4)	.162
Indirect public	2 (2.6)	2 (3.1)		
Private	25 (32.9)	21 (32.3)		
Chooses not to complain	4 (5.3)	12 (18.5)		

### **DISCUSSION, FUTURE RESEARCH, MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

This study compares the complaining actions of the Filipino migrant group with those of the native Saudi group. Significant differences are found between the two groups in their complaint actions when faced with a dissatisfying purchase experience. We sought to establish whether these differences could be attributed to cultural differences between the groups, or to demographic and other situational influences affecting the migrant group.

Faced with an unsatisfactory shopping experience, Saudi and Filipino consumers differed in their preferred type of complaint behavior. Significant differences are found in each type of complaint category. Saudis preferred to complain publicly, both directly and

indirectly, more than Filipinos. Filipinos preferred to complain privately or to not complain.

Before examining whether these differences can be linked to cultural differences between the groups, we sought to exclude demographic differences between the samples. Age differences, for example, have been used to explain differences in attitudes towards consumer complaint (Lee & Soberon-Ferrer, 1999). Our testing found that demographic differences are not associated with differences in complaint behavior between the two nationalities. To exclude the possibility that Filipino residents are not familiar with the Saudi retail environment, an analysis of the Filipino cohort by length of residency and complaint action was undertaken, again finding no significant difference by age cohort.



Differences in cultural dimensions such as power distance or uncertainty avoidance have previously been used to explain CCB differences (Meng et al., 2010), so H3 tested whether Saudi and Filipino respondents differed in terms of the cultural value dimensions. Significant differences in Power Distance and Collectivism were found, consistent with earlier studies (At-Twajri & Al-Muhaiza, 1996; Hofstede, 1980). The average Power Distance and Collectivism scores were significantly higher for the Filipino than for the Saudi group, also consistent with Huang et al. (1996) and Ngai et al. (2007). As previous literature (Ngai, et al., 2007; Liu & McClure, 2001) has claimed that consumers with higher power distance and more collectivist cultural values are more inclined towards private complaining and non-complaining, the results appear consistent with such findings.

Examination of this apparent link between preferred complaining actions and these two cultural value dimensions found Filipino complaint actions had no association with respondents holding either higher or lower Power Distance values, as about the same percentage of those with HPD or LPD values preferred to complain directly. The majority of Filipino respondents in both quartiles preferred to complain privately or not complain, regardless of whether they had high or low Power Distance values. No significant differences in complaint responses between those with HPD and those with LPD were found. The breakdown of Saudi respondents shows a similar pattern: complaint actions show no association with whether a respondent holds high or low Power Distance values. Saudis, regardless of their power distance values, prefer direct complaining far more than Filipino respondents in the same quartiles. Correspondingly, not complaining is a less preferred Saudi option, regardless of the respondent's Power Distance value. No significant

difference in complaint responses between the two quartiles has been found.

In terms of the links between Collectivism and complaint actions, contrary to expectations Filipinos with high CI had a stronger preference for direct complaint actions than for not complaining. The preferences of those in the lowest CI quartile were also contrary to expectation, with the highest percentage of non-complainers falling in this quartile. Saudi responses were mixed: those with a low CI had a stronger preference for direct complaint but private complaining was similar regardless of the CI rank. No significant differences in the complaint actions of both nationality group, and whether they had either a high or low CI, could be found.

These contrary findings require further consideration. The predicted effects were in part based on findings drawn from international comparisons of cultural dimension differences and complaint differences. These findings may not readily extrapolate to within-country differences between ethnic or nationality groups because of acculturation effects. However, a within-country study of two immigrant groups in the USA by Meng et al. (2010, p.126) concludes that "consumers' value orientations (e.g., individualist vs. collectivist; power distance; masculine vs. feminine; uncertainty avoidance; long-term vs. short-term orientations) can directly influence consumers' perceptions, reactions, and attitude toward complaining", and that these are strong predictors of consumer complaining choices. Our study of a different country and a temporary migrant group compared with mainstream consumers also found differences in cultural value dimensions between the groups consistent with expected complaining actions; however, examination and testing of within-group responses found no systematic differences in complaining actions based on respondents' cultural values.

Focusing on within-country ethnic group differences, Berry and Sam, (1997) explain that acculturation by a migrant group can follow several possible acculturation strategies, including some with a strong retention of home country values; however, at the individual level, psychological and sociocultural adaptation, the latter focused on how well the individual learns to cope with the social and market environment, may proceed differently. Learning to cope in a culturally different market environment may be fairly quick, even while retaining home country values (Luedicke, 2011), but it may also involve different ways and rates of learning to cope (Broderick et al., 2011). Thus, migrant responses to an unsatisfactory buying experience may be situational, dependent on how well they have learned to negotiate the new market environment; that is, sociocultural adaptation linking the individual to how well they cope in the new environment may occur, unrelated to the strength of their cultural values. Further research is required to examine this possible link.

Excluding demographic and cultural value dimension differences between the two nationality groups as reasons for the differences in complaining behavior leaves only the conditions under which Filipinos reside in Saudi Arabia. While Blodgett et al. (2015) show how international differences in redress policies can cause a sub-cultural group of purchasers to change their behavior from that used in their home country, adaptation in the host country does not mean the migrant group will respond to the retail environment in a similar way to the mainstream, even if they are apparently familiar with the retail environment and policies (Badghish et al., 2015).

The less active complaint responses of Filipinos suggest the need to revisit and widen the concept of a vulnerable consumer. Andreasen and Manning (1990) cite ethnic and racial minorities as two groups likely to be disadvantaged in

exchange relationships, the basis for their definition of vulnerable consumers.

Being a member of a minority ethnic group per se may not be the reason why a consumer is vulnerable; the conditions of residency that apply to the group may be more relevant. The conditions under which migrants reside within a country, specifically those with temporary status and reliance on continuing approval of work permits, may create a reluctance to complain publicly. While the concept and study of consumer vulnerability in the market place is a major research area, the approach taken by Broderick et al. (2011, p. 10) is notable because it does not seek to categorize individuals but to focus on the conditions giving rise to vulnerability: "A myriad of internal and external factors ... give rise to unfair or imbalanced marketplace conditions that create marketplace dissonance and contribute to consumer experiences of vulnerability". For consumers such as migrants in a culturally different market environment, vulnerability may well be situational and temporary as they develop coping capabilities, but may become permanent if their coping capabilities are inadequate or external factors remain oppressive. As previously outlined (p.3) the work and associated residency conditions for guest workers differ from Saudi nationals and this aspect of their potential vulnerability may constrain more overt complaint behaviors. Understanding the development of coping capabilities by temporary migrants and the nature of their vulnerability in a culturally different marketplace invites more research because of these findings.

That said, our findings suggest opportunities for further research. Future research could explore other value dimensions such as Schwartz's (2006) cultural value orientations or an alternative framework (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). Cultural differences are clearly evident between the two groups but

what is unclear is how consumers from a different cultural group to the host country may respond if they feel vulnerable because of the socio-political environmental constraints under which they may reside and work. Future research should investigate how such conditions influence how guest worker complain or might leave guest workers more restrained in their redress actions compared to host-country citizens.

### ***Managerial implications***

The findings of this study support a minimal effect of cultural values with perhaps a greater impact of situational effects on complaint behaviors, such that management should be less concerned about specific cultural differences related to complaining and more concerned about specific complaint actions. Thus, for management, developing frontline staff awareness and sensitivity to their customers' different preferences and styles of complaining would appear to be more useful, without a presumption that these preferences are strongly based on cultural values. Vulnerability in the Filipino sample is mainly reflected in a reluctance to complain publicly. Open, effective, and easy-to-use, on-line grievance processes should therefore be developed that reduce the need for personal encounters, but this cannot be the whole solution for off-line retailers.

Our quantitative findings support qualitative research (Badghish et al. 2015) that the CCB of Filipino temporary migrants differ in significant ways from the Saudi group. This may be related to a general finding of the qualitative study that customer service employees ignored or paid less attention to non-Arab consumers (Badghish et al., 2015). Curbing practices that alienate or antagonize customers lacking Arab language skills or an understanding of local market practices would seem to be a necessary area of focus. The need for customer service staff to be aware of and trained to handle

cultural value differences between customers in a multicultural market place may not be as important as creating a service environment where all customers regardless of their cultural differences are treated equally, whilst being aware of differences in how customers prefer to complain.

### ***General Limitations***

Because of the non-random, snowballing method used to recruit the Filipino sample and its size (139), and because Filipinos are only one of several diverse groups in the large temporary migrant population, our managerial implications require further confirmation, preferably expanded to cover more and different cultural groups within the GCC. Very little prior research could be found focusing on consumer behavior differences between different nationality groups residing in either Saudi Arabia or the wider GCC, let alone focused on cultural differences that might affect their behavior. The inability to corroborate or draw on prior Arab or Saudi studies suggests that further research is required to confirm our conclusions.

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## Appendix 1

### Survey Details

#### ***Part One: consumer profile questions***

These questions form Section One of the questionnaire and are designed to collect data on respondents' characteristics such as occupation, income, gender, language, and time spent living in Saudi Arabia. The objective of collecting such data is to group individuals into segments that may be expected to display differing patterns of behavior (Worcester and Downham, 1986).

#### ***Part Two: CCB survey***

This survey was used for the second section of the questionnaire and was based on the multi-item scale proposed in Day's (1984) model, and also used by Blodgett and Granbois (1992), Fernandes and Santos (2008), Hernandez et al. (1991), Huppertz (2003), Liu and Zhang (2008), Oh (2003), and Stephens and Gwinner (1998). Prior to participating in the survey, the respondents were asked if they had previously made complaints with regard to an unsatisfactory purchasing experience. They were then asked to state the product or service category and to specify the complaint actions they undertook in response to their dissatisfaction.

The list of actions was adopted from the work of Hirschman (1970) and Singh (1991). The respondents' actions were used to categorize the respondents as complainers and non-complainers, respectively. Those who took public action, such as making a complaint to the marketer concerned, seeking redress directly from the provider, taking legal action or complaining privately to family and friends were considered complainers; those who took no action at all were considered non-complainers (Keng, Richmond and Han, 1995).

## Appendix 2

The scaled construct items developed by Day (1984) to measure complaint behavior of respondents

CONSTRUCT	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	SURVEY QUESTIONS
Consumer knowledge and experience of the product and complaint process.	Measured on a 7-point Likert scale by the extent of agreement with statements relating to the general perception of the consumer's knowledge and experience of the product and complaint process.	Q21a: I have had a lot of experience in purchasing this type of product. Q21b: - I have had a lot of experience in purchasing the same brand in different products. Q21c: - I thought I had sufficient knowledge and expertise about the product. Q21d: - I thought I knew my rights as a consumer. Q21e: - I have had significant experience in complaining when dissatisfied about this product category.
Consumer assessment of perceived cost of	Measured on a 7-point Likert scale by the	Q22a: - It took me a lot of time to complain:

CONSTRUCT	OPERATIONAL DEFINITION	SURVEY QUESTIONS
complaining	extent of agreement with statements relating to the consumer's general perception of the inconvenience/cost of complaining	<p>Q22b: - Complaining disrupted my family routine</p> <p>Q22c: - I incurred a significant cost in complaining</p> <p>Q22d: - I have spent a lot of effort to find out who to contact:</p> <p>Q22e: - My health is poor and I am unable to get out and complain personally:</p> <p>Q22f: - Complaining is a hassle that I do not need.</p>
Consumer assessments of chances of success in complaining	Measured on a 7-point Likert scale by the extent of agreement with statements relating to the consumers' general perception of the benefit of complaint	<p>Q23a: I've complained because: - There was a chance that full redress would be made.</p> <p>Q23b: I've complained because: - There was a chance of recovering out of pocket costs from complaining.</p> <p>Q23c: I've complained because: - There was a chance of getting additional compensation.</p> <p>Q23d: I've complained because: - There was a chance that my complaint would improve the seller's product.</p> <p>Q23e: I've complained because: - There was a chance to let them know just how I felt.</p> <p>Q23f: I've complained because: - There was a chance of influencing government agencies to increase consumer protection activities.</p>
Consumer perception of the significance of similar consumption events.	Measured on a 7-point Likert scale by the extent of importance of statements to the participants regarding the consumers' general perception of the consumption event significance.	<p>Q24a: In relation to the product that I complained about - The amount of money I paid was:</p> <p>Q24b: In relation to the product that I complained about - For my life-style, this product was:</p> <p>Q24c: In relation to the product that I complained about - The social visibility and standing of product was:</p> <p>Q24d: In relation to the product that I complained about - The expected life of the product was:</p>

<b>CONSTRUCT</b>	<b>OPERATIONAL DEFINITION</b>	<b>SURVEY QUESTIONS</b>
Attitude towards the act of complaining	Measured on a 7-point Likert scale by the extent of agreement with statements relating to the consumers' attitude towards complaining actions.	<p>Q25a: Complaining about anything to anyone is distasteful to me.</p> <p>Q25b: Complaining is mostly done by people with little else to do.</p> <p>Q25c: I am embarrassed to complain regardless of how bad the product is.</p> <p>Q25d: - Complaining is a consumer's right, not an obligation.</p> <p>Q25e: - I always complain when I am dissatisfied because I feel it is my duty.</p> <p>Q25f: - Complaining is not much fun but it's got to be done to keep business on its toes.</p> <p>Q25g: - It really feels good to get my dissatisfaction and frustrations off my chest by complaining.</p> <p>Q25h: - Complaining just leads to more frustration.</p> <p>Q25i: - Most businesses will cheat you if I do not stand up for my rights.</p> <p>Q25j: - The people I know who complain about things they buy are neurotic.</p>