THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS (GHANA)

ICAG MEMBER SATISFACTION RESEARCH REPORT

CO-AUTHORED BY

PROFESSOR NATHANIEL BOSO
(KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY)

AND

DR DOMINIC ESSUMAN
(KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Institute of Chartered Accountants, Ghana (ICAG) member satisfaction study was commissioned by the ICAG membership directorate with the objective of measuring member satisfaction level among ICAG members, examining whether and how two association-level factors including service experience and perceived service quality affect member satisfaction, and whether and how member satisfaction, in turn, affects five member-based performance indicators including service patronage intention, word-of-mouth, loyalty, switching intention, and positive brand attitude. This objective informed three core research questions investigated in this study: 1) what is the level of satisfaction of ICAG members; 2) what are the associational determinants of the ICAG member satisfaction levels; 3) to what extent does variability in ICAG member satisfaction levels associated with member-based performance outcomes?

An online survey design, implemented using pre-validated measurement indicators, was utilized to collect data from a population of 6,437 ICAG members during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. In all, 236 valid responses were received (representing 3.67% response rate) and used for the study. The characteristics of this effective sample were found to reflect those of the study population. Findings from the study suggest that the majority of ICAG members are satisfied with the association's activities and services. 0.42%, 3.39%, and 7.63% of them tend to be very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, and somehow dissatisfied respectively. Furthermore, results from the study indicates that ICAG members who perceive the association's services to be of high quality and those who have had positive experience with the association, and male members tend to be more satisfied. Additionally, evidence from the study shows that satisfied ICAG members are more likely to be loyal to the association, recommend the association to other people, have lower intention to switch to other professional associations, continue using the association's services, and demonstrate positive attitude towards the association's brand.

Notwithstanding the moderate member satisfaction level, there is still an opportunity for ICAG to improve its member satisfaction level. Consistent with findings from previous studies conducted elsewhere, results from the study indicate that ICAG can increase its member satisfaction level by improving service experience and quality of service provided to members. Specific areas of service experience and perceived service quality that ICAG needs to focus on to boost member satisfaction are provided in this report (see Table 2 and Table 3). Evidence from the study, in support of those reported in prior research, further suggest that by improving member satisfaction, ICAG can significantly increase member loyalty, service patronage intention, positive brand attitude, and word-of-mouth and at the same time reduce member switching intention. As documented from several bodies of empirical work, these variables, when they increase in magnitude, can significantly increase ICAG's competitiveness and growth.

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INTRODUCTION

Studies continue to show that members of professional associations are increasingly demanding and complex, exhibiting dynamic behaviors that are difficult to predict. At the same time, the professional association marketspace is witnessing constant increases in competitive intensity and rapid changes in the basis of competition, facilitated by globalization and digitalization (Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, 2020; Sidaway et al., 2013). These customer and competitive dynamics necessitate that accounting professional associations (APAs) devise strategies to boost member satisfaction to be competitive (Otto et al., 2019; Sidaway et al., 2013). This is particularly so for APAs competing in developing economy markets that are constantly targeted by internationally recognized larger and more resourced developed market APAs. An argument is that developing economy APAs such as the Institute of Charted Accountant – Ghana (ICAG) face liabilities of smallness and localness, which limit their ability to compete favorably with globally recognized APAs such as the Association of Charted Certified Accountants and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (Hopper et al., 2017). To remain competitive, therefore, levels and determinants of member satisfaction become a major managerial challenge that developing economy APAs need to address.

Member satisfaction reflects the degree to which a member's expectations are met by a professional association (Markova et al., 2013). Cumulative evidence from marketing research suggests that improvements in member satisfaction are critical to boosting the success of professional associations in several areas, including market share and income growth (Otto et al., 2019). In the context of APAs, research findings based on data from a large international APA shows that intention to renew membership increases significantly with increases in member satisfaction, both of which significantly increase when members are satisfied with the tangible benefits offered by the association, and when they are satisfied with the association's publications, conference activities, and customer service (Markova et al., 2013). Enhanced member satisfaction can, therefore, help APAs build brand reputation to grow and protect membership size, which helps boost income levels to support development of new initiatives (Sidaway et al., 2013). On this front, this study first sought to measure the current member satisfaction levels of ICAG

members. The authors of this report take the view that this information can help ICAG appraise itself in relation to competitors/industry average, or its expectations, targets, and previous results, which then can afford ICAG to take necessary actions, going forward.

A question that needs to be explored is: why do members differ on a member satisfaction scale, and how can APAs control and manage levels of member satisfaction? Previous research identifies two broad categories of factors that could explain member satisfaction: (1) *member-level factors* (e.g., demographic characteristics) and (2) *association-level factors* (e.g., customer service) (Ki, 2017). Unlike the former, the association can manipulate the latter to alter its members' member satisfaction level (Ki, 2017; Markova et al., 2013). Accordingly, the authors further investigated whether ICAG could leverage two such associational-level factors: (1) *service experience* and (2) *perceived service quality*; to increase thresholds of its members' member satisfaction. Fundamentally, it could be argued that members are customers of APAs in that the latter provides ongoing services (i.e., accounting education) to the former at a cost (i.e., membership fee). In this exchange relationship or service delivery process, service experience captures the extent to which a member's interaction with the association is stimulating and educative (Oh et al., 2007), while perceived service quality gauges a member's subjective judgment of the service' excellence, or superiority (Zeithaml, 1988). Findings from prior research indicate that both service experience (Kastenholz et al., 2018; Oh et al., 2007) and perceived service quality (Ladeira et al., 2016; Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009; Choi et al., 2004) augment customer satisfaction.

Further, this study examines whether prior identified immediate benefits of customer satisfaction (i.e., positive brand attitude, high service patronage intention, improved word-of-mouth, reduced switching intention, and increased loyalty [Ladeira et al., 2016; Markova et al., 2013; Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009; Szymanski and Henard, 2001]) occur in the context of ICAG members who score high on a member satisfaction scale. Positive brand attitude measures the degree to which members feel good about the association's brand, while considering it to be superior and want to be identified with it (Kim, 2017; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Service patronage intention measures a member's proclivity to continue using an association's services (Lin, 2019; Kim, 2017). Word-of-mouth refers to the willingness of a member to recommend an association to others including acquaintances, friends and family relations

(Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009). Switching intention refers to a member's propensity to change current association for another association (Athanassopoulos et al., 2001). Member loyalty captures the extent to which a member is attached to a particular association and considers the association as a primary choice (Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Pan et al., 2012).

Against this background, this study examines three objectives as summarized in the conceptual framework in Figure 1. The underlying logic driving these study objectives as captured in Figure 1 is that ICAG members' experience with, and perception of the quality of service provided by ICAG contribute to the level of member satisfaction with services provided by ICAG, which in turn influences levels of membership-based performance indicators. This research seeks to find empirical evidence for this argument. In the section that follows, the methodology followed to empirically address these objectives are provided. The study results, discussion, and conclusion are subsequently presented.

Figure 1: The conceptual model driving the study
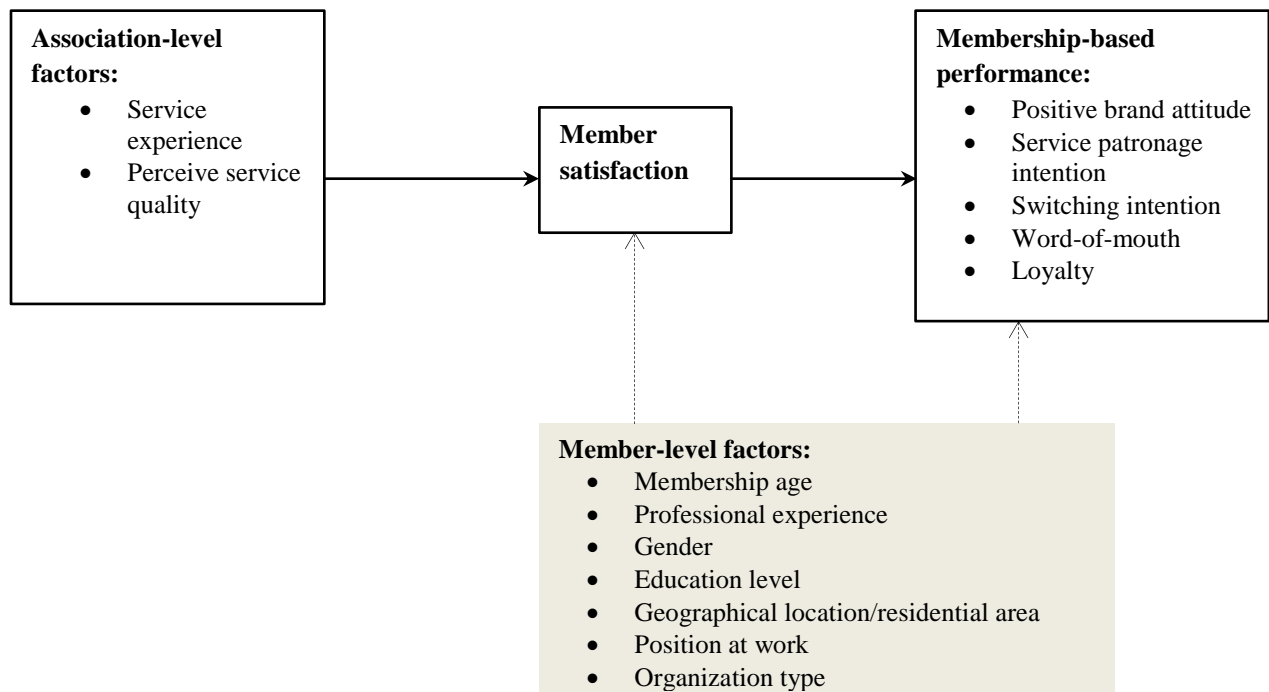
Notes:
1. Broken paths are controls variables that may influence both member satisfaction level and membership-based performance indicators

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METHODOLOGY

2.1. DESIGN, SAMPLE, AND DATA COLLECTION

The authors of this report recognized that generalizability of findings and timely implementation of the study results was paramount to ICAG, the client for this report. Therefore, a cross-sectional survey design, involving administration of a structured online survey, which allowed the researchers to generate responses from a large sample of ICAG members, was utilized to obtain primary data for the study. All members of ICAG, totaling 6,437[1], were sampled for the study. Due to disruptions and restrictions imposed by the Government of Ghana as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, an online survey, developed with and hosted on, Google Forms platform[2], was used. Prior to administering the survey, the ICAG members were briefed about the study via short message services (SMS) (Message 1). A week later, a link to the questionnaire was shared with the targeted ICAG members via SMS (Message 2). A follow-up SMS and/or email (Message 3), reminding members to respond to the study, was sent a week after Message 2. In all, 245 valid responses were received over a period of 14 days, starting from June 26, 2020. Nine responses were found to be duplicates[3] and were accordingly discarded, giving an effective sample size of 236. This figure corresponds to 3.67% response rate[4]. Message 2 accounted for 83.1% of the effective sample.

2.2. MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES AND DEVELOPMENT OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The variables used in this research (as captured in Figure 1) were measured with indicators that have already been validated in prior scholarly research. The indicators were adapted to suit the study context

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[1] Only registered members captured on ICAG database with valid mobile phone numbers were contacted.

[2] https://forms.gle/nqtpVKhzacg1f4zcA.

[3] This might have occurred as the respondents could not be restricted to a single attempt/response and might have mistakenly click on the "submit" bottom more than once.

[4] While this is generally a low response rate, it is a typical characteristic of online surveys and could be expected in a context like Ghana where people are used to face-to-face questionnaire administration. Importantly, a sample size of 236 is adequate for the study given its exploratory nature and further suffices for generalization (Hair et al., 2014) as the study sample is more homogenous (i.e., members of a single case organization).

and were jointly reviewed by the researchers and ICAG. Table 1 to Table 8 present a full list of indicators used to measure the study variables.

Table 1: Descriptive results for indicators for member satisfaction

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
The accounting education services provided by ICAG have met my needs.	5.19	1.505
I have been receiving the kind of accounting education services I wanted from ICAG.	5.08	1.590
I am satisfied with my overall experiences of using services provided by ICAG.	5.03	1.532
Overall, I am satisfied with the services I receive from ICAG.	4.88	1.583
I am satisfied with my purchase experiences with ICAG (e.g., services ordering, payment procedures).	4.86	1.576
I am very satisfied with the amount of help I receive from ICAG.	4.75	1.743
I am satisfied with my post-purchase experience with ICAG (e.g., customer support and after-sales support, handling of returns/refunds, delivery care).	4.73	1.465

Notes: 1. Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)"; 2. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

Table 2: Descriptive results for indicators for perceived service quality

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
Convenience[1]:		
The payment procedures at ICAG Member Services Directorate are quick and simple	4.93	1.678
The procedures to follow to get services provided by ICAG Membership Services Directorate is convenient	4.57	1.452
The process for setting up an appointment at ICAG Member Services Directorate is simple	4.44	1.527
The services provided by ICAG Member Services Directorate are always delivered promptly	4.43	1.510
The ICAG Member Services Directorate has an easy appointment system	4.38	1.487
Empathy[1]:		
The staff at ICAG are very polite	5.08	1.421
The staff at ICAG are friendly	5.07	1.503
The staff at ICAG always help me as much as they could	4.94	1.594
The staff at ICAG usually explain processes very well	4.92	1.497
The staff at ICAG usually make me feel comfortable	4.87	1.462
The staff at ICAG give me personal attention	4.64	1.604
The staff at ICAG have my best interest at heart	4.63	1.564
The staff at ICAG truly care for me	4.61	1.592
Tangibles[2]:		
The staff at ICAG offices dress professionally	5.41	1.306
The ICAG provides a clean environment in its offices	5.33	1.235
The ICAG offices provide comfortable and friendly environment	4.77	1.301
The waiting areas at the ICAG offices are pleasant	4.71	1.415
The amenities (e.g., cafeteria, toilets) at the ICAG offices are excellent	4.59	1.382
ICAG has modern accounting educational facilities (e.g., library)	4.58	1.371
The ICAG is equipped with the latest equipment	4.32	1.294
Reliability[1]:		
The ICAG is a reliable accounting education service provider	5.53	1.373
The ICAG performs its accounting education services right the first time	4.95	1.326
The ICAG provides its accounting education services at the time it promises to do so	4.94	1.313
When ICAG promises to do something by a certain time, it does so	4.75	1.503

Table 2: Descriptive results for indicators for perceived service quality (continued)

Assurance[3]:		
Staff at the ICAG are knowledgeable and experienced people	5.39	1.170
I feel safe in dealing with ICAG (e.g. sharing/providing information)	5.28	1.343
Staff at the ICAG are consistently courteous with me	5.15	1.262
Staff at the ICAG are well-informed about accounting education services	5.14	1.213
The behaviour of the staff at ICAG instills confidence in me	5.03	1.385
Responsiveness[1]		
The ICAG offices open on time during published working days	5.67	1.210
ICAG gives you prompt accounting education services	4.92	1.392
My telephone calls to the ICAG offices are usually answered	4.69	1.710
The staff at ICAG offices are never too busy to respond to your requests	4.66	1.534
I receive a response, within 24 hours, to my emails to ICAG	4.34	1.667

Notes:
1. [1]Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".
2. [2]Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "not at all (=1)" to "to a largest extent (=7)".
3. [3]Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "not at all (=1)" to "to a very large extent (=7)".
4. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

Table 3: Descriptive results for indicators for service experience

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
Educational experience[1]:		
My experience with ICAG really enhanced my accounting education skills	5.58	1.440
My experience with ICAG has been highly educational to me	5.50	1.448
My contact with ICAG has been a real learning experience for me	5.47	1.466
The experience has made me more knowledgeable about accounting education	5.45	1.341
I have learned a lot from my experiences with ICAG services	5.38	1.389
My experience with ICAG services has stimulated my curiosity to learn new things	5.32	1.431
Aesthetics experience[2]:		
I felt a real sense of harmony with ICAG	5.47	1.412
Just visiting the ICAG was very pleasant	5.11	1.374
The setting at the ICAG was very attractive	5.09	1.319
The setting at ICAG provided pleasure to my senses	5.02	1.273
The setting at the ICAG was pretty bland	4.77	1.473

Notes:
1. [1]Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".
2. [2]Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "totally disagree (=1)" to "totally agree (=7)".
3. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

Table 4: Descriptive results for indicators for loyalty

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
I am a proud member of ICAG	6.16	1.301
I love ICAG	5.82	1.465
I am dedicated to doing business with ICAG	5.54	1.508
ICAG is my first choice when I decide to seek accounting education services	5.53	1.737

Notes:
1. Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".
2. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

Table 5: Descriptive results for indicators for service patronage intention

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
I will continue to use the services at ICAG	5.72	1.499
I will continue my patronage of the services provided by ICAG	5.69	1.441
I anticipate using the services at ICAG in the near future	5.53	1.531
I will likely use the services provided by ICAG in the near future	5.45	1.606
I will not search for other accounting education services outside those provided by ICAG	4.50	2.029

Notes:
1. Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".
2. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

Table 6: Descriptive results for indicators for word-of-mouth

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
I do encourage my friends and acquaintances to do business with ICAG	5.44	1.590
I always recommend services provided by ICAG to my friends and acquaintances	5.32	1.700
I usually inform my friends and acquaintances about complaints I have about the services offered by ICAG[1]	3.67	1.893

Notes:
1. Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".
2. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.
3. [1] Reverse-coded.

Table 7: Descriptive results for indicators for positive attitude towards brand

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
I will associate myself with Figure 1	5.89	1.566
I feel good about Figure 1	5.80	1.557
Figure 1 is a good brand	5.71	1.631
Figure 1 is a nice brand	5.56	1.614
Figure 1 is a superior brand in Ghana	5.49	1.749
Figure 1 is attractive	5.40	1.775

Notes:
1. Figure 1 refers to ICAG logo.
2. Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "not at all (=1)" to "Of course, it is (=7)".
3. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

Table 8: Descriptive results for indicators for switching intention

Measurement indicators	Mean	SD
In the near future, I intend to intensify my efforts to find a better accounting education service provider	3.13	1.959
I have decided to engage less with ICAG.	2.67	1.846
I have decided to switch to another accounting education service provider that offers better services.	2.64	1.927
In the last year I have thought very seriously to switch to another accounting education service provider	2.64	1.912

Notes:
1. Each indicator is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".
2. Indicators are ranked based on their mean results.

2.2.1 Member satisfaction Level

Member satisfaction level is measured with seven indicators (e.g., the accounting education services provided by ICAG have met my needs), adapted from Markova et al. (2013) and Larsen et al. (1979). The

respondents evaluated each indicator on a 7-point rating scale, ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)".

2.2.2. Determinants of Member satisfaction Level

2.2.2.1. Perceived Service Quality

Perceived service quality is operationalized as a composite measure of six core conceptual components: tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, convenience, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1991; Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009; Choi et al., 2004). Five indicators (e.g., the procedures to follow to get services provided by ICAG Membership Services Directorate is convenient) were used to measure *convenience*; eight indicators (e.g., the staff at ICAG are friendly) were used to capture *empathy*; seven indicators (e.g., the staff at ICAG offices dress professionally) were used to measure *tangibles;* four indicators (e.g., when ICAG promises to do something by a certain time, it does so; the ICAG is a reliable accounting education service provider) tapped into *reliability*; five indicators (e.g., the behaviour of the staff at ICAG instills confidence in me) captured *assurance*; five indicators measured (e.g., ICAG gives you prompt accounting education services) *responsiveness*. The indicators for convenience, empathy, reliability, and responsiveness were all evaluated on 7-point rating scale, ranged from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)" while the indicators for tangibles and assurance were evaluated on 7-point rating scales, which ranged from "not at all (=1)" to "to a largest extent (=7)" and "not at all (=1)" to "to a very large extent (=7)" respectively.

2.2.2.2. Service Experience

Service experience is captured as a composite indicator of educational experience and aesthetic experience (Kastenholz et al., 2018; Oh et al., 2007). The scale for educational experience has six indicators (e.g., my experience with ICAG really enhanced my accounting education skills) while that of aesthetic experience has five indicators (e.g., just visiting the ICAG was very pleasant). Seven-point rating scales ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)" and "totally disagree (=1)" to

"totally agree (=7)" were used to evaluate the indicators for the educational experience and aesthetic experience variables respectively.

2.2.3. Member-based Performance Outcomes of Member Satisfaction

2.2.3.1. Switching Intention

Four indicators (e.g., I have decided to switch to another accounting education service provider that offers better services), anchored on a 7-point rating scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)", were used to capture switching intention (Athanassopoulos et al. 2001).

2.2.3.2. Service Patronage Intention

Five indicators (e.g., I anticipate using the services at ICAG in the near future) rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)" were used to measure service patronage intention.

2.2.3.3. Word-of-Mouth

Three indicators (e.g., I do encourage my friends and acquaintances to do business with ICAG), anchored on a 7-point rating scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)", were used to measure word-of-mouth (Kim, 2017; Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009; Athanassopoulos et al., 2001).

2.2.3.4. Brand Attitude

To measure brand attitude, the respondents were shown the logo of ICAG (labelled "Figure 1" in the questionnaire) and were asked to use a 7-point scale ranging from "not at all (=1)" to "of course, it is (=7)" to evaluate six statements (e.g., I feel good about Figure 1) (Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017; Kim, 2017) highlighting their (positive) attitudes toward the logo.

2.2.3.5. Loyalty

Four indicators (e.g., I am dedicated to doing business with ICAG), rated on a 7-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (=1)" to "strongly agree (=7)", were used to tap into loyalty (Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Pan et al., 2012).

2.2.4. Other Information Captured

The survey instrument captured data on respondent' gender, education level, geographical location/residential area, professional experience, position at work, organization type, and membership age (Table 9). These variables were included in the analysis as control variables (Ki, 2017). Again, the data captured profiles of the respondents in terms of frequency of use of key services and programmes offered, by ICAG. A 7-point scale of ranging from "never" to "more than 5 times" was used to indicate frequency of use of 10 services (e.g., practice licensing and orientation for new practitioners). Additionally, the survey instrument measured the respondents' social desirability biases, using a single item: I sometimes help people because I want something in return. This item, evaluated on a 7-point scale, which ranged from "not at all (=1)" to "to a largest extent", was used to assess whether the survey method implemented in the study introduced bias in the data.

Table 9: Demographic characteristics of respondents (n = 236)

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
What is your gender?	Male	202	85.59
	Female	31	13.14
	Prefer not to say	3	1.27
What is your highest level of education?	Up to 1st degree	58	24.58
	Up to 2nd degree	172	72.88
	Up to PhD	6	2.54
Which of the following organization types do you work?	Non-profit-making organization (e.g., government institution, NGO)	107	45.34
	Profit-making organization	110	46.61
	None of the above	10	4.24
	I'm retired/not working	9	3.81
What is your current/last position in your organization?	Top/Senior management position	110	46.61
	Middle management position	105	44.49
	Junior/low management position	21	8.90
Where do you live currently?	Accra/Tema	155	65.68
	A regional capital in Ghana other than Accra	53	22.46
	Outside a regional capital in Ghana	26	11.02
	Outside Ghana	2	.85

Table 9: continued

How long (in years) have you practiced in the field of accounting/finance?	Less than 3 years	7	2.97
	About 3 to 5 years	19	8.05
	About 6 to 8 years	36	15.25
	About 9 to 11 years	33	13.98
	More than 11 years	141	59.75
How long (in years) have you been a member of ICAG?	Less than 3 years	41	17.37
	About 3 to 5 years	52	22.03
	About 6 to 8 years	42	17.80
	About 9 to 11 years	40	16.95
	More than 11 years	61	25.85

2.3. STRUCTURE OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The items in the survey instrument were organized into several sections. The sections were separated using section breaks (i.e., the respondents could view only a section at a time). The first section was a cover letter, which highlighted the purpose and potential benefits of the study to both ICAG and its members. Additionally, the letter assured the respondents of anonymity and provided them with guidelines for participating in the survey. Furthermore, the letter informed the respondents that they were not under any compulsion to complete the survey and were not required to provide "right" or "wrong" responses. To enhance the credibility of the survey, the letter included the principal investigator's designation and was published on a letterhead which had both the logos of ICAG and the researchers' institution (i.e., Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology). Additionally, the letter requested the respondents to indicate their consent to participate in the study.

Section 2 of the survey instrument collected data on member use of key services, or participation in ICAG programs. Section 3 to Section 10 collected data on attitude towards ICAG's brand, convenience aspect of perceived service quality, empathy aspect of perceived service quality, tangibles aspect of perceived service quality, reliability aspect of perceived service quality, assurance aspect of perceived service quality, responsiveness aspect of perceived service quality, educational experience, and aesthetic experience, respectively. Section 11 captured data on switching intention, word-of-mouth, and service patronage intention. Data on member satisfaction and loyalty were data captured in Section 12. The last section collected data on demographic variables and other additional information (see Section 2.2.4).

2.4. SURVEY BIAS CONTROLS AND ASSESSMENTS

As detailed in Section 2.2, already validated measurement indicators from prior studies were used in this study to minimize measurement errors. The study, therefore, further assessed statistically the psychometric properties of each set of measurement indicators and found each to be reliable (see Cronbach's alpha results in Table 10 [Hair et al., 2014]). Given that there was a possibility for the study design (i.e., cross-sectional survey) and instrument (i.e., questionnaire) to generate artifactual responses (Podsakoff et al., 2012), several recommended procedural remedies (Podsakoff et al., 2012) were followed to control for this form of bias. The first set of the procedural remedies were implemented in the cover letter (see Section 2.3). Next, the indicators for the study variables were made to be simple and easy to understand by the targeted respondents. Additionally, the indicators were evaluated using wider scale lengths and varied scale anchors (see Section 2.2). Temporal breaks were introduced in the survey instrument to prevent random scoring (see paragraph 2 of Section 2.3). In addition, the survey instrument did not provide information on the kind relationship between variables of interest in the study, and contained several measurement indicators, which made it difficult for the respondents to understand the kind of relationships investigated in the study. Finally, valid members of ICAG provide data for the study (see Section 2.1), which helped ensured high degree of understanding and accuracy of responses.

The efficacy of the procedural remedies were statistically assessed by following Lindell and Whitney's (2001) marker variable technique. A social desirability bias indicator (i.e., *sometimes help people because I want something in return*) was included in the survey instrument and used as a marker variable. There is no known theoretical basis to expect that the marker variable would correlate with the study variables: this is largely confirmed by the study results (Table 10), indicating that the method employed to collect data for the study is unlikely to bias the conclusions from the study (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

The results shown in Table 9 suggest that the distributions of the characteristics of the study sample in terms of gender, organization type, and geographical location/residential are largely reflect with the study population. Again, results in Table 10 show that early respondents (members who responded to the survey following Message 2) and late respondents (members who responded to the survey following

Message 3) were largely invariant in terms of their demographic characteristics including gender, education level, geographical location/residential area, professional experience, organization type, and membership age (except for position at work) and their scores to the substantive variables in the study. These results suggest that nonresponse bias is unlikely to contaminate the conclusions and generalizability of the findings (Armstrong and Overton, 1977).

2.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Several ethical principles were followed in the conduct of the study. First, the purpose of the study and what the data would be used for were discussed with the study participants. Second, the participants were guaranteed anonymity and efforts were made to ensure that none of the responses could be used later to identify the study participants. Third, only data provided by participants who explicitly agreed to participate in the study were used. Fourth, no ICAG member was coerced or persuaded to participate in the study. Fifth, the data have been anonymized, coded, and stored in safe storage spaces and remain accessible to the client and other relevant stakeholders of the study.

Table 10: Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variables		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	Positive attitude towards brand	1																		
2	Service patronage intention	.295**	1																	
3	Word-of-mouth	.300**	.672**	1																
4	Switching intention	-.269**	-.646**	-.620**	1															
5	Loyalty	.356**	.751**	.728**	-.642**	1														
6	**Member satisfaction**	**.373****	**.767****	**.660****	**-.613****	**.792****	**1**													
7	Service experience	.406**	.668**	.592**	-.476**	.684**	**.758****	1												
8	Perceived service quality	.457**	.622**	.506**	-.465**	.568**	**.798****	.779**	1											
9	Male[a]	.035	.156*	.209**	-.158*	.245**	**.181****	.200**	.105	1										
10	First degree[a]	-.021	-.008	-.081	.016	-.010	**-.004**	.012	.020	-.074	1									
11	Second degree[a]	.029	.011	.058	-.025	-.002	**.006**	-.02	-.026	.048	-.936**	1								
12	Top/senior level mgt.[a]	-.050	.047	.027	-.058	.058	**.002**	-.078	-.072	.238**	-.08	.016	1							
13	Middle level mgt.[a]	.062	-.015	.051	-.013	-.025	**.017**	.096	.103	-.167*	.004	.047	-.837**	1						
14	Accra/Tema[a]	-.007	.020	-.042	-.016	-.028	**-.044**	-.112	-.011	-.119	-.064	.021	-.022	.001	1					
15	Membership age	-.093	.131*	.119	-.134*	.051	**.056**	-.056	.005	.092	-.196**	.116	.392**	-.250**	.207**	1				
16	Profit-making orgn.[a]	-.119	-.073	-.130*	.127	-.130*	**-.088**	-.067	-.094	.093	-.001	-.022	.132*	-.221**	.175**	.058	1			
17	Years of practice	.008	.202**	.213**	-.227**	.092	**.120**	.076	.133*	.144*	-.184**	.138*	.339**	-.198**	.131*	.488**	-.003	1		
18	Social desirability[1]	-.022	-.013	-.021	.150*	-.027	-.059	-.085	-.056	.039	-.057	.019	.103	-.134*	-0.06	.038	.065	.010	1	
19	Message 2[a]	.069	-.045	.100	-.032	.051	.056	.003	.002	.040	-.031	.080	-.167*	.132*	.006	-.088	-.053	-.012	-.092	1
	Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	1.00	.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	.00
	Maximum	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	7.00	7.00	1.00
	Mean	5.38	5.03	2.77	5.76	4.93	5.27	4.88	.86	.25	.73	.47	.44	.66	3.12	.47	4.19	1.68	5.38	.83
	Standard deviation	1.372	1.281	1.701	1.379	1.405	1.186	1.042	.352	.431	.446	.500	.498	.476	1.454	.500	1.143	1.313	1.372	.375
	Skewness	-.772	-.395	.788	-1.248	-.606	-.916	-.549	-2.040	1.189	-1.036	.137	.223	-.665	-.041	.137	-1.199	2.345	-.772	-1.773
	Kurtosis	-.018	-.188	-.526	1.122	-.207	.742	.563	2.181	-.592	-.935	-1.998	-1.967	-1.572	-1.381	-1.998	.294	5.475	-.018	1.154
	Scale reliability: Cronbach's alpha	.96	.90	.60	.91	.93	.96	.96	.97	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Notes:

1. [1]I sometimes help people because I want something in return
2. [a]Dummy variable
3. Bolded coefficients are for relationships of interest in the study
4. *p < .05, **p < .01.
5. n = 236

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report presents and discusses the results from the study. The profile of the respondents is first presented. Next, descriptive statistics on member satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes are presented. Following this, results relating to how member satisfaction relates to its proposed antecedents and outcomes are presented and discussed.

3.2. RESPONDENT PROFILE

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 9. Findings show that a few of the respondents are females (13.14%, n = 236), a reflection of the study population (females: 14.90%; n = 6,437). More than 70% of the respondents hold at least a masters' degree. Almost the same proportion of members who work in profit-making organizations (46.61%) and non-profit-making organizations (government institutions, NGOs) (45.34%) participated in the study. More than two-third of the respondents live in Accra or Tema. About 60% of the respondents have more than 11 years of practicing experience while less than 5% have up to 3 years practicing experience. Less than 5% of the respondents have retired from active practice. Lastly, a quarter of the respondents have more than 11 years membership experience with ICAG, while less than a quarter have less than 3 years membership experience.

Further results displayed in Figure 2 show that more than 70% of the participants ha experienced the services offered by, or participated in the programs organized by, ICAG. At least 85% of the respondents had participated in programs such as annual meetings, general meetings and conferences, and admission and orientations for new members organized by the association, or received information through bulletins and journals. Additionally, findings show that 70% of the participants did receive souvenirs. Only a few of the participants, however, had participated in activities such as practice

management, practice licensing and orientation for new practitioners, and post-chartered diploma programs.

In sum, the respondents appeared competent to provide data for the study as majority of them had high educational background, long membership and practicing experience, and had received most the services provided, or engaged in most of the activities organized, by the associated. Again, the high similarity in membership gender and location of work/residence distributions between study sample and population suggests that the study findings could be generalized to the population.

Figure 2: Member use of/participation in ICAG's services/programs

Percentage of Members (n = 236)
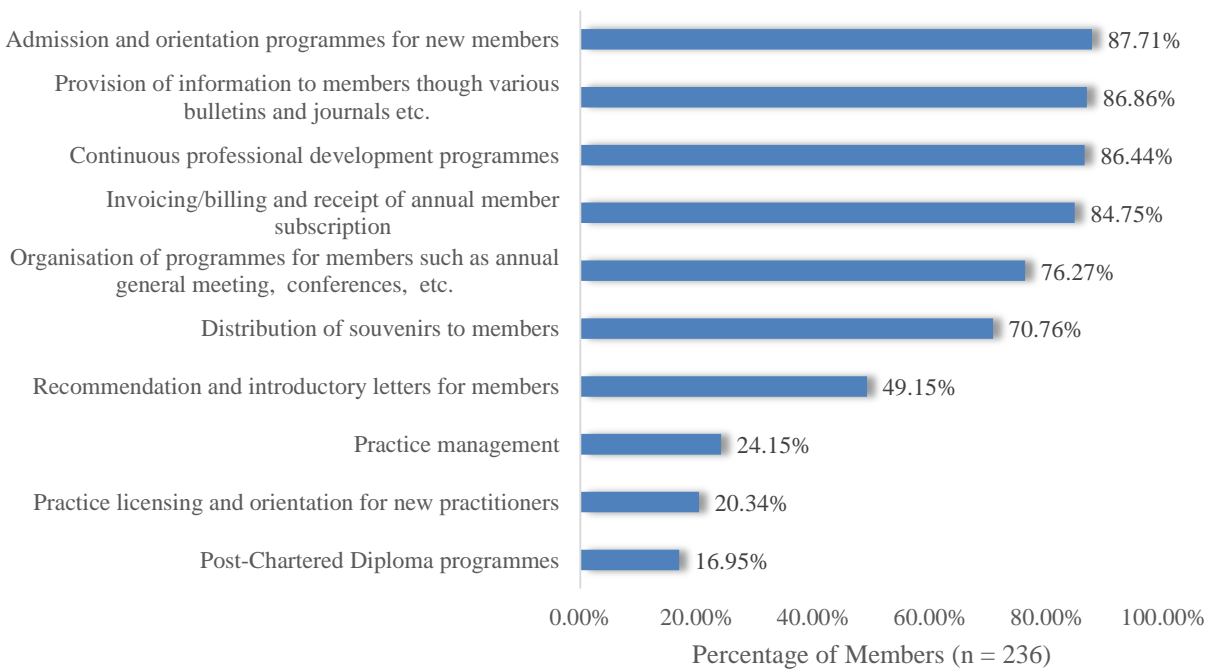
3.3. MEMBER SATISFACTION LEVEL

Quantifying ICAG member satisfaction level is the prime focus of this study. As depicted in Figure 3, the grand mean member satisfaction level is 4.93 out of 7.00. There is no evidence, therefore, that members are dissatisfied with the services provided by ICAG: a grand mean member satisfaction level of 4.93 is not significantly different from a test value of 5.00 (i.e., a point where members, at least, agree that they

are satisfied). About 56.8% have member satisfaction level of at least 5.00 out of 7.00. Again, about 20.76%, 33.05%, and 19.49% are very satisfied, satisfied, and somehow satisfied respectively while 0.42%, 3.39%, 7.63%, and 15.25% are very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, somehow dissatisfied, and neither satisfied nor dissatisfied respectively.

3.4. MEMBER SATISFACTION AND ITS DETERMINANTS

The study further examined whether perceived service quality and service experience are related to member satisfaction level. Controlling for demographic factors, results of multiple regression analysis (using ordinary least square as an estimator) show that perceived service quality ($\beta = .53$, t-value = 8.85, p < .01) and service experience ($\beta = .35$, t-value = 5.68, p < .01) are significant determinants of member satisfaction level: the greater level of perceived service quality and the higher the level of service experience, the stronger the level of member satisfaction. These two determinants alone were found to significantly explain more than 50% of the variance in member satisfaction level ($R^2 = 68.4\%$, F = 252.527, df = 233, p < .01). Details of the regression analysis results are available in Table 3.3.

The data further reveals that, apart from gender, the demographic characteristics captured in the study independently make no difference in explaining why member satisfaction varies among ICAG members. Evidence from the study further shows that member satisfaction level among males is significantly higher than females: Males mean = 5.04, standard deviation = 1.33; Female/prefer-not-to-say, mean = 4.32, standard deviation = 1.66; t = -2.813, p < .05 (Figure 4). In other words, male members are more satisfied with ICAG activities and services than female members.

3.5. MEMBER SATISFACTION AND ITS OUTCOMES

The study further examined whether member satisfaction is related to five interrelated attitudinal and behavioral outcomes: positive brand attitude, service patronage intention, word-of-mouth, switching intention, and loyalty.
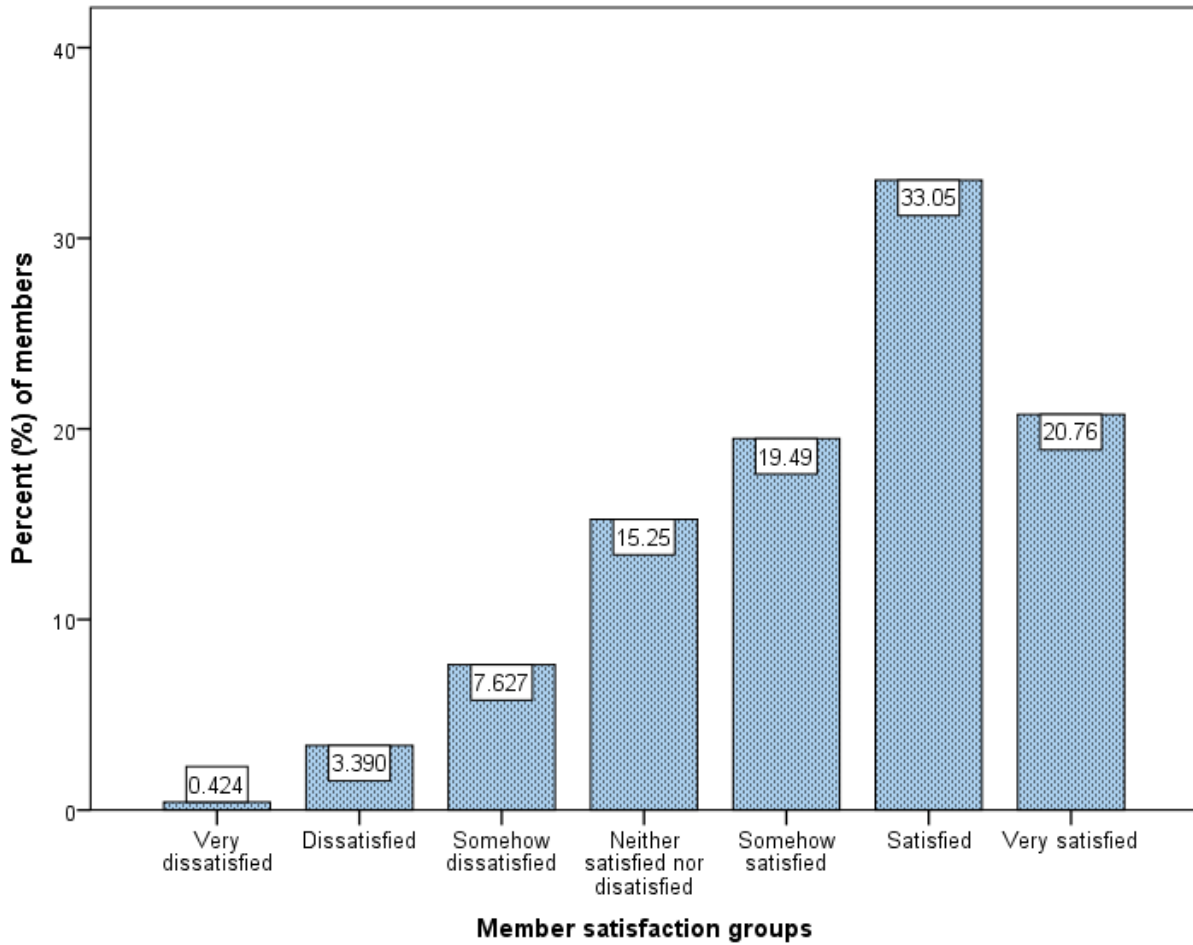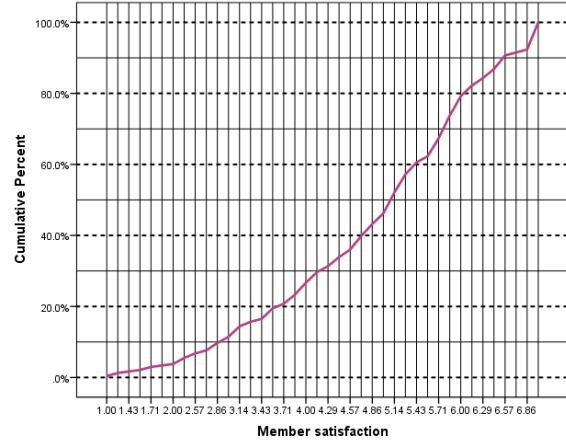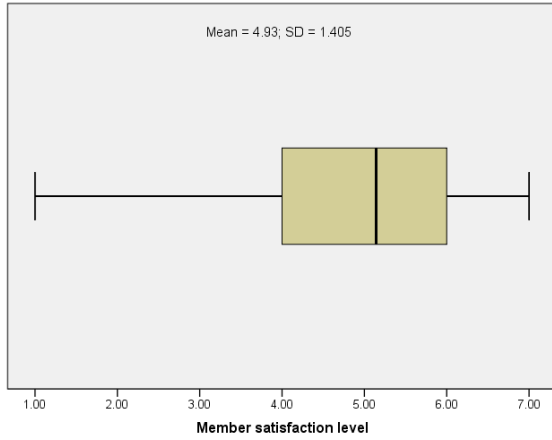
Figure 3: Member Satisfaction Level
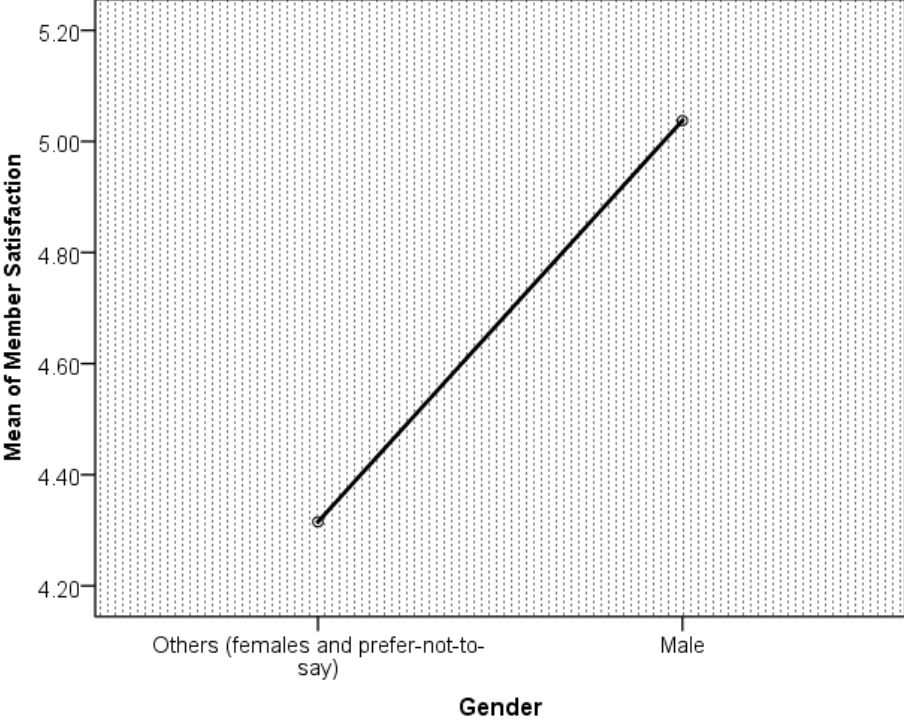
Figure 4: Gender and member satisfaction

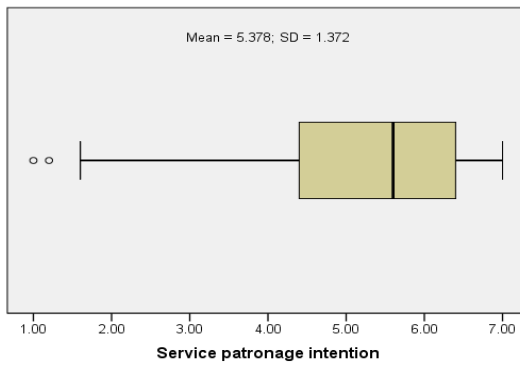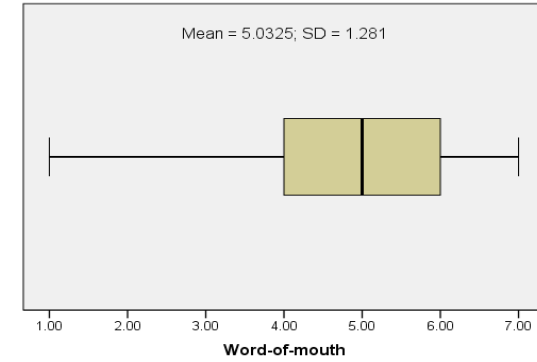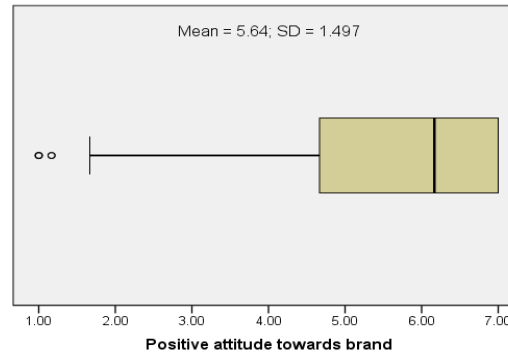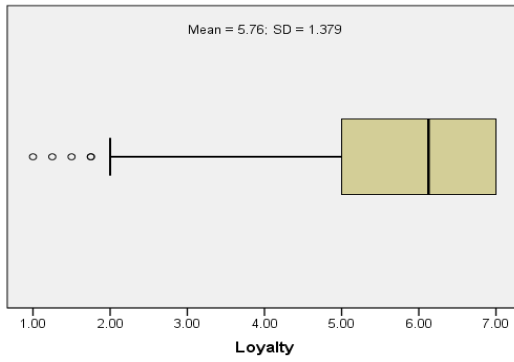**Figure 5: Plot of descriptive results for determinants and outcomes of member satisfaction**

Mean = 5.27; SD = 1.186
Service experience

Mean = 4.88; SD = 1.042
Perceived service quality

Mean = 2.77; SD = 1.701
Switching intention

Mean = 5.76; SD = 1.379
Loyalty

Mean = 5.64; SD = 1.497
Positive attitude towards brand

Mean = 5.0325; SD = 1.281
Word-of-mouth

Mean = 5.378; SD = 1.372
Service patronage intention
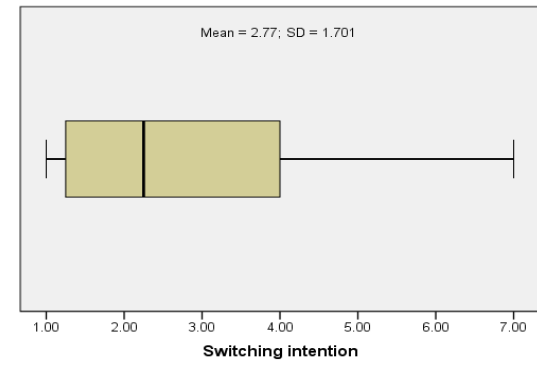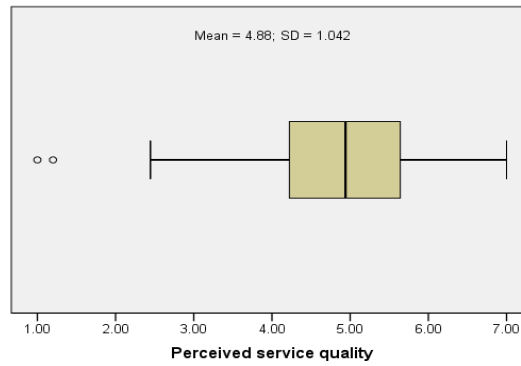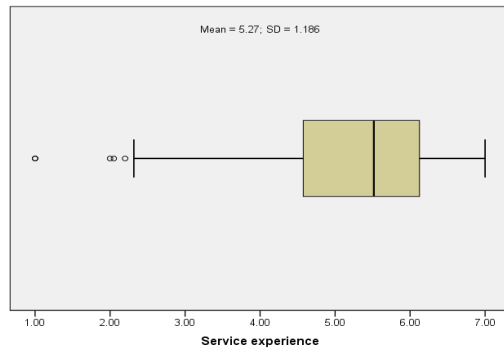
Findings as presented in Figure 5 indicate that a significantly higher number of respondents have had positive experience with ICAG services. Additionally, significantly higher number of respondents perceived ICAG services to be of high quality. Results further show that respondents have strong loyalty and positive attitude towards ICAG brand. The respondents further indicate their strong propensity to engage in positive word-of-mouth for ICAG. Finally, the study finds that the respondents have strong ICAG service patronage intentions and are less likely to switch to a competing brand.

Table 11: Regression results

Independent variables:	*Dependent variables:*					
	Member satisfaction	Positive brand attitude	S. patronage intention	Word-of-mouth	Switching intention	Loyalty
Member satisfaction		.375 (5.991)***	.753 (17.501)***	.620 (12.446)***	-.582 (-11.056)***	.771 (19.004)***
Service experience	.345 (5.682)***					
Perceived service quality	.530 (8.845)***					
Male	.046 (1.169)	-.014 (-.210)	.009 (.210)	.090 (1.745)	-.043 (-.799)	.111 (2.647)**
Second degree	.020 (.540)	.038 (.617)	-.012 (-.272)	.028 (.575)	.005 (.097)	-.009 (-.231)
Top/senior level mgt.	.045 (1.067)	.012 (.168)	.002 (.044)	-.042 (-.747)	-.033 (-.056)	.060 (1.321)
Accra/Tema	.002 (.045)	.048 (.748)	.038 (.856)	-.016 (-.307)	-.040 (-.732)	.043 (1.035)
Membership age	.066 (1.467)	-.133 (-1.796)	.039 (.772)	.040 (.673)	-.031 (-.500)	-.010 (-.217)
Profit-making orgn.	-.029 (-.764)	-.086 (-1.366)	-.017 (-.387)	-.077 (-1.533)	.089 (1.675)	-.087 (-2.138)*
Years of practice	-.033 (-.758)	.014 (.194)	.086 (1.744)	.118 (2.052)*	-.129 (-2.132)*	-.037 (-.794)
R^2	.695	.162	.604	.469	.409	.648
F	57.193***	5.490***	43.267***	25.082***	19.597***	52.197***
DF	226	227	227	227	227	227
Durbin Watson	1.826	2.009	2.123	1.918	1.903	2.103
Highest VIF	2.730	1.483	1.483	1.483	1.483	1.483

Notes:
1. Standardized regression coefficients (t-values) are reported.
2. [†]p < .10, [*]p < .05, [**]p < .01, [***]p < .001.

Taking into account demographic factors, results of the regression analysis as captured in Table 11 reveals that member satisfaction significantly influences each of the five attitudinal and behavioral indicators measured in the study. Specifically, the results indicate that positive brand attitude, service patronage intention, positive word-of-mouth and loyalty increase with increases in member satisfaction while switching intension decreases with increases in member satisfaction.

3.6. KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study is to generate empricial insights into (1) member satisfaction level among ICAG's members, (2) how service experience and perceived service quality affect member satisfaction of ICAG's members, and (3) how member satisfaction affects service patronage intention, switching intention, word-of-mouth, brand attitude, and loyalty of ICAG's members. The key findings from the study are as follows:

- Results from the study suggest that about half of the ICAG members are satisfied with the association's activities and services. The remaining half are either dissatisfied or somehow dissatisfied.

- Members who perceive the association's services quality as high, those who have had superior service experience with the association, and male members tend to be more satisfied.

- Members with high member satisfaction are more likely to be loyal to the association, recommend the association to other people, have low intention to switch to other professional associations, continue using the association's services, and demonstrate positive attitude towards the association's brand.

In a nutshell, the study finds that satisfaction among ICAG's members is generally moderate and that there is still an opportunity for the association to improve its member satisfaction level. Consistent with findings from previous studies, results from this study indicate that ICAG can increase member satisfaction by improving service experience (Kastenholz et al., 2018; Oh et al., 2007) and perceived

service quality (Ladeira et al., 2016; Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009; Choi et al., 2004). Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 detail the specific areas of service experience and perceived service quality that the association can focus on to achieve this outcome.

Evidence from the study, in support of those reported in prior research (Ladeira et al., 2016; Markova et al., 2013; Chaniotakis and Lymperopoulos, 2009; Szymanski and Henard, 2001), suggest that by improving member satisfaction, ICAG can significantly increase member loyalty, service patronage intention, positive brand attitude, and word-of-mouth and at the same time reduce member switching intention. As documented from several bodies of empirical work, these variables, when they increase in magnitude, can significantly increase ICAG competitiveness and growth (Otto et al., 2019).

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COVER LETTER AND CONSENT FORM

ICA Ghana Member Satisfaction Survey

Dear ICA Ghana Member,

KNUST is assisting The Institute of Chartered Accountants (Ghana) (ICAG) to undertake a nationwide survey to understand members' satisfaction with services provided by the Institute. You have been identified as a registered member of ICAG whose views are critical to shaping ICAG's strategies to improve its services to members. ICAG hopes to share the summary of the findings and implications from the study with its members. Accordingly, your kind responses to this survey will be greatly appreciated.

Please note that you are not under any compulsion to complete the survey. Your responses need NOT be right or wrong. For confidentiality reasons, kindly do not indicate your name or the name of your organisation any where in the survey. We can assure you that all data collected will be anonymized and only average and aggregate responses will be reported in the final survey report to be submitted to ICAG.

The survey has specific instructions to follow and scales to use to indicate your responses. Every statement included in the survey is relevant and although some appear quite similar, they are also unique in many ways, so kindly do well to respond to each.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. All questions and concerns about the study can be directed to Dr. Dominic Essuman (Tel.: 0555101774), a member of the research team.

Once again, we are most grateful that you take the time to participate in this survey.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Nathaniel Boso

Principal Investigator and Dean of KNUST School of Business, Kumasi
Email: nboso@knust.edu.gh   or natboso@gmail.com
Tel.: 0260684465

I consent to participate in this study: [ ] Yes   [ ] No