

BUSINESS CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION ON  
ELFORA AGRO-INDUSTRIES P.L.C. WITH  
REFERENCE TO POULTRY

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## **Dedication**

**I dedicated this study to my beloved and model brother, Yohannis Tamiru (Engasha), who has passed away on Tahissas 28,1996 E.C by car accident.**

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## ABSTRACT

*The major purpose of the study was to assess business customers' satisfaction on ELFORA agro-industries P.L.C with reference to poultry. To this effect descriptive survey method was employed and the study used census. To collect data from 70 business customers, questionnaire were prepared and administered and for 12 front line employees of ELFORA interview check lists were prepared and used. The collected data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean scores and standard deviation. The other tools used in this study are Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) and Gap Analysis. The result of the study indicates that from 19 attributes presented to business customers to indicate the importance level of each attribute in making decision to buy poultry products, business customers put top priority to supplier's quality system, technical performance of product to the required purpose (quality) being slightly less than the first one in average score The next position is held by consistency and continuity of product quality and overall hygiene of products both being 3<sup>rd</sup>. Besides, business customers revealed that they were highly satisfied with overall hygiene of ELFORA's poultry products, quality system, consistency and continuity of product quality supplied as one to three respectively. And front-line employees of ELFORA mentioned quality, receiving full weight, supply and customer handling as business customers' top priority in making buying decisions. Customers Satisfaction Index (CSI) that indicates the overall satisfaction of business customers of ELFORA is 3.783 out of five or 75.66%. The overall rating given by employees to their organization's performance in satisfying business customers was 2.83 out of 5 or 56.60%. By putting the importance and satisfaction scores together, the gap between the two were identified for four most important attributes. And the gap between importance level and satisfaction of business customers obtained from technical performance of the product to the required purpose is the highest of the four most important attributes. And supplier's quality system, consistency and continuity of product quality and overall hygiene of products followed respectively. In comparison of ELFORA's performance with its competitors most business customers and front-line employees of the company judged ELFORA as better than its competitors. Based on the findings, conclusion and recommendations were made*

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviation**

The following abbreviations appear in the study as stated hereunder

**CEO**— Chief Executive Officer

**CSI**—Customer Satisfaction Index

**MIDROC**—Mohammed International Development and Research Organization  
Company

**PLC**—Private Limited Company

**SPSS**—Statistic Package for Social Science

**TV**—Television

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The very essence for the existence of a business entity is serving customers aimed at achieving organizational objectives profitably. A customer has to be in a position to buy goods or services a firm offers.

Emphasizing on customer, Zikmond (1996:300) stated that “There is only one boss-the customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else.” In his book “Extraordinary Customer Service” McCoy (2005:10), explained importance of customer satisfaction as “if you get the customer care completely in any business, the future sales and marketing would just about look after them.” These statements of the two scholars clearly magnify the decisive power of customers who should always be at the center of firm’s business activities to maintain long-term relationship. The quality of goods or services a firm is offering and its overall marketing activities are best judged by the customers.

As stated by Kotler (1996:3), with regard to need for focus on customer “marketing is so basic that it cannot be considered as separate function....it is the whole business seen from the point of view of the final result, that is, from customer’s point of view”. In competitive market arena, keeping customers satisfied through provision of expected level of services or exceeding their expectation would enable a firm to maintain its position sustainable. As also mentioned by Lele (2001:3), customer satisfaction is a key to long-term profitability and keeping the customer happy is everybody’s business. Increasingly, companies are finding these factors such as lower labor costs, more efficient manufacturing, and superior technology provide only transient, short-term advantages. In the long run, however, what matters is how pleased the customer is with the company’s products

A firm should continuously ensure customers' satisfaction and establish a mechanism to receive any complaints for further improvement. For this, the firm should monitor customer satisfaction through conducting study on the issue on regular basis.

Despite the fact, many of research papers conducted on satisfaction with which the researcher came across before were focused on consumer or end user market and business customers had not been addressed adequately both in the sphere of academic and real business perspectives. So, this paper initiated to contribute in narrowing the gap in this regard.

ELFORA, a member of MIDROC Group Companies, engaged in Agro-Industrial activities, is the largest live stock company in Ethiopia established in 1997 by acquiring eight live stock enterprises through the government privatization program. It is one of the twelve companies organized under the Office of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MIDROC Ethiopia. The word "ELFORA" comes from two Borena Oromo words "ELA" and "FORA", "ELA" means permanent water point and "FORA" means rainy season grassing. Currently it provides employment opportunity for about 3000 employees.

The company has six zonal operations that are found at Debrezeit, Hawassa, Wollo, Dire Dawa, Adama and Gonder. Moreover, ELFORA has facilities of Slaughterhouse at Debrezeit, Metehara, Melge Wondo, Dire Dawa, Kombolcha and Gondar. The company has a modern chicken hatchery, poultry farm, chicken slaughtering abattoir and processing plant at Debrezeit. In addition to this, the company has meat processing and canning plants at Dire Dawa, Gondar, Kombolcha, Kaliti and Melge Wondo. Delivery vans, cold trucks, and live animals transporting vehicles are available in the organization used to transport products for domestic and export markets. Quarantine, ranches, holding grounds and feedlots at various locations are the other facilities of ELFORA. The company has outlets in Adiss Ababa, Debrezeit, Dire Dawa and Gondar. The company offers its products both to domestic and foreign markets. Its major product group includes poultry, live stock, meat products (such as beef, veal, lamb and goat)

canned products (such as beef stock, minchet abish, fish, soup and tomato), crops and vegetables and diary products. (Company brochure)

In line with this background, this research paper attempted to address customer satisfaction level with special focus on business buyers of ELFORA particularly poultry produces in Addis Ababa market. This company has been branded by ELFORA and this name was used throughout the research report.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It is obvious that superior customer satisfaction is the key for the success of a business and all marketing mix elements and efforts should be geared towards achieving this objective at profit. A company should have thorough knowledge on expectations and how customers perceive performance. Lacking the understanding of the level of customer satisfaction and their expectation lead to having unpleasant and non-loyal customer and eventually lose of market. Holding strong and sustainable competitive position in the customer's mind can be attained only if the customer is happy with what a firm offers.

For the past many years, ELFORA held monopolistic power as exclusive producer and distributors of poultry products, but now a days the number of modern poultry firms in the country is increasing to produce and distribute poultry products. This scenario had presented ELFORA the actual and potential challenges of competition from other competitors in the market. Such existing reality called for devising strategic options focusing on business customers that aimed at winning the race in the market thereby maintain its competitive position. To this end, understanding the level of customer satisfaction that could be used as a basic input in strategy formulation for future improvement is critical issue for the company to address, workable strategy design to tackle the current and potential challenges coming from strong competition is largely rests on clear understanding of business customers in terms of their value priority and satisfaction level.

Moreover, for the past many years, poultry firms in Ethiopia have not conducted a research to measure the level of their business customers' satisfaction. This is largely due to lack of qualified marketing experts in order to quantify and analyze customer satisfaction data.

In connection to this, the researcher attempted to study business customers' satisfaction with the poultry products and associated services offered to them by ELFORA in its distribution operation.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study tried to find out answers to the following questions:

1. Which attributes of poultry products and related services are most valued by business customers (importance level of attributes)?
2. How are business customers satisfied with each attribute and the overall poultry products supplied and associated services rendered by ELFORA?
3. What is the overall satisfaction of business customers?
4. How large the satisfaction gaps are for top important attributes?
5. How business customers and front line employees rate ELFORA's performance in satisfying business customers?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to assess business customers' satisfaction on ELFORA Agro-Industries P.L.C with reference to poultry. In addition to this major objective, the study has the following specific objectives:

1. To determine business customers' value priority (importance) for various attributes in their purchase decision;
2. To identify major attributes that lead business customers to satisfaction or dissatisfaction;
3. To investigate the level of overall business customers' satisfaction ;

4. To see the gaps between top important attributes and business customers satisfaction with them (the attributes);
5. To distinguish and compare views of business customers, and front line employees toward ELFORA's performance in satisfying customers.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Besides its academic significance to the researcher, this study will have the following importance:

1. The out put of this study would spearhead ways for improving the performance of the company in satisfying business customers in order to be more competent and maintain ELFORA's position in the poultry products' distribution.
2. The findings of this study would initiate and can be used as platform by any concerned parties in the company or external researchers who may carry out further and in-depth research on the customer satisfaction or other related issues in the sector.
3. It may provide relevant information to decision makers of ELFORA agro-industries about the strengths and weaknesses of the existing practices of the organization in satisfying business customers and achieving the organization's objective.
4. Research on business customers' satisfaction particularly on agricultural marketing (poultry) is very limited; the researcher hopes that the study will enrich the existing literature.
5. It may also provide suggestions and recommendations to the problem under investigation.
6. Serve as a basis for detailed and further study for those who have the intention to make research on business customer satisfaction and poultry marketing.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

Though ELFORA has been providing other products such as live stock, meat products, canned products, crops and vegetables and diary products, this study focused on poultry products and related services.

Besides domestic Business customers, in its marketing of poultry, the firm serves consumers at its retail outlets that are found at Lamberet, Mexico, Addiss Home Depot and Kazanchiz. This study focused on domestic business customers of the firm. Business customers buy products or services for further manufacturing (processing), resale or to facilitate their commercial activities in production process or services rendering. Unlike consumer markets, purchases in business market are huge and not for final consumption. And business customers' of the firm includes supermarkets, hotels and restaurants, cafe, and hospitals that are registered by the firm and buying products directly from and having direct contact with ELFORA.

ELFORA markets its products to business customers that are found in other towns of the country such as Debrezeit Dire Dawa, and Gondar, the research is delineated in Addis Ababa business customers, this is mainly due to concentration of business customers in Addis Ababa and their records are better accessible in the firm.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher does not believe that the study is totally free from all sorts of limitations. Accordingly, unavailability of relevant references on agricultural marketing particularly on poultry marketing, lack of cooperation on the side of some respondents in filling and returning questionnaire on time, and unwillingness of concerned management bodies of the company to conduct interview with them were among the limitations that faced the study. Their magnitude, how ever, was not large enough to affect the findings basically,

## 1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

**Abattoir** – a place where animals are killed for meat

**Broiler**- a young chicken used for broiling or roasting

**Hatchery**- a place where fish or chicken eggs are hatched as part of a business

**Quarantine**-a situation in which a person animal that might have a disease is kept separate from other people or animal so that they do not catch the disease: in quarantine animals can be kept in quarantine for up to three months.

**Ranches** a very large farm where cows, horses, or sheep are kept.

**Veal**-meat from a young cow

## 1.9 Organization of the study

The study is divided in to five chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction which encompasses background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study and delimitation of this study.

The second chapter deals with the review of related literature. This part would give a highlight of the theoretical framework of the topic understudy.

The third chapter focuses on research design and methodology. The fourth chapter, namely the presentation and analysis part of the study diagnoses the data collected through questionnaire and interviews. The fifth and final chapter is dedicated to summary, conclusion and recommendations of the overall study.

personal consumption. The buyer may be a manufacturer, a reseller, a government body, a nonprofit institution, any organization other than ultimate consumers. Business markets constitute one element of organizational market. Business markets are characterized by rationality in selection of alternative suppliers, informed individuals in purchasing standard or specification. Importance of repeated market transactions (overall buyer-seller relationship) and business markets are characterized by derived demand and volume purchase.

### **2.3 Product and Related Services Characteristics/ Attributes/ of Business Market**

According to Havaladar (2002:3-4) in business marketing, the products or services are generally technically complex. They are used for serving the operations of the organizations. Because of the importance given to the technical aspect of products, the purchases are made based on the specifications evolved by the buyers. As compared to consumer marketing, business customers place a great importance on service, that is, timely delivery or availability of products, because any delay in supply will have a significant impact on the production or operations.

According to Hill, Alexander and Cross (2004:54) unlike the ultimate consumer, the business customer is motivated by budgetary considerations such as profit goal, expense quotas, and cost-benefit guide lines. The business customer must be prepared to justify his purchases on the basis of measurable performance. Consequently, the considerations which influence the customer's decision to patronize one supplier rather than another tend to be quality, service, and price- frequently in that order. These are not the only attributes weighted by business customers; but they are the most common ones. The authors (2004:55) explained these most common attributes as follow:

**Quality-** the business customers tend to define product quality as combination of properties which fits the product to its intended use. The business customer probably wants these properties to be present in the product in precisely the degree needed to suit

its purpose and no more. A consideration inseparably related to product quality is the supplier's ability to deliver materials, components, and supplies of consistent quality. The degree of consistency in quality needed by a customer, as well as the range of tolerance permitted in quality standards, can usually be determined by a study of the customer's production system or other appropriate operation.

**Service**-businesses customers need a variety of services in addition to products and materials. The most common types of services requested are technical, replacement parts, delivery, information, and sales. Problems of a technical nature are quite common wherever equipment, materials, and components are in use. The business customer who has learned to rely on the technical advice and assistance of a business marketer in solving his materials use problems.

**Price**-business customers seldom rely solely on a vendor's quoted prices. They are much more concerned with what is often referred to as the evaluated price. This takes into consideration a variety of factors, such as the amount of scrap or waste resulting from the use of a material, the costs of processing the material, the amount of work a machine will do, the power it consumes, loss or damage liability, and a host of other variables that generate or minimize costs. As Hill, Alexander and Cross (2004:57-61) stated, in addition to quality, service, and price, the business customer is also motivated to realize the following:

**Savings** in the use of materials and equipment or in the methods by which they are procured. The motivation is especially pronounced in periods of accelerating costs. The most obvious places business customers look for savings are in the substitution of materials and new types of equipment.

**Assurance of supply** is vital to the purchasing officer. If the supply flow of an item is interrupted, probable resulting shortages may cause shut down of production operations. When a shortage threatens, the business customer may be able to avoid a shutdown by

purchasing emergency orders from suppliers with whom he does not ordinarily deal, but such orders are appropriate to be expensive.

Reeder, Brierty and Reeder (2004:100) added Reciprocity as another attribute and explained as giving consideration to selecting suppliers because of their value as customers is known as “reciprocity.” “The objective of reciprocity is, in theory at least, for the buyer and seller to reach an agreement on an exchange of business that is mutually beneficial” and has become an important part of the trade relations responsibility of purchasing and materials management.

## **2.4 Business Customers Satisfaction**

Kotler and Keller (2006:144) defined satisfaction as satisfaction is a person’s feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product’s perceived performance (or out come) in relation to his or her expectations. If the performance falls short of expectations, the customer is dissatisfied. If the performance matches the expectations, the customer is satisfied. If the performance exceeds expectations, the customers, the customer is highly satisfied or delighted. So, companies should show efforts to satisfy business customers by matching the companies’ performance with the business customers’ expectations.

Kotler and Keller (2006:145) further elaborated their discussion on business customer satisfaction, although the customer-centered firm seeks to create high customer satisfaction that is not its ultimate goal. The company must operate on the philosophy that it is trying to deliver a high level of customer satisfaction subject to delivering acceptable levels of satisfaction to the other stake holders, given its total resources.

## **2.5 Source of Business Customers’ Dissatisfaction**

Dissatisfaction can steam from various sources. According to Neill (2001:10-11), some of the reasons why customers get dissatisfied include the followings:

“Promises not delivered, service that was rude and inefficient, conflicting messages from employees, feelings of victimized by the business or operation, misinformation from an

employee, delays and long waits, treatment on being uninformed, wrong, or an important, defective or inferior products, feeling of being dismissed or discounted by the personnel, business integrity or honesty that was questionable.” The point here is that companies have to check for the availability of any complaints either formally or informally and if there is any, specification should be made as to its source and then, an appropriate measure has to be taken as solution to the problem identified by using a clear set of procedure. For instance, to handle the complaints of a customer who want a service, an officer where and/or a person to whom the complaints forwarded need to be clearly known and located.

In his contribution of customer perception associated with the promise of the company in creating dissatisfaction, Richard (2004:105) stated that most dissatisfied customers are not created by the failure of our products and services. This type of failure could easily be identified and rectified. Most dissatisfied customers are created by the way our organizations perform in fulfilling the promises implied or made to customers.

## **2.6 Importance of Measuring Business Customers’ Satisfaction**

Through measuring business customer satisfaction, a company would be able to identify where the customers perceive the greatest performance gaps in terms of a product and service dimensions. Regarding the importance of measuring customer satisfaction, Kotler and Keller (2006:145) said that many companies measuring business customer satisfaction and the factors shaping it. For example, IBM tracks how satisfied business customers are with each IBM salesperson they encounter, and makes this a factor in each salesperson’s compensation.

A company would be wise to measure business customers’ satisfaction regularly because one key to customer retention is customer satisfaction. A highly satisfied customer generally stays loyal longer, buys more as the company introduces new products and upgrades existing products, talks favorably about the company and its products, less attention to competing brands and is less sensitive to price, offers product or service ideas

to the company, and costs less to serve than new business customers because transactions are routine. Focusing on the importance of measuring customer satisfaction John (2005:21) said that organizations are increasingly interested in retaining existing customer while targeting non-customers; measuring customer satisfaction provides an indication of how successful the organization is at providing products and /or services to the market place.

All these views show that unless companies undertake customer satisfaction survey, they wouldn't be able to understand customers' dissatisfaction prevailing in their business operation.

## **2.7 Measurements of Business Customers' Satisfaction**

“Without accurate customer satisfaction measurement, management is most unlikely to make the right decisions so as to consistently achieve the required incremental improvements in customer retention. Success will always rely, on doing best what matters most to customers” Hill and Alexander (2004:9-10). In this regard, Hague and Morgan (2004:93) explained that customer satisfaction surveys have two important components-the measurement of the importance of the many factors that are part of the offer from a company (for example, delivery on time, consistent quality, technical support) and satisfaction with these factors or attributes. It is also the researcher's conviction that this view is critical for its consideration of attaching importance to each attribute or dimension that would ultimately affect the overall satisfaction level. Two techniques of rating scales and Customer Satisfaction Index can be used in measuring customer satisfaction.

These are:

**Verbal Rating Scales:** These are the simplest of all scales, in which respondents choose a word or phrase about products and associated services on a scale to indicate the level of their feeling. Hague and Morgan, (2004:96)

**Numerical Rating Scales:** This is a very similar approach to the verbal rating scale except the respondent is asked to give numerical 'score' rather than a semantic response. The scores are often out of a number, with 5 and 10 being popular choices (where large number is extremely important/total satisfaction and 1 is unimportant at all/total dissatisfaction). There is a debate between various schools of thought about which scale (5, 7 or 10) to use. Hague and Morgan, (2004:103) recommend that for questionnaires that test opinions on a very large number of issues, such as in customer satisfaction or segmentation studies, it is often wise to use a 10 point scale as this give the greatest differentiation of response and therefore the greatest sensitivity, with no mid-point.

**Customer Satisfaction Index:** A figure which represents customers' overall satisfaction level. "The simplest way of arriving at a satisfaction index is to average all firm's performance scores. This would not be ideal because some things are more important to customers than others, and their most important requirements influence their satisfaction judgment more than those that are less important to them. An accurate satisfaction index therefore has to work in the same way. It has to be more strongly influenced by the products and associated services attribute with the highest importance scores. In other words, it must be a weighted average satisfaction score, which requires a two-step process for its calculation. First step is calculating the weighting factors and the second step is multiplying each satisfaction score (performance score) by its corresponding weighting factor. The importance scores are used to calculate the weighting factors. It is normal to convert that score into a percentage" Hill and Alexander (2004:177).

**Gap Analysis:** To do best what matters most to customers, analysis of gap between the importance and the performance scores should be done to allow identification of priorities for improvement. In Connection to this, Hill and Alexander (2003:180) suggested that when you put the importance and the performance score together and ask that very simple but absolutely fundamental question, 'Are we doing what matters most to customers?' Gap analysis indicates that if performance bar is shorter than the importance bar, the company may have a problem. The biggest gaps between importance and performance highlight where the company is failing to meet customers' requirements

and there are products and associated services attribute it needs to focus on if it wants to improve customer satisfaction.

## **2.8 Measures in Increasing/improving/ Customer Satisfaction**

### **• Establish Integrated Approach and Get Internal Commitment**

The issue of improving customer satisfaction should be approached in an integrated manner from top management to the lower tier employees. All the various functional departments have to be integrated to form cross-functional team to provide comprehensive and complete level of product and associated services better than competitors. “You need to put customer service in everyone’s job description. Add a sentence at the beginning of every employee’s job description. That helps the company to prosper by satisfying and delighting those wonderful people who make the job possible-the customers” Karr (1998:27).

### **• Understand Customer Expectation and Value**

As indicated before, one of the variables that affect customer satisfaction is the expectation about products and associated services that customer sets in mind about products and associated services. Understanding expectations of customer should be the prior task of a firm in improving the current state. Clear knowledge of how customers build their expectations, what factors affects them; the relative importance of various dimensions of goods and services toward customer value is building block to identify and priority and establish priority for improvements.

Understanding customer expectation and their value system would enable the firm to design selectively focused strategy on the first two groups of customers and their priority of attributes/dimensions of goods and services most valued by them. In this regard, Denton (2000:11-17), said that the logical place to start is big understanding just those expectations of customers are. The company establishes goals to help focus the company’s energy on the area most important to customers. Literally, the service goals for a given company depend on its customer’s expectations and its own service strategy.

Although it is important to identify the specific company standards of customer satisfaction you need to meet for each market segment, the following provide good starting points.

- A. **Value (Price ratio):** the value is the measure of how much value customers get in exchange for the price paid. Company can improve this ratio either by raising the value or by lowering the price
- B. **Product Quality:** it doesn't matter whether the customers are buying a financial service or paper clip: they want the products to conform to their expectation. The entire advertising, discounting or customer services a smiley will not carry the burden of a poor-quality product.
- C. **Warranties and Guaranties:** nobody wants to purchase a product without some assurance that the supplier will make good on promises of performance and quality.
- D. **Problem resolution:** studies indicate that customers who have a problem and are satisfied with the way the company resolve it are likely to be even more loyal than customers who commonly experience no an ordinary, trouble free service. This shows that supplies' response to problem situations is an important point of evaluation for customers.

- **Establish Customer Priority**

A firm cannot be everything to all and therefore, has to prioritize its customers based on their value contributing to the company either currently or potentially. Customers can be categorized into all time and most profitable, potentially growing and those contributing less to a firm's profitability even some time may entail loss in making business with them.

Denton (2000:13) stated that a company's most important customers distinguished from the rest by their long term value to the company should get most extraordinary services in

return to their loyalty first. The second group is made up of customers that are growing and that have then potential to become core customers. The companies need to identify these customers as much as possible. The final group includes just every body. The important point in this step is that every customer service package has a business mission and what service should be offered to which group must be worked out carefully.

- **Define Product and Service Goals**

Ones the company has analyzed customers' expectation and picked the specific customer segments he wants to serve, he can define his customer service goal; the choice depends on each company's unique market situation. However, a statement of service goals should have for attributes: It must be a non-trivial statement of company's intention, it must differentiate the company from its competitors, it must be worked in the customers' language and it must have them, it must be achievable. A company that promise more than it can deliver will upset its customers and frustrated its employees.

- **Establish Service Infrastructure**

Before a company can deliver a satisfactory customer service, it has to have the necessary infrastructure in place. The type of infrastructure needed is dependent on the nature of the company's business and the type of customer service. It could be employees who know how to handle every situation for instance.

- **Develop Employees**

The right employees supported by the right management system, are the key to satisfy customers. The company has to pay attention to four important fundamentals for the performance of the employees:

- A. Selection**

Not every employee is a good fit for customer service position, particularly those jobs that require a lot of customers contact. Front line employees are the back bone of the service delivery system. They have an immediate and uncensored impact on customers. In selecting front line employees only experience and skills may not be sufficient, look

for the attitudes, aptitudes and characteristics that increase success in these all important customer positions. This dictates carefully screening and selection above and beyond normal company's procedures.

## **B. Training**

Without the necessary training from top to bottom the changes in corporate culture is unlikely to occur. This is because every one needs to know not only what to do but also how, to do it. Companies can gain a strong competitive advantage through hiring and training better people than their competitors do.

According to Kotler, (2003:21) better trained personnel exhibit six characteristics: The employees possess the required skill and knowledge, are friendly respectful and consideration, the employees are trust worthy, perform the service consistently and accurate, respond quickly to customers' require and make on effort to understand the customer and communicate clearly. At this point, it is probably clear that training-learning behaviors, attitudes and skill-is the fuel that this entire process.

## **C. Support**

Companies who want to deliver customer service must give-up some of the traditional managerial controls in order to allow front-line employees to make decisions that best fit each customer. In other words it means that giving employees the power to solve problems in the way they consider most appropriate for customers. This is called employee support.

The principle behind employees' empowerment is to push decision making and complaint resolution down to lowest possible level. The company empowers the people who are dealing with customers to make decisions in company's behalf and to solve their problems on the spot; if at all possible. In addition, the company gains the participation and the input of the people who know the customers best and focus them on solving problems, rather than refer the customers to superiors or dismiss them with "that is-company's policy" replies.

#### **D. Compensation/Motivation**

Normally service providers are steed to be pleasant, efficient, sensitive, creative, and productive. But one cannot expect from employees who are not motivated. And every one needs to be motivated and committed. Rewards and recognitions are the way to motivate employees to perform. What techniques should the company use to motivate must be carefully worked out: Monetary rewards, prize (valuable reward), recognition of peers and managers, meaningful work, or all these in some combination.

Managers often assume that employees will achieve the goal set for them because “that is their job.” They don’t reward subordinate for good performance, even with a “Thank you” or “Good job”. That costs nothing. Conversely, managers often judge failure harshly.

They find a scapegoat to pin point blame rather than seek way to prevent and improve thorough problem solving. All this crates developing corporate cultures that ultimately get passed on to customers. Never forget that service is a relationship between your employees and your customers. To help guarantee service excellent, take good care of your caretakers: build their self-esteem, value them, and pay attention to their day to day success. Acknowledge, reward and celebrate both effort and goat achievement. Cannie (2003:22) said that customer relations mirror employee’ relation. The way you treat your employees is the way they will treat your customers. As he elaborates this idea, if you are indifferent to your employees, they will be indifferent to customers.

- **Measure Customer Satisfaction on Regular Bases**

Because customer satisfaction determines a company’s success or failure, it is important to know how satisfied customers really are.

According to Thomas, (2001:26) “dissatisfied customer is probably having problems with the core value of the company’s product or service- the basic elements that customers expect everyone in the industry to be able to provide”.

- **Searches for Complaints and Problem Resolution**

A company needs to actively search dissatisfied customers because these customers are real opportunities to improve customer service. Thomas (2001:98) said that most customers don't complain; because they think complaint don't make any better so they think going to other business is less burdensome. Therefore, to overcome the problem, the company should try to identify them.

## **2.9 Marketing Mix**

Kotler and Armstrong (2006:50) defined Marketing Mix as "Set of controllable, tactical marketing tools that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in target market." And they (2006:50-51) further elaborate as follow: The marketing mix consists of every thing the firm can do to influence the demand for its product. The many possibilities can be collected in to four groups of variables known as the "four Ps": product, price, place and promotion.

An effective marketing program blends all of the marketing mix elements into a coordinated program designed to achieve the company's marketing objectives by delivering value to customers. The marketing mix constitutes the company's tactical tool kit for establishing strong positioning in target markets.

### **1) Product**

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006:232), a product is any thing that can be offered to a market attention, acquisition, use, or consumption and that might satisfy a want or need. Products include more than just tangible goods. Broadly defined, products include physical objects, services, events, persons, places, organizations, ideas, or mixes of these entities. Product is the key element in the market offering. Marketing mix planning begins with formulating an offering that brings value to target customers. This offering becomes the basis upon which the company builds profitable relationships with customers.

**Product Attribute:** Kotler and Armstrong (2006:239-245), explained that, developing a product involves defining the benefits that a company will offer. These benefits are communicated and delivered by product attribute such as quality, feature, style and design, packaging and labeling.

- **Product Quality:** product quality is one of the marketer's major positioning tools. Quality has a direct impact on products performance; thus, it is closely linked to customer value and satisfaction. In the narrowest sense, quality can be defined as "freedom from defects." But most customers-centered companies go beyond this narrow definition. Instead they define quality in terms of creating customer value and satisfaction.

Product quality has two dimensions-*level and consistency*. In developing a product, the marketer must first choose a quality level that will support the product's position in the target market. Here, product quality means performance quality-the ability of a product performs its functions. Companies rarely try to offer the highest possible performance quality level-few customers want or can afford the high levels of quality offered in products. Instead, companies choose a quality level that matches target market needs and the quality levels of competing products.

Beyond quality level, high quality also can mean high level of quality consistency. Here, product quality means conformance quality-freedom from defects and consistency in delivering a targeted level of performance. All companies should strive for high level of conformance quality.

- **Product Features:** A product can be offered with varying features. A stripped-down model, one without any extras, is the starting point. The company can create higher-level models by adding more features. Features are a competitive tool for differentiating the company's product from competitors' products. Being the first producer to introduce a needed and valued new feature is one of the most effective ways to compete.

How can a company identify new features and decide which ones to add to its product? The company should periodically survey buyers who have used the product and ask these questions: How do you like the product? Which specific features of the product do you

like most? Which features could we add to improve the product? The answers provide the company with a rich list of feature ideas. The company can then assess each feature's value to customers versus its cost to the company. Features that customers value little in relation to costs should be dropped; those customers value highly in relation to costs should be added.

- **Product style and Design:** Another way to add customer value is through distinctive product style and design. Design is a larger concept than style. Style simply describes the appearance of a product. Style can be eye-catching or yawn producing. A sensational style may grab attention produce pleasing aesthetics, but it does not necessarily make the product perform better. Unlike style, design is more than skin deep-it goes to the very heart of a product. Good design contributes to a product's usefulness as well as to its looks.

- **Packaging:** involves designing and producing the container or wrapper for a product. The package includes a product's primary container (the tube holding Colgate Total toothpaste). It may also include a secondary package that is thrown away when the product is about to be used (the cardboard box containing the tube of Colgate). Finally, it can include a shipping package necessary to store, identify, and ship the product (a corrugated box carrying six dozen tubes of Colgate). Labeling printed information appearing on or with the product, to making package.

Traditionally, the primary function of the package was to contain and protect the products. In recent times, however, numerous factors have made packaging an important marketing tool. Increased competition and clutter on retail store shelves means that packaging must now perform many sales tasks-from attracting attention, to describing the product, to making the sale.

Companies are realizing the power of good packaging to create instant consumer recognition of the company or brand. In this highly competitive environment, the package may be the seller's last chance to influence buyers. "Not long ago, the package was

merely the product's receptacles, and the brand message was else where-usually on Television," says a package expert. But changes in the market place environment are now "making the package itself an increasingly important selling medium."

Innovative packaging can give a company an advantage over competitors. Consumer packaged-goods firms have recently upped their investments in packaging research to develop package designs that grab more shelf attention or make life easier for customers. In contrast, poorly designed packages can cause headaches for consumers and lost sales for the company. In recent years, product safety has also become a major packaging concern. In making packaging decisions, the company also must head growing environmental concern.

- **Labeling:** Labels may range from simple tags attached to products to complex graphics that are part of the package. They perform several functions. At the very least, the label identifies the product or brand. The label might also describe several things about the product-who made it, where it was made, when it was made, its contents, how it is to be used, and how to use it safely. Finally, the label might promote the product through attractive graphics. Labeling has been affected in recent years by unit pricing (stating the price per unit of standard measure), open dating (stating the expected shelf life of the product), and Nutritional Labeling etc. Sellers must ensure that their labels contain all the required information.

## 2) Price

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006:307), price is the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of the values that consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service. Price is the only element in the marketing mix that creates revenue, the other elements are costs. The price of a product must be determined in such a manner as to offer a reasonable amount of profit to the manufacturer, a reasonable remuneration to middlemen and the maximum satisfaction to customers. Kotler and Armstrong further explained that pricing and price competition are the number-one problems facing many marketing executives. Yet many companies do not

handle pricing well. The most common mistakes are these: pricing is set independent of the rest of the marketing mix rather than as an intrinsic element of market-positioning strategy; and price is not varied enough for different product items, market segments, and purchase occasions.

Price is one type of cue in judging product quality Engel (1995:220). He further explained that the use of price as a signal of quality has been substantiated repeatedly. Even so, price may have little influence on perceived quality in some situations and for some customers. Recognize that although higher-priced offering benefit when customers perceive a price-quality relationship, this perception is not desirable from the perspective of those offering lower-priced products. The challenges for low-priced competitors, then is to undermine customers' use of price as an indicator of quality.

### 3) Place

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006:50), place includes company activities that make the product available to target consumers. And the followings are the main concerns of placing:

- **Warehousing:** Kotler and Armstrong (2006:381) explained that, production and consumption rarely match. So most companies must store their tangible goods while they wait to be sold. The storage function overcomes differences in needed quantities and timing, ensuring that products are available when customers are ready to buy them.

A company must decide on how many and what type of warehouses it needs and where they will be located. The company might use either storage warehouses or distribution centers. Storage warehouses store goods for moderate to long periods. Distribution centers are designed to move goods rather than just store them. They are large and highly automated warehouses designed to receive goods from various plants and suppliers, take orders, fill them, efficiently, and deliver goods to customers as quickly as possible.

- **Inventory Management:** Inventory Management also affects customer satisfaction. Here, manager must maintain the delicate balance between carrying too little inventory

and too carrying too much. With too little stock, the firm risks not having products when customers want to buy. To remedy this, the firm may need costly emergency shipments or production. Carrying too much inventory results in higher-than-necessary inventory-carrying costs and stock obsolescence. Thus, in managing inventory, firms must balance the costs of carrying larger inventories against resulting sales and profits.

Many companies have greatly reduced their inventories and related costs through just-in-time logistic systems. With such system, producers and retailers carry only small inventories of parts or merchandise, often only enough for a few days of operations. Just-in-time systems require accurate forecasting along with fast, frequent, and flexible delivery so that new supplies will be available when needed. However, these systems result in substantial savings in inventory-carrying and handling costs. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006: 381)

- **Transportation:** “The choice of transportation carriers affects the pricing of products, delivery performance, and condition of the goods when they arrive—all of which will affect customer satisfaction. In shipping goods to its warehouses, dealers, and customers, the company can choose among five main transportation modes: truck, rail, water, pipeline and air. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006: 382)

#### **4) Promotion**

According to Semenik (2004:7), promotion is the communication process in marketing that is used to create a favorable predisposition towards a brand of a product or service, an idea, or even a person. Promotion for a brand of product or service is the most common kind of promotion. An example of the promotion of an idea is a public service advertising campaign for gun safety or when a firm sponsors a special event like a 10k run to raise money for a local hospital. Promotion of a person is most common in politics and entertainment. When a politician holds a fund-raiser, meets with the press, and uses newspaper and television advertising to try to get elected, then a person is being promoted.

## **The promotional Mix**

Promotional mix is a blend of communications tools used by a firm to carry out the promotion process and to communicate directly with target markets (or audiences in the language of communications). These communications tool include advertising, sales promotion, public relations, publicity and personal selling. (Semenik, 2004:9),

- **Advertising:** As Belch and Belch (2004:16) defined, “advertising is any paid form of non personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor.” The further elaborated that the paid aspect of this definition reflects the fact that the space or time for an advertising message generally must be bought. An occasional exception to this is the public service announcement, whose advertising space or time is donated by the media. The non personal component means that advertising involves mass media (e.g. TV, radio magazines, and newspapers) that can transmit a message to large groups of individuals, often at the same time. The non personal nature of advertising means that there is generally no opportunity for immediate feed back from the message recipient (except in direct-response advertising). Therefore, before the message is sent, the advertiser must consider how the audience will interpret and respond to it. Advertising is the best-known and most widely discussed form of promotion, probably because of its pervasiveness (frequency).

- **Sales promotion:** is the use of incentives to generate a specific and short-term response in a household consumer, trade buyer (a retailer), or business buyers .Free samples, coupons, premiums, sweepstakes and contests rebates, and price discounts are some of the primary methods of sales promotion in the consumer market. The business market relies more on trade show, demonstration, premiums, price or merchandise allowance, and sales force or deliver contests as sales promotion techniques. Sales promotion is designed to stimulate short term purchasing in a target market and enhance dealer effectiveness in promoting a firm’s brand, this promotional option is valuable to marketers because it provides a way to get a consumer who is using a competitors brand

to switch to the marketer's brand. It is also a way to more stagnant inventory and creates needed cash flow.

Firms have to be careful when they use sales promotion techniques, though. The frequent use of sales promotion can make it difficult to attract customers without it. But, used judiciously and with care timing, sales promotion provides an incentive to consumers and business buyers like no other promotional tools. (Semenik, 2004:13)

- **Public relations:** "public relations is a broad, overall communications effort to influence various groups' attitude toward the organization. Public relation activities typically are designed to build or maintain a favorable image for an organization and favorable relationship with its various publics-customers, prospects, stockholder, employees, labor unions, the local community, and the government." (Stanton, 1994:471)
- **Publicity:** Publicity is a special form of promotion that amounts to free advertising, such as a write up about the firm's product in a news paper article. (Stanton, 1994:472)

### **Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)**

According to Semenik (2004:9), integrated marketing communication is the process of using promotional tools in a unified way so that a synergistic communications effect is created. That is, every form of communication being used--from the company's business cards and stationery through the most elaborate full-production television advertisement--is evaluated to be sure that a clear, consistent, and compelling message is being communicated to the intended audiences.

But Clow and Baack (2003:306-307) classified promotional mix as advertising ,Trade promotions, sales promotions, personal selling and sales management They see sales promotion from consumers perspective as sales promotion and from business buyers perspective that is trade promotions. They define trade promotions as the expenditures or incentives used by manufacturers and other members of the marketing channel to help push their products through to retailers. Trade promotions are aimed at retailers, distributors, wholesalers, brokers, or agents. A manufacturer can use trade promotions to

convince another member of the trade channel to carry its goods. They (2003:307) also mentioned the difference between sales promotion and trade promotion as follow “sales promotion involves a sale to an end users or consumers. When a manufacturer sells products to another business for end use, the enticements involved are consumer or sales promotions tools. On the other hand, when a manufacturer sells to another business for the purpose of having the goods resold, and then trade promotion tools are being used.” When they indicate the role of trade promotion they said that “Trade promotion is used to build strong relations with other members in the channel. When a retailer stocks the merchandise a manufacturer promotes, consumers have the opportunity to buy the product. The same is true for distributors, wholesalers, brokers, or agents. If they carry the product, they help push it down to retailers.

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

The descriptive survey method is used in this research. As mentioned by Seyoum and Ayalew (1989) descriptive survey method becomes useful when the purpose of the research is to picture the current situations. It also allows collection of the data using tools and describes and interprets what is.

### 3.2 Research Methodology

The study is aimed at assessing Business Customers' Satisfaction on ELFORA Agro-Industries P.L.C. with Reference to Poultry. To achieve the purpose quantitative approach method was selected to collect data related with the study under investigation

### 3.3 Population and Sampling Technique

Since the present study was confined to the investigation of Business Customers' Satisfaction on ELFORA Agro-Industries with Reference to Poultry, the population of this study is business customers and front-line employees who have direct and close contact to business customers. According to data obtained from ELFORA local customer handling service, at Lamberet head office, and additional records from Mexico, Kazanchiz and Addis Home depot sales branches of Addis Ababa; the numbers of business customers that are registered and directly buying poultry products from the company are seventy (based on the data from January 2007 to January 2009). Since the number of business customers' is limited to the above stated number, the study employed census. This was done due to the fact that the number of business customers is manageable and small.

With regard to front-line employees, working in the areas of warehouses at head office, sales personnel and cash receiving at the four branches are 16 in total and 12 (75%) of employees were voluntary to participate in the study. The remaining was not willing to participate. This is so, due to the reason that some employees were in fear of their supervisors.

In the study to be undertaken under the constraint mentioned in limitation of study part, it was not possible to include individuals who are working in the management position.

### **3.4 Sources and Type of Data Collected**

In order to address the stated research questions and objectives, the research relies on both primary & secondary data. Specifically, primary data, on relationship between business customers and ELFORA, importance of each attribute to business customers and corresponding level of satisfaction, comparison of ELFORA's performance with competitors, employees handling and satisfaction, etc and the sources were both business customers and front-line employees. Secondary data were gathered on background of the company, list of customers and literature review to strengthen the study. And the sources were relevant books, journals, internet and some records from ELFORA.

### **3.5 Instrument of Data Collection**

To get first hand information pertaining to the subject of the study two major instruments has been prepared. These are questionnaire and interview check lists.

Self administered questionnaire is prepared to obtain data from business customers as this type of questionnaire allows the respondents sufficient time to answer adequately and freely to provide substantial amount of information. Most questions were close ended and some open ended question types were presented in order not to restrict respondents to the pre-determined choice only. The questionnaire has six parts. The first two parts of the questionnaire is concerned with general personal and organization's information. The

third part is concerned with organization's relationship with ELFORA. The fourth part asks the importance level of attributes and the satisfactions obtained from each attribute. The fifth and the sixth parts are concerned with ELFORA's performance compared to its competitors and general opinions of the respondent respectively.

To secure additional information, semi-structured interview check lists were prepared for front-line employees. This instrument mainly consisted of 12 questions. And using the semi structured questions face-to-face interviews was made because this type of interview enables to ask the same questions in each interview to obtain structured response and at the same time the interview remain flexible so that other information can still arise.

### **3.6 Procedure of Data Collection**

The instrument used to collect data in the study was drafted on the intended data to be collected and on the bases of the review of the related literature. The distribution of questionnaire to business customer respondents of Addis Ababa was made and follow up during the collection process were done. The researcher made the study clear and simple to all respondents in order to avoid confusion and facilitate ease of administration. Beside these, the cell phone number of the researcher was also indicated in the cover page of each questionnaire and close follow up was made for prompt correction of problems.

### **3.7 Methods of Data Analysis**

Methods of data analysis were selected and utilized depending on the research methodology employed and type of data collecting instruments. After data collection was completed, proper edition and organizing of the data in to tables or graphs followed using SPSS and Excel soft ware. The interpretation was made using frequency, percentage mean scores and standard deviation. The other tools used in this study are Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) that is done by linking actual satisfaction with importance level of each attribute and Gap Analysis. Moreover, responses collected from open ended

interview questions, open ended questions of the questionnaire and information gathered through observation were narrated to support the analysis

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESNTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This Chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected through questionnaire and interview. It consists of two parts: the first part treats the general characteristics of respondents which consist of business customers and front-line employees. Analysis and interpretation of data is addressed in part two.

#### 4.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

The questionnaire to business customers was distributed to those customers, who had/have direct business deal with ELFORA including supermarkets, hospitals, hotels/restaurants and cafeterias. Business customer respondents comprised of those working in the position of purchaser, general service head, and marketing manager. In addition to these, business customer respondents who were in the position of food and beverage department head, and finance head have filled out the questionnaire. The question prepared for business customers were divided into six sections: section one dealt with personal questions; section two addressed general organizational data; section three concerned with relationship between ELFORA and their respective organizations; section four was about customer value priority /importance/ of products and associated services attributes and measuring satisfaction level of business customers on each attribute; section five addressed comparison of ELFORA's performance with competitors; in section six questions were raised about the future relationship, areas for improvement of ELFORA's performance and whether they do have additional opinions on ELFORA.

In total, 11 interview questions that included general personal data, employees handling and their satisfaction, business customers' satisfaction, comparison of ELFORA's performance with competitors and any comment if they had any, were presented to front-line employees of ELFORA.

**Table 1: Sex, Age, Educational Background and Experience Profile of Respondents**

Item No	Item	Description	Respondents			
			Business customers		Font-line Employees	
			No.	%	No.	%
1	Sex	Male	45	77.6	3	25%
		Female	13	22.4	9	75%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>
		up to 25 years	14	24.1	1	8.33
		26 to 35 years	19	32.8	5	41.67%
		36 to 45 years	17	29.3	3	25%
		46 to 55 years	7	12.1	3	25%
2	Age	Above 55 years	1	1.7	-	-
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>
		Uneducated	1	1.7	1	8.33%
		Elementary school (1 to 6)	1	1.7	4	33.33%
		Secondary school (7 to 10/12)	17	29.3	5	41.67%
		Diploma	31	53.4	2	16.67%
		Degree & above	8	13.8	-	-
3	Educational background	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>
		Purchaser	19	32.8	--	--
		General service heed	17	29.3	--	--
		Marketing manager	10	17.2	--	--
		Other type of position	12	20.7	--	--
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
		Less than 1 year	8	13.8	1	8.33%
4	Current status	1-5 years but below five years	24	41.4	6	50%
		More than 5 years	26	44.8	5	41.67%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>
5	Experience in current position	Less than 1 year	8	13.8	1	8.33%
		1-5 years but below five years	24	41.4	6	50%
		More than 5 years	26	44.8	5	41.67%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 on page 33 showed that there is high level of male domination in the business customers' gender composition. Male takes the share of 45 in number and 77.6 in percent while females constitute only 13 in number and 22.4 percent respectively. The majority of business customer respondents were male.

But in front-line employees' category, female sex group has dominance with 75 percent share over males which have 25 percentage shares with respective number of 9 and 3. Age wise 14 (24.1 percent) of business customer respondents were in the category of up to 25 years inclusive; 19 (32.8 percent) fall into age 26-35 years inclusive; 36-45 years inclusive constitute 17(29.3 percent); 46-55 years inclusive 7(12.1 percent) and business customer respondents whose age is above 55 and inclusive was 1(1,7 percent). In the case of front-line employees, the dominant age group is from 26 to 35 years with 41.67% share of the total. Followed by 36 to 45 and 46 to 55 years both with the same percentage of 25% each .The remaining are under the category of up to 25 years.

As to the educational background of business customer respondents, 1(1.7 percent) was uneducated; 1(1.7 percent) was under the category of elementary school; 17(29.3 percent) completed high school while 31 of the respondents i.e. 53.4 % were diploma holder and 8 (13.8) were holder of degree and above. One can conclude that the majority of business customers of the company have better educational back ground, diploma and above, this would enable them evaluating the performance of ELFORA's.

Regarding current status/position of business customers respondents, 19 or 32.8 percent of them were purchaser of their organization; 17 (29.3 percent) and 10 (17.2 percent) were working in the positions of general service head and marketing management respectively. In addition to these positions, food and beverage department head, sheif, finance head, food preparation head, supervisor, sales, administrator, general manager and accounting clerk positions constitute 12 or 20.7 percent. 32.8 percent of business customer respondents were purchaser of their organization this would enable them assessing the performance of ELFORA products and associated services better than other respondents whose position was other than purchaser.

Looking in to the fields of studies of front-line employees, all members of front line employee respondents' educational background were under diploma except the two who are diploma holder in accounting. From this one can infer that the company gave least attention in selection and hiring of employees who have direct and close contact with customers. In selecting front line employees only experience may not be sufficient, look for the right educational back ground, attitudes, aptitudes and characteristics of employee is vita. But the company didn't do so.

As it can be observed from the same table, page 33, only 8 or 13.8% of the business customer respondents had experience of less than one year in their current position; 24 (41.4 percent) of them had experience of 1 to 5 years but below five years; large number of the respondents, 26 (44.8 percent) have relatively long time experience for more than five years in their current positions. Totally, about 86.2% of business customer respondents had experience of more than a year in their position that could in general enable them to respond to the questions presented to them adequately. Only one (8.33%) front-line employee serve the organization in her/his current position less than a year. Most front-line employees (6 in number or 50%) had medium level work experience in their position they hold. 5 employees (41.67%) of the total posses long time experience of more than 5 years.

From experience point of view, one can conclude that employees can have sufficient awareness and knowledge on operations of the company and business customers. If this was accompanied by training and promotion of employees, the company can win its customers better than its competitors. Because front line employees are the back bone of the service delivery system and without the necessary training, changes in corporate culture is unlikely to occur in the organization. This is because employees need to know not only what to do but also how to do it.

Regarding front-line employees' field of study for diploma and above, only two of them are under this category. Both are diploma graduate in accounting. But not every

employee is a good fit for customer service position; particularly those positions that require a lot of customers contact such as front line employees have an immediate and unrestricted impact on customers. To ensure customer satisfaction, much emphasis should be given to the selection, motivation, training and educational back ground of employees who have direct and close contact to customers.

**Table2: Establishment and Type of the Organizations**

Item No	Item	Description	Respondents	
			No.	%
1	Establishment of the organization	Sole proprietorship	31	53.4
		Partnership	2	3.4
		Private Limited Company	19	32.8
		Corporation	4	6.9
		Other type	2	3.4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>
2	The type of the organization	Supermarket	11	19.0
		Hospital	12	20.7
		Hotel & Restaurant	28	48.3
		Café	7	12.1
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 above showed that the establishment of the business customers' organization had different forms. The majority of the organizations, 31 (53.4 %), were sole proprietorship; the second majority 19 (32.8 %) were private limited company; 2 (3.4 %) and 4 (6.9%) were partnership and corporation form of businesses respectively. In addition to these, 2 business customers' organizations were under the category of other forms, 1 franchise form of business and 1 government owned business.

## **4.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

### **4.2.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Responses of Business Customers**

#### **4.2.1.1 Business Relationship between the Business Customers and ELFORA**

As it can be seen from Table 3 below, business customer respondents who started business associated with poultry products less than a year time constituted 8 or 13.8 percent, one to five years 22 (37.9 percent), six to ten years 18 (31.0 percent), eleven to fifteen years 5 (8.6 percent) and 5 (8.6 percent) of them have done businesses associated with poultry products more than fifteen years. The majority of business customer started businesses associated with poultry products five years and above. From this, one can conclude that business customers' long time experience would help customers evaluating poultry products and associated services of the poultry industry.

Regarding the major types of poultry products the organizations are buying from ELFORA, some of the business customer respondents explained that they are buying various types of poultry products including live chicken, table eggs, boilers (the whole chicken meat used for 'wot') and broiler (chicken pieces used for arrusto). Others responded that they are buying only one type of products mainly table eggs. Moreover, some of them responded that at the time they buy table eggs, boiler and broiler from other poultry firms. These would enable business customers' comparing poultry products and associated services of ELFORA with its competitors. From this one can say that those business customers, who are buying poultry products from both ELFORA and its competitors, would switch to competitors permanently unless ELFORA try its best to satisfy them in their full poultry products need.

**Table 3: Relationship between ELFORA and the Business Customers**

Item No	Item	Description	Respondents	
			No.	%
1	For how long the organization has done business that is associated with poultry products?	Less than 1 year	8	13.8
		1 to 5 years	22	37.9
		6 to 10 years	18	31.0
		11 to 15 years	5	8.6
		More than 15 years	5	8.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>
2	For how long had (have) your organization been customer of ELFORA buying poultry products?	1 to 5 years	36	62
		6 to 10 years	17	29.3
		Above 10 years	5	8.6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Does your organization have business relationship with ELFORA currently?	Yes	56	96.6
		No	2	3.4
4	If you don't have business relation ship with ELFORA what is (are) the main reason for stopping your purchase form ELF ORA?	With relative to its competitors the price is high	1	50
		Selling service is poor	1	50
		For to provide verities & quality products	1	50
5	Have you ever been exposed to ELFORA's advertisements?	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>
		Yes	28	48.3
		No	30	51.7
6	If you are exposed to ELFORA's advertisement, how do you agree on the idea that ELFORA lives up to its promise (it provides what has been advertised)	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>
		Strongly disagree	2	7.14
		Disagree	4	14.29
		Neutral	5	17.86
		Agree	10	35.71
		Strongly agree	7	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>		

- i. As shown in table 3 on page 39 under item 2, about 62.1% of business customers had business relationship for the period ranging from 1 to 5 years. There were about 29.3 % and 8.6 % of the customers have stayed with ELFORA for 6 to 10 and for more than 10 years respectively. All these show that long-term relationship had been between ELFORA and business customers.
- ii. According to responses to item 3 of the same table, 56 (96.6%) of the business customers have still business relationship. The remaining 2 customers (3.4%) totally stopped their relationship with ELFORA. From this it can be inferred that the company is losing some of its business customers with whom it had long lasted relationship in most cases as discussed above.
- iii. From 2 respondents under Item 4, who stopped relationship with ELFORA, 1 of them cited that with relative to competitors, the price of ELFORA's poultry products is high and switch away. The other reason mentioned by the remaining respondent for stopping its relationship with the company is that deterioration of selling services from time to time. Moreover, some front-line employees mentioned that some times ELFORA follow quota system, that prohibit business customers purchasing the amount they want to buy. From this analysis, it can be concluded that if ELFORA will show efforts to improve its selling services , avoiding quota system and satisfying customer with products at their full need, those customer who had long established relationship with ELFORA would switch to those poultry firms who are growing and competing ELFORA.
- iv. In responding Item 5, 28 (48.3 percent) respondents revealed that they had been exposed to ELFORA's advertisement. And 30 (51.7 percent) of them responded that they didn't exposed to the advertisement this indicates that ELFORA was not successful at least in reaching its business customer audiences.
- v. As observed under Item 6, 2 of the respondents (7.14%) strongly disagreed on the idea that ELFORA lives up to its promise (it doesn't provide what has been

advertised). While 4 (14.29 %) of the respondents disagreed on the idea; 5 (17.86%) of the respondents stayed neutral in concerning the idea; while 10 (35%) and 7 (25%) agreed and disagreed respectively on the idea. Here, the result depicts that there is a significant gap between what was communicated (promised) and what actually performed this would lead customers to dissatisfaction.

**Table 4: Complain Presentation and Handling**

Item No	Item	Description	Respondents	
			No.	%
1	Does ELFORA have complaint handling mechanism?	Yes	12	20.7
		No	5	8.6
		Don't now	41	70.7
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Have you ever presented (expressed) your dissatisfaction or any complaints?	Yes	21	36.2
		No	37	63.8
		<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>
3	If you have presented (expressed) your dissatisfaction, how fast and adequate was the response?	Adequate & fast	7	33.33
		Adequate but slow	6	28.57
		Inadequate & slow	2	9.52
		Never responded	7	33.33
		<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>
4	If you have not presented (expressed) your dissatisfaction or any complaints, why was so?	I had no complaints	27	72.97
		Refrain from presenting your complaints assuming that you wouldn't get response	6	16.22
		Because ELFORA doesn't have mechanism for handling complaint /dissatisfaction	4	10.81
		<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

- i. For Item 1 of table 4 above, 20.7% of the respondents replied that there was complaint handling mechanism at ELFORA while 8.6% revealed the absence of such mechanism and the remaining 70.7% don't know whether there is or no. This could also show that the complaint mechanism, if there is any, was not communicated adequately to all business customers. As indicated above, there

were different views among customers regarding existence of complaint handling mechanism

- ii. In answering Item 2, the number of respondents who expressed their complaints was 21 (36.2%) and those who didn't present their complaint were significant in number that is 37 (63%). The company needs to actively search dissatisfied customers because these customers are real opportunities to improve customer service. Most customers may not complain; because they think that complaint don't make any better so they think that going to other business is less burdensome and inexpensive. The speed and adequacy of responses received by those who expressed their complaints and the reasons cited by respondents who didn't express their complaints are presented under iii and iv respectively.
- iii. In Item 3, about 7 (33.33%) of business customers that expressed their complaints had received 'adequate and fast' responses while 6 (28.57%) of them gave rating of 'adequate but slow'. Others 2 (9.52%) replied that the responses were 'inadequate and slow'. The remaining 7 (33.33%) didn't receive any response for their complaints. The worst case for the company was encountered with complaints that were not responded which constituted for 12.1% of the customer who presented complaints. Regarding this, studies indicate that customers who have a problem and are satisfied with the way the company resolve it are likely to be even more loyal than customers who commonly experience no or trouble free service. This shows that supplies' response to problem situations is an important point of evaluation for customers.
- iv. In their replay to the question under Item 4, 27 (72.97%) of respondents cited that they didn't have complaints to express. The other respondents with 6 (16.22%) share were refrained from expressing their complaints assuming that they wouldn't get response. Another group 4 (10.81%) cited the absence of complaint handling mechanism as their main reason for not expressing any complaints. Despite varied nature of reasons for not expressing complaints, some gap can be

observed in this regard except the case of the first group of customers who didn't have complaints to express. From this one can infer that the company didn't encourage customers to give feed back about its products and associated services

#### **4.2.1.2 Level of Importance of Attributes (Dimensions) to Business Customers**

In this section business customers were asked to indicate the importance level of each attribute in making decision to buy poultry products. Generally, they were presented with 19 identified attributes with 5 respective alternatives that enable business customer respondents indicating the level of importance of each attribute to their organization.

**Table 5: How important are the following attributes /dimensions/ to business customers in making decision when purchasing poultry products**

No.	Attribute dimension	Importance score, Rank & Standard Deviation		
		Average importance score	Rank in level of importance	Standard Deviation
1	Consistency & continuity of products quality	4.5690	3 <sup>rd</sup>	0.797106
2	Technical performance of product to the required purpose ( quality)	4.5862	2 <sup>nd</sup>	0.622239
3	Supplier's (ELFORA's) quality system	4.6034	1 <sup>st</sup>	0.64472
4	Supplier's (ELFORA's) product standard	4.5000	5 <sup>th</sup>	0.73150
5	Overall hygiene of products	4.5690	3 <sup>rd</sup>	0.86068
6	Speed of order receiving & invoicing	4.2241	9 <sup>th</sup>	0.97411
7	Speed, timely & full delivery of purchased products	4.3448	7 <sup>th</sup>	0.92815
8	Continuity of supply by ELFORA	4.5000	5 <sup>th</sup>	0.84295
9	Enthusiasm, Responsiveness & Interpersonal skill of frontline employees whenever customers face problem	4.0345	14 <sup>th</sup>	1.05905
10	Convenience of supplier's (ELFORA's) working hours & days	4.1379	10 <sup>th</sup>	1.19132
11	Location of supplier's (ELFORA's) warehouse in terms of distance	4.0517	13 <sup>th</sup>	1.03318
12	Convenience of parking & security	3.9138	17 <sup>th</sup>	1.21806
13	Range of product types & varieties	4.1207	12 <sup>th</sup>	1.20055
14	Provision of transport	3.8448	18 <sup>th</sup>	1.33511
15	Provision of warehouse facilities	3.5000	19 <sup>th</sup>	1.31456
16	Competitiveness of supplier's (ELFORA's) price offer	3.9138	15 <sup>th</sup>	1.26053
17	Accessibility & availability of frontline employees when needed	4.2586	8 <sup>th</sup>	0.94495
18	Accessibility & availability of officials & branch heads when needed	3.9138	15 <sup>th</sup>	0.99621
19	Technical capability of frontline employees	4.1379	10 <sup>th</sup>	0.96449
	<b>Average (Mean)</b>	<b>4.1960</b>		
	<b>Average Standard deviation</b>			<b>0.99487</b>

Since the score given by respondents vary according to importance they attached to each attribute, average score (mean) was derived to arrive at a single representative value for each attribute that would enable to rank all attributes based on their overall average

importance level. The average score (mean) of each attribute was determined from original data by using SPSS.

As it can be observed in table 5 on page 45, business customers put top priority to supplier's (ELFORA's) quality system and then the second place held by technical performance of product to the required purpose (quality) being slightly less than the first one in average score (mean). The 3<sup>rd</sup> position is held by two attributes namely consistency and continuity of product quality and overall hygiene of products.

In some cases the same average score was obtained for some attributes such as the attributes consistency and continuity of product quality and continuity of supply both had average score of 4.5690 & took the 3<sup>rd</sup> position. This indicates similarities in importance level attached by business customers.

Provision of transport and warehouse facilities by supplier (ELFORA) took the last two ranks in their importance level as 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> respectively, and this could mainly be due to the need for fast movement of such perishable products by available means of transportation instead of waiting for the service from the supplier. The issue of warehouse is associated with economies of scale in transportation where buyers are looking for minimum average cost per unit which can be achieved via utilization of small truck/ pick-up vehicles to their full capacity. This makes provision of warehouse by supplier (ELFORA) to be less important to buyers.

The standard deviation that is 0.99487 shows that the average values given by customers to different attributes are more concentrated around the mean and in turn this could imply the agreement among business customers in their priority of importance.

The overall importance of attributes (average importance of all attributes) is 4.1960 this could indicate that those attributes selected are appropriate for the research under study. The four top most important attributes /dimensions/ identified by business customers are extracted from table 5 are shown in table 6 on page 47 below.

**Table 6: The four most important attributes /dimensions/**

No	Attribute	Rank level of importance
1	Suppliers quality system	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Technical performance of product to the required purpose (quality)	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	Consistency & continuity of product quality	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Overall hygiene of products	3 <sup>rd</sup>

#### **4.2.1.3 Degree of Business customers' satisfaction**

In this section business customers were asked to indicate the degree of satisfaction they obtained from each attribute. To do so, business customers were provided with 19 identified attributes with their corresponding alternatives to choose.

The score given by respondents vary according to the level of satisfaction they obtained from each attribute, therefore average score (mean) was derived to arrive at a single representative value for each attribute that would enable to rank all attributes based on overall average satisfaction level. The average score (mean) of each attribute was determined from original data using SPSS.

**Table 7: Average satisfaction scores on ELFORA's performances by attributes**

No	Attributes	Average satisfaction score	Rank in satisfaction score	Standard deviation
1	Consistency & continuity of products quality	4.1379	3 <sup>rd</sup>	0.84704
2	Technical performance of product to the required purpose ( quality)	4.1207	4 <sup>th</sup>	0.97473
3	Supplier's (ELFORA's) quality system	4.1552	2 <sup>nd</sup>	0.95148
4	Supplier's (ELFORA's) product standard	4.1207	4 <sup>th</sup>	1.02730
5	Overall hygiene of products	4.1724	1 <sup>st</sup>	1.11036
6	Speed of order receiving & invoicing	3.7414	10 <sup>th</sup>	1.27816
7	Speed, timely & full delivery of purchased products	3.7931	7 <sup>th</sup>	1.23911
8	Continuity of supply (ELFORA)	3.8621	6 <sup>th</sup>	1.09941
9	Enthusiasm, Responsiveness & Interpersonal skill of frontline employees whenever customers face problem	3.3966	16 <sup>th</sup>	1.22746
10	Convenience of supplier's (ELFORA's) working hours & days	3.7586	9 <sup>th</sup>	1.32864
11	Location of supplier's (ELFORA's) warehouse in terms of distance	3.5345	14 <sup>th</sup>	1.21706
12	Convenience of parking & security	3.6207	12 <sup>th</sup>	1.30891
13	Range of product types & varieties	3.7931	7 <sup>th</sup>	1.10436
14	Provision of transport	3.0345	19 <sup>th</sup>	1.31076
15	Provision of warehouse facilities	3.2069	18 <sup>th</sup>	1.30799
16	Competitiveness of supplier's (ELFORA's) price offer	3.3793	17 <sup>th</sup>	1.36147
17	Accessibility & availability of frontline employees when needed	3.5690	13 <sup>th</sup>	1.14113
18	Accessibility & availability of officials & branch heads when needed	3.4138	15 <sup>th</sup>	1.09279
19	Technical capability of frontline employees	3.6370	11 <sup>th</sup>	1.19499
	<b>Average Standard deviation</b>	-	-	<b>1.16438</b>

Business customers revealed that they were highly satisfied with overall hygiene of ELFORA's poultry products. The next two positions were held by ELFORA's quality system and consistency and continuity of product quality supplied taking 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> ranks respectively. With respect to provision of transport, business customers placed it last (19<sup>th</sup>) in the rank.

The average standard deviation presented in the last row of the table 7 on page 48 indicates the average distance between each satisfaction score and the average standard deviation is 1.16438 this depicts that the values were more dispersed from their mean and this imply that customers were in less agreement in evaluating ELFORA's performance of satisfying business customers as compared to importance level of attributes (table 5 average standard deviation)

It is possible to calculate Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) by averaging all business customers' average satisfaction scores. But that would not be ideal because some things are more important to customers than others, and their most important requirements (attributes) influence their satisfaction judgment more than those that are less important to them. Hence, the researcher sees the situation by considering weighing factors derived from importance score and calculate Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) that best reflect and measure the overall satisfaction level. In arriving at a well and more real measure of satisfaction using Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI), determination of weighing factor for each attribute is critical step. This weighing factor can be derived by summing up average importance score of all attributes and then calculating the percentage share of each attribute taking the sum as 100. (Reference annexes I for the calculation of weighing factor and Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI). Accordingly, weighing factors were determined in table 8 on page 50 below.

**Table 8: Calculating the weighing factors**

No	Attributes	Average importance score	Weighing factor
1	Consistency & continuity of products quality	4.5690	5.73 %
2	Technical performance of product to the required purpose ( quality)	4.5862	5.75 %
3	Supplier's (ELFORA's) quality system	4.6034	5.77 %
4	Supplier's (ELFORA's) product standard	4.5000	5.64 %
5	Overall hygiene of products	4.5690	5.73 %
6	Speed of order receiving & invoicing	4.2241	5.30 %
7	Speed, timely & full delivery of purchased products	4.3448	5.45 %
8	Continuity of supply by ELFORA	4.5000	5.64 %
9	Enthusiasm, Responsiveness & Interpersonal skill of frontline employees whenever customers face problem	4.0345	5.06 %
10	Convenience of supplier's (ELFORA's) working hours & days	4.1379	5.19 %
11	Location of supplier's (ELFORA's) warehouse in terms of distance	4.0517	5.08 %
12	Convenience of parking & security	3.9138	4.91 %
13	Range of product types & varieties	4.1207	5.17 %
14	Provision of transport	3.8448	4.82 %
15	Provision of warehouse facilities	3.5000	4.39 %
16	Competitiveness of supplier's (ELFORA's) price offer	3.9138	4.91 %
17	Accessibility & availability of frontline employees when needed	4.2586	5.34 %
18	Accessibility & availability of officials & branch heads when needed	3.9138	4.91 %
19	Technical capability of frontline employees	4.1379	5.19 %
<b>Total</b>		<b>79.724</b>	<b>100</b>

In table 8 above, supplier's quality system, technical performance of product to the required purpose, consistency and continuity of product quality and overall hygiene of products were the top four attributes with respective weighing factors of 5.77 %, 5.75 %, 5.73 % and 5.73 % share from 79.724 (which is the total of all attributes' score and will be used to calculate weighted satisfaction score and CSI). From the top four priorities of

business customers, the last two attributes have the same rank with the same weighing factor, 5.73%.

The relative high weighing factors of the attributes are the reflection of importance level attached to them by business customers. On the contrary, those attributes that had low importance to business customers also have low weighing factors. These weighing factors will be useful in arriving at Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI), which indicates the overall satisfaction of business customers, in the subsequent section.

**Table 9: The Satisfaction Index**

No	Attributes	Average satisfaction score	Weighing factor	Weighted satisfaction score
1	Consistency & continuity of products quality	4.1379	5.73 %	0.302
2	Technical performance of product to the required purpose ( quality)	4.1207	5.75 %	0.237
3	Supplier's (ELFORA's) quality system	4.1552	5.77 %	0.240
4	supplier's (ELFORA's) product standard	4.1207	5.64 %	0.232
5	Overall hygiene of products	4.1724	5.73 %	0.240
6	Speed of order receiving & invoicing	3.7414	5.30 %	0.198
7	Speed, timely & full delivery of purchased products	3.7931	5.45 %	0.207
8	Continuity of supply by ELFORA	3.8621	5.64 %	0.218
9	Enthusiasm, Responsiveness & Interpersonal skill of frontline employees whenever customers face problem	3.3966	5.06 %	0.172
10	Convenience of supplier's (ELFORA's) working hours & days	3.7586	5.19 %	0.195
11	Location of supplier's (ELFORA's) warehouse in terms of distance	3.5345	5.08 %	0.180
12	Convenience of parking & security	3.6207	4.91 %	0.178
13	Range of product types & varieties	3.7931	5.17 %	0.196
14	Provision of transport	3.0345	4.82 %	0.133
15	Provision of warehouse facilities	3.2069	4.39 %	0.141
16	Competitiveness of supplier's (ELFORA's) price offer	3.3793	4.91 %	0.166
17	Accessibility & availability of frontline employees when needed	3.5690	5.34 %	0.191
18	Accessibility & availability of officials & branch heads when needed	3.4138	4.91 %	0.168
19	Technical capability of frontline employees	3.6370	5.19 %	0.189
	<b>Average (Mean)</b>	<b>3.5480</b>	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	-	<b>100</b>	<b>3.783</b>
	<b>Satisfaction Index</b>	-	-	<b>75.66%</b>

The overall satisfaction was more affected by those attribute having high importance and weighing factors. Customers Satisfaction Index (CSI) is 3.783 or 75.66% which is significantly lower than expected (total or complete) satisfaction to being 5 (100%) (See appendix III for computation). From this one can suggest ELFORA to maximize business customers' overall satisfaction by giving more emphasis on those attributes that received

top priorities by customers but, the degree of satisfaction obtained from the attributes is low.

#### 4.2.1.4 Gap Analysis and Priorities for Improvement

By putting the importance and satisfaction scores together, the gap between the two can easily be identified. Gap analysis is a useful tool to identify priorities for improvement. Accordingly, the gaps for most important four attributes are analyzed in the following table 10. Number in parenthesis showed that satisfaction scores are less than importance scores.

**Table 10: Analysis of Gap between importance and satisfaction scores for four top attributes**

No.	Attribute dimension	Average Importance score & Satisfaction Score		
		Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
1	Suppliers quality system	4.6034	4.1552	(0.4482)
2	Technical performance of product to the required purpose (quality)	4.5862	4.1207	(0.4655)
3	Consistency & continuity of product quality	4.5690	4.1379	(0.4311)
4	Overall hygiene of products	4.5690	4.1724	(0.3966)

As indicated above in table 10, the gap between importance level and satisfaction of business customers obtained from technical performance of the product to the required purpose was the highest of the four most important attributes by 0.4655. And the gap between importance level and degree of satisfaction obtained from attributes of supplier's quality system, consistency and continuity of product quality and overall hygiene of products followed by 0.4482, 0.4311 and 0.3966 respectively. For the four top attributes, customer's expectation exceeds ELFORA's performance by the amount indicate in parenthesis.

**Chart: 1 Gap between importance and satisfaction scores for four top attributes**

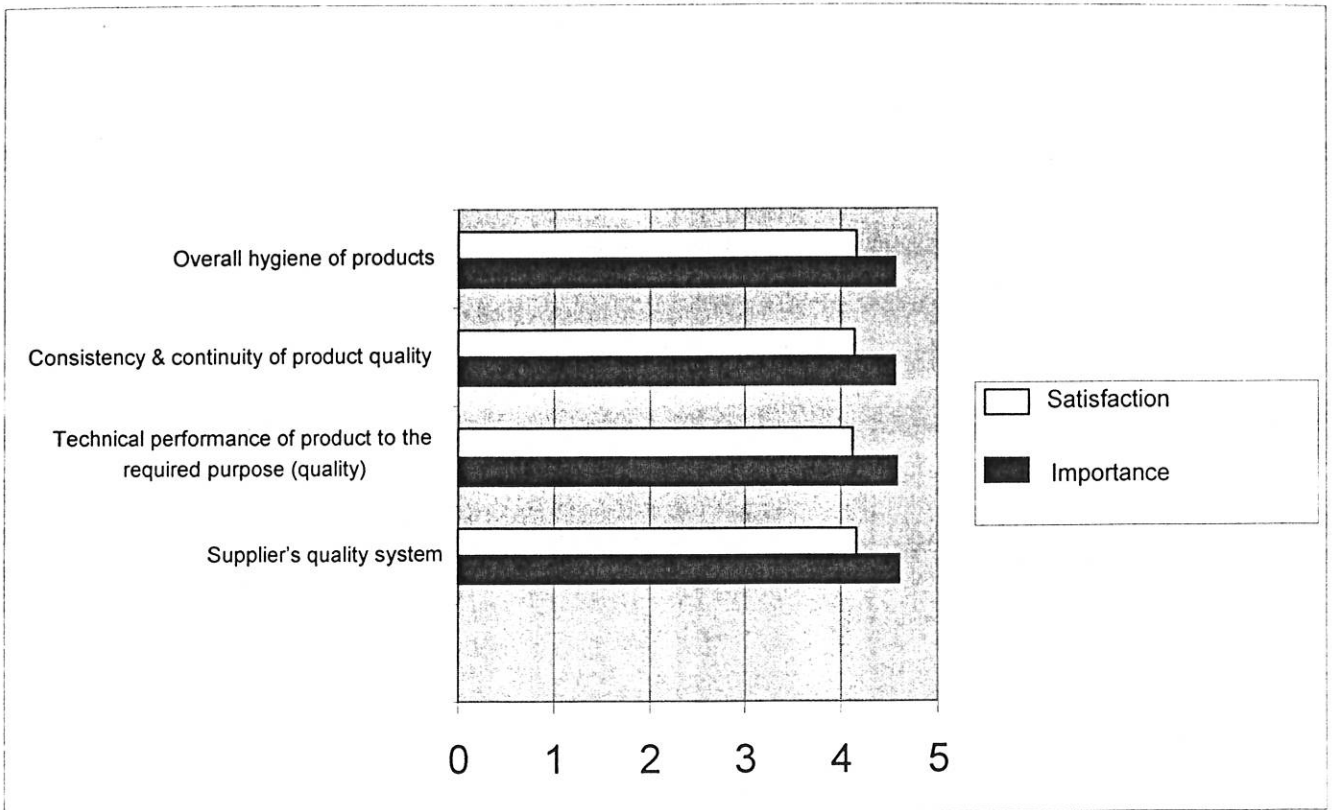


Chart 1 above, also shows the gap between importance level and satisfaction of business customers obtained from the four top attributes. As indicated in the chart, in all cases the importance bar is larger than the satisfaction bar, this indicates in all cases business customers' expectation exceed ELFORA's performance. gap. if performance (satisfaction) bar is shorter than the importance bar like in the chart above, the company may have a problem in meeting customer's expectation. The biggest gaps between importance and performance (satisfaction) highlight where the company is failing to meet customers' requirements and there are attributes it needs to focus on if it wants to improve customer satisfaction.

#### 4.2.1.5 Comparison of ELFORA with Competitors by Business Customers

Here, business customers were asked to compare ELFORA's poultry products and associated services with competitors of the company. And business customers were provided with eight questions with their corresponding chooses that comprised five alternatives.

**Table 11: Comparison of ELFORA with competitors**

No	Basic Dimensions	Rating in Percent				
		best	better	Similar	lower	Least
1	Product type and quantity of supply	44.8	41.4	12.1	1.7	--
2	Price level of ELFORA	--	13.8	15.4	31.0	39.7
3	Convenience of delivery service	--	17.2	12.1	22.4	48.3
4	Warehouse & sales outlets	24.1	31.0	20.7	6.9	17.2
5	Associated services & receiving customers	6.9	31.0	17.2	12.1	32.8
6	Quality of products supplied	58.6	25.9	8.6	3.4	3.4
7	Delivery of purchase in full quantity	58.6	15.5	15.5	5.2	5.2
8	Overall ELFORA's product supply & associated services	--	27.6	29.3	24.1	19.0

In terms of product type and quantity of supply (item 1 table 11), ELFORA was judged as 'best' and 'better' by 44 % and 41.4% of respondents respectively. That is 85.4% of the respondents are satisfied with ELFORA's product type and quantity in comparison to competitors. The rest 12.1% and 1.7% of them gave 'similar and 'lower' rating respectively. From this one can conclude that in terms of product type and quantity of

supply, comparison to competitors, ELFORA is still in the leading position as evaluated by business customers. This would be happened as a result of the company's volume and capacity of producing large volume of poultry products and large poultry farm facilities as observed by the researcher too.

About 70.7% of business customer respondents classified ELFORA's price offer (item 2) as unsatisfactory or expensive in comparison to its competitors' price offer (as 39.7% 'least' and 31.0 'lower'). While 15.5 % and 13.8% of them put it under 'similar' and 'better' categories respectively. Most business customer agreed that the price of poultry products of ELFORA is expensive in comparison to its competitors; the reason would be, mostly high quality goes with high price.

In its convenience of delivery service (item 3) 70.7% of business customers are unhappy (i.e. 48.3% 'least' and 22.4% 'lower') and 12.1% of them put it in similar position with competitors and 17.2 % of business customer respondents put convenience of delivery service of ELFORA under 'better' position. In this regard front line employees explained that ELFORA delivers purchased products only to some selected business customers such as Ethiopian Air lines, Addis Ababa University and Ministry of Defense. From this one can infer that ELFORA discriminates business customers in providing delivery services.

Concerning warehouse and sales out lets convenience (item 4). 17 %, 6.9%, and 30.7% of business customer respondents assigning rating of 'least', 'lower' and 'similar' respectively. The remaining 24% and 31% of them were in favor of the company, that is put ELFORA's warehouse and sales out lets convenience in the category of 'best' and 'better' respectively. Since ELFORA was established long years ago, this favors the company to possess better out let locations such as the ones that are found at Lamberet ,Mexico, Kazanchiz and Sarbet.

Regarding associated services and receiving customers (item 5) 44.9% of the business customers expressed their unhappiness by assigning rating of 'least' and 'lower' 17.2% judged ELFORA's associated services and receiving customers 'similar' to the

competitors and the remaining 37.9% were in favor of the company. These extreme cases of replies might be indication of existence of some discrimination practices in treating customers. Based on the response obtained from most front-line employee, majority of front-line employees didn't take any type of training. Moreover, almost front-line employee respondents explained that they are not happy of their current status. As a result, expecting them to give appropriate services that will satisfy customers is difficult.

58.6% and 25.9 of respondents respectively rated the quality of products (item 6) as 'best' and 'better'. This was mainly because ELFORA has experienced in producing poultry products better than its competitors for long period of time. Moreover, the company produces poultry products for foreign market too. So, the company meets export standard for both local and international markets. As a result, the company emphasis in supplying quality poultry products.

When looking at delivery of purchase in full quantity (item 7), 58.6% and 25.9% of respondents judged ELFORA's performance as 'best' and 'better' respectively. Most business customers received what they bought in full weight. As front line employees of ELFORA (sales persons) mentioned during the interview made with them, Boilers (whole poultry meat used for 'wot') and broiled (chicken pieces such as litter, feather, neck, gizzard, feet) chicken have weight loss allowance (for weight lost due to natural characteristics of perishable products by temperature during transport or warehouse).

With regard to overall performance (item 8), about 27.6% of business customers judged ELFORA better than competitors and still have positive attitude toward the company compared to its competitors. Contrary to this group, 43.1% of business customer respondents' designated overall performance of the company as unsatisfactory compared to competitors. Regarding this, front-line employees also explained that ELFORA didn't do its level best to its full production capacity and satisfy business customers; some times it utilizes quota system for some selected business customers with the exception of others this makes customers feeling unimportant by ELFORA.

#### **4.2.1.6 General Opinions and Comments of Business customers**

The following analysis is made based on responses obtained from open ended questions of the questionnaire.

What are major key factors influencing your decision to continue or stop relationship with ELFORA? Their responses are summarized as follows:

The majority of business customer respondents comment that the price of poultry products of the company is high in comparison to its most competitors; front line employees who have direct customer contact don't treat customers as expected and not ready to help them when they face some problems or need information; the company doesn't have customer complaint handling mechanism. These would be the most critical factors for future relationship. More over, the customer suggested ELFORA, to expand its production capacity and distribution by opening additional sales out lets and getting customers at their places by practicing door to door sales. Business customers also want ELFORA to supply products on their demand in full capacity; providing after sale services including transport service for bulk purchase, warranty for products that would be spoiled or damaged; finally they add that the company should increase its production capacity

In general, business customers' subsequent decision to a larger extent depends on how far ELFORA could excel its competitors in serving business customers in the future. From this one can suggest that considering the opinions of the business customer respondents, ELFORA should make the necessary modification so that customers can continue their business relationship and stayed loyal to the company. Retaining the current customer is less costly than searching for new customer.

## **4.2.2 Analysis of Responses from Front-line Employees**

As indicated in the beginning of this chapter, front-line employees, who have direct and close contact with business customers, had been approached using an interview in this study.

### **4.2.2.1 Employees handling and satisfaction**

i. Regarding the presence of a system for front line employees to participate in decision making and areas of decision/issue in which they were participating, 2 (16.67%) of front-line employees revealed that they were participating in decision making to a certain extent. While the remaining 10 (83.35%) of them replied that they don't have any role in making decision. From this one can infer that in the organization, there is no any system that invites front-line employees participating in decision making particularly, if the employees do not have any right on solving and making decisions in relation to customers, they would not be in a position to solve customers problem at the spot This in turn will hurt customer satisfaction

Those respondents, who revealed that the system was in place for participation, were asked to mention areas of their involvement or participation and they identified the followings: Proposing opinions on how a quota to be allocated to individual business customers when there is scarcity of products, discussing with customer handling service manager on complaints forwarded by customers, suggest alternative ideas when proposals are coming from business customers and supervisors, identifying expired products and avoiding them. Particularly these were mentioned by those front-line employees who are processing of invoice and receipt for customers. This indicates that management bodies that have close work relationship with front-line employees make discrimination among employees in making them participating in decision making activities. Companies who want to deliver better customer service must give-up some of the traditional managerial system in order to allow front-line employees to make decisions that best fit each customer. It means that giving employees the power to solve problems and decision making in the way they consider most appropriate for customers.

ii. Concerning participation in any training program related to customers handling and poultry products marketing:

All front-line employee respondents indicated that they didn't participate in any type of training programs organized and provided at ELFORA. From this one can understand that the company didn't give attention for front line-employees, who are the first representative and brand of the company, better performance. This would in turn affect customer satisfaction negatively.

iii. Responses on the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction among front-line employees feel on current position they held.

Their response indicate that 5 (41.67%) of front-line employees are 'extremely dissatisfied' and the same proportion of them, 5 (41.67%), are 'dissatisfied'. Other group of the employees 2 (16.67) had the feeling of 'satisfaction to some extent'. In general significant numbers of employees (83.34%) are unsatisfied or not happy of their current position. This again affects customer satisfaction. Employees who are not happy of their work, would not perform their work in such way customers are happy or satisfied.

Regarding factors that contribute to lack of satisfaction among front-line employees, front-line employee respondents identified the following issues according to their importance level to them: Inadequate salary (1<sup>st</sup>), inadequate services and facilities (2<sup>nd</sup>), and absence of promotion opportunities (3<sup>rd</sup>) were mentioned. Other factors including inadequacy of various fringe benefits, lack of management concern for employee, and absence of training and education opportunities were mentioned as 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively. Inequitable treatments of employees based on friendship, family or relatives, ethnicity and other personal relationships and dividing employees by some management members were cited as minor factors.

#### **4.2.2.2 Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction of Business Customers**

i. Response on presence or absence of any mechanism for handling complaints of business customers at ELFORA; most front employees (83%) agreed with the absence of

systematic mechanism in handling complaints of business customers. While the remaining 16.67% of the respondents believe that there is such mechanism. Two front-line employees explained that some customers, who have the telephone number of managers, some times call and present their complaint, and these were discussed by the manager in meetings held with front line-employees. From this one can conclude that the company didn't have any well organized and communicated complaint presentation and handling mechanism.

ii. Adequacy of speed or responses to complaints of business customers.

About 75% of front-line employee respondents replied that responses to customers' complaints were characterized by slowness and inadequacy. Only 25% of the respondents designated the response to business customers' complaint as adequate and fast. This indicated that even if there is no systematic complaint handling system in the company, some business customers who have presented their complaint didn't get adequate and timely response.

iii. With regard to the three most frequent complaints presented by business customers, front-line employee respondents pointed out that supply related problems as most frequently raised complaints followed by continuous price increments and unavailability of customer complaint mechanism as the second and third positions. The supply problem commonly associated with lack of appropriate product type, size and products in different kilo. ELFORA some times use quota system when it faces product scarcity, this is the other area of complaint associated with supply.

iv. The three most important attributes that business customers take into consideration when making decisions to buy poultry products, as identified by front-line employees are presented in the following table.

**Table: 12** Four most Important attributes in making buying decisions of business customers

Attributes	Number of Mentions as---			Total number of mentions
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
<b>Quality</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Receiving full weight</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Supply</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Customer handling</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Price</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>

One can infer from the above table that according to front-line employees' of the company quality is the top most important attribute to business customers with 5 mentions as 1<sup>st</sup> followed by price having equal number of mentions as 1<sup>st</sup> but considering the number of mentions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position quality scores more by 4.

The third place held by supply scoring 2 mentions as 1<sup>st</sup> and supply include related issues like continuity, variety and timeliness. No other attribute scored to be in the 1<sup>st</sup> position other than the three. From this one can understand that the issue of quality, price and supply related considerations are the top three most important dimensions for business customers in making purchase decision according to employees' point of view.

v. Rating of ELFORA's overall product supply and associated services' performance in satisfying business customers by front-line employees.

Here employees were asked to give scores out of 5; where 5 represented 'highly satisfactory', 4 'satisfactory', 3 'neutral', 2 'dissatisfactory', and 1 'highly

dissatisfactory'. The response of front-line employees is displayed in table 13 on page 65 below.

**Table 13:** Assigning scores to overall product supply and associated services of ELFORA in satisfying business customers

Scores out of 5	Number of respondents	Total score
1	2	2
2	4	8
3	1	3
4	4	16
5	1	5
Total	12	34
<b>Weighted Average Score out of 5</b>		<b>2.83</b>
<b>Weighted Average Score in %</b>		<b>56.60</b>

In assigning score to the overall products and associated services performance of ELFORA in satisfying its business customers, 1 (8.3%) of front-line employees gave score of 5 (highly satisfactory) and 33% of them rated at 4 (satisfactory).

Score of 3 (neutral) was assigned by two (16.67%) of employees. 4 (33.33%) and 2 (16.67%) of the front-line employees, who constituted highest of the respondents, categorized the overall product supply and associated services of ELFORA as dissatisfactory and highly dissatisfactory respectively.

Weighted average score shown in the above table, 2.83 (56.60%), is the overall rating given by employees to their organization's performance in satisfying business customers. It seems that employees disfavor their company by under rating its performance by 19.06% compared to CSI of 75.66% obtained earlier from business customers. This might imply that front-line employees are dissatisfied with the organization they are working in. It is difficult to ensure customers satisfaction having dissatisfied front-line

employees. The company has to pay attention to front-line employees for their satisfaction and performance because they have an immediate and uncensored impact on Vi. Response on the major factors causing dissatisfaction of business customers in the order of importance:-

According to responses obtained from front-line employees, factors identified as major sources for dissatisfaction of business customers are shown in the following table 14.

**Table: 14** Major factors for dissatisfaction of business customer

Attributes	Number of Mentions as---			Total number of mentions
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
Quality	-	-	5	5
Receiving full weight	-	4	1	5
Supply	5	5	1	11
Customer handling	2	2	3	7
High Price	5	1	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>

As given in the above table14, the 1<sup>st</sup> major source of dissatisfaction is supply issues followed by high price having equal number of mentions as 1<sup>st</sup> but considering the number of mentions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> position supply scores more by 3. Customer handling was mentioned as 3<sup>rd</sup> factor for disappointment of business customer of ELFORA. No other attribute scored to be in the 1<sup>st</sup> position other than the three (that is supply, customer handling and high price).

From this one can infer that, the issue of supply related considerations, high price and poor customer handlings are the top three major factors that lead business customers into dissatisfaction.

#### **4.2.2.3 Front-line Employees' Comparison of ELFORA with Competitors**

Two (16.67) front-line employees categorized their company (ELFORA) as 'best' and 6 (50%) better as compared to rivals while 1 (8.33%) of them thought that the company is 'similar' with other poultry firms' performance. 2 (16.67%) feel that the company's performance is 'lower' than others The remaining 2 (16.67%) front-line employee agreed on that ELFORA's performance is the 'least' of all. In total 66.67% of front-line employees consider ELFORA's poultry products and associated services performance as better than competitors. This would be mainly due to the newness of most competitors' operating in the poultry industry. Not because ELFORA is doing its level best in its operation as most front-line employees mentioned during the interview session.

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **5.1 Summary**

The proposal was designed to measure degree of satisfaction of business customers in ELFORA poultry by gathering the necessary data from the business customers and front-line employees. It was also designed to identify most important attributes, satisfaction level, gaps and priorities for improvement. Descriptive research method was employed. Questionnaires and interview were applied as instruments for data collection. Since the initial number of business customers was limited to 70, census was made. Regarding front-line employees, being their number was small 16, the researcher's plan was to include all front-line employees in the study and implement census. But only 12 of them were voluntary to be included in the study and interviewed. It was possible to reach all the seventy business customers and 58 customers filled and returned the questionnaires. Data could not be gathered from the rest of planned respondents because of their personal problem, inconvenience and unwillingness.

Business customers and front-line employees were participated as respondents in this study. The respondents had experience in their current position ranging from a little less than a year to more than five years and educationally, they attend from elementary to degree and above with the exception of one uneducated front-line employee. Field of studies for front line-employees, who had diploma, includes only Accounting. Respondents were with in age of 25-55 with the exception of one business customer above 55 and gender wise, only 22.4% of business customers and 75% of front line employees were female. The remaining balances in each group were males.

Business customers stayed with ELFORA for the period ranging from 1 to more than 10 years. Regarding business relationship with ELFORA, only 3.4% of them switched to competitors and 96.6% of business customers are still having attachment with the company. The reasons given by two business customers, who are switched to other suppliers of poultry products, were with relative to its competitors the price of poultry products of ELFORA is high and poorness of its selling service.

More than half of business customers (51.7%) were not exposed to ELFORA's advertisement and the remaining 48.3% of them were exposed to the advertisement. And from those who were exposed to advertisement 60.71% of them are agreed on the idea that ELFORA lives up to its promise (it provides what has been advertised). The remaining 31.43% and 17.56% are neutral and disagree respectively. Majority of respondents said that the company has no systematic complaint handling and regular customer satisfaction's measuring mechanism.

The numbers of respondents who expressed their complaint to the company and who didn't do were 36.2% and 63.8% respectively. Those business customers who expressed their complaint in some way, 52% of them replied that response from the company was inadequate and slow and even there were business customers who didn't get any response (33.33%). About 72.97 % of business customers who didn't express complaints mentioned that they had no complaints, 10.81% indicated absence of such mechanism as their main reason for not expressing their dissatisfaction. The company could reach some business customers in its advertisement but was not living up to its promises. The front-line employees mentioned lack of coordination between the front-line employees and management, fail to use its full capacity and delay in decision making as main problem (constraints) in fulfilling promises.

In identifying importance of attributes to business costumers, based on the weighted average (mean) calculated with the help of SPSS from scores given 1-5 likert scales and the result showed that 'suppliers quality system', 'technical performance of product to the required purpose (quality)' and ('consistency & continuity of product quality' and overall

hygiene of products having the same 3<sup>rd</sup> position) were ranked in the top positions from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The last rank was held by 'Provision of transport' which was identified as the least important attribute. In their response to identify the three most important attributes to customers, regarding front-line employees, came up with some how different lists compared to those presented by business customers.

Because some attributes are more important than others, weighing factors were determined for each attribute based on importance score that would enable to calculate the actual and real measurement of ELFORA's performance in satisfying business customers. These weighing factors allowed incorporating of the influence of those most important attributes on overall satisfaction to be more than those having less importance. In measuring how satisfied or dissatisfied business customers were, Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) was calculated by combining importance values and satisfaction level rated by business customers.

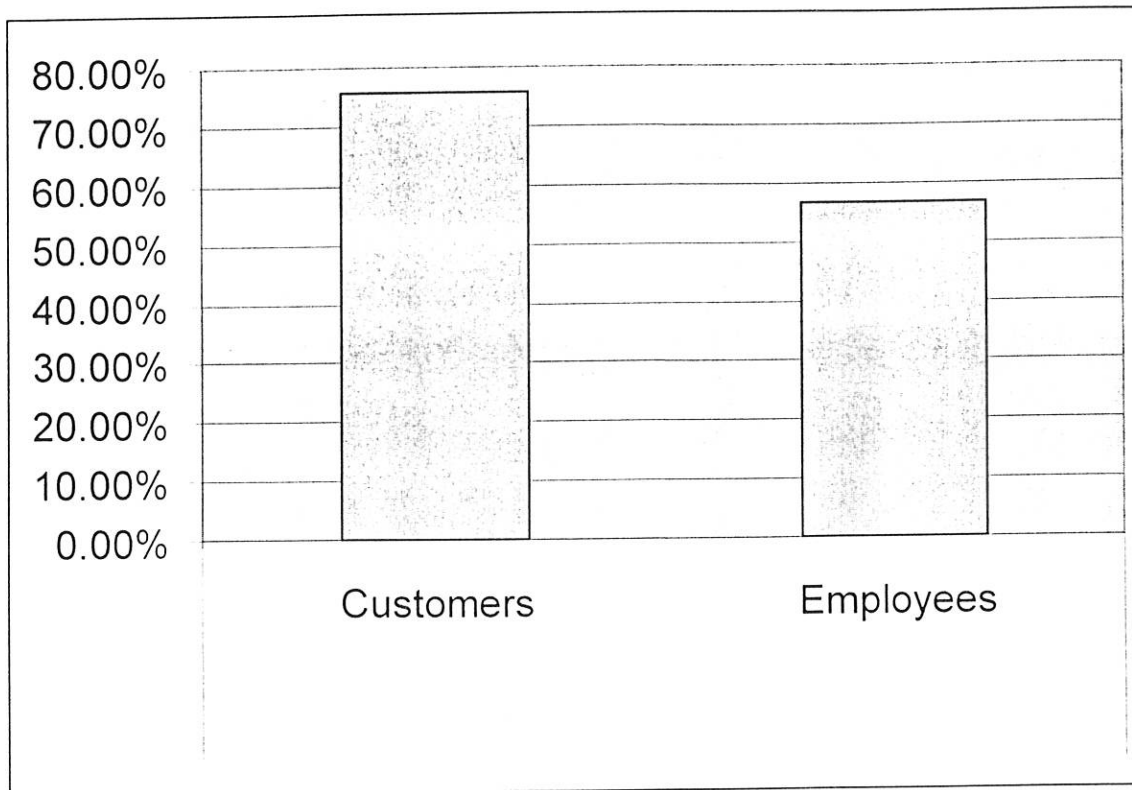
Accordingly, CSI of ELFORA found to be 75.66%. And 56.60% was the rating given by front-line employees to the overall performance of ELFORA in satisfying business customers

**Table 15:** Summary of Business customers' satisfaction rating by business customer and front-line employees

<b>Respondents group and satisfaction rating in percent</b>	
Customers	Employees
75.66%	56.60%

From the table 15 above and chart 2 below, it is possible to see that there were significant differences between rating of business customers and front-line employees. As compared to business customers, front-line employees under rated their organization's performance by 19.06%.

**Chart 2:** Comparison of satisfaction ratings in percentage given by the two respondent groups.



In comparing with competitors, overall performance of ELFORA was designated as lower and least by 43.1% of the business customer respondents. But in terms of product type supplied, quality of products supplied and delivery of purchase in full quantity were rated as better and best by 86.2%, 84.5, and 74.1 respectively. Customers put some preconditions in continuing relation ship with ELFORA in the future.

Rating by front-line employees in this respect, 66.67% of them were in favor of the company and consider ELFORA's poultry products and associated services' performance as best and better while 8.33% consider the company's performance as similar with competitors and 25 % feel that the company's performance is lower and the least.

Gap analysis showed that from the top most important attributes identified by customers, technical performance of products to the required purpose (quality) exhibited large gap

between its importance and satisfaction scores depicting priority for improvement. The next priority for improvement found to be suppliers quality system.

With regard to employee empowerment, 16.67% of front-line employees' agreed with the idea that, there was some but inadequate empowerment and participation in decision. 100% or the whole front-line employee respondents explained that they didn't participate in any type of training during their stay in ELFORA.

Issues like inadequate services and facilities, absence of promotion opportunities, inadequacy of various fringe benefits, lack of management concern for them, and absence of training and education opportunities were cited as major sources of dissatisfaction of employees. About 83.34% of front-line employees have feeling of 'dissatisfaction' and 16.67% are satisfied 'some how' in their current position.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

Based on the above summary of findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

- ✓ From profiles of front-line employees, practices of misplacement of employees were observed. All front-line employees who have direct and close contact to customers were not marketing professional; there are even some employees who didn't attend any type of education. From customers handling and service, optimum satisfaction of customers and appropriate utilization of company's human resource point of view, assigning uneducated and unprofessional personnel in sales position for ELFORA might not be feasible.
  
- ✓ Some business customers who had long relationship with the company switched to other suppliers and totally stopped their relationship with ELFORA due to mainly high price of ELFORA's poultry products, deterioration of selling services from time to time and quota system of the company that prohibit business customers purchasing the amount they want.

Other significant numbers of business customers have still business relationship with the company at the same time they buy poultry products from other suppliers particularly when ELFORA faces product scarcities and employ quota system.

- ✓ There were gaps in clear understanding of expectation of business customers and their value priority. This was witnessed in the differences seen identifying most important attributes where employees' view was not matched with that of customers'. There were no systematic, organized, and regular assessments and measuring customer satisfaction at ELFORA.
- ✓ Tangible aspects of ELFORA's operation were given more value than the intangible by business customers. This was clearly reflected in the positions held by the top most important attributes in the importance score most being tangible aspect of the company's operation.
- ✓ Even though there were very little practices of handling customer complaints here and there, majority group of respondents agreed that there was no systematic, regular, and well-communicated mechanism in this regard. Some of the business customers were not even aware about that kind of unorganized and unsystematic practices. This might imply the occurrence of gaps in making business customers aware of such practices.
- ✓ Business customers attach significantly different importance to different attributes/dimensions/. Some attributes were extremely important and could not be compromised while some others were less important.

Business customers identified their most valued attributes by giving high importance scores. This difference in importance scores made attributes differ in their influence on overall magnitude of satisfaction with ELFORA's performance where those with high importance scores did have more impact than attributes having low importance score.

- ✓ In most cases ELFORA had performed high satisfaction scores in most important attributes like overall hygiene of products and quality system, consistency & continuity of products quality one to three ranks respectively. This is mainly due to the fact that most business customer gave priority for tangible aspects of ELFORA's performance as indicated above and ELFORA is good at operation of tangible aspects.
- ✓ As the magnitude of CSI 75.66% derived from response of business customers indicated, they were some how dissatisfied as poultry products and associated services provided by ELFORA were below what was expected by them (100%).
- ✓ Most business customers were not happy with provision of associated services and receiving customers. This showed that in most cases front-line employees had no enthusiastic responses and handling costumers.
- ✓ Some differences exhibited between views of customers and front-line employees in identifying the top three most important attributes and rating the overall satisfaction level. Some problems were tolerated by business customers so long as their major demands with respect to most important aspects had been addressed adequately. They showed this by assigning less important value to competitiveness of ELFORA's price offer that was identified among the top attributes by front-line employees.
- ✓ Among the top important attributes, 'technical performance of product to the required purpose (quality)' and 'ELFORA's quality system' exhibited large gaps between their respective importance and satisfaction scores. 'Consistency and continuity of product quality' also stands in the third position in terms of size of the gap. All these three attributes deserve priority for improvement in their order.

- ✓ Due to inadequate financial benefits, training, promotion, facilities, support and other management problems most front-line employees were not satisfied in their current position they held in the company. This in turn might be reflected in dissatisfaction of business customers with provision of associated services and receiving customer and other aspects linked to involvement of front-line employees.

Business customers' extreme positions in responding on their satisfaction might imply the existence of some practice of inequity treatment and discrimination. Lack of adequate financial benefits were major contributors for dissatisfaction of employees.

- ✓ Compared with competitors, ELFORA has some strengths and weaknesses. Its superiority (strength) points could help in its strategic measures aimed at tackling strong competition.
- ✓ Customers expressed their preconditioned willingness to continue their relationship with the company in the future.
- ✓ Continuous price increment, inefficiency of front-line employees, fails to utilize its full potential and employing quota system during product scarcity are the most magnified weaknesses of the company.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on summary and conclusions of findings, the following recommendations were made:

- In selecting candidates for a particular post the company should consider better service provision to customers as primary criteria that might necessitate recruitment of competent employees from external sources (in marketing stream in particular)

rather than assigning internal personnel who doesn't possess the requirements and not fit to the position.

- Consider reshuffling or provide education opportunity to most employees who had not graduated in the streams that enable them exerting better performance in the posts they were assigned to positions where they could contribute their best to the company. All front-line employees except the two who have graduated in accounting at diploma level were assigned in the front-line posts can be examples of improper and inefficient utilization of human resource, viewed from the overall company perspective.
- To save the existing customers in the future and win-back those customers switched to other suppliers of poultry products; the company should utilize full potential of its poultry farm and produce large volume of product at the same time employ price modification considering various ways such as offering of competitive prices in bidding. And avoid quota system
- Strengthening supply of poultry products in large volume by working in collaboration with marketing intermediaries and marketing specialists. Diversifying poultry product types and extend branch out lets.
- Though the outcome of this study could give some plat form to be used by the company in understanding customer expectations and value priority, ELFORA should carry out its own extensive survey at regular interval. And also, undertake systematic, organized, and regular assessments and measuring customers' satisfaction. This can be performed by Customer Handling Service of the company with assigning necessary manpower and furnish of facilities. ELFORA should incorporate customers in its mission statement to spearhead (organize) its commitments.
- The company should establish systematic, consistent and regular mechanism for handling business customers' complaints and follow-up. This can be done through

planning and implementation of organized service reform program. Then communicate the commitments of the company to customers that the system is functioning and it is for them.

- Some business customers revealed that ELFORA was not living up to its promises. Fulfillment of promises in action is critical in affecting satisfaction and hence, it has to promote what most likely it would be able to offer.
- Give more emphasis and priority in formulating strategy to those attributes most valued by business customers and having large gaps between their importance and satisfaction score mainly of quality and performance of product related issues.
- Being key internal customers playing critical role in affecting customer satisfaction, give more emphasis to employees' development and improving working environment (selecting, training and promotion or improvement in financial and non financial benefits. Equitable treatment and respectful approach allow more empowerment and participation in decision making and provision of facilities). Provide more training programs focusing on customer handling and satisfaction. Put the issue of customer service and satisfaction in everyone's job description, of front-line employees in particular.

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Appendix I

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ድህረ ምረቃ መርሐ ግብር

ንግድ ሥራ ትምህርት ትምህርት ክፍል

በኤልፎራ የዶሮና የዶሮ ተዋፅኦ ውጤቶች አምራችና አቅራቢ ድርጅት ደንበኞች

የሚሞላ መጠይቅ

በቅድሚያ የከበረ ሰላምታ አቀርባለሁ!!

በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ድህረ ምረቃ መርሐ ግብር ንግድ ሥራ ትምህርት ክፍል በማርኬቲንግ ማኔጅመንት ትምህርት የማስተርስ ተማሪ ነኝ። በአሁን ወቅት ለመመረቂያ የሚሆን ጥናታዊ ጽሁፍ “የነጋዴ /ድርጅት/ ደንበኞች ዕርካታ በኤልፎራ የዶሮና የዶሮ ተዋፅኦ ውጤቶች አምራችና አቅራቢ ድርጅት” ወይም በእንግሊዘኛ “Business Customers’ Satisfaction on ELFORA Agro-Industries with Reference to Poultry ” በሚል ርዕስ ላይ እየሰራሁ እገኛለሁ።

የእርስዎ ድርጅት ከኤልፎራ ደንበኞች አንዱ በመሆኑ ለዚህ ጥናት ሊመረጥ ችሏል። ማንኛውንም ጥያቄዎችን በተመለከተ ከድርጅትዎ የሚገኝ ምላሽ /መረጃ/ ምስጢራዊነቱን በሚገባ የተጠበቀ መሆኑንና ሌሎች ድርጅቶች ከሚሰጡት ምላሽ ጋር በአንድነት የሚተነተን እንጂ በተናጠል እንደማይታይ ላረጋግጥልዎት እወዳለሁ።

የድርጅትዎን ወይም የእርስዎን ስም መፃፍ አስፈላጊ አለመሆኑን እገልጻለሁ።

እጅግ ወድ ከሆነው ጊዜዎ የተወሰኑ ደቂቃዎችን በመሰዋት ለሚያደርጉልኝ ዕገዛና ቀና ትብብር ያለኝን ምስጋናና አክብሮት ከወዲሁ እገልጻለሁ። ጥናቱን የተመለከቱ ጥያቄዎች ካለዎት 0911613326 አስቻለው ታምሩ ብለው ይጠይቁ።

Appendix I

**ክፍል አንድ: አጠቃላይ የግል መረጃዎች**

መልስዎን መርጠው በተሰጠው ሳጥን ውስጥ የ(✓) ምልክት በማስቀመጥ ይመልሱ።

ተ.ቁ	ጥያቄ	አማራጮች
1	አሁን በድርጅቱ ውስጥ ያለዎት ኃላፊነት /የስራ ድርሻ/?	<input type="checkbox"/> የዕቃ ግዥ ሰራተኛ <input type="checkbox"/> ጠቅላላ አገልግሎት ኃላፊ <input type="checkbox"/> ማርኬቲንግ ኃላፊ ሌላ ከሆነ ይጠቀስ _____
2	አሁን በያዙት የሥራ መደብ በዚህ ድርጅት ውስጥ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ አገልግለዋል?	<input type="checkbox"/> ከ1 ዓመት በታች <input type="checkbox"/> ከ1 ዓመት በላይና ከ5 ዓመት በታች <input type="checkbox"/> 5 ዓመትና ከዚያ በላይ
3	የትምህርት ደረጃዎ ከየትኛው ሊመደብ ይችላል?	<input type="checkbox"/> ምንም ያልተማረ <input type="checkbox"/> ከ1-6 /አንደኛ ደረጃ/ <input type="checkbox"/> ከ7-10/12 /ሁለተኛ ደረጃ/ <input type="checkbox"/> ዲግሎማ <input type="checkbox"/> ዲግሪና ከዚያ በላይ
4	ዕድሜዎ ከየትኛው ምድብ ሊመደብ ይችላል?	<input type="checkbox"/> እስከ 25 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ26-35 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ36-45 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ46-55 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ55 ዓመት በላይ
5	ፆታ	<input type="checkbox"/> ወንድ <input type="checkbox"/> ሴት

**ክፍል ሁለት: አጠቃላይ ድርጅቱን የተመለከቱ ጥያቄዎች**

6	የድርጅትዎ ምሥረታ ዓይነት	<input type="checkbox"/> በአንድ ግለሰብ ባለቤትነት የተቋቋመ <input type="checkbox"/> በሽርክና የተቋቋመ <input type="checkbox"/> ኃላፊነቱ የተወሰነ የግል ማኅበር <input type="checkbox"/> አክሲዮን ማኅበር ሌላ ካለ ይገለፅ _____
7	ድርጅትዎ የተሰማራበት የሥራ ዘርፍ ከየትኛው ሊመደብ ይችላል? /ከአንድ በላይ በሆኑ ዘርፎች የተሰማራ ከሆነ ከአንድ ምርጫ በላይ በመስጠት አላዩ/	<input type="checkbox"/> ሱፐር ማርኬት <input type="checkbox"/> ሆስፒታል <input type="checkbox"/> ሆቴል/ምግብ ቤት <input type="checkbox"/> ካፌ/ቴሪያ
8	ድርጅትዎ በዋናነት ከኤሌጎራ ይገዛቸው የነበሩ ወይም እየገዛቸው ያሉ የዶሮና የዶሮ ተወፅኦ ምርቶችን ቢገልጹልኝ?	8.1 ቀደም ባሉት መታት ----- ----- 8.2 በአሁኑ ወቅት ----- -----
9	የርስዎ ድርጅት የዶሮና የዶሮ ተወፅኦ ስራ ጋር በተያያዘ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ቆይቷል?	<input type="checkbox"/> ከ1ዓመት ያነሰ <input type="checkbox"/> ከ 1 — 5 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ 6 — 10 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ11 — 15 ዓመት <input type="checkbox"/> ከ15 ዓመት በላይ

Appendix I

**ክፍል ሶስት: ድርጅቱ ከኤልፎራ ጋር ስላለው ግንኙነት**

10	ድርጅትዎ በአሁኑ ወቅት ከኤልፎራ ጋር የንግድ ግንኙነት አለው?	<input type="checkbox"/> አለው <input type="checkbox"/> የለውም
11	ከላይ በተራቁጥር "10" በተጠየቀው መልስዎት "የለውም" ከሆነ ከኤልፎራ ምርት መግዛት ያቆሙበት ዋነኛ ምክንያት ምንድን ነው? /አንድ ወይም ከአንድ በላይ መልስ መርጠው ያሳዩ/	<input type="checkbox"/> ከሌሎች ድርጅቶች አንጻር ሲታይ ኤልፎራ የሚያቀርባቸው ምርቶች ዋጋ ከፍተኛ በመሆኑ <input type="checkbox"/> የኤልፎራ የሽያጭ አገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ደካማ ከመሆኑ <input type="checkbox"/> ከተፈለገው ዓይነት፣ ብዛትና የጥራት ደረጃ የዶሮ ምርቶችን ስለማያቀርብ ሌላ ምክንያት ካለ ይገለጽ _____ _____
12	የእርስዎ ድርጅት ለምን ያህል ጊዜ የኤልፎራ ደንበኛ ሆኖ ቆይቷል?	----- ዓመት
13	የኤልፎራ ማስታወቂያዎችን ይከታተላሉ?	<input type="checkbox"/> እከታተላለሁ <input type="checkbox"/> አልከታተልም
14	ከላይ በተራቁጥር "13" ለተጠየቀው መልስዎት እከታተላለሁ ከሆነ የኤልፎራ የምርት አቅርቦት በማስታወቂያው እንደተግለጸው ነው። በዚህ ሃሳብ ምን ያህል ይስማማሉ?	<input type="checkbox"/> ፍፁም አልስማማም <input type="checkbox"/> አልስማማም <input type="checkbox"/> አላውቅም <input type="checkbox"/> እስማማለው <input type="checkbox"/> በጣም እስማማለው
15	ኤልፎራ የነጋዴ /ድርጅት/ ደንበኞቹን ቅሬታ /ስምታ/ የሚያስተናግድበት አሰራር አለው?	<input type="checkbox"/> አለው <input type="checkbox"/> የለውም <input type="checkbox"/> አላውቅም
16	የርስዎ ድርጅት ቅሬታ /ስምታ/ ለኤልፎራ አቅርቦ ያውቃል?	<input type="checkbox"/> አቅርቦ ያውቃል <input type="checkbox"/> አቅርቦ አያውቅም
17	ከላይ በ"15" የተጠየቀው መልስዎት "አቅርቦ ያውቃል" ከሆነ ያገኘው ምላሽ እንዴት ነበር?	<input type="checkbox"/> በቂ ምላሽና ፈጣን ነበር <input type="checkbox"/> በቂ ምላሽ ግን የዘገየ ነበር <input type="checkbox"/> በቂ ያልሆነና የዘገየ ምላሽ ነበር <input type="checkbox"/> በቂ ያልሆነና በጣም የዘገየ ምላሽ ነበር <input type="checkbox"/> ምንም ምላሽ አልተገኘም።
18	ከላይ በ"15" በተጠየቀው መልስዎት "አቅርቦ አያውቅም" ከሆነ ላለማቅረብ ዋነኛው ምክንያት ምን ነበር?	<input type="checkbox"/> ቅሬታ /ስምታ/ ስላልነበረው <input type="checkbox"/> ባቀርብም መፍትሔ አላገኝም በሚል ሃሳብ <input type="checkbox"/> ቅሬታን /ስምታን/ ተቀብሎ የሚያስተናግድ የአሰራር ስርዓትና አካል በድርጅቱ ባለመኖሩ ሌላ ምክንያት ካለ በገልፁ ----- -----

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**ክፍል አራት: የጉዳዮች (attributes) አስፈላጊነት እና የእርካታ ደረጃ**

በዚህ ክፍል ለማወቅ የተፈለገው እያንዳንዱ የተጠቀሰው ጉዳይ (attribute) ለእርስዎ ድርጅት ያለው የአስፈላጊነት መጠን እና ድርጅትዎ ከእያንዳንዱ ጉዳይ ያገኘው የእርካታ መጠንን ነው። ስለሆነም ቀጥለው የተዘረዘሩት ጉዳዮች (attributes) ለድርጅትዎ ያላቸውን የጠቀሜታ መጠን እና ድርጅትዎ ያገኘውን የእርካታ መጠን ትክክለኛውን ቁጥር በመክበብ ያሳዩ።

ጉዳዮች(attributes)	እነዚህ ጉዳዮች ለድርጅትዎ ምን ያህል አስፈላጊ ናቸው?					ድርጅትዎ በእነዚህ ጉዳዮች ምን ያህል ረከቷል?				
	5-በጣም አስፈላጊ (Very Important)	4-አስፈላጊ (Important)	3-አላውቅም (Neutral)	2-በትንሹ አስፈላጊ (less important)	1-በጣም በትንሹ አስፈላጊ (least important)	5-በጣም ረከቻለሁ (Very Satisfied)	4-ረከቻለሁ (Satisfied)	3-አላውቅም (Neutral)	2-አልረካሁም (Dissatisfied)	1-ፍፁም አልረካሁም (Highly dissatisfied)
የምርት ጥራት ወጥነትና ቀጣይነት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የምርቱ በተፈለገው ዓላማ የመዋል ብቃት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የአቅራቢው /ኤልፎራ/ የጥራት ስርዓት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የአቅራቢው የምርት ደረጃ	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የአቅራቢው ምርት አጠቃላይ ንፅህና ደረጃ	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የግዥ ትዕዛዝ አቀባበልና የደረሰኝ ዝግጅት ፍጥነት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የምርቱን በጊዜው፣ በተሟላ ሁኔታና ፍጥነት የማስረከብ አስተማማኝነት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የምርት አቅርቦት ቀጣይነት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
ከደንበኛ ጋር ቀጥተኛ ግንኙነት የላቸው ሰራተኞች ደንበኛው ችግር ባጋጠመው ጊዜ ለመፍታት የሚሰጡት ምላሽና የመግባባት ክህሎት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የአቅራቢው የስራ ቀንና ሰዓት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1

አመቺነት										
የአቅራቢው መጋዘን ያለበት ቦታ ከርቀት አንጻር ያለው አመቺነት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
ለመኪና ማቆሚያ አመቺነትና ፀጥታ	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የሚያቀርባቸው የምርት ዓይነቶችና ዝርያዎች ብዛት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የምርት ማጓጓዣ አገልግሎት መስጠቱ	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የመጋዘን አገልግሎት መስጠቱ	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የአቅራቢው ዋጋ ተወዳዳሪነት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
ከደንበኞች ጋር ቀጥተኛ ግንኙነት ያላቸው ሰራተኞችን በተፈለገው ጊዜ ማግኘት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
የሚመለከታቸው የቅርንጫፍ ወይም ሌሎች ኃላፊዎችን በተፈለገው ጊዜ ማግኘት	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1
ከደንበኞች ጋር ቀጥተኛ ግንኙነት ያላቸው ሠራተኞች ከተመደቡበት ስራ አንጻር ቴክኒካዊ ብቃታቸው	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1

20. ከላይ ከተጠቀሱት ጉዳዮች ለእርስዎ ድርጅት በጣም አስፈላጊ የሆኑትን ከ1—3

አስቀምጡ

1. በአንደኛ ደረጃ ቅድሚያ የሚሰጡትና እጅግ አስፈላጊ የትኛው ነው? \_\_\_\_\_
2. በሁለተኛ ደረጃ ቅድሚያ የሚሰጡትና እጅግ አስፈላጊ የትኛው ነው? \_\_\_\_\_
3. በሶስተኛ ደረጃ ቅድሚያ የሚሰጡትና እጅግ አስፈላጊ የትኛው ነው? \_\_\_\_\_

21. ሌሎች ጉዳዮች ካሉ ይጥቀሱ \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix I

**ክፍል አምስት: የኤልፎራ የዶሮና የዶሮ ተዋፅኦ የምርት አቅርቦትና ተዛማጅ አገልግሎቶች ከተወዳዳሪዎቹ ጋር እንዴት ያነፃፅሩታል?**

የነጋዴ /የድርጅት/ ደንበኞችን ከማርካት አንፃር ኤልፎራን ከሌሎች ተወዳዳሪዎች ጋር እንዴት ያነፃፅሩታል?

ተ.ቁ	ጉዳዮች	በጣም የተሻለ	የተሻለ	ተቀራራቢ	አንድ እይነት	ዝቅተኛ
1	የምርት አቅርቦት ዓይነትና መጠን	5	4	3	2	1
2	የዋጋ ደረጃ	5	4	3	2	1
3	የምርት ማጓጓዣ አገልግሎት አመችነት	5	4	3	2	1
4	መጋዘንና የሽያጭ ቦታዎች አቀማመጥ አመችነት	5	4	3	2	1
5	ተዛማጅ አገልግሎት አሰጣጥና መስተገገዶ	5	4	3	2	1
6	የምርት ጥራት	5	4	3	2	1
7	የተገዛን ምርት በተሟላ ክብደት ማስረከብ	5	4	3	2	1
8	አጠቃላይ የኤልፎራ የምርት አቅርቦት አገልግሎት	5	4	3	2	1

**ክፍል ስድስት: አጠቃላይ ሐሳብ**

1. ከኤልፎራ ጋር በነበረው ወይም ያለው ግንኙነት ለወደፊቱ ለመቀጠል ወይም ላለመቀጠል ወሳኝ የሆኑ ጉዳዮች ምንድን ናቸው?

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2. ኤልፎራ ትኩረት ሰጥቶ ማሻሻል የሚገባው ዋናዎች ጉዳዮች ምንድን ናቸው?

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3. ሌላ በኤልፎራ ላይ የሚሰጡት ሃሳብ ካለዎት ይግለፁ?

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አመሰግናለሁ!!

**Appendix II**

**Addis Ababa University  
Post Graduate Program  
Business Education Department**

**Check list for Interview Questions to be responded by front-line employees**

1. Personal questions (current position, experience in the current position, age sex, educational back ground)
2. Is there a system in the organization that makes you participating in decision making activities? If yes; in what types of decision making activities of the organization do you participate?
3. Have you ever taken trainings on customer handling, poultry products marketing and handling system during your stay in ELFORA,
4. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your current job and position? If you are dissatisfied; list those reasons for your dissatisfaction
5. Is there any mechanism for handling complaints of Business Customers?
6. How ELFORA handles/responds to Business Customers complaints?
7. What are the three most frequent complains presented by business customers?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
8. How do you see the overall activities of ELFORA in satisfying business customers?( 5-highly satisfactory; 4-satisfactory; 3-nuetral; 2-dissatisfactory; or highly dissatisfactory)
9. What are the three most important attributes/dimensions that Business Customers give priority in purchasing poultry products?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
10. What are the three main reasons for business customers' dissatisfaction?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
11. What do you think/suggest ELFORA to increase Business Customer satisfaction
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
12. How do you see the overall activities of ELFORA in satisfying business customers in comparison to its competitors?

## Appendix III

**Customer Satisfaction Index in percent (CSI) = ( $\sum$ weighted satisfaction Score) X 5**

**Where weighted satisfaction score is determined by multiplying the average satisfaction by weighing factor derived from importance table. Table 8 weighing factors were derived as follows:**

Weighing factor for the item 3 in table 8, Supplier's (ELFORA's) quality system can be calculated as

- **Weighing factor of an attribute** = Average importance score of that attribute divided by ( $\sum$ average importance score), consider similar example:

**4.6034** divided by **79.724** = **0.0577** = **5.77 %**, where **79.724** is the sum of average importance score in table 8.

- **Weighted Satisfaction score of an attribute** = Average satisfaction score X Weighing factor so, weighted factor of the same example will be;

**Weighted Satisfaction Score = 4.1552 X 5.77 % = 0.240**

- **CSI =  $\sum$  (Weighted Satisfaction Score) X 5**, to obtain the CSI in percent, multiply the sum by 5.

**CSI = 3.783 = 3.783 X 5 = 75.66%**

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as  
University advisor

Name: Dr. Worku Mekonnen

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_