



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction of Ethio Telecom's Call Center

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A thesis submitted to School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of master of arts in Marketing Management

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June, 2017
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

This is to certify that this thesis entitled as “*Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction of Ethio Telecom’s Call Center*”, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Marketing Management to the School of Commerce of Addis Ababa University, done by **Meron Tilahun** is an authentic work carried out by her under our guidance. The theme embedded in this thesis has not been submitted earlier for the award of any degree or diploma in any other university to the best of our knowledge.

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This is to certify that MERON TILAHUN has carried out her research work on the topic entitled “*Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction of Ethio Telecom’s Call Center*” The work is original in nature and is suitable for the award of Master’s Degree in Marketing Management.

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Declaration

I, **Meron Tilahun**, declare that this work entitled “*Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction of Ethio Telecom’s Call Center*”, is the outcome of my own effort and study and that all sources of materials used for the study have been duly acknowledged. I have produced it independently except for the guidance and suggestion of my Research Advisor and internal examiner. This study has not been submitted for any degree in this University or any other University. It is offered for the partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Arts in Marketing Management.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ET..... Ethio Telecom

ETC..... Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation

IVR..... Interactive voice recorder

VC Voucher card

SERVPERF..... Service Performance Scale/Model

SERVQUAL Service Quality Scale/Model

Abstract

This research deals with the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction of ethio telecom call center service. The objectives of the research were to examine the quality of service provided by Ethio Telecom's call center and its effect on customer satisfaction by SERVPERV model.

A deductive research approach was used to execute the study. Data was gathered using the questionnaire from 358 respondents (customer of call center service of ET) who were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using statistical tools such as mean, correlation, and logistic regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that, all the service quality dimensions (reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance) have positive and significant relationship with customer satisfaction. Also the finding of this study indicates that customers were most satisfied with the assurance dimensions of service quality followed by responsiveness. Accordingly from the regression result it is observed that all service quality dimensions have positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. Furthermore, 22.7% of the variations in customer satisfaction explained by service quality dimensions in ethio telecom call center service. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher forwarded some recommendations to the call center management.

Key Words: Service quality, customer satisfactio

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This chapter contains the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, Operational definition of terms and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the study

In service industry, the concept of quality holds the main position. The relationship with the customer is based on the promise that customer satisfaction is achieved through providing standard quality of service. The high quality demands on customers end is becoming prominent due to the growing fact that high level of service quality leads to sustainable competitive advantage in the competitive business environment (Sureshchandar, 2002) It is not surprising to know that quality level of services is the leading phenomena to plan strategies in the services firms (Khamalah and Lingaraj 2007).

Service has been defined in many ways by various scholars through time. Still there is no universal definition of service. But these are well known definitions of service. A service is any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Another definition is by Gronroos, (2001) defined service as an activity or series of activities of more or less intangible nature that normally, but not necessarily, take place in interactions between the customer and service employee and/or systems of the service provider, which are provided as solutions to customer problems.

Customer satisfaction is a personal feeling of either pleasure or disappointment resulting from the evaluation of services provided by an organization to an individual in relation to expectations (Oliver, 1980). Customer satisfaction is a comparison of customer expectations with perception regarding actual service encounter (Huffman & Bateson, 2001). Various authors have written about determinant factor of customer satisfaction. Although there are debates among them, most of the authors explained that quality is major factor in satisfying customer. Service quality has therefore been defined as an overall judgment similar to attitudes towards the service and generally accepted as an antecedent of overall customer satisfaction (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

Since customer satisfaction has been considered to be based on the customer's experience on a particular service encounter, (Cronin & Taylor, 1992) it is in line with the fact that service quality is a determinant of customer satisfaction, because service quality comes from outcome of the services from service providers in organizations. Another author stated in his theory that "definitions of consumer satisfaction relate to a specific transaction (the difference between predicted service and perceived service) in contrast with 'attitudes', which are more enduring and less situational-oriented," (Lewis, 1993). Regarding the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality, Oliver (1993) first suggested that service quality would be antecedent to customer satisfaction regardless of whether these constructs were cumulative or transaction-specific.

Quality is generally regarded as being a key factor in the creation of worth and in influencing customer satisfaction. Hence, the telecommunication industry has to be strategically positioned to provide quality service to satisfy customer. To provide improved quality service, telecommunication companies need to investigate degree of customers' sensitivity and expectation towards service quality. Armed with such information, telecommunication outfits are then able to strategically focus service quality objectives and procedures to fit the market.

The formerly known "Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC)" is introduced in 1894, seventeen years after the invention of telephone technology in the world. ETC is state owned sole telecommunication service provider in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government has decided to transform the telecommunication infrastructure and services to world class standard,

considering them as a key lever to the development of Ethiopia. Thus, Ethio Telecom (ET) is born out of ETC on December 2, 2011, in order to bring about a paradigm shift in the development of the telecom sector to support the steady growth of our country.

Currently Ethio Telecom provide telecom service in the entire country on voice, internet, data, channels and value added services (VAS) with comprehensive plans in place to meet the requirements set out by the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology (MCIT) and peoples of Ethiopia (www.ethiotelecom.et).

According to Trevor Arden and Stephanie Edwards (2009), customer service is a sum total of what an organization does to meet customer expectations and produce customers' satisfaction. In order to meet expectations of customers, organizations must study their own service characteristics. Service characteristics are the individual elements that make up the service provided to customers. According to Zeithaml and Bitner (2003), One path to achieving customer's satisfaction is through effective customer service. Customer service is the provision of service to customers, before, during and after a purchase. Creating satisfied customers include prompt and effective response and solutions to their need and complains.

One of the most basic types of customer service is call center. A large business will often devote an entire department to taking calls free of charge from customers who have needs or concerns about the business' service or product. The representatives who work at the call center will usually be the first people to hear about the customers' concerns and will either resolve the problem or contact the people who can. Company call centers are the link between customers and the company, and how they handle customer concerns reflects on the company in a very important way.

According to “the Call Center Association, 1999 call centers are physical or virtual operation within an organization in which a managed group of people spend most of their time doing business by telephone, usually working in a computer – automated “environment” . Call center sector has emerged globally in the last 10 to 15 years around the globe. It serves large number of customers and wide varieties of services from very simple to complex. Call Centers are used to provide various services free of charge which include customer support services, technical

support services, sales and telemarketing services, administrative support services, customer relationship management, finance and accounting services, human resource management etc.

Now a day's Call centers are the major channels of communication with the customers. Today's, call center industry is one of the most rapidly growing industries in the world. Call centers are providing a mix of services like customer support, technical support, sales and telemarketing, administrative support, customer relationship management, financial services, human resource management. In Ethiopia, call center industry is in infant stage relative to other countries who have call center services for example, in India call center Industry is a huge industry employing more than 330,000 people and is worth about £3.2 billion a year and growing at a very fast rate of around 25% per annum. Today, more than 500 companies of UK, USA and other developed countries are outsourcing their call center activities to India.

The formerly known Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation started operator based call center service namely 997 and 998 through manually operated system serving by operators. The 997 call center service was open for all types of customer for any enquiry but mainly customer were calling for directory and bill information on other hand 998 call center deployed for helping customer to assist for communicating international call servicing as an exchange site. When the old ETC is transformed to ET in 2011 the call center service also changed its name to 994 and nature of service, system and work flow also changed. (www.ethiotelecom.et).

Currently Ethio Telecom provide two types of call center services namely 994 and 980 in four different places by employing nearly 2315 staffs, both services are provided through online telephone supporting by IVR (interactive voice response). 994 call center is accessible to all service users of Ethio Telecom around the country and it's serving customer in five different languages specifically English, Amharic, Oromiffa, Tigrigna and Somali, whereas 980 call center is dedicated only for selected enterprise, VIP and Key account customers of the company and the customers are served in English and Amharic languages. 994 call center services work 24/7 to support customer enquiry by providing full information about ET products and services, subscription requirements, billing and related enquires, activation of value added services, fault

registration, status update and follow up but even if the support given by advisors of 980 and 994 are the same the working hour of 980 call center is from Monday to Saturday in office hours.

According to the study by Collart (2000), one of the determinants of success of a firm is how the customer perceives the service quality, as this is the key driver of the perceived value. It is the perceived value which determines customers' satisfaction. In ethio telecom, call centers are trying to satisfying customers by reducing the overall cost of transaction and improving the quality of interaction with customers. But it's becoming difficult for call centers to make a balance between quality and efficiency while trying to achieve companies' objectives. The major objective of this study, therefore, is to examine the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in ethio telecom call centers and to find out important dimensions of services having greater influence on customer satisfaction.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2003), satisfying the needs of customers is the major priority to be considered if the company is to survive and prosper. However, many organizations seem to be far from satisfying the needs of their customers and as a result fail to be successful, while some organizations that constantly follow up the needs of their customers are observed to achieve their goals of bringing customer loyalty and boosting their revenue.

Customer satisfaction is a critical issue in the success of any business system. According to Potluri and Magnale (2010) customer satisfaction is the key to survival and the source of competitive advantage for organizations (Anderson, Fornell & Lehmann, 1994). Empirically, researches support the concept that there is a positive relationship between customers' satisfaction and financial performance (Rust & oliver, 1994; Anderson et al, 1994). However, the case in Ethio Telecom is the reverse to what the researchers found. Which means the organization is always profitable and has excellent financial performance but customers are dissatisfied with most of its services. This is because Ethio Telecom is the sole telecommunication service provider and it has 100% market share with the highly growing telecom service demand in Ethiopia due to that whether the customers are satisfied or not with

service quality of the company there is no choice for the customer to switch provider in to one of the competitors except staying unsatisfied.

It has been proven from past researches on service quality and customer satisfaction that customer satisfaction and service quality are related from their definitions to their relationships with other aspects in business. Some authors have agreed to the fact that service quality determines customer satisfaction. Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A. and Berry, L.L., (1985) in their study, proposed that when perceived service quality is high, then it will lead to increase in customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is influenced by various factors. According to Andaleeb and Conway (2006) service quality is the main driving factor for satisfaction of customer in service sectors. Therefore a firm should concentrate on the improvement of service quality and charge appropriate fair price in order to satisfy its customers who would ultimately help the firm to retain its customers (Gusfaffsson, 2005). Telecom sector like other sectors is not exception to the rule. Zeithaml, and Bittner (2006) found satisfied customers of telecom sector have high extent of usage and intentions to repurchase in future like in the other sector. Besides, Kim (2004) found that call quality, value added services and customer support play a significant role in building customer satisfaction for telecom service subscribers and they tend to keep using current service as the level of the customer satisfaction is high that leads to customer loyalty.

Call center service is one way of online customer support free of charge which is provided by Ethio Telecom for its service users throughout the country. Since call center is serving as a bridge between the company and its customers the service given by the call center have to maintain the service quality expected by the customer in order to get customer satisfaction. A central challenge in designing and managing a service operation in general, and telephone-based services in particular, is to achieve a desired balance between operational efficiency and service quality to provide a desired customer satisfaction.

There are a number of complaints on the service delivery system of Ethio Telecom call center service. A Number of reasons are behind these customer discontents. Whatever the reasons may be, once the customer is dissatisfied, it would be very difficult to gain their trust. In this regard, a

research should be carried out to urge a major reform, to assesses the root causes of the problem and get the problem rectified.

According to customer satisfaction survey on call center service made by ethio telecom customer service department which is taken for two month of duration from November 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 by participating 1.4 million customers 534,232 manual rating which is filled by customers without contacting advisors immediately after the survey and 877,049 automatic rating which is filled by customers after contacting advisors before the survey on two parameters satisfaction and willingness to help for manual survey and three parameters for satisfaction, willingness to help and accessibility for automatic survey the finding for satisfaction on the call center services was 60.83% from automatic survey and 69.62% for manual survey. From the finding we can see the huge gap which is 30.38% of customers of the call center are dissatisfied with the service quality of the center. This shows the satisfaction level of customers on call center services are far from the target which is 100%, expected by customers and the companies too.

Even if the survey give us some clue on the overall level of customer satisfaction on the call center it didn't incorporate service quality dimensions or use other models in order to see the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction and which quality parameter have major influence. But, only show us general comment of customers towards the service. The study attempted to look in to the overall service quality of call center services and customer satisfaction level in ethio telecom call center by using service quality dimensions which has not been done by the company or other researchers as well in this specific area. Therefore, the main interest of this study was to measure the perception of customers concerning a service provided by call center and find out whether Ethio Telecom has met the perception of its customers under all the dimensions of service quality.

1.3 Research Question

The main research question of the study was:

- Does the service quality of call center have impact on customer satisfaction?

In addition to the main question stated above, the attempted to find answers for the following sub questions

- What is the overall satisfaction of customers with the call center service?
- In which quality dimension is the service quality gap higher in call center services of ethio telecom provided to customers?
- What is the relationships between the overall service quality and customer satisfaction in call center services?
- How significant are the dimensions in predicting overall service quality and satisfaction with call center service of ethio telecom?
- What is the dominant service quality dimension that has a strong relation with customer satisfaction?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the quality of service provided by ethio telecom's call center and its impact on customer satisfaction.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To examine the overall satisfaction level of the customer.
- To examine which dimension have the higher quality gap.
- To examine the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction.
- To identify the significant dimension in predicting customer satisfaction.
- Identifying the dominant dimension of service quality that drives customers' perceived service quality in call center.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Even if there are few documents about the service quality and customer satisfaction with regard to Ethio Telecom call center service, there are no previous well documented studies on service quality and its subsequent effect on customer satisfaction with regard to the call center service. This research, therefore, plays a role in filling the research gap related to service quality and customer satisfaction using a model that will describe the various factors of service delivery through five dimensions.

This study will serve as an input for researchers and other interested people in related topic and to acquire broader knowledge about the subject matter under the study. As a researcher I'm also the beneficiary of this study by getting experience of how to conduct a research and the experience will help me in order to make other researches.

Other government and private service giving organizations who provide call center service of their own can use the study to get practical experience of customer expectation of service quality and their satisfaction level for call center service.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Ethio Telecom is providing call center service for each and every one of its customer throughout the country. The study on service quality and customer satisfaction of Ethio Telecom call center services was restricted only on some sample of customers focusing on Amharic language (IVR) users of the call center service.

Sample respondents were selected randomly from ET's call center database system on which telephone numbers of those customers who recently called to the center is recorded. Then, the data was collected using the telephone survey method having a questioner which was developed using SERVPERF model.

Because of the broad nature of this area of study, accessing all the literature concerning customer satisfaction and service quality would have been very voluminous. Thus the literature was limited around the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions of the SERVPERF model.

1.7 Limitation of the study

Since Ethio Telecom is the only telecom service provider in the country, the customers are millions in numbers and there are different customer segmentation and the company give two types of call center service namely 994 for residential in five languages which are Amharic, English, Oromiffa, Tigrigna and Somali and 980 for enterprise customers. Because of the difficulty of accessing all service users of the company call center, the study was limited to the exploration and analysis of ET's call center service customer satisfaction and service quality focusing on only some samples of Amharic IVR users who called during one week. Thus the findings of the study give some picture of the quality of the call center service provided by the company and it can contribute to further study on quality of the call center service and its impact on customer satisfaction.

1.8 Definition of terms

- Service quality: the degree and direction of discrepancy between the consumers' perceptions and expectations, or the extent to which a service meets or exceeds customer expectation.
- Customer satisfaction: satisfaction can also be a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment that results from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome with their expectations.
- Customer - is the recipient of a services or idea obtained from a seller, vendor, or supplier for a monetary or other valuable consideration
- Call center- is a physical place where customer and other telephone calls are handled by an organization, usually with some amount of computer automation.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study paper is organized in five chapters. Chapter one is composed of background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the

study, scope of the study and organization of the study. The second chapter presents theoretical backgrounds on service quality and customer satisfaction, different model and frameworks are discussed with their strength and criticism followed by a review of previous studies particularly empirical literatures related to the SERVPERF dimension. Chapter three discuss about research methodology details. The empirical results with descriptive statistics of the model is presented and analyzed in the fourth chapter. Lastly, chapter five presents the conclusion and recommendation of the overall finding.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

In this chapter relevant literature in service quality, customer satisfaction, customer perception and expectation, relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, and measuring service quality and customer satisfaction is reviewed.

2.1 Theoretical Review

In theoretical review part how the concept are defined by different authors and what the relevant variables functions, importance, advantage and limitation related to the variables will be discussed.

2.1.1 Who are customers?

Smith (2003) defined Customer as any individual or group of individuals to whom a company supplies one or more products or services.

Customers could be any of a range of people or organizations; they could be:-

- External customers:- individuals, end users or consumers of a product or service, these are outside an organization.
- Internal Customers:- individuals, departments or sub groups within an organization.
- Corporate customers:- organization, that an organization does business with, such as suppliers, distribution companies or transport providers. (These are also external customers, as they too are outside the organization) Arden and Edwards (2009).

2.1.2 What is Service?

Services are economic activities offered by one party to another. In exchange for money, time, and effort, service customers expect value from access to goods, labor, professional skills, facilities, networks, and systems; but they do not normally take ownership of the physical elements involved (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

A service occurs when an interaction is established between customers and service providers and/or the physical component of the service and/or the systems through which the service is delivered (Shahin & Janatyan, 2011).

Service is any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product (Kotler, 2006).

Service has different characteristics. Mudie & Pirrie (2006) in their book explained that service has four key characteristics. These are intangibility, perishability, variability (or heterogeneity) and inseparability.

Arden and Edwards (2009) identified key four distinguishing characteristics of service with their implications

1. Intangibility

Services cannot be generally be seen, felt, heard or smelled before being bought. The potential customer is unable to perceive the service before (and sometimes during and after) the service delivery.

Implications

Intangibility present problems in those customers may experience difficulty in knowing and understanding what is an offer before, and even after receipt of the service. The challenge for the service provider is to determine the extent of intangibility and the

management action required to make the service more tangible example, via brochure to help customers understand the service.

2. Inseparability

Whereas goods are first produced, then stored, finally sold and consumed, services are first sold, then produced and consumed simultaneously. Service inseparability means that services cannot be separated from their providers whether the providers are people or machines.

Implications

The involvement of the customer in the production and delivery of service means that the service provider must exercise care in what is being produced and how it is produced. Proper selection and training customer contact personnel are necessary to ensure the delivery of quality.

3. Variability

An unavoidable consequence of simultaneous production and consumption is variability in performance of a service. The quality of the service may vary depending on who provides it as well as when, where and how it is provided. As such, service quality is difficult to control.

Implications

Reducing variability involves determining the causes, it may be due to unsuitable personality traits in an employee which are difficult to detect at the selection stage and increasing standardization of procedures may be required.

4. Perishability

Services cannot be stored for later sales or use. If demand far exceeds supply, it cannot be met.

Implications

Fluctuation in demand characterizes service organization and may pose problems where these fluctuations are unpredictable. Strategies need to be developed for producing a better match between supply and demand.

2.1.3 Customer Service

Customer service is defined as an organization's ability to constantly and consistently meet the needs and expectations of its customers. In other words, customer service is meeting the needs and desires of any customer. In the corporate world, the emphasis on customer service has been described as a marketing concept of business management. When an organization has adopted the marketing concept, it 'moves' from a product orientation to a customer orientation. The foundation of the marketing concept is a business philosophy that leaves no doubt in the mind of every employee that customer satisfaction is primary importance (Kaliski, 2001).

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) defined customer service as the service provided in support of a company's core products. Customer service is provided by various types of companies including manufacturing, IT companies and service companies. Customer service provided by companies most often includes answering questions, taking orders, dealing with billing issues, handling complaints, and perhaps scheduling maintenance or repairs. Customer service can occur on site, or it can occur over the phone or via internet. Many companies operate customer service call centers, often staffed around the clock. Quality customer service is essential to build customer relationships.

2.1.4 Service quality

According to Irons (1997), quality and value can only be judged in a context of customers' expectations and experiences. It is value to the customer which should be the driver of quality and this need to be a dynamic factor, responding to change.

Quality doesn't exist in an objective fashion, rather it is perceived subjectively and in a personal way by every single customer. Consequently, it is appropriate to talk about perceived service quality. The perceived service quality is a function of the expectations and the experience of a given customer. If the experienced service equals the expected service, the service quality will be good. On the other hand, if the experience is below the expectations, the customer will probably be unsatisfied and the perceived service quality will be lower.

Service quality in the management and marketing literature is the extent to which customers' perceptions of service meet and/or exceed their expectations for example as defined by Zeithaml et al. Thus service quality can intend to be the way in which customers are served in an organization which could be good or poor. Parasuraman defines service quality as "the differences between customer expectations and perceptions of service" (Parasuraman, 1988). They argued that measuring service quality as the difference between perceived and expected service was a valid way and could make management to identify gaps to what they offer as services.

The aim of providing quality services is to satisfy customers. Measuring service quality is a better way to dictate whether the services are good or bad and whether the customers will or are satisfied with it. A researcher listed in his study: "three components of service quality, called the 3 "Ps" of service quality" (Haywood, 1988). In the study, service quality was described as comprising of three elements:

- Physical facilities, processes and procedures;
- Personal behavior on the part of serving staff, and;
- Professional judgment on the part of serving staff but to get good quality service.

He stated that "an appropriate, carefully balanced mix of these three elements must be achieved." (Haywood, 1988) What constitutes an appropriate mix, according to him will, in part, be determined by the relative degrees of labour intensity, service process customization, and contact and interaction between the customer and the service process. From the look of things, this idea of his could be design to fit with evaluating service quality with the employee perspective.

Quality can only be judged in a context of customers' expectations and experience. Its value to the customers which should be the driving force of quality needs to be a dynamic factor responding to change. Ken Irons (1997) said "service is the one unique opportunity we have to be better than competitors and make sure our customers return" which would mainly be the result of a quality service. Gronroos (1984) defined service quality as the outcome of an evaluation of process where the consumer compares their expectations with the service they received. He postulated that customer perceived service quality is a function of expected service, perceived service, and image quality. Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982) defined service quality in terms of physical quality, interactive quality and corporate (image) quality. Physical quality is associated with tangible aspects of the service. Interactive quality involves the interactive nature of services and refers to the two-way flow, which occurs between the customer and the service provider, or his/her representative, including both automated and animated interactions. Corporate quality refers to the image attributed to a service provider by its current and potential customers, as well as other publics.

They also suggested that, when compared with the other two quality dimensions, corporate quality tends to be more stable over time. Researchers argue that the distinctive nature of services requires a distinctive approach to defining and measuring service quality. As a result of the intangible multifaceted nature of many services, it may be harder to evaluate the quality of a service than of a good. Because customers are often involved in service production particularly in people processing services, distinction needs to be drawn between the process of service delivery and the actual output of the service. Perceived quality of service is the result of an evaluation process in which customers compare their perception of service delivery and its outcome against what they expect.

2.1.5 Service Quality Dimensions

In services marketing literature, service quality has been reported as a second order construct being composed of first order variables (Sachdev and Verma, 2004). Various authors have provided different conceptualizations over time.

They include Gronroos (1984) three-component structure (technical quality, functional quality and reputational quality); Lehtinen and Lehtinen's (1982) three component conceptualization (interactive, physical and corporate quality); Hedvall and Paltschik (1989) two dimension model (willingness and ability to serve; and physical and psychological access); Garvin (1988) nine dimensional approach (performance, features, conformance, reliability, durability, serviceability, response, aesthetics and reputation); Oliver and Rust's (1994) functional quality, technical quality and environmental quality construct; Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) conceptualization of five dimensions (tangibles (T), reliability (R), responsiveness (R), assurance (A) and empathy (E) which eventually led to the development of the SERVQUAL instrument. However, the five dimensional construct of Parasuraman et. al. (1988) happens to be the most universally accepted and most extensively used. Assurance has been defined as the "employees' knowledge and courtesy and the service provider's ability to inspire trust and confidence (Zeithaml et al 2006).

According to Har (2008), this dimension may differ from one industry to the other. In some it may be very important, in others it may not. Andaleeb and Conway (2006) observed that assurance may not be so important relative to other industries where the risk is higher and the outcome of using the service is uncertain. They concluded that in the health sector, for example, assurance is a very much important dimension to clients assessing a hospital or a surgeon for an operation. Empathy, according to Har (2008), is treating the customer as if he is unique and special. It is defined as the caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers (Zeithaml et al, 2006). Like the other dimensions, the importance of this factor differs from industry to industry.

Empathy has been found to be more suitable and important in enhancing service quality in industries where building relationships with customers and clients ensures the firm's survival as opposed to "transaction marketing" (Andaleeb and Conway, 2006). Thus Har has argued that in quick service restaurant setting, the customer look for quick service and whether the queues at the counters are long and in that context empathy may not be so important. He however indicated

that in fine dining restaurant, empathy may be important to ensure customer loyalty as the server knows how the customer likes his or her food prepared (Har, 2008).

Reliability is about the organization keeping its word. It is defined as “the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately” or delivering on its promises” (Zeithaml et al, 2006). Responsiveness is the willingness to help and provide prompt service. This dimension is concerned with dealing with customer’s requests, questions and complaints promptly and attentively.

A firm is known to be responsive if it takes time to communicate to its clients how long it would take to get answers or have their problems dealt with (Har, 2008). Tangibles is defined as the physical appearance of facilities, equipment, staff and written materials. Tangibles are used to convey images and to signal quality (Zeithaml et al 2006). Hayes (1997), states that some quality dimensions are generalized across many services, but some will apply only to specific type of services and it is necessary to understand quality dimensions to be able to develop measures to assess them.

2.1.6 Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the consumer’s fulfillment response. It is a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under or over-fulfillment (Oliver 2010). Zeithaml and Bitner (2000) defined customer satisfaction as the customers’ evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether that product or service has met their needs and expectations.

Customer satisfaction can also be defined as the “customer’s response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectation and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption” (Tse and Wilton, 1998). Jamal and Nazer (2002) cited argued that customer satisfaction is not only linked with the view of customers but also on their experience with the service delivery process.

Customer satisfaction as an important concept in marketing and has been used as a benchmark to measure the performance of companies (Manhasa and Takumashaba, 2015). Service quality can improve customer satisfaction and later on can encourage customer positive desires. High quality service can drive positive customer desires, and vice versa (Su, 2011). Kotler and Amstrong (2012) stated that customer satisfaction is the level of one's feelings after comparing products performance that gets along with his expectations. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction of consumers is a response to the evaluation of discrepancy or disconfirmation perceived between previous expectations and actual product performance that is felt after use.

Holbrook (1994) suggests that customer satisfaction is one of the goals of marketing activity. In accord with Holbrook's suggestion, Kotler & Amstrong (2003) explain that customer satisfaction is an essential element in marketing, or a fundamental concern.

Holbrook (199) explained that although some studies interpreted service quality perceptions as an outcome of satisfaction, recent studies have characterized service quality as an antecedent of satisfaction. We except the position that customers can evaluate a service (be satisfied or dissatisfied) only after they perceive it. Many authors who studied the relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction have shown that service quality determines customer satisfaction. Anderson et al (1994) believes that the concept of service should be approached from a customer perspective. It is the customer's total perception of the outcome, which is "the service". It forms the perception of quality and determines whether a particular customer is satisfied or not. Customers have different values and different grounds for assessment; they may perceive one and the same service in different ways.

Therefore a company must first find out the level of satisfaction of its current customers to improve its customer satisfaction. One common way of measuring satisfaction is to ask customers first to identify what factors are important in satisfying them and then to evaluate the performance of a service provider and its competitors on these factors. Many firms use a five point scale to measure customer satisfaction, with the following format; 1= very dissatisfied, 2=somewhat dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4= somewhat satisfied 5=very satisfied.

The result of the satisfaction surveys can be used to estimate the number of loyal customers a firm has as well as how many are at risk defecting Lovelock and Writz (2004).

2.1.7 Customer Expectations and Perception

Expectations are formed prior to usage of the service and perceptions are the customer's evaluation of the service. After the service has been consumed, customers compare the perceived service with the expected service and if the perceived service meets or exceeds the expected service, the customer is satisfied. $\text{Satisfaction} = \text{perception} - \text{expectations}$. (Mudie and CTTAM, 1993)

2.1.7.1 Customer Expectation

Service quality is determined by comparing customer's expectation and perception. Before the process of service delivery starts, we should know what customers expect to receive. Expectations are usually formed prior to usage of a service but may also occur where a customer is actively involved in the delivery of a service. They reflect inclinations or beliefs as to what will or should happen (Mudie & Pirrie, 2006). Past literatures define expectations as desires and wants of customers. It refers to what the customers think a company should provide. Customers might expect to be treated in a particular way unconsciously when they are entering into a transaction (Timm, 2001). They have their own set of expectations for different transactions. Specially consultancy service customers clearly define their expectation and select organizations that deliver the expected service.

2.1.7.2 Customer Perceptions

To analyze service quality customer expectation only is not enough. Assessing customer perception is necessary. Most literatures in the past stated that evaluation of service quality should consider both expectation and perception. Customers perceive service quality differently. They have their own standards based on their prior experience. A specific service that is considered as high quality service by one customer may be perceived as low quality by other.

Perceptions can be developed during a service, but invariably materialize after usage (Mudie & Pirrie, 2006). If their expectations are met, service quality will be regarded as satisfactory or good; otherwise, it will be regarded as unsatisfactory, bad, poor or deficient. When customers' perception exceeds their expectations, the firm would be commented as excellent and the chance of turning customers into repeat customers would increase (Timm, 2001).

2.1.7.2.1 How Expectations are formed

Customers' expectations about what constitutes good service vary from one business to another. Expectations are also likely to vary in relation to differently positioned service providers in the same industry. People's expectation about services tend to be strongly influenced by their own prior experience as customers with a particular service providers, with competing services in the same industry, or with related services in different industries. If they have no prior experience, customer may base their pre-purchase expectation on word-of-mouth comments, news, and firm's own marketing efforts.

Expectations change over time, influenced by both suppliers controlled factors such as advertising, pricing, new technologies, and service innovation, as well as social trends, advocacy by consumer organizations, and increased access to information through the media and the internet. (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004)

2.1.7.2.2 The Components of Customer Expectations

According to Lovelock and Wirtz (2004), Customer expectation embrace several elements, including desired service, adequate service, predicted service and a zone of tolerance that falls between the desired and adequate service levels.

1. Desired and Adequate service levels:- the type of service customers hope to receive is termed as DESIRED SERVICE. It is a "whished-for" level; a combination of what customers believe can and should be delivered in the context of the personal needs. However, most customer are realistic and understand that companies can't deliver the

desired level of service; hence, they also have a threshold level of expectations termed ADEQUATE SERVICE, which is defined as the minimum level of service customers will accept without being dissatisfied. The levels of both desired and adequate service expectations may reflect explicit and implicit promises by the provider, word of mouth comments, and the customer's past experience, if any, with the organization. Among the factors that set the expectations are situational factors affecting service performance, and the level of service, that might be anticipated from alternative providers.

2. Predicted Service Value:- the level of service that customer anticipate receiving is known as predicted service, which directly affects how they define 'adequate service' on the occasion. If good service is predicted, the adequate level will be higher than if poor service is predicted. Customer prediction of service may be situation specific.
3. Zone of tolerance:-the inherent nature of services makes consistent service delivery difficult across employee from one day to another. The extent to which customers are willing to accept this variation is called the zone of tolerance. A performance that falls below the adequate service level will cause frustration and dissatisfaction, whereas, one that exceeds the desired level will both please and surprise customers. Another way of looking the zone of tolerance is to think of it as a range of service within which customers don't pay explicit attention to service performance. When service falls outside this range, customer will react either positively or negatively.

2.1.7.2.3 How Confirmation or Disconfirmation of Expectations Relate to Satisfaction

The term quality and satisfaction sometimes used interchangeably, however, some researchers believe that the perceived service quality is one component of customer satisfaction, which also reflect price or quality tradeoffs, as well as personal and situational factors.

Satisfaction can be defined as an attitude like judgment following a purchase act or a series of consumer product interactions. Most of studies are based on the theory that the confirmation or disconfirmation of pre-consumption expectation is the essential determinants of satisfaction. This means that customers have some certain services standard in mind (their expectation) prior to

their consumption, observe service performance and compare it to their standards and then form satisfaction judgments based on comparison. The resulting judgment is labeled negative disconfirmation if the service is worse than expected, and some simple confirmation if as expected. When there is substantial positive disconfirmation, along with pleasure and element of surprise, customers are likely to be delighted. **(Lovelock and Wirtz 2004)**

2.1.8 Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

During past few decades the interest of academics and researchers has been increased to measure the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. Both customer satisfaction and service quality are considered as extensive and vast subjects of research and many studies related to customer satisfaction are conducted in the area of service settings (Cadotte, Woodruff and Jenkins, 1980).

In marketing theory, the consumer satisfaction category has the main position. It is based on the premise that the profit is made through the process of satisfaction of consumers' demands (Dubrovski, 2001). A further debate has considered whether service quality is a cause of customer satisfaction (Cronin and Taylor, 1992), (Parasuraman et al., 1985). It then helps to identify a link between both constructs.

The increased level of customer satisfaction, decreases the chances that customers will be pointing the flaws in the quality (Anderson et al., 1997). In service settings it would offer a better perspective of the relative importance of service quality determinants by developing more comprehensive models of the drivers of customer satisfaction (Anderson et al., 1997). A great similarity between the customer satisfaction and service quality is observed, however researchers are careful to say that these two are different concepts (Spreng and Singh, 1993; Oliva, Oliver, and MacMillan, 1992).

In academics both constructs are recognized as distinct and independent (Oliver, 1980). Whereas a wide literature studies shows that both concepts are distinct conceptually but also are closely related to each other (Parasuraman et al., 1994; Shemwell et al., 1998) and any increase in one (quality) leads to increase in another (satisfaction) (Sureshchandar et al., 2002). However there

are number of variations found in literature between service quality and customer satisfaction. Cronin and Taylor, 1994; Boulton and Drew 1991 stated that Satisfaction is customer decision after an experience while quality is not.

According to Cronin and Taylor (1992) it is important to have this distinction between the two concept for managers and academics, as there is a greater need to understand either the firms objective is to perform in a way that satisfies the customers or they should strive to provide maximum level of service quality perceived by its customers.

There are researchers like Hurley and Estelami (1998) who states that service quality and satisfaction are distinct constructs, and there is a causal relationship between the two, and the impression about the quality of service influence emotions related to satisfaction which, in turn, affect future purchase behavior. Also customer satisfaction is viewed as the overall assessment of the service provider (Anderson et al., 1997).

The literature related to service quality and satisfaction has emphasized that customers compare the performance of product and services on some standards (Spreng & Mackoy, 1996). Also the quality of service as perceived by the customers is considered as an important factor that affects the level of satisfaction. Due to its relative importance in the service context it became a wide debatable topic and focus of research for academics.

Literature revealed that the difference between perceived service quality and satisfaction is due to the use of different standards of comparison (Zeithaml et al., 1993; Parasuraman et al., 1988). Different authors stated that the standard of comparison to form satisfaction depends on customer's feelings regarding what will come out (predictive expectations) where perceived service quality defines what customers believe that a firm should deliver, also it is a result of comparing the performance (Spreng & Mackoy, 1996) .

Essentially, customer satisfaction is the sense that customers get when they experience service that fulfills or surpasses their expectation. Primarily in marketing, satisfaction is defined as the global evaluation of relationship fulfillment by a firm (Dwyer and Oh, 1987) or the positively

affected state resulting from the assessment of a firm's working relationship (Farrelly and Quester, 2005). Satisfaction is also one of the most important elements to explain any type of relationship among participants (Sanzo et al., 2003) and a consumer's fulfillment response (Oliver, 1997). Generally, customer satisfaction is known as an outcome of service quality, which means that it is related to the quality of the products or services provided to the customer in a positive manner. The level of customer satisfaction is also believed to be enhanced, along with an increased level of perceived quality of the product or service. In particular, customer satisfaction is considered to be an intrinsic variable that explains returning customers and their post-behaviors of purchasing products and services (Oliver, 1980; Lee, 2000; Szymanski, and Henard, 2001).

Since customer satisfaction has been considered to be based on the customer's experience on a particular service encounter, (Ekinici, 2004) it is in line with the fact that service quality is a determinant of customer satisfaction, because service quality comes from outcome of the services from service providers in organizations. Another author stated in his theory that: "definitions of consumer satisfaction relate to a specific transaction (the difference between predicted service and perceived service) in contrast with attitudes, which are more enduring and less situational-oriented," (Lewis, 2006).

Regarding the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality, Oliver (2009) first suggested that service quality would be antecedent to customer satisfaction regardless of whether these constructs were cumulative or transaction-specific. Some researchers have found empirical supports for the view of the point mentioned above where customer satisfaction came as a result of service quality. In relating customer satisfaction and service quality, researchers have been more precise about the meaning and measurements of satisfaction and service quality. Satisfaction and service quality have certain things in common, but satisfaction generally is a broader concept, whereas service quality focuses specifically on dimensions of service (Wilson, 2008).

Although it is stated that other factors such as price and product quality can affect customer satisfaction, perceived service quality is a component of customer satisfaction (Wilson et al.

2008). This theory complies with the idea of Wilson et al. (2008) and has been confirmed by the definition of customer satisfaction presented by other researchers.

2.1.9 Factors Affecting Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

For marketers or service providers, achieving customer satisfaction is important because it is supposed to be an important motive of customer loyalty, repeated business (with customer) and positive word of mouth (Bearden and Teel, 1983). However quality is not the only factor that effects the customer satisfaction, there are other factors besides quality like Performance, Expectations, (Mohr, 1982) desires and price factor affect the customer perceptions and the overall satisfaction level. Where quality of service is a descendent of customer satisfaction as described by Cronin and Taylor (1992), Service quality is not the only factor that has direct impact on customer satisfaction.

Identification of other elements beside quality that effects the satisfaction is critical. The other factors as described by Woodruff & Albert (2002) are value, corporate reputation, image and transaction satisfaction. On other hand factors that affect the service quality other than those of intangible nature like human interaction in service delivery, rest are of tangible nature, design and décor elements, the effect of atmospherics, employee appearance and appearance of equipment etc (Sureshchandar et al., 2002). A clear understanding of all these factors that affect the relationship between service quality, and customer satisfaction results in overall performance of the firm and can help to ensure better implementation of resource that firm required putting in place.

2.1.10 Measuring Service Quality

Sachdev and Verma (2004), had stated that service quality by its very nature is an elusive, indistinct and abstract concept. Consumers do not easily articulate their requirement and also there are difficulties in delimiting and measuring the concept. As a result only a handful of researchers have operationalized the concept.

In the literature two perspectives of service quality measurement have been identified - internal and external perspectives. The internal perspective is defined as zero defect - doing it right the first time, or conformance to requirements (Garvin, 1988). The external perspective sees service quality in terms of customer perception, customer expectation, customer satisfaction, customer attitude and customer delight (Sachdev and Verma, 2004). The external perspective has become important because of increasing customer awareness, changing consumer tastes and growing consumer expectations (Sachdev and Verma, 2004) and it is the concern of this study.

As Curry and Herbert (1998) put it, quality is generally transparent when it is present, but easily recognized when it is absent. If service quality is to be the cornerstone of any organizations strategy, then there must be a means of measuring it.

Many different methods exist to measure, control and improve quality in various fields. It would be helpful if quality was an easily defined and unambiguous concept. Unfortunately, quality is hard to define and often difficult if not impossible to measure.

Service quality is viewed as a multi-dimensional concept. Consumers assess and evaluate a number of factors or dimensions. The fifth gap, in the Gaps Model of Service Quality gave rise to SERVQUAL, a self-administered questionnaire purported to be a generic measure of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Many literature and research have been using this method as standardized instrument in various settings with only minor modification.

2.1.10.1 Soft and Hard Service Quality Measures

According to Christopher H. Lovelock and Jochen Wirtz (2004) Customer defined standards and measures of service quality can be grouped into two broad categories, **soft** and **hard**. Soft measures are those that cannot easily be observed and must be collected by talking to customers, employees or others. As noted by Zeithaml and Bitner(2003), “Soft standards provide direction, guidance and feedback to employees on ways to achieve customer satisfaction and can be quantified by measuring customer perceptions and beliefs” by contrast, hard standards and measures relate to those characteristics and activities that can be counted, timed, or measured

through audits. Such measures may include how many telephone calls were abandoned while the customer was on hold, how many minutes customers had to wait in line at a particular stage in the service delivery, the time required to complete a specific task, how many patients made a complete recovery following a specific type of operation, and how many orders were filled correctly.

Organizations that are known for excellent service make use of both soft and hard measures. These organizations are good at listening to both their customers and their customer contact employees. The larger the organization, the more important it is to create formulated feedback programs using a variety of professionally designed and implemented research procedures.

2.1.10.2 The Gap Model

If one accepts the view that quality entails consistently meeting or exceeding customers' expectations, the manager's task is to balance customer expectations and perceptions and to close any gaps between the two. A total of seven types of gaps are identified;

- I. The knowledge gap:- is the difference between what service providers believe customers expect and customers' actual needs and expectation.
- II. The standard gap:- is the difference between management's perception of customer expectations and the quality standards established for service delivery.
- III. The internal communication gap:- is the difference between what the company's advertising and sales personnel think are the product's features, performance and service quality level and what the company actually able to deliver.
- IV. The perception gap:- is the difference between what is , in fact, delivered and what customer's perceive they have received
- V. The interpretation gap:- is the difference between what a service provider's communication offer to (in advance of service delivery promise and what a customer thinks was promised by these communications.
- VI. The delivery gap:- the difference between specific delivery standard and the service provider's actual performance.

VII. The service gap:- the difference between what customers expect to receive and their perception of the service that's delivered.

Gaps at any point in service delivery can damage relationships with customer. The service gap is the most critical; hence, the ultimate goal in improving service quality is to close or narrow this gap as much as possible (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004).

2.1.10.3 Prescriptions for Closing Service Gaps

As Christopher H. Lovelock and Jochen Wirtz (2004) referred from (Zeithams et al, 1990) and summarized the following prescription for closing service gaps.

Prescription for Gap 1 (knowledge gap) - Learn what customers expect

- Understand customer expectation through research, complaint analysis, customer panels.
- Increase direct interactions between managers and customers to improve understanding.
- Improve upward communication from contact personnel to management.
- Turn information and insights into action.

Prescription for Gap 2 (the standard Gap).- establish the right service quality standards

- Ensure that top management displays ongoing commitment to quality as defined by customers.
- Set, communicate and reinforce customer oriented service quality standards for all work units.
- Train managers in the skills needed to lead employees to deliver quality service.
- Become receptive to new ways of doing business that overcomes barriers to delivering quality service.
- Standardize repetitive work tasks to ensure consistency and reliability.
- Establish clear service quality goals that are challenging, realistic and explicitly designed to meet customer expectation.
- Ensure that employees understand and accept goals and priorities.

- Measure performance and provide regular feedback.
- Reward managers and employees for attaining quality goals.

Prescription for Gap 3 (the delivery gap) - ensure the service performance meets standards

- Clarify employee roles.
- Ensure that all employees understand how their jobs contribute to customer satisfaction.
- Provide employees the technical training needed to perform their assigned tasks.
- Develop innovative recruitments and retention methods to attract the best people and build loyalty.
- Enhance performance by selecting the most appropriate and reliable technology and equipment.
- Teach employees about customers' expectations, perceptions and problems.
- Ensure that employees working at internal support jobs provide good service to customer contact personnel.

Prescription for Gap 4 (The internal communication gap) - ensure that communication promises are realistic

- Seek inputs from operations personnel when new advertising programs are being created.
- Allow service providers to preview adverts before customers are exposed to them.
- Ensure that consistent standards of service are delivered across multiple locations.
- Manage customers' expectations by letting them know what is and is not possible and the reasons why?

2.1.10.4 SERVPERF

The SERVPERF model was carved out of SERVQUAL by Cronin and Taylor in 1992. SERVPERF directly measures the customer's perception of service performance and assumes that respondents automatically compare their perceptions of the service quality levels with their expectations of those services. Cronin and Taylor argued that only perception was sufficient for

measuring service quality and therefore expectations should not be included as suggested by SERVQUAL (Baumann et al, 2007). Instead of measuring the quality of service via the difference between the perception and expectation of customers as in SERVQUAL, SERVPERF operationalizes on the perceived performance and did not assess the gap scores as expectation does not exist in the model. Thus, it is performance-only measure of service quality.

The model adopts the five dimensions of SERVQUAL and the 22 item scale is used in measuring service quality. In the SERVPERF model, the results demonstrated that it had more predictive power on the overall service quality judgment than SERVQUAL (Cronin and Taylor 1994). “The SERVPERF scale is found to be superior not only as the efficient scale but also more efficient in reducing the number of items to be measured by 50% (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Babakus and Boller, 1992; Bolton and Drew, 1991)”. Many studies have been conducted by adopting the SERVPERF model. Also, Wall and Payne(1973) note that when people are asked to indicate the “desired level” (expectations) of a service and the “existing level”(perceptions) of the service, there is a psychological constraint that people always tend to rate the former higher than the latter ($E > P$).

Babakus and Boller1992 have found that service quality, as measured in the SERVQUAL scale, relies more significantly on the perception score than on the expectation score. (Cited on H.Vasanth Kumari) Due to the above mentioned facts the researcher also preferred to use SERVPERV model to undertake the study.

2.1.10.5 SERVQUAL

The original conceptualization of service quality was a framework developed by Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988 and 1994). Their works led to the development of a 22-item scale, the SERVQUAL instrument which has been used extensively by most researchers. The SERVQUAL instrument was originally measured on ten (10) aspects or dimensions of service quality: reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility,

security, understanding, and tangibles (Parasuraman et al 1985) as a means of measuring the gap between customer expectation and experience.

The original construct was found to be overly complex, subjective and statistically unreliable, and as a result it was simplified and modified to the five dimensional model which is measured on five (5) aspects, namely - reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness (RATER). (McCabe et al, 2007). Service quality is therefore a function of pre -purchase customers' expectations perceived process quality and perceived output quality (McCabe et al, 2007). Parasuraman et al (1985), conceptualized service quality as the gap between customers' expectation and their perception of the service experience. Based on their conceptualization of service quality, the original instrument was made up of 22-items. The data on these items were grouped under the five dimensions of RATER (Nyeck et al, 2002).

2.1.10.6 Criticism of the Model

The service quality gaps models can be criticized on both methodological and conceptual grounds (Carman, 1990; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Tse, 1993; Brown et al., 1993). Cronin and Taylor (1992) proposed that there is a lack of evidence supporting the expectation-performance gap as a predictive measure of service quality. They believe that assessing customer perception is enough for evaluating service quality and it is unnecessary to measure customer expectations in service quality research. They oppose evaluating service quality by calculating the difference between customer perceptions and customer expectations (P-E). Indeed, they define Service Quality as a customer Perception (of Performance only) without expectations. They proposed that the performance based measurement approach (SERVPERF) is more in conformance with the existing attitude and customer satisfaction literature and is superior to the perception-expectation gap approach.

Tse (1993) questioned the validity of perception-expectation gap with conceptual and operational problem in the definition of the expectation. While perception (P) is definable and measurable in a straightforward manner as the customer belief about service is experienced, expectation (E) is subject to multiple interpretation by different authors/ researchers (e.g. Babakus and Inhofe,

1991; Dabholkar et al., 2000; Gronroose, 1990; Teas, 1993, 1994). They believe that expectation concept is doubtful and conceptualized owing to there are plenty definition for the term expectation in service quality literature where it is defined as “normative expectation” with concern to organization constraints such as human resource or facilities and equipment limitation or “ideal expectation” without any concern to limitation and constraint, it means what the customer would expect from excellent service. Initially, Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988) defined expectation as "desire or wants of customer"; what they feel a service provider should offer rather than would offer (Jain and Gupta, 2004).

Brown et al. (1993) raised psychometric concerns regarding the use of difference score and felt that the gap model would display poor reliability, because expectation and perception could be positively correlated. They also suggested that if the statistical variance of performance score and expectation score are different, any tests of statistical significance would become more complex.

The other criticizer claims that SERVQUAL is not applicable to a wide variety of service contexts as the common tool for evaluating service quality (Carman, 1990). The above explanation provides a critical discussion of the traditional models, but it is not convincing and it seems that this model still needs to be further developed. In the following, other shortcomings in gaps models are addressed and a model is developed based on the discussion. Considering the critical discussion, more gaps are added to the previous models. The new components which are proposed to be fitted in to the model include:-

- Ideal service standards;
- Service quality strategy and policy;
- Translation of service quality strategy and policy into service quality specifications and service design;
- Management perceptions of customer perception; and
- Employee perceptions of customer perception.

Although the elements listed in SERVQUAL model have been proven to be the main method for evaluating service quality from the consumer’s perspective (Brown et al., 1993), drawbacks in

using SERVQUAL in measuring service quality has been the reason that the SERVPERF scale was proposed by Cronin & Taylor (1992, cited in Jain et al. (2004, p. 25-37) after they called into question the conceptual basis of the SERVQUAL, having found it, led to confusion with service satisfaction (Jain et al., 2004, p. 25-37). These researchers discarded the 'E' for 'expectation' claiming instead that 'P' for 'performance' alone should be used. They meant that higher perceived performance entails higher quality service. Unfortunately, during this past century, customers have changed their behaviors in ways that do not suit organizational behavior.

The SERVQUAL has come under some criticisms. Francis Buttle (1996) has criticized the SERVQUAL on a number of theoretical and operational bases. He noted that the five dimensions of RATER are not universals and that the model fails to draw on established economic, statistical and psychological theory (Buttle, 1996). Luis Lages and Joana Fernandes (2005), in their critique of the SERVQUAL, suggest that consumer's final decisions are taken at a higher level of abstraction. Consequently, they proposed the Service Personal Values (SERPVAL) model. Similar to the SERVQUAL, the SERPVAL is also a multidimensional construct. It presents three dimensions of service value to peaceful life, social recognition and social integration. All three SERPVAL dimensions are associated with customer or client satisfaction. While service value to social integration is related only with loyalty, service value to peaceful life is associated with both loyalty and patronage intents (Lages and Fernandes, 2005). Some research studies do not support the five-factor structure of SERVQUAL put forward by Parasuraman et al (1988), and administering expectation items is also considered unnecessary (Carman, 1990; Babakus and Boller, 1992). In addition, Cronin and Taylor (1992) have developed their own performance-based measure, the SERVPERF. In fact, the SERVPERF scale is the un weighted perceptions components of SERVQUAL, which consists of 22 perception items thus excluding any consideration of expectations. In their empirical work in four industries, Cronin and Taylor (1992) found that un weighted SERVPERF measure (performance-only) performs better than any other measure of service quality, and that it has the ability to provide more accurate service quality score than SERVQUAL. They argue that current performance best reflects a customer's perception of service quality, and that expectations are not part of this concept. Despite the criticisms, SERVQUAL has been used to measure service quality in a variety of contexts,

including hospitals (Bakar et al., 2008), universities (Galloway, 1998), police services (Donnelly et al., 2006), banks (Kangis and Passa, 1997), travel agencies (Luk, 1997) and public utilities (Babakus and Boller, 1992). The wide array of application of such an instrument as SERVQUAL spells confidence in its utilization as a technique for measuring service quality in various business sectors and service industries. Although some studies did fail to support its structure, Parasuraman et al (1993) defended the use of the different dimensions, based on conceptual and practical grounds. Parasuraman et al. (1988) noted that even if it may be necessary to reword or modify some of the items, yet the SERVQUAL scale is applicable in a wide range of business services. However, Parasuraman et al. (1991) cautioned that the addition/deletion of items and/or dimensions may result in the loss of the scale's integrity.

In their arguments in support of the SERVQUAL, Nyeck et al (2002), suggest that SERVQUAL remains the most complete attempt to conceptualize and measure service quality. They contend that its main benefit is the ability of researchers to examine numerous service industries such as healthcare, banking, financial services and education. The fact that SERVQUAL has critics does not render it moot. Rather the criticisms may well have to do with how researchers use the tool.

2.2 Empirical Review

Generally the context in which the presented findings of the studies that have been conducted by these researchers differ from that of Ethiopia where technology is limited, awareness and knowledge seems to be low compared to developed world in which most studies have been conducted. Such important aspect, necessitate for investigating on the relationship exists between customer satisfaction and service quality provided by ethio telecom call center service.

2.2.1 The Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Numerous studies in many service sectors confirmed the positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Brady and Robertson, 2001; Cronin and Taylor, 1994; Parasuraman et al., 1994) with some conflicting evidence (Rosen and Suprenant, 1998). The few

studies in the transportation sector, including aviation (Anderson et al., 2009) and high-speed railways (Cao and Chen, 2011), revealed a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, research in the maritime sector on this relationship, particularly in the context of ports, is scant and the subject deserves further investigation

Saha, P. and Zhao, Y. (2005) in their study of customer satisfaction and service quality, found out that; these two variables (customer satisfaction and service quality) are related, confirming the definitions of both variables which have always been linked. They also dictated that service quality is more abstract because it may be affected by perceptions of value or by the experiences of others that may not be so good, than customer satisfaction which reflects the customer's feelings about many encounters and experiences with service firm.

2.2.2 Tangibility and Customer Satisfaction

Sumit A., Dr. Deepack S. Prof. K.S (2013) in their studies of impact of service quality dimensions towards customer satisfaction in Indian call centers, found that tangibility have least impact on customer satisfaction in case of Indian call centers as there is very less visual involved in call center services. In contrast from the study by Francis K. (2011) title, assessment and analysis of customer satisfaction with service delivery of MTN, Tangibility was found to be the best dimension. The tangibility dimension of MTN deal with the physical nature of MTN both the infrastructure and the appearance of the employees of the company, in this study, state of art equipment, professionalism and appearance of employees, visually appealing of physical facilities and modernization of equipment for service delivery were considered. All the items used for the discussion of the tangibility for MTN have a mean above 4.0. This shows that, in terms of tangible assets of the company, MTN is doing better of its service quality delivery. Averagely, the tangibility dimension had an average of 4.20, representing 84 percent. A mean of 4.20 indicate that, customers agreed to the assertion that, the service quality delivery of MTN is satisfy which results in a quality delivery of an appreciable 84 percent.

Anantha R. A and Dr. Abdul G. A (2013) in their study of service quality and customer satisfaction in the cellular telecommunication service provider in Malaysia found that by using

Pearson correlation the weakest correlation was found to be between empathy and customer satisfaction. Other study by Thien P. N. (2014) in his thesis of Measuring Customer Satisfaction on Perceived Service Quality of Mobile Telecommunications Service when the evaluation is made in importance level of each dimension on the scale from least important to most important found that least important factor is tangibles which indicates for the appearance of Bouygues's representative stores and their infrastructures. This result might derive from the fact that customers only come to the representative stores when they take SIM cards and sign the contracts with the operator in the beginning. However, during the utilization of mobile phone services, customers do not frequently come to the stores, even the malfunctions happen with their network, they tend to call for the service operator rather than coming to the stores. The respondents were also asked to rate their expectation and their perception of the service quality of Bouygues Telecom on the scale from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree) to show level of customer satisfaction on each dimensions. In this case, tangibles are the appearance of Bouygues Telecom's representative stores, its infrastructure, as well as the appearance of its employees. Based on the result, of 5 dimensions, tangibles gain the least average expectation score but it has the second highest perception score which indicates that Bouygues Telecom is doing a great job in maintaining its physical appearances.

H1: There is a significant relationship between tangibility and customer satisfaction.

2.2.3 Reliability and Customer Satisfaction

Sumit A., Dr. Deepack S. Prof. K.S (2013) in their studies of impact of service quality dimensions towards customer satisfaction in Indian call centers, found that reliability is the most important dimensions of service quality which have the greater impact on customer satisfaction

In contrast with the above finding, the study by Francis K. (2011) title, assessment and analysis of customer satisfaction with service delivery of MTN, reliability were found not to be of its best dimensions. Reliability deals with the ability of the company to provide services as schedule time, keeping of accurate records of customers, sincere interest in solving problems of customers and the customer's satisfaction with the quality of service provided. On the reliability dimension, most of the items were not agreed upon by the customers of MTN. Clearly it indicates that, MTN

is not doing enough to increase its reliability of service provision to its customers. On the item “MTN employees keep accurate records of customers” was found to be consistently disagreed among the customers. This might be attributing to the fact that, as a telecommunication company keeping records of customers to large extent becomes sometimes costly since such information will not be useful in the day to day operation of the company. The items “MTN provides services at scheduled times as promised”, “When you have a problem MTN shows a sincere interest in solving it” and “ Customers are satisfied with the quality of service provided by MTN” were all mainly record to have dominated by uncertain by the respondents. Perhaps this might also be attributing to the fact that, customer might not be able to measure these items with a comparison to other service providers.

It was found that, customers agreed on insist on error-free records and the performing of the services right the first time. All these record a mean of more than 4.0 and show a consistency of a general agreement among respondents. In all customer measure for the reliability shows that, MTN provide a service quality level of 3.68 representing 73.6%

Anantha R. A and Dr. Abdul G. A (2013) in their study of service quality and customer satisfaction in the cellular telecommunication service provider in Malaysia found that by using Pearson correlation reliability and customer satisfaction have positive moderate correlation. In addition Thien P. N. (2014) in his thesis of Measuring Customer Satisfaction on Perceived Service Quality of Mobile Telecommunications Service found that, when the evaluation is made in importance level of each dimension on the scale from least important to most important reliability is the most important dimensions from all. With related to customer perception and expectation which represents the capacity of a company can provide the services as it promised. It means the company can provide the products which correspond to its advertising; its delivery service arrives punctually and so on for instance, the overall customers’ perception regarding reliability is under-satisfied.

H2: There is a significant relationship between reliability and customer satisfaction.

2.2.4 Responsiveness and Customer Satisfaction

Sumit A., Dr. Deepack S. Prof. K.S (2013) in their studies of impact of service quality dimensions towards customer satisfaction in Indian call centers, found that responsiveness is the most important dimensions of service quality which have the stronger impact on customer satisfaction

Missana E.G (2015) in his dissertation on customer satisfaction in service quality of TENESCO emergency call center determines that there was no multi-collinear relationship between customer satisfaction and responsiveness. Likewise, the study found that from the collected questionnaires filled by 70 customers, there is an absolute strong positive relation between satisfaction and responsiveness, which reveals that the very crucial service quality variable which marks the image of TANESCO to majority of esteemed customers is responsiveness.

The study by Francis K. (2011) title, assessment and analysis of customer satisfaction with service delivery of MTN, found that the ability of the company to deal with complaints of clients, promptness of services, willingness to offer help to clients and made known when and where exactly services will be executed formed the responsiveness dimensions of a company. As clearly shown in the finding, customers were not receiving services as thought to be, out of all the service items provided, with the exception of “Employees of MTN gives you prompt services” all the remaining items were scored below 4.0 indicating inconsistency in the extent of service provision from MTN. Customers indicate that, the services they have received from their service provider has an overall average for the responsiveness dimension to be 3.63, which constitute a service provision of 72.60 percent.

Anantha R. A and Dr. Abdul G. A (2013) in their study of service quality and customer satisfaction in the cellular telecommunication service provider in Malaysia found that by using Pearson correlation the same as reliability, responsiveness and customer satisfaction also have positive moderate correlation. Another study by Thien P. N. (2014) in his thesis of Measuring Customer Satisfaction on Perceived Service Quality of Mobile Telecommunications Service when the evaluation is made in importance level of each dimension on the scale from least

important to most important found that responsiveness is the second most important dimensions from all. With related to customer perception and expectation the overall customers' perception regarding responsiveness is considered as the second importance by the most of respondents, it has the highest average expectation score among six dimensions

H3: There is a significant relationship between responsiveness and customer satisfaction.

2.2.5 Empathy and Customer Satisfaction

Sumit A., Dr. Deepack S. Prof. K.S (2013) in their studies of impact of service quality dimensions towards customer satisfaction in Indian call centers, found that empathy is not the most important dimensions of service quality which has no much impact on customer satisfaction. Another study by Anantha R. A and Dr. Abdul G. A (2013) in their study of service quality and customer satisfaction in the cellular telecommunication service provider in Malaysia found that by using Pearson correlation the strongest correlation was between empathy and customer satisfaction.

Missana E.G (2015) in his study found that there were no multi-collinear relationship between customer satisfaction and variables empathy. Rather there was linear regression between customer satisfaction and services' empathy which showed the very strong positive ($R=0.966$) between what were predicted customer satisfactions and to what exactly is the confidence of customers on empathy from TANESCO. Therefore TANESCO should focus on training its employees on how to respond and serve customers that is customer care as the results revealed that as empathy increases the customer satisfaction increases and the vice versa is also true to customer satisfaction. This concludes that efforts made on improvement of empathy and responsiveness produced the desired results in winning the customers preferences and perceptions toward the TANESCO emergency call center services.

The study by Francis K. (2011) title, assessment and analysis of customer satisfaction with service delivery of MTN, Empathy is the ability to share another's feelings as one's own i.e. to be in the shoes of another", understanding the customers" needs as well as giving individual attention to customers. With regards to empathy, the finding depicts that customers of MTN hold

the view that MTN actually has about 3.94 level of quality. This may be attributed to the MTN staff have the interest of their customers at heart by giving them individual attention, understanding the specific needs of customers and operating hours convenient to customers to satisfy them. Again as the competition within the industry becomes very keen a lost customer means lost revenue and for that are more conscious of customers' needs.

H4: There is a significant relationship between empathy and customer satisfaction.

2.2.6 Assurance and Customer Satisfaction

Sumit A., Dr. Deepack S. Prof. K.S (2013) in their studies of impact of service quality dimensions towards customer satisfaction in Indian call centers, found that assurance is the most important dimensions of service quality which have the stronger impact on customer satisfaction

The study by Francis K. (2011) title, assessment and analysis of customer satisfaction with service delivery of MTN, This study assurance of service deal with the confidence instill in customers by employees of MTN, safeness of transaction, consistency of courteousness of staff and knowledgeable of staff to answer customers queries. The result indicates that, assurance dimension has a general agreement among the customers of the company. This reveals a better service delivery on this dimension to customers of MTN. It is found that, almost all the items received a consistent agreement of mean more than 4.0, resulting in an overall service provision of 4.15, constituting 83.00 percent of service delivery of MTN. followed by tangibility assurance is the second important service quality dimension according to the finding.

Anantha R. A and Dr. Abdul G. A (2013) in their study of service quality and customer satisfaction in the cellular telecommunication service provider in Malaysia found that by using Pearson correlation there was a significant positive relationship between assurance and customer satisfaction. Another study by Thien P. N. (2014) in his thesis of Measuring Customer Satisfaction on Perceived Service Quality of Mobile Telecommunications Service when the evaluation is made with related to customer perception and expectation customers are pretty

satisfied with the overall assurance aspect of the company. It is demonstrated by professional manner of sellers which is capable of creating beliefs, trust and confidence for customers.

H5: There is a significant relationship between assurance and customer satisfaction.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The general idea from the past literature is that there is a relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality; also that service quality could be evaluated with the use of five service quality dimensions and the most useable is the SERVPERF scale. Based on the literature presented above, the following conceptual framework of the study has been developed.

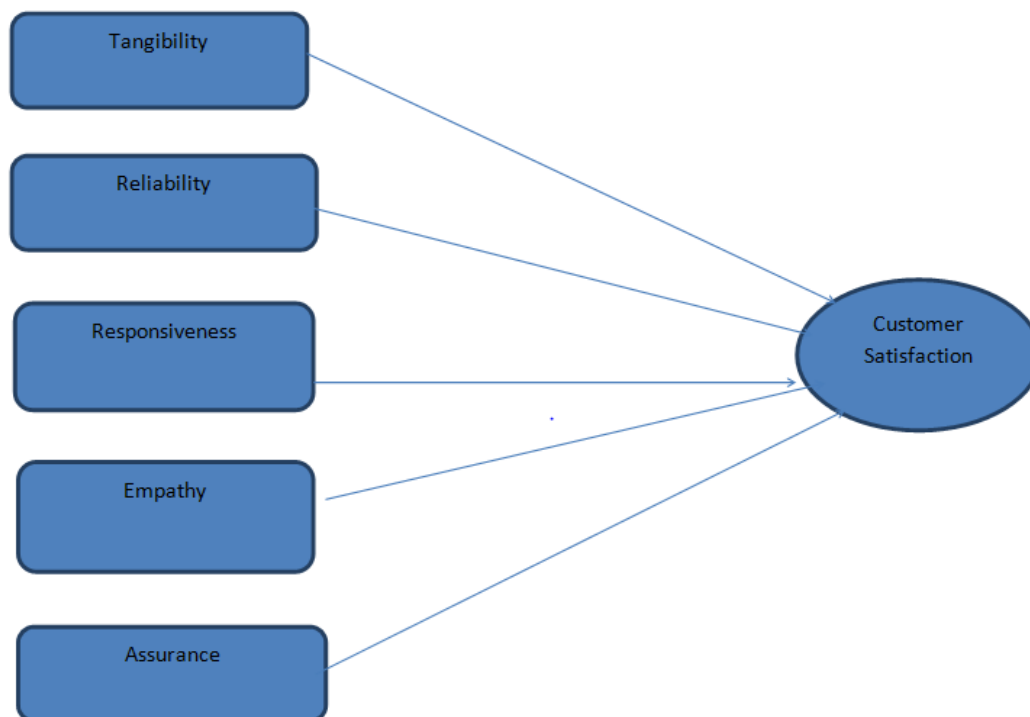


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Effect of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction

Source: Adapted from SERVPERF model

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

The aim of this section is to highlight the overall methodological considerations of the thesis. The methodology section is divided into six sub-sections. The first section outlines the general research design and approach which the paper relies on, and the second encompass discussion of the study target area. The following third section elaborates on the sampling method used and the justification for it and the sample size determined for the research. Section four and five respectively constitute data source and method of data collection and the description of the data analysis method. Finally the six section presented ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design and Approach

The main aim of this study was to assess service quality and depict customer satisfaction among call center customers and to explore the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions. Deductive approach was applied to develop hypothesis based on what is theoretically known about the research concepts. Both descriptive and explanatory research design was used because descriptive research involves describing a problem, context or a situation of research variables and explanatory design enables to explain the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. The study utilized mainly primary data sources. This is due to the fact that there is no prior research conducted on service quality and its subsequent effect on customer satisfaction with regard to Ethio telecom call center services as

mentioned in the problem identification. Hence, in order to solve the research problem at hand, the thesis relied on primary data sources mainly the use of questionnaires.

This thesis is somewhat qualitative research because satisfaction should be described and it cannot be measured by numbers, it is somewhat quantitative research in the sense that to compare factors of service quality together and find top priorities. And the research is involving the administration of a set of structured questions with predetermined response options to a large number of respondents. To examine the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality with the five dimensions SERVPERF model was used. In doing so, the hypothesis of the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions by SERVPERF model was tested; relationship between service quality and service quality dimensions by SERVPERF model; either to reject or accept the null hypotheses.

3.2 Target of the Study Area

The target of this study was Ethio Telecom's 994 and 998 call center Amharic IVR users. On average there are around 1,713,351 customers who accessed the call center per week they are divided in five languages by the system according to the user language preference. Out of the total number of calls made to call center; 1,119,291 calls handled by Amharic, 30,547 call handled by English, 436,368 calls handled by oromiffa, 72838 calls by somaligna and the rest 53052 by Tigrigna. Since the call center service is the type of service which is accessible 24/7 to the customers through online telephone, the above mentioned service user can call to the call center any time to get support or information regarding the service given by the company. This study targeted 1,119,291 customer of the call center Amharic IVR users.

3.3 Sampling Technique

In this study probability sampling method was applied, stratified sampling technique was used to stratify the population by language and simple random sampling technique was implemented to select population of the subject who represent the whole customer of the call centers. One week data was taken to select the sample size, per week from the total population of 1,713,351

customers who call to the call center 1,119,291 are served online by Amharic. The random sampling technique was opted since there is no reason to purposely select subjects, because the service given by the call center for all customers have the same standard; all advisors use the same tools, same procedure of serving customers' and give the same response based on the customer request in addition to that customer of call center services almost all the time calls for the same reason due to that one customer could represent the other. The reason why Amharic IVR users were selected is because according to the report from the total call made to the call center the lion share was served by the Amharic language and it was assumed that it increases the representativeness of the sample.

The total population size of the call center is 1,713,351 according to the week data taken from the system, 1,119,291 of them call to Amharic IVR to get the service, that mean per day an average of 159,897 customers are served by the call center. The sample was taken from the customer who called to the call center during one week which is 1,119,291 in number and according to the sample size calculator with the margin error of 5% and 95% confidence level the recommended sample is 385 customers. Because the sample size doesn't change much more as population become larger. Accordingly from 385 samples 358 of them were used for to fill the questionnaire by making out bound call. The reason for using out bound call was that because the service of Ethio Telecom is nationwide and different customers found in geographically dispersed areas making outbound call to them would be effective in addition they would be easily cooperative to answer the questions.

3.4 Data Sources and Collection Instrument

For these study primary sources was used. Primary data was collected via communicating the study population through major tools i.e. questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed in five likert scale measurement with five response categories (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). A 26 item measure was used to indicate the customer degree of agreement for the 26 performance statements, based on their assessments of the service provided by the call center adopted from SERVPERF. Customer satisfaction was measured with one scale adopted from Lovelock and Wright (1999) with response ranging from 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied'.

Questionnaire was the major tool used since most of customer's call to call center to get Ethio Telecom related services, their data was collected from the system and outbound call was made to selected target customers because telephone call will help to access geographically dispersed population since the telecom service is nationwide.

Questionnaire was designed to conduct the telephone interview, as well as to have a broader picture of the practice and philosophy of ET's call center service. Most of the research questions require respondents to remember and thoroughly think about their customer service experience and practices of the call center service.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

Reliability Test

To measure consistency of the scale, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used as a measure of reliability. A high value of the Cronbach alpha coefficient suggests that the items that make up the scale 'hang together' and measure the same underlying construct.

Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis mean, frequency distribution, and standard deviation was applied to assess the level of customer satisfaction and overall quality of service of the five dimensions and each respective attribute and to summarize the basic findings from the sample. The descriptive statistical results were presented by tables, frequency distributions and percentages to analyze the data. This was achieved through summary statistics, which includes the mean values and percentages which were computed for each variable in this study. The data collected through questionnaire was analyzed by Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Pearson Correlation analysis

In this study Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationships between service quality dimensions (Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and customer satisfaction.

Binary logistic Regression Analysis

Logistic regression analysis was used to examine the effect of service quality dimensions (Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) on customer satisfaction. Since the study has more than two independent variable to investigate how independent variables are related to the dependent variable, how each independent variable influences the dependent variable and how much each variable influence it binary logistic regression model used.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

Concerned management officials of ethio telecom were informed about the study. In addition, the respondents were asked for their consent prior to the tools to gather the relevant information. The respondents' responses are taken absolutely confidential and they were informed that no part of their response is exposed to any one without their complete consent. And respondents were approached with open mind so as to encourage them forward all of their opinions freely.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis

This chapter describes the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. Out of the 385 questionnaires distributed using the system out bound call to customers of ethio telecom call center service 358 questionnaires were collected and all of them are valid for analysis and it represent 93% of the sample. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 20.

4.1 Reliability Test

To measure consistency of the scale, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was used as a measure of reliability. A high value of the Cronbach alpha coefficient suggests that the items that make up the scale ‘hang together’ and measure the same underlying construct. A value of Cronbach alpha above 0.70 can be used as a reasonable test of reliability.

As a result, measurement scale of service quality dimension was high. The lowest scale of cronbach alpha was tangibility 0.758 and the highest was 0.886 for dimension of assurance. Cronbach alpha for reliability, responsive and empathy was 0.796, 0.771 and 0.840 respectively. The overall Cronbach’s alpha for the independent variables (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy and Assurance) was found to be 0.859. Therefore the five dimensions of service quality were found to be high in their internal consistency and thereby in measuring the dimensions of interest.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Service Quality Measurement

To measure the customers’ perception of the service quality provided by ethio telecom call center, SERVPERF model is used in this study. SERVPERF directly measures the customer’s perception of service performance and assumes that respondents automatically compare their perceptions of the service quality levels with their expectations of those services. The model

contains 26 questions and a five point likert scale is used to measure the performance. For all the service quality dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy and Assurance), the mean score have been computed.

4.2.1 Tangibility

Tangibility refers to the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials. Accordingly the mean value of tangibility is 4.31 and as it can be seen from the table from the 5 questions asked under tangibility the highest mean score is obtained on the call center conversation clothing part which shows that majority of the respondent's agree that the call center advisors end the conversation properly by giving proper good bye and give the chance the customer to hung up first. The lowest mean score is obtained in the statement which asks whether the call center has up-to-date equipment and technology and this imply that the company is not using the latest technology and equipment.

Table 4.2.1 Mean score for tangibility

		Tangibles 1	Tangibles 2	Tangibles 3	Tangibles 4	Tangibles 5	Tangibles
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.60	4.34	3.99	3.94	4.70	4.3151

Source: Survey result (2017)

4.2.2 Reliability

Reliability is the ability to perform the promised service dependably, accurately and consistently. It is performing the service right the first time. It also means that the firm honors its promises. Reliability of service designates the call center capability to supply the promised output at the stated level. Accordingly the mean value of reliability is 4.22. The highest mean score is obtained on questions no.7 thus respondents agree that the call center advisors show sincere interest on solving customer's problems. The lowest mean score is obtained on question no.8 which asks whether the call center advisors perform service right the first time or not. This

shows that the company objective of giving first time resolution to customer request have to be improved.

Table 4.2.2 Mean score for reliability

		Reliability 1	Reliability 2	Reliability 3	Reliability 4	Reliability 5	Reliability
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.13	4.47	3.94	4.46	4.14	4.2279

Source: Survey result (2017)

4.2.3 Responsiveness

Responsiveness refers to the prompt response to the service need of the customer and the readiness of employees to provide service. It is the speed and timeliness of service delivery. This includes the speed of throughput and the ability of the service to respond promptly to customer service requests, with minimal waiting and queuing time. As it can be noted from the below table the mean score of responsiveness is 4.03. The highest mean score is obtained on question number 14. Here majority of the respondents agree that call center advisors are always happy and willing to serve customer whereas the lowest mean score is obtained on question number 10 which is there are adequate number of employee to respond to customer request or not. From this we can say that the number of advisors who serve online are not enough to answer every customer call right the first time.

Table 4.2.3 Mean Score for Responsiveness

		Responsive 1	Responsive 2	Responsive 3	Responsive 4	Responsive 5	Responsive
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.66	3.84	4.15	4.47	4.03	4.0302

Source: Survey result (2017)

4.2.4 Empathy

Empathy is providing caring and individualized attention to customers to make them feel they are receiving caring services and individualized attention. Service empathy characterizes both the service provider's willingness and capability to respond to individual customer desires. This means putting one's self in the shoes of the customer. The mean score of Empathy is 4.28. The majority of the respondents agree that the call center service hour is convenient and the call center interactive voice recorder manual and language is easy to understand and user friendly hence the highest mean score is obtained therein. The lowest mean score is obtained on the question which asks whether the call center interactive voice record service is easily accessible or not, this infer that the accessibility of the call center is less.

Table 4.2.4 Mean Score for Responsiveness

		Empathy 1	Empathy 2	Empathy 3	Empathy 4	Empathy 5	Empathy 6	Empathy 7	Empathy
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.20	4.25	4.44	3.87	4.44	4.36	4.42	4.2821

Source: Survey result (2017)

4.2.5 Assurance

Assurance is the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence so that the customer feels he or she is in courteous, able and competent hands. It relates to the capability of the service provider to deliver the output, specifically in terms of the knowledge, politeness and trustworthiness of the employees to the customer of the service firm. This dimension is about the behavior and ability of the employees to instill confidence, secure transactions, courtesy of the employees and the knowledge of the employees to answer questions from customers. Accordingly assurance has a mean score of 4.43 which is the highest from all

the service quality dimensions. The highest contributor for this score is question 24 where the majority of the respondents agree that they feel safe when they make conversation with the call center advisors. The lowest mean score is obtained on advisors sufficient knowledge and required skill to answer customer question this imply that the advisors not having required skill and knowledge to their work decrease the confidence the customer have on the call center service.

Table 4.2.5 Mean Score for Assurance

Mean Score for Assurance

		Assurance 1	Assurance 2	Assurance 3	Assurance 4	Assurance
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.38	4.52	4.51	4.33	4.4344

Source: Survey result (2017)

In summary the mean and standard deviation of each service quality dimensions is represented in the table below. The service quality dimension with the highest mean score is Assurance 4.4344, followed by Tangibles 4.3151, Empathy 4.2821, Reliability 4.2279 and Responsive 4.0302. With this we can infer that the service provided by ethio telecom call center service is somewhat satisfactory. This also answers the first research question.

Table 4.2.6 Overall mean value

		Tangibles	Reliability	Responsive	Emphaty	Assurance
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.3151	4.2279	4.0302	4.2821	4.4344
Std. Deviation		.47544	.66804	.70626	.63126	.68693

Source: Survey result (2017)

4.3 Customer Satisfaction

As explained in the literature review, customer satisfaction involves the fulfillment of customers' anticipation of the goods and services. Customers become satisfied if the performance of the good or service is equivalent to, or even surpasses, the original expectation. Accordingly identifying satisfaction level of customers is one interest of this study. The satisfaction level in this study is also categorized and it ranges from highly dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied and highly satisfied. The table below presents the overall level of customer satisfaction.

Table 4.3 overall customer satisfaction level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Dissatisfied	6	1.7	2.2	1.7
	Dissatisfied	9	2.5	2.8	4.2
	Neutral	20	5.6	5.6	9.8
	Satisfied	166	46.4	45.8	56.1
	Highly Satisfied	157	43.9	43.6	100.0
	Total	358	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey result (2017)

As it can be seen from the table 45.8% of the respondents are satisfied, 43.6% of the respondents are very satisfied, 5.6% chose to remain neutral, 2.8% are dissatisfied and 2.2% is very dissatisfied. Therefore even if the highest percentage of respondents are somehow satisfied by the service provided by call center service 5% of the respondents are dissatisfied from these one can infer that ethio telecom needs to work more to change this result and highly satisfy its customers.

4.4 Correlation Analysis between Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

To find out the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) which measures the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables is used. Values of Pearson's correlation coefficient are always between -1 and +1. A correlation coefficient of +1 indicates that two variables are

perfectly related in a positive sense; a correlation coefficient of -1 indicates that two variables are perfectly related in a negative sense, and a correlation coefficient of 0 indicates that there is no linear relationship between the two variables. A low correlation coefficient; 0.1-0.29 suggests that the relationship between two items is weak or non-existent. If r is between 0.3 and 0.49 the relationship is moderate. A high correlation coefficient i.e. >0.5 indicates a strong relationship between variables. The direction of the dependent variable's change depends on the sign of the coefficient. If the coefficient is a positive number, then the dependent variable will move in the same direction as the independent variable; if the coefficient is negative, then the dependent variable will move in the opposite direction of the independent variable. Hence in this study both the direction and the level of relationship between the dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction are conducted using the Pearson's correlation coefficient. The table below presents the result of the correlation analysis made using bivariate correlation.

Table 4.4 Pearson Correlation

		Tangibles	Reliability	Responsive	Empathy	Assurance	Overall customer satisfaction level
Tangibles	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	358					
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	.546**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	358	358				
Responsive	Pearson Correlation	.447**	.610**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	358	358	358			
Empathy	Pearson Correlation	.491**	.622**	.551**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	358	358	358	358		
Assurance	Pearson Correlation	.447**	.581**	.529**	.706**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	358	358	358	358	358	
Overall customer satisfaction level	Pearson Correlation	.218**	.339**	.314**	.344**	.425**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	358	358	358	358	358	358

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Survey result (2017)

From the result we can see that assurance is moderately correlated to satisfaction (0.425) followed by empathy (0.344), reliability (0.339), and responsiveness (0.314) and tangibility

(0.218) which have positive but weak correlation with customer satisfaction. When we look at the inter correlation between the service quality dimensions we can see that there is a positive and significant ($P=.000$) relationship which implies that a change made in one of the service quality dimension will positively motivate the other service quality dimension.

The highest inter correlation is between empathy and assurance ($r=0.706$) followed by empathy and reliability($r=0.622$), responsive and reliability ($r=0.610$) reliability and assurance (0.581) Thus from this result confirmed that there is a positive and significant relationship between service quality dimension and customer satisfaction. Hence it answers the second research question which asks about the relationship between service quality dimension and customer satisfaction. Accordingly we can conclude that there is a positive relationship between the service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. Hence any improvement in one of the dimensions will positively contribute in enhancing the customer satisfaction.

4.5 Binary Logistic Regression Analysis

Binary logistic regression analysis is a statistical method for analyzing a dataset in which there are one or more independent variables that determine an outcome. It includes many techniques for modeling and analyzing several variables, when the focus is to examine the effect of customer service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction it answers the third research question. The following subsections present the results of binary logistic regressions analysis.

The binary logistic regression is an assumption free model hence there is no need to maintain any assumption before doing the regression analysis. In order to perform the regression analysis the dependent variable recoded to same variables of yes or no choice.

4.6 Overall Regression analysis

From the logistic regression analysis we can see that there is a positive statistical relationship between tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance (the independent variable) and customer satisfaction (the dependent variable).

Table 4.6.1 Omnibus test of model coefficients for over all regression

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients				
		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	41.183	5	.000
	Block	41.183	5	.000
	Model	41.183	5	.000

Source: Survey result (2017)

The above table revealed that the overall significance of the logistic regression model is good which means independent variables have the ability to predict the dependent variable. (i.e adding all independent variables in the model significantly affects the dependent variable customer satisfaction).

Table 4.6.2 Model Summery for over all regression

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	192.454 ^a	.109	.227

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Source: Survey result (2017)

Nagelkerke R Square values=.227 indicate that 22.7% of the variation in customer satisfaction can be explained by the independent variable (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance.)

Table 4.6.3 Hosmer and Lemeshow Test for over all regression

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	5.268	8	.729

Source: Survey result (2017)

The Hosmer-Lemshow test is assessing goodness of fit of the model, sig value >5% indicated that the logistic regression model has a good fit. Therefore the above result 7.2% indicate that the model fit perfectly.

Table 4.6.4 Classification Table for over all regression

Classification Table ^a							
	Observed				Predicted		
					Overall customer satisfaction level		Percentage Correct
					No	Yes	
Step 1	Overall level	customer	satisfaction	No	6	30	16.4
				Yes	2	320	99.4
	Overall Percentage						91.1

a. The cut value is .500

Source: Survey result (2017)

The classification table given above shows that, out of the 358 respondents who had been included in the study, 91.1% were correctly classified with respect to customer satisfaction.

Table 4.6.5 Variables in Equation for over all regression

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	90.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a	Reliability	.275	.166	2.754	1	.075	1.316	1.002	1.728
	Responsiveness	.300	.171	3.081	1	.072	1.349	1.019	1.787
	Empathy	.370	.195	3.618	1	.047	1.448	1.051	1.994
	Assurance	.541	.206	6.861	1	.009	1.717	1.223	2.411
	Tangibles	.175	.237	.100	1	.079	.928	.628	1.370
	Constant	-3.403	1.091	9.728	1	.002	.033		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy, Assurance, Tangibles .

Source: Survey result (2017)

The "Variables in the Equation" table shown above reveals the contribution of each independent variable to the model and its statistical significance. The B variables in the equation show the contribution of each independent variable on the predicted variable.

The 0.175 beta coefficient for tangibility in the table show that at P 0.079 level of significance, Tangibility positively affects customer satisfaction at 90% confidence interval. Hence a one

percent change in tangibility when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 17%.

The 0.275 beta coefficient for reliability in the table show that at P 0.075 level of significance, Reliability positively affects customer satisfaction at 90% confidence interval. Hence a one percent change in reliability when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 27%.

Responsive have a beta coefficient of .300 with p value of .072, responsiveness positively affects customer satisfaction at 90% confidence interval. When there is a one unit change in responsiveness when all other independent variables kept constant increase customer satisfaction by 30%.

Empathy have a beta coefficient of 0.370 with p value of 0.047, empathy positively affects customer satisfaction at 95% confidence interval. When there is a one unit change in empathy when all other independent variables kept constant increase customer satisfaction by 37%.

The 0.541 beta coefficient for assurance in the table show that at P 0.009 level of significance, assurance positively affects customer satisfaction at 99% confidence interval. Hence a one percent change in assurance when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 54% or the higher assurance of the service the higher will be the customer satisfaction.

4.7 Individual Regression

4.7.1 Tangibility

From the logistic regression analysis we can see that there is a positive statistical relationship between tangibility (the independent variable) and customer satisfaction (the dependent variable). Thus 6.8% ($R^2 = .068$) of the variation on customer satisfaction is explained by the independent variable tangibility.

Table 4.7.1 Variables in equation for Tangibility

	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a	Tangibles	1.256	.374	11.250	1	.001	3.511	1.685
	Constant	-3.019	1.541	3.840	1	.050	.049	7.315

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Tangibles.

Source: Survey result (2017)

The 1.256 beta coefficient for tangibility in the table show that at P 0.001 level of significance, Tangibility positively affects customer satisfaction. Hence a one percent change in tangibility when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 12% or the higher tangibility of the service the higher will be the customer satisfaction.

And also the expected beta coefficient Exp(B) revealed that the higher the tangibility level customers tend to be 3.5 times more likely to be satisfied.

4.7.2 Reliability

From the logistic regression analysis we can see that there is a positive statistical relationship between reliability (the independent variable) and customer satisfaction (the dependent variable). Thus 15.8% ($R^2 = .158$) of the variation on customer satisfaction is explained by the independent variable reliability.

Table 4.7.2 Variables in Equation for Reliability

	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a	Reliability	1.279	.252	25.787	1	.000	3.592	2.193
	Constant	-2.846	.969	8.622	1	.003	.058	5.885

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Reliability.

Source: Survey result (2017)

The (1.279) beta coefficient for reliability in the table show that at P 0.00 level of significance, reliability positively affects customer satisfaction. Hence a one unit change in reliability when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 12% or the higher reliability of the service the higher will be the customer satisfaction.

And also the expected beta coefficient Exp(B) revealed that the higher the tangibility level customers tend to be 3.5 times more likely to be satisfied.

4.7.3 Responsiveness

From the logistic regression analysis we can see that here is a positive statistical relationship between responsiveness (the independent variable) and customer satisfaction (the dependent variable). Thus 14.3% ($R^2 = .143$) of the variation on customer satisfaction is explained by the independent variable responsive.

Table 4.7.3 Variables in the equation responsive

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a	Responsive	1.194	23.473	1	.000	3.300	2.036	5.348
	Constant	-2.261	6.386	1	.012	.104		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Responsive.

Source: Survey result (2017)

The 1.194 beta coefficient for responsiveness the table show that at P 0.000 level of significance, responsive positively affects customer satisfaction. Hence a one unit change in responsiveness when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 11% or the higher responsiveness of the service the higher will be the customer satisfaction.

And also the expected beta coefficient Exp(B) revealed that the a higher the responsiveness level customers tend to be 3.3 times more likely to be satisfied.

4.7.4 Empathy

From the logistic regression analysis we can see that there is a positive statistical relationship between empathy (the independent variable) and customer satisfaction (the dependent variable). Thus 16.8% ($R^2 = .168$) of the variation on customer satisfaction is explained by the independent variable empathy.

Table 4.7.4 variables in the equation for Empathy

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a								
Empathy	1.443	.278	26.971	1	.000	4.232	2.455	7.295
Constant	-3.576	1.078	11.011	1	.001	.028		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Empathy.

Source: Survey result (2017)

The 1.443 beta coefficient for empathy in the table show that at P 0.000 level of significance, empathy positively affects customer satisfaction. Hence a one unit change in empathy when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 14% or the higher empathy of the service the higher will be the customer satisfaction.

And also the expected beta coefficient Exp(B) revealed that the a higher the empathy level customers tend to be 4.2 times more likely to be satisfied.

4.7.5 Assurance

From the logistic regression analysis we can see that there is a positive statistical relationship between assurance (the independent variable) and customer satisfaction (the dependent variable). Thus 23.3% ($R^2 = .233$) of the variation on customer satisfaction is explained by the independent variable assurance.

Table 4.7.5 Variables in the equation for Assurance

	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Step 1 ^a	Assurance	1.427	.242	34.716	1	.000	4.164	
	Constant	-3.676	.976	14.178	1	.000	.025	6.693

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Assurance.

Source: Survey result (2017)

The 1.427 beta coefficient for assurance in the table show that at P 0.000 level of significance, assurance positively affects customer satisfaction. Hence a one unit change in assurance when all other independent variables are kept constant increases customer satisfaction by 14% or the higher assurance of the service the higher will be the customer satisfaction.

And also the expected beta coefficient Exp(B) revealed that the a higher the assurance level customers tend to be 4.1 times more likely to be satisfied.

4.8 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is based on standardized coefficients beta and P-value to test whether the hypotheses are rejected or not. Based on the above binary logistic regression result, each proposed hypothesis is tested as follows

Hypothesis 1

Ho 1: Tangibility would not have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Ha1: Tangibility would have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

The results of regressions, as presented above, revealed that tangibility has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction with a beta value (beta = 1.256), at 95% confidence

level ($p = 0.01$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is accepted that, tangibility has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2

Ho2: Reliability would not have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Ha2: Reliability would have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

The above regression result showed that the standardized coefficient beta and p value of reliability were positive and significant ($\beta = 1.279$, $p = 0.00$). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is accepted that, reliability had a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3

Ho3: Responsiveness would not have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Ha3: Responsiveness would have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

The results of the table showed that the standardized coefficient beta and p value of responsiveness were positive and significant ($\beta = 1.194$, at 95% confidence level $p=0.00$). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and it was accepted that, responsiveness has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4

Ho4: Empathy would not have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Ha4: Empathy would have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

According to the above regression result, empathy had a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction with a beta value ($\beta = 1.443$, at 95% confidence level ($p= 0.00$)).

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it was accepted that empathy had a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5

Ho5: Assurance would not have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Ha5: Assurance would have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, the regression also indicates that, the standardized beta and p - value of assurance were positive (beta = 1.427), and significant at 95% confidence level (p= 0.00). As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected. So assurance had a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction.

Table 4.8 Summary of hypothesis testing variables

Hypothesis	Description	Sig 2-tailed	Test
1	There is a significant association tangibility and customer satisfaction	0.001	Accept H1
2	There is significant relation between reliability and customer satisfaction	0.000	Accept H2
3	There is a significant association between responsiveness and customer satisfaction	0.000	Accept H3

4	There is significant relation between empathy and customer satisfaction	0.000	Accept H4
5	There is significant relation between assurance and customer satisfaction	0.000	Accept H5

In overall, from the findings of this study, it is found that all of the service quality dimensions (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) had positive effects on customer satisfaction. The findings of this study also indicated that assurance was the most important factor to have positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction, followed by responsiveness, reliability, empathy and tangibles.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion and Recommendation

The fifth and last chapter of this study revolves around the major findings of the study and what we can conclude from the findings and give recommendation based on these findings. This chapter, moreover, highlighted the limitations of this work and indicated future research areas for anyone interested in the applicability of customer satisfaction in call center service.

5.1 Conclusion

The study was conducted to examine the effect of service quality on customer satisfaction in ethio telecom call center service. A total of 358 samples were selected for the study and the study used SERVPERF model questionnaire for collecting data from customers of the call center. Accordingly, a five dimensional instrument comprising of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy has been used for the study. The data obtained from the respondent was analyzed using various statistical tools.

From the Pearson's correlation result it is indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between the five service quality dimensions (tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and reliability) and customer satisfaction. Accordingly assurance is found to have the highest correlation with customer satisfaction. More over assurance has the highest beta value on the regression model and is the dominant service quality dimension with the highest impact on customer satisfaction. The descriptive analysis also confirmed that assurance has a mean value of 4.43 which implies that customers of ethio telecom call center are satisfied with the assurance dimension of service quality and the company should continue to maintain it in the future.

The correlation result indicates that the highest correlation is found between empathy and assurance while the lowest relationship was found between reliability and tangibility. Thus the change in one of the service quality dimension will positively affect the other service quality dimension.

Tangibility is the lowest service quality dimension, according to the result of Pearson correlation. It also have the weak but positive relationship with service quality. Since the service type of the call center is based on telephone conversation but not physical we can say that this dimension didn't affect customer satisfaction like others.

In terms of the stated research hypotheses the following specific empirical findings emerged from the investigation: The five service quality dimensions including tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy have positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction. The findings of this study also indicated that assurance is the most important factor to have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction followed by empathy, reliability, responsiveness and tangibles.

The results of customers' overall satisfaction analysis showed that call center customers are mostly satisfied by service quality of call center. In addition the finding from the logistic regression result indicates all the service quality dimensions have a positive impact on customer satisfaction and assurance is the dominant service quality dimension which affects customer satisfaction while tangibility is the least to influence customer satisfaction.

Thus the findings are important to enable ethio telecom to have a better understanding of customers perception of service quality of the call center and consequently of how to improve their satisfaction with respect to aspects of service quality.

5.2 Recommendation

This research has shown the impact of service quality and customer satisfaction in ethio telecom call center service. The results obtained confirm that all the service quality dimensions have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to help improve more service quality of ethio telecom call center service.

- The ET call center have to treat customers with great respect, giving individual attention to customers and serving customers proactively based on their specific needs that emanate from themselves.

- Ethio telecom should give fast service within first time resolution to ensure a high level of reliability and responsiveness.
- The company should invest on trainings to enhance its employee's knowledge and behavior. The company should also realize that the improvement of this dimension would enhance customer satisfaction which in turn results in better performance of the call center.
- The call center should use more professional and individual approach towards customers. This is a tool for advisors to ensure more empathy to customers. Therefore the input of this need to be continually updated so as to capture dynamic customers' desires and perceptions.
- The advisors should give the same value proposition to each customer because every customer expectation about service quality has no big differences.

5.3 Areas for Further Study

Further research can be done to determine other variables of service quality and customer satisfaction not covered by the research. Any future researcher should reflect on the effect of intervening variables by using other service quality measurements. The researcher could also include other company call center services to use more respondents to make the research more significant.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Appendix 1.1: Questionnaire (English Version)

Addis Ababa University

School of Commerce

Marketing Management Program Unit

A questionnaire to be filled by customers of ethio telecom call center service

Dear Respondents,

I am Meron Tilahun, a graduate student of Addis Ababa University School of Commerce. I am conducting a research ***Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction of Ethio Telecom's Call Center*** in partial fulfillment of Master of Art in Marketing Management. The main objective of this study is to examine the quality of service provided by Ethio Telecom call center and its impact on customer satisfaction.

I kindly request you to spend some minutes of your time in answering the questionnaire. Your responses will be used only for academic research and any information which you provide will be kept confidential. Your genuine response will have significant effect on the result of the study.

General Instruction:-

- There is no need of writing your name
- In all cases where answer options are available please tick (✓)

Thank You, for your kind cooperation in answering the questionnaire.

Part I: Survey on Service Quality Items

Direction: This part of the questionnaire intends to find your perception towards the service quality of ethio telecom call center services. Please put a check mark (✓) on the number which reflects your perception.

1= strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree

S/N	Statement of Service Quality	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Tangibles						
1	Did the advisor welcome/greet you properly? Considering if the advisors: Introducing the company name, Introducing himself/herself, Asking how he/she could help you					
2	Call center advisors have welcoming tone of voice					
3	The interactive voice recorder facilities and technology call center are using goes with the type of service provided					
4	Call center has up-to-date equipment and technology					
5	Did the advisor ends the conversation properly; Considering if: The advisor thanking you for calling, The advisor saying goodbye, Let you hang up first					
Reliability						
6	Call center advisors promised to do something by a certain time they provide the service at the time they promise to do so					
7	Call center advisors show sincere interest on solving customer's problems					
8	Call center advisors perform service right the first time (error free service)					

9	Call center advisors provide correct /accurate information to you					
10	Call center advisors briefly present the various offers and services (short message service, voicemail, coloring ring back tone, Internet on mobile...)					
Responsiveness						
11	There are always adequate number of employees to respond to your needs at the time you make a call to the call center					
12	The length of time you had to wait before you could speak to an advisor is reasonable					
13	The speed with which your request was processed are fast					
14	Call center advisors are always happy and willing to serve customer					
15	Call center management are accessible, listen to and provide prompt and honest responses to customers inquiries					
Empathy						
16	Call center advisors have customers best interests at heart					
17	Call center advisors give individual attention to customer's					
18	Call center service hours are convenient to you					
19	Call center interactive voice record service is easily accessible					
20	Call center interactive voice record is user friendly and easily understandable (the instruction, language)					
21	Call center advisors understand your specific needs					
22	Call center employees demonstrate integrity and trustworthiness in dealing with customers					
Assurance						
23	The behavior of call center advisor instills confidence in you					

24	you feel safe in making conversation with call center advisors					
25	Call center advisors provide you the adequate information on the service you requested.					
26	Advisors have sufficient knowledge and required skills to answer customer question					

Part III: Level of Customer Satisfaction

Direction: the following statement describes the overall feeling you have about ethio telecom call center services, please respond by choosing the number which best reflects your own perception.

My feeling about call center service delivery can be best described as;

1. Highly dissatisfied ☐
2. Dissatisfied ☐
3. Neutral ☐
4. Satisfied ☐
5. Highly satisfied ☐

Thank you for taking your time to answer this questionnaire!!!

Appendix 1.2: Questionnaire (Amharic Version)

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ንግድ ስራ ትምህርት ቤት
ማርኬቲንግ ማኔጅመንት ኘሮግራም ክፍል
በኢትዮ ቴሌኮም የጥሪ ማእከል አገልግሎት ደንበኞች የሚሞላ መጠይቅ

ይህ መጠይቅ የተዘጋጀው በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ንግድ ስራ ትምህርት ቤት የድህረ ምረቃ ተማሪ በሆኑት ሜሮን ጥላሁን ሲሆን አላማውም ‘የአገልግሎት ጥራት እና የደንበኛ እርካታ በኢትዮ ቴሌኮም ጥሪ ማዕከል’ በሚል እርዕስ ለማደርገው ጥናት የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው። የጥናቱ ዋና አላማ የኢትዮ ቴሌኮም ጥሪ ማእከል ለደንበኞች የሚሰጠውን የአገልግሎት ጥራት በደንበኞች እርካታ ላይ ያለውን ተጽእኖ ለመመርመር ነው።

እባክዎ ጥቂት ጊዜ ሰጥተው የሚከተሉትን ጥያቄዎች በመመለስ ይተባበሩ። የሚሰጡት መልስ የሚውለው ለዚህ ጥናት አላማ ብቻ ነው እናም የሚሰጡት ማንኛውም አይነት ምላሽ ሚስጥሩ የተጠበቀ ይሆናል። ስለሆነም ከዚህ በታች ለቀረቡት ጥያቄዎች ትክክል ነው የሚሉትን መልስ ይሰጡ ዘንድ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ ምክንያቱም የእርስዎ ምላሽ ጥናቱ ለሚያስገኘው ውጤት ከፍተኛ አስተዋጽኦ አለው።

አጠቃላይ መመሪያ

- ስምዎን መጥቀስ አያስፈልግም
- ትክክል ነው የሚሉትን መልስ በተዘጋጀው ሳጥን ውስጥ (✓) ምልክት ያስቀምጡ

መጠይቁን በመሙላት ለሚያደርጉት ትብብር በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ!!

ክፍል አንድ፡ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት ጥራት መጠይቅ

መመሪያ፡ ይህ የመጠይቅ ክፍል ስለ ኢትዮ ቴሌኮም የጥሪ ማዕከል የአገልግሎት ጥራት ያሎዎትን ምልክታ ለማወቅ የተዘጋጀ ነው፡፡ እባክዎ የኔን ሀሳብ ይገልጻል ብለው ያመኑበት ላይ በተዘጋጀው ሳፕን ውስጥ (✓) ምልክት በማስቀመጥ ያመልክቱ፡፡

1 = በጭራሽ አልሰማማም 2 = አልሰማማም 3 = ሀሳብ የለኝም

4 = እስማማለሁ 5 = በጣም እስማማለሁ

ተ.ቁ	የአገልግሎት ጥራት ጥያቄ	በጭራሽ አልሰማማም	አልሰማማም	ሀሳብ የለኝም	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
		1	2	3	4	5
1	የጥሪ ማእከሉ ሰራተኞች የመግቢያ ሰላምታ ባግባቡ ያቀርባሉ? የሚቀጥሉትን ከግምት ውስጥ ያስገቡ፡ (የድርጅቱን ስም ማስተዋወቅ፣ የራስን ስም ማስተዋወቅ፣ ምን ልርዳዎ ብለው መጠየቅ)					
2	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ደንበኛን ለመርዳታ የሚጋብዝ ድምጽ አላቸው?					
3	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ የሚጠቀመው የኮምፒውተር መቅረጸ ድምጽ የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ከሚሰጠው አገልግሎት ጋር አብሮ ይሄዳል					
4	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ወቅቱን የጠበቀ ዘመናዊ የመገልገያ መሳሪያ እና አዳዲስ ቴክኖሎጂ ይጠቀማል?					
5	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች በአግባቡ የመዝጊያ ሰላምታ ይሰጣሉ? የሚቀጥሉትን ከግምት ውስጥ ያስገቡ፡ (ስለደወሉ እናመሰግናለን፣ መልካም ጊዜ ይሁንልዎ፣ ስልኩን ይዝጉ እባክዎ)					
6	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች አንድ ነገር በተወሰነ ጊዜ ውስጥ ለማድረግ ቃል ከገቡ የገቡትን ቃል ይፈጽማሉ?					
7	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች የደንበኞችን ችግር ለመፍታት ያላቸውን ፍላጎት በቅንነት ያሳያሉ?					
8	በመጀመሪያ ጥሪ መስተንግዶ የማያዳግም					

	ትክክለኛ አገልግሎት በጥሪ መዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ይሰጣል?					
9	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ትክክለኛና ጥራቱን የጠበቀ መረጃ ይሰጥዎታል?					
10	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ስለ ድርጅቱ አገልግሎትና ምርት በግልጽ ያስረዳሉ ምሳሌ አጭር የጽሁፍ መልዕክት፣ የድምጽ ሳጥን አጠቃቀም፣ የድምጽ ማሳመሪያ፣ ኢንተርኔት አገልግሎት...					
11	ወደ ጥሪ ማዕከሉ በደወሉ ጊዜ የርስዎን ጥያቄ ለመመለስ የተዘጋጁ በቂ ሰራተኞች አሉ?					
12	የጥሪ ማዕከሉን ሰራተኛ ለማግኘት መስመር ላይ የሚጠብቁት ጊዜ ምክንያታዊ ነው?					
13	በጥሪ ማዕከሉ በፍጥነት እና በቅልጥፍና ይስተናገዳሉ?					
14	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ደንበኞችን ለማገልገል ሁሉም ደስተኛ፣ ትሁት እና ፈቃደኞች ናቸው?					
15	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ የስራ ኃላፊዎች የደንበኛን ጥያቄ ለማዳመጥና አስፈላጊውን መፍትሄ ለመስጠት ተደራሽ ናቸው?					
16	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ሲያስተናግዱ የደንበኞችን ፍላጎት ከልባቸው አኑረው ነው?					
17	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ለያንዳንዱ ደንበኛ ልዩ ትኩረት ይሰጣሉ?					
18	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ የስራ ሰአት ለእርስዎ አመቺ ነው?					
19	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ የድምጽ ሳጥን አገልግሎት ለማግኘት አያስቸግርም ወይም በቀላሉ ይገኛል?					
20	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ የድምጽ ሳጥን አገልግሎት ለአጠቃቀም ምቹና በቀላሉ መረዳት የሚችሉት ነው? (ቋንቋው፣መመሪያው....)					
21	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች የደንበኞችን ትክክለኛ ፍላጎት ይረዳሉ?					
22	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ደንበኞቻቸውን በታማኝነት እና በቅንነት ያገለግላሉ?					
23	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች የሚሰጥዎት አገልግሎት ላይ የመተማመን ስሜት እንዲኖርዎት ያደርጋሉ?					
24	ከጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ጋር ሲነጋገሩ					

	የመመቻት ስሜት ሰማዎታል?					
25	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች ለሚጠይቁት አገልግሎት በቂ መረጃ ይሰጥዎታል?					
26	የጥሪ ማዕከሉ ሰራተኞች የደንበኞችን ጥያቄ ለመመለስ የሚያስችል በቂ እውቀት እና ክህሎት አላቸው?					

ክፍል ሁለት: የደንበኞች እርካታ መጠን

ከዚህ በታች ያለው አረፍተ ነገር አጠቃላይ ስለ ኢትዮ ቴሌኮም የጥሪ ማዕከል የደንበኞች አገልግሎት ያልዎትን የእርካታ መጠን የሚመዝኑበት ነው። እባክዎ ከቀረቡት አማራጮች የኔን ስሜት በትክክል ይገልጻል ብለው ያመኑበትን በተዘጋጀው ሳፕን ውስጥ (✓) ምልክት በማድረግ ይግለጽ።

አጠቃላይ ስለ ጥሪ ማዕከሉ አገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ያለኝ የእርካታ መጠን በሚቀጥለው ይገለጻል፤

- በጣም ዝቅተኛ ☐
- ዝቅተኛ ☐
- ሃሳብ የሆኝም ☐
- ከፍተኛ ☐
- በጣም ከፍተኛ ☐

ጊዜዎን ሰጥተው መጠይቁን ለመመለስ ላደረጉልኝ ትብብር እጅግ አመሰግናለሁ!!

Appendix 2: Statistical output

Table 4.3 Mean score and Standard Deviation for Service Quality Dimensions

		Tangibles	Reliability	Responsive	Empathy	Assurance
N	Valid	358	358	358	358	358
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.3151	4.2279	4.0302	4.2821	4.4344
Std. Deviation		.47544	.66804	.70626	.63126	.68693

Over all correlation matrix

Correlation Matrix							
		Constant	Reliability	Responsiveness	Empathy	Assurance	Tangibles
Step 1	Constant	1.000	-.150	-.148	-.256	-.275	-.515
	Reliability_3	-.150	1.000	-.238	-.230	-.034	-.060
	Responsiveness_3	-.148	-.238	1.000	-.060	-.177	-.143
	Empathy_1	-.256	-.230	-.060	1.000	-.265	-.049
	Assurance_3	-.275	-.034	-.177	-.265	1.000	-.238
	Tangibles_4	-.515	-.060	-.143	-.049	-.238	1.000

Regression result of Tangibility

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	11.502	1	.001
	Block	11.502	1	.001
	Model	11.502	1	.001

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	13.942	6	.030

Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	213.246 ^a	.032	.068

- a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Classification Table^a

	Observed	Predicted		
		Overall customer satisfaction level		Percentage Correct
		0	Highly Dissatisfied	
Step 1	Overall customer satisfaction level	0	34	.0
	Highly Dissatisfied	0	324	100.0
	Overall Percentage			90.5

- a. The cut value is .500

Regression result of Reliability**Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients**

	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	27.448	1	.000
Block	27.448	1	.000
Model	27.448	1	.000

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	1.168	7	.992

Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	197.299 ^a	.074	.158

- a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Classification Table^a

	Observed	Predicted		
		Overall customer satisfaction level		Percentage Correct
		0	Highly Dissatisfied	
Step 1	0	4	30	11.8
	Overall customer satisfaction level Highly Dissatisfied	1	323	99.7
	Overall Percentage			91.3

a. The cut value is .500

Regression result of Responsive

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step	24.692	1	.000
Step 1 Block	24.692	1	.000
Model	24.692	1	.000

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	3.354	8	.910

Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	200.055 ^a	.067	.143

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Classification Table^a

	Observed	Predicted		
		Overall customer satisfaction level		Percentage Correct
		0	Highly Dissatisfied	
Step 1	Overall customer satisfaction level	0	33	2.9
	Highly Dissatisfied	0	324	100.0
	Overall Percentage			90.8

a. The cut value is .500

Regression result of Empathy

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

		Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	29.168	1	.000
	Block	29.168	1	.000
	Model	29.168	1	.000

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	7.991	7	.333

Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	195.579 ^a	.078	.168

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Classification Table^a

	Observed	Predicted		
		Overall customer satisfaction level		Percentage Correct
		0	Highly Dissatisfied	
Step 1	Overall customer satisfaction level	2	32	5.9
	Highly Dissatisfied	0	324	100.0
	Overall Percentage			91.1

a. The cut value is .500

Regression result of Assurance

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients

	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step	41.208	1	.000
Step 1 Block	41.208	1	.000
Model	41.208	1	.000

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	4.440	5	.488

Hosmer and Lemeshow Test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
1	4.440	5	.488

Model Summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	183.540 ^a	.109	.233

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Classification Table^a

	Observed	Predicted		
		Overall customer satisfaction level		Percentage Correct
		0	Highly Dissatisfied	
Step 1	Overall customer satisfaction level	8	26	23.5
	Highly Dissatisfied	3	321	99.1
	Overall Percentage			91.9

a. The cut value is .500