

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND
SERVICE QUALITY: A SURVEY OF FUNERAL HOMES IN
NAIROBI CITY COUNTY**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in this or any other University.

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This project has been submitted for Examination with my approval as the University Lecturer.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to Mr. Joseph Mugi and Godfrey Waithaka for going out of their way to ensure my completion of this program.

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I wish to thank most sincerely all those whose contributions have made this project a success. To my supervisor Mr. Ochoro for his assistance and advice all through making this project a success.

To Almighty who has performed miracles to enable completion of this program

ABSTRACT

Funeral homes in Kenya like other businesses operate in a competitive environment. Knowing what factors influence the level of service quality in their institutions is important because it can lead to future business success for the funeral homes. One of the dimensions that influence service quality is employee satisfaction. Therefore the relationship between employees' level of job satisfaction and service quality is important because if it is understood properly it can enable the right decisions to be made about service quality that lead to increase in customer satisfaction. The study objective was to establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and service quality of the Funeral homes in Nairobi. The study adopted a descriptive research design where each of the 7 funeral homes in Nairobi formed the sample frame. A questionnaire was the main research instrument in which one questionnaire was dropped and latter collected from the firms. The managers answered questionnaire items constructed by the researcher. The inferential relationship was imputed using the ordered regression analysis. The study findings were that in cognizance of the role that its staff play in enhancing the level of service quality, the funeral homes have put in place measures aimed at motivating the staff. The study found that indeed the level of employee's satisfaction influenced positively the level of service quality in the funeral homes. Thus an institution will have to identify the most critical variables that affect its employee's performance and try to reinforce the same in order to improve the effectiveness of service quality. This implies that the senior management of the firm should consider their internal reward system as well as working environment for their employees because they were found to affect their performance and therefore job satisfaction. The managers should consider their internal strategic management processes, training and development process so that these practices can motivate their staff and this will increase their satisfaction and as the study show it will increase the service quality. The major weakness in this study is that it was limited in scope in the sense that it was only based on funeral homes in Nairobi. This means that the findings cannot be over generalized. Future researchers may concentrate on trying to identify the other factors that influence the service quality in the funeral homes other than the employee level of satisfaction.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- EP** - Effort–performance expectancy
- ISO** - International standards organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's world of intense competition, delivery of quality services is the key source of competitive advantage. World Class organisations work towards delivery of quality services with a lasting impression to customers. Quality service leads to customer satisfaction and influences customer's loyalty (Mohammad et.al 2006). Service has characteristics of intangibility, inseparability and heterogeneity. Delivery of quality service is therefore inseparable from the person delivering it (Sureshchandar, 2002). Employees who deliver the service are therefore an important factor that influences the quality of service delivered since they are inseparable from the service delivered.

Theories on employee satisfaction are largely need or process based. Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) is of the view that employee satisfaction occurs when he or she interprets that he is getting a reward that is commensurate to the effort expended in a task and that the reward has a high valence or importance to him. Equity theory (Adams, 1965) states that employee satisfaction is realized out of comparison with other employees carrying out similar task Satisfaction occurs when employee interprets equal or fair treatment or reward after comparison. Mowday et al, 1982 in career growth theory cites growth and development needs to be the source of employee satisfaction.

Funeral or "death" industry is nowadays characterized by many competing firms. Keith (1999) has observed that customers who constitute the bereaved differentiate funeral homes on the basis of service quality offered. Funeral homes work towards offering

quality services as a strategy for survival and gaining competitive advantage. Customers shall make a repeat use of a funeral home or recommend the funeral home to other users if they have a positive experience on the quality of service offered (Ivy, 2007). Funeral homes are nowadays managed by funeral directors, who ensure delivery of quality service through the employees. Employee satisfaction influences quality of service because service is inseparable from the person delivering it.

1.1.1 Service Quality

Service quality is a form of attitude formed by a service user about service experience and determines a negative or positive predetermined response towards a service (Zeithmal, 2006). Service quality is also a perception that is largely affected by expectation, experience and perception (Spreng et al, 1996). Expectation is the anticipated service quality while experience of a service quality occurs after use of a service or service encounter. Perception is a conditioned interpretation about a service largely out of experience.

Nimako et al (2012) explains expectations as either ex-ante or ex-post. Ex-ante expectation refers to customer expectations of service quality before receiving the service. Ex-post expectation is the customer's expectation about future service quality having used the service at least once. Ex-post expectation relates a future service quality to the first encounter of the service. Azzolin (1993) explains experience by using the terms contamination and pollination effects. Contamination effect occurs when a customer's unfavourable assessment of a service event negatively affects future service encounters. Pollination effect arises from a customer positive assessment of a future service encounter based on previous positive service encounter. Tiernan (2008) describes

perception on service quality as a prolonged experience that results to a positive or negative mental positioning of a service and other related or unrelated service from service providers.

Zeithmal et al (2006) cites service quality as the difference or gap between expectation, experience and perception. Bad service quality occurs where the gap results to a perceived shortfall while a good service quality occurs where the gap is non-existence or positive. Bad service experience has a greater and long lasting adverse effect on a customer's emotional capital (Mohammad et.al 2006). Emotional capital represents the cumulative effects of emotional response effects. Negative emotional capital yields dissatisfaction and disappointment about a service therefore leading to emotional capital reduction. Positive emotional capital adds satisfaction leading to an increase in emotional capital. (Parasuraman et.al 1985).

1.1.2 Service quality measurement criteria

Service quality unlike product quality is hard to measure because of interrelationship of user expectation and the impact of specific features of services such as intangibility, inseparability heterogeneity and portability (Zeithmal et al 2006). Service quality is measured against the criteria of dependability, trust, recovery factors and personal attention and empathy.

Dependability is service provider's ability to fulfill his commitments. The commitments include prices agreements, service delivery time limits, and that the service is carried out correctly from the beginning. The customer wants to be assured that the service will be delivered as agreed and that what he gets conforms to what he had been promised and

meets his expectations (Lewis et al, 1990). Trust arises when the customer feels that the service provider has the capacity and competence to deliver the requested service. Trust occurs when the customer perceives the service provider to have credibility and worthy being trusted.

Yavas et al (2003) describes recovery factors as the service provider's ability to handle critical situations and to note when the customer is disappointed with the service. The service provider masters the situation and get things right. Professional handling of critical incidents and customer's complaints is a recovery factor process. Personal attention is the ability to give focused attention to a customer's needs without diverting or dividing resource, time, energy and concentration to other activities. Bushoff (2002) found that personal attention creates a feeling of worthiness to a customer, improves service quality perception and emotional capital. Empathy is putting one into others shoes and to give a corresponding freely and expected response.

1.1.3 Employee Satisfaction Dimensions

Satisfaction level of an employee is a concept reflecting the degree to which the individual needs and desires are met and the extent to which this is perceived by the employee (Cranny et al, 1992). The needs and desires can be classified as either extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic needs are physical or financial needs that includes; salary, physical work environment and monetary benefits. Intrinsic needs are psychological and increase emotional capital by meeting emotional desires of the employee. They include; recognition, work groups, career prospects and growth, training and skills acquisition, actualization and empowerment. The most emphasized employee satisfaction dimensions are; organization's leadership, job satisfaction physical environment compensation and

benefits, individual growth, and organization culture. Sweetman (2001) states that improvements of each or a combination of the factors can lead to improvement of employee satisfaction. Organization's leadership is the ability of higher management to understand employee problems and needs, consider employees suggestions when making decisions, empathize to employees and being accessible (Armstrong, 2012). Employee satisfaction is influenced by management or leadership style of exercising and communicating power (Michael et al 2010). The five bases of exercising and communicating power; are coercive, reward, legitimate, referent and expert (French et al 1988).

Job satisfaction is how well an employee is satisfied with the work he performs (Cranny et al, 1992). Employee's job satisfaction and performance is affected by presence of skills variety, tasks identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback in a job (Cumming et al, 2007). Job satisfaction increases employee's interest, commitment and performance. The physical environment is the hygiene factors that support in Herzberg dual factory theory. Herzberg (1987) specified the factors to include space, ventilation, accident free work, Salary and benefits, working equipment and machines.

Individual growth is attained through career progression and skills acquisition. Training and development schemes in organizations impart to the employee the relevant skills which enhances his performance and positive attitude towards the organization (Armstrong, 2012). Well trained employees are in a position to effectively manage and give solutions to complex challenges in their work, thereby gaining personal confidence, recognition and satisfaction. Growth in career or vertical progression at work improves employee's morale, performance and satisfaction level (Armstrong et al, 2012).

Organization culture is the shared knowledge and scheme created by a set of people for perceiving, interpreting expressing and responding to the social realities around them (Bernadette et al, 1985). Organization culture creates a shared pattern of rules to act in a common manner and know how to act in various circumstances. It denotes know how of the other members of the organization acts in the same circumstances and gathers organization members in the same umbrella (Bullet and Adrian, 2008) Culture orientations of the organization that affect employee satisfaction are; learning , performance culture, customer orientation culture and ethics cultures (Schein, 1992). Employee satisfaction from an organizational culture occurs if the various combinations of organizational culture results to mutual benefits between the organization and the employee.

Employee satisfaction has a direct relationship with service quality. Satisfied employee's have willingness, empathy, readiness and assurance when delivering the service (Gilbert et.al, 2006). Willingness and readiness means delivering the service punctually and quickly, being there for customers and being there when customers need assistance. Assurance refers to the employee's knowledge, competence and the ability to inspire reliance and trust. Empathy is employee's ability to give personal attentiveness and the ability to enter into and identify with another person's situation. The employees must inspire confidence and give a feeling of credibility and trustworthiness to the service consumer. All in all service users must feel that the supplying company has the capacity and competence to deliver the quality service (Rajiv, D. et.al, 2000).

1.1.4 Public Health

Public health is division of the health which deals with environment related health. It is distinct from medical health from the perspectives of preventive and curative. Public health is founded on the preventive paradigm while medical health is based on curative paradigm. Preventive paradigm of health reasons that poor health can be prevented by keeping the environment clean and free from infectious germs which bring ailments. Curative health treats ailments which arise from unclean environment. Managing public health would therefore reduce ailments which are managed by in medical health.

Kenya Health policy 2012-2030 that guides devolution of health under Kenya Constitution 2010 provides institutional framework structure which specifies that administration of funeral homes and funeral services be under County Governments. The County Governments administrates funeral homes under Public Health Act legislated by Health Ministry. Funeral homes are considered to be part of public health death isn't viewed as ailment. The dead bodies require to be disposed to avoid environment pollution and infections that lead to ailments

1.1.5 Funeral Homes in Nairobi City County

Funeral homes also referred to as mortuaries, morgues, funeral parlors or final resting houses are a segment of the wide "death industry". The other segment is referred to as funeral services (Spencer, 2011). Funeral homes are involved in the processes of funeralizing the "body" by offering services to the body. Funeral services segment is involved in funeral ceremonial activities of casket making, florist, transport and cremation (Walter, 1990). Disposal of the deceased is viewed a public health function involved separate from the mainstream medical health. Funeral homes are therefore

categorized under public health, a division of health that deals with maintenance of the environment (Robert et al, 1997). Euphemism is highly used to reduce stigmatization associated with death and the funeral homes. The terms “passed away” instead of died; “Mr.”, ‘Mrs.’, ‘Miss’ in place of corpse or dead body; “deceased” rather than dead; “infant “ in place of still born; ‘loved one’ instead of the late are commonly applied (Wolfet, 2000a).

Nairobi City County government licenses the funeral homes in Nairobi County. Business registration and Licensing Report 2014 for Nairobi County indicate that there are ten funeral homes namely; City Mortuary, Lee funeral, Umash funeral Services, old Chiromo Mortuary, Chiromo Parlour, Kenyatta University funeral home and Montezuma and Manalisa. The funeral homes for purposes of this study can be categorized into public, private and institutional funeral homes. Omega, Charflo and Old Chiromo funeral homes though registered are not functional and offer funeral services only.

Kihara (2013) has observed that there has been an increase in the number of funeral homes in Nairobi. This has led to intense competition and adoption of competitive strategies that include advertising in the print media, televisions, bill board, internet and direct marketing. Troyer (2001) cites funeral business to be a sophisticated one that has developed to strategic alliances and operating of branches. Strategic alliances are made with funeral services providers as a step towards enhancing quality of service and gaining competitive edge (Kihara, 2013)

1.1.6 Funeral Homes Services

Funeral home services are essential because of the negative emotional condition that is usually with the bereaved. Services offered by funeral homes are stigmatized out of the mystery and fear about transition from the living and the dead (McCormic, 2001b). Funeral homes offer variety of services that facilitates burials or last warm send off. Human beings have a lot of emotional attachment with the dead and wish to give a descent final 'send off' to their loved ones. Keith (1989) identified following services that are offered by funeral homes; safety and body preservation, embalming, legal and statutory documents processing, post mortem, transport, and strategic linkage with other industrial players and funeral directorship.

Body preservation requires cleaning, refrigeration and treatment to prevent decomposition (Ivan, 2007). Safety is the guarantee that the body deposited at the funeral homes shall be presented as a "product" during the day of the burial having undergone through various funeral home services (Steve et al, 2007). Embalming is a body reconstruction process whereby dented bodies out of accidents, shootings, war or other physical body damaging encounters during death are reconstructed to an almost normal or un-dented condition. Embalming makes the bereaved be satisfied that the deceased has departed in honour (Wolfet, 2001b). Legal and statutory documents processing are the services of facilitating acquisition of death permit and death certificate from registrar of birth and deaths. This is done through approved agents after presentation of confirmatory documents to the state department by the funeral homes. Post mortem services are offered through mortician or pathologist to determine cause of death. The service though a medical process is supported by funeral homes which offer technical equipment and

space (Robert et al, 1997). Body transport is carried through specialized body transport vehicles that are owned and managed by the funeral homes. Directorship of the funeral services is when the funeral director relieves the bereaved the roles duties of organizing the funeral. The funeral director undertakes to coordinate the activities on behalf of the bereaved (Wolfet, 2001b). Strategic linkage services funeral organizing to other players in the industry who offer the services of florist, transport, church and crematory.

1.2 Research Problem

Funeral homes have come of age to adopt modern managerial practices, human resources competencies and technology in their operations (Brian, 1999). The bereaved or the customers through the funeral homes websites have access to information about the quality of services they should expect (Wolfelt, 2001b). Offering of quality services is therefore double edged in that it meets competitive advantage objective and ex-ante service quality. Previously a stigmatized business, funeral business has changed to be a professional one where strategic competing practices of customer care, advertisement, information technology application and strategic alliances are a common feature (Ivy, 2007). This business transformation motivates the study of funeral homes and quality of services offered.

The increased number of funeral homes has raised competition level between funeral service providers. Service quality has therefore been adopted as a strategic tool that offers competitive advantage to a funeral home. Inseparability of service provider from the service means that employees of funeral homes play a strategic in determining the quality of services offered (Wolfet, 2001b). Funeral home services are undesired because death is unwanted and is therefore stigmatized. Employees offering services at funeral homes

provide a “service without thanks” (Adams, 1985). The employees are stigmatized but their satisfaction is critical for funeral homes to offer quality services (Steve, 2007). They undergo emotional stress due to the nature of their work and the working environment, yet customers expect delivery of quality service from them. Stigmatization, work environment, nature of customer and the service expectation makes study of employee satisfaction an interesting area of study (Bernadette et al, 1985).

Several studies on employee satisfaction have attempted to establish its relationship with performance, corporate citizenship, staff turnover and levels of motivation. Rajiv et al (2000) researched on link between employee satisfaction, employee turnover, customer satisfaction and financial performance. The study was cross sectional cutting across various industries. He found a strong relationship between employee satisfaction as a non-financial moderator and financial performance. Koys (2001) researched on effects of employee satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior and turnover to organization effectiveness. The study found out that employee satisfaction is a strong moderating factor in organization effectiveness, Grandy et al (2011) studied on employee satisfaction, responsiveness and customer satisfaction. The study found out that employee satisfaction has a positive influence on customer satisfaction and degree of organization responsiveness.

Mwonga (2013) studied on factors perceived to influence employee satisfaction at work place at Kenya Wine Agencies. The study singled out levels of job involvement, communication and work to be critical in determining levels of employee satisfaction. Oteba (2012) researched on service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in the Kenya Telecommunication Service Industry. The study found out that some service

dimensions are more important than others depending on the industrial context. Gituanja (2010) researched on quality perception and customer satisfaction in the air line in Kenya focusing on Kenya Air ways. The study found a strong relationship between customer satisfaction and perception of service quality delivered.

To the best of researcher's knowledge, no known study have been undertaken on relationship between employee satisfaction and service quality in funeral homes in Nairobi. The study seeks to fill this gap by answering the following research question: What is the relationship between employee satisfaction and quality of service at funeral homes in Nairobi City County?

1.3 Research Objective

To establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and service quality in funeral homes in Nairobi City County.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study shall be of great importance to the funeral homes as it brings into focus the importance of delivering quality service to customers. They shall use the research to improve service quality through enhancement of employee satisfaction. This shall require drawing of employee programs that shall lead to improvement of their satisfaction and quality of service at funeral homes.

Scholars shall use the study as a basis of further research on the effect of work environment, to employees stress and emotional stability. Strategies to moderate the effects shall be developed leading to enhancement of employee satisfaction and quality improvement at funeral homes.

The study ventures into a stigmatized area that touches on death. Gaining insight of funeral homes shall change people's perception on funeral homes are equal or alternative workplaces. The demand for working at funeral homes shall increase leading to introduction of professionalism, employee satisfaction and improvement of services.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter explores on the literature about service quality and customer satisfaction. Theoretical framework about employee satisfaction is covered in the chapter. A conceptual framework linking service quality to employee satisfaction is included.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Theories of employee satisfaction are largely derived from motivation theories whereby satisfaction is viewed as an outcome rather than a behavior. Emotional, attitudinal, and perceptive nature of satisfaction makes it intrinsic, hence a strong relationship with motivation. Theories explaining satisfaction includes; expectancy theory, Herzberg dual theory, Equity theory, and career stage theory.

2.2.1 Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom (1964) expectancy theory identifies three factors or expectancies that play an interactive role in employee satisfaction; effort and performance, instrumentality and valence. Effort–performance expectancy (E-P) is perception by the employee that effort is positively correlated to performance. Performance–outcome expectancy (P-O) or instrumentality concerns that following the performances appropriate rewards intrinsic and extrinsic shall follow. Valence (V) is the degree to which a person values a particular reward. Employee satisfaction would occur if he interprets a positive relationship between the effort put and level of performance.

The organization should appropriately reward the performance in order to positively reinforce the employee in repeating or improving the performance. Instrumentality or the rewards offered are predictive in that the employee shall expect a future improved performance shall result to rewards and hence increased performance and satisfaction (Slocum, 1986). The rewards should however have valence for them to be satisfying. Managers in organizations should therefore evaluate the nature of rewards to respective to each employee because valence is relative.

Expectancy theory is therefore a highbred of instrumentality theory and drive theory that incorporates experience in similar situations. The employee is satisfied once his expectations are met and this acts as an instrument for him or her to improve the performance. Expectancy theory is a process theory that deals with intrinsic motivation and human emotions.

2.2.2 Equity Theory

Adams (1965) equity theory is based on employee perception towards rewards or pay he receives in relation to those of others in similar positions, having equal qualifications or training and expending similar level of effort for similar job. The theory is based on two ratios; my pay /others pay and my position on dimensions relative to pay/others positions on dimensions relative to pay. If ones ratio is unequal to another's with whom the employee compares with then the perception of inequity and thus dissatisfaction ensues.

Equity theory as a perception of rewards or salary treatment is moderated by a host of internal and external factors (Rajiv et al, 2000). The internal moderating factors include

valence, clarity of structure, instrumentality, past salary treatment and expectancies. External moderating factors include industry and or global practices.

2.2.3 Herzberg Duality Theory

Herzberg (1987) classified the work dimensions into motivators and hygiene factors. Motivators are the satisfying events, absence of whose would cause no satisfaction and not dissatisfaction. They include achievement, recognition, work, itself, responsibility, advancement and growth. Hygiene factors are the dissatisfying events presence of whose would not cause satisfaction. They include company policy and administration, supervision, relationship with superior, work condition, salary relationship with peers, personal life, relationship with subordinates status and security. Herzberg (1987) stated that motivators would include intrinsic satisfaction that impacts on attitudes, stress, morale commitment and hence employee satisfaction while hygiene factors impacted on extrinsic satisfaction which does not impact on motivation or satisfaction. Satisfied employees exhibit positive behaviour outcomes on turnover, productivity and performance (Babakus et al, 2003).

2.2.4 Career Stage Theory

Mowday et al, (1982) proposes that employees' passes through distinct career stages namely; exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement. The needs that give satisfaction to employee in each stage are distinct. Management of the organization is required to identify the appropriate stage of an employee and provide the corresponding needs that relate to the stage. Hall (1984) suggests that a mismatch between the career stage and the need shall not result to the desired satisfaction.

Employees in exploration stage are newly recruited and have less commitment to the organization. They are more concerned with survival and belonging over any other needs. Establishment stage employees have more concern on salary increases, promotion, achieving success and job security (Slocum, 1996). Skills and potential are acquired through experience, coaching and mentoring. Employees in maintenance stage have reached the peak of their careers. They are more concerned with maintaining their present job status, position and performance levels and express less interest in working harder to achieve additional rewards (Armstrong, 2012). In disengagement, individuals tend to psychologically separate themselves from work and hence low performance.

2.3 Service Quality

International standards organization (ISO) defines services as part of total production process. Service quality is the value added in the production process that makes a product to have satisfaction to the user. Satisfaction is the value added and is realized in the features of the final product or service. The features include packaging, timeliness, differentiation, pricing distribution and compliance to the established standard (Gilbert et al, 2006). The term service quality is viewed differently depending on individual orientation and the intended purpose.

Townsend et al, (1986) speak of quality in fact and quality in perception. Quality in fact refers to the established quality specifications. Quality specifications are contained in service charters that are developed by management. Service charters specify the quality or level of service that customers should expect in terms of efficiency in delivery, cost, feedback, reliability and management's commitment (Zeithmal et al, 2006). Quality in perception on the other hand refers to the customer's feelings about the service offered on

a first encounter. The perception created depends on the service provider's ability to meet or exceed customer's expectations on a consistent basis (Mosahab et.al 2010). When the customer receives the service quality expected consistently, he attains a steady state of equilibrium and becomes a loyal customer who cannot switch to competitors. Pollination effect occurs when he develops to be an advocate of the firms quality services by recommending them to other potential customers (Hackl et al, 2000).

Gummesson, et al (1988, 1991) has suggested the term 'construction quality'. This is the value added into a service through the processes of production, delivery and relativity. Production of service is influenced by the technical capacity of the service providers which includes machinery, infrastructure and level of technology used by service provider. Technical capacity inspires the level of trust that a service user has on the ability of service provider to produce quality service consistently (Tiernan, 2008). Delivery of quality is how the service is delivered to the service user and is inseparable from the person delivering it. Service delivery is dependent upon the person's attitude, training, degree of care towards the customer and support by other team members or management (Azzolin, 1993). Relativity denotes the interaction with customers through feedback or satisfactory response to customer queries. Service quality is enhanced when feedback from the customers is timely acted on or when queries raised by the customers are satisfactorily addressed (Spreng et al, 1996).

Grounross, 1985 describe service quality as technical, functional and image. Technical service quality is depicted by the nature and quality of the products and services the customer receives. It's determined by machine, tools and equipment outlay possessed by the service provider (Gumesson, 1991). Functional quality is how the consumer gets the

technical outcome or the goods and services. Functional quality largely captures the human element involved in the delivery of the goods and carries (Tiernan et.al, 2008). Human elements include employee's responsiveness, timely delivery, distribution, and customer handling. Technical and functional quality gives a positive or negative image about the service quality or produces contamination and pollination effects (Mosahab et.al, 2010).

2.3.1 Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is used as the standard of determining the quality of service offered because the customer is the end consumer of the service. Zeithmal et al (2006) view satisfaction as the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether it meets the customers' needs and expectations. The ultimate goal of a service provider is to deliver a service of high quality and to increase customer satisfaction (Spreng et al, 1996). The five factors of service quality which lead to customer satisfaction are; core service or service product; human element or service delivery, systematization of service delivery; non-human element tangibles or services scapes and social responsibility (Sureshchandar et.al 2002).

Core service portrays the 'content' of a service. It's 'what 'of a service or the features offered in a service (Wang et al, 2006). Human element of service delivery refers to all aspects in the person delivering the service and includes though not limited to reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, moments of truth, critical incident and recovery (Cheb et al, 2000). Systematization of service delivery is the processes, procedures, systems and technology that one would like and expect the service delivery process to possess. Systematization should be perfectly standardized, streamlined and simplified so

that service could be received without any hassles, hiccups, undesired or inordinate questioning by the customers (Edvardsson, 1998).

Non-human tangibles are the facets of the service quality that includes equipment, machinery, and employee appearance. They are the man-made physical environment popularly known as the service scapes. Social responsibility helps the organizations to lead as a corporate citizen in encouraging ethical behaviour in everything it does (Tiernan et.al, 2008). Service-scapes and social responsibility send strong signals towards improving the organizations image and goodwill and consequently influence the customer overall evaluation of service quality.

2.4 Service quality and Employee Satisfaction at Funeral Homes

Satisfied employees at the funeral homes shall empathize with the bereaved and offer personalized services that shall meet the customer satisfaction. Such service shall be provided timely and promptly to meet the short deadlines that are associated with the burial process. (Brian, 1999). Employees shall exhibit a higher degree of responsiveness by interacting with customers. Interaction and feedback between the employees and the bereaved or clients gives, inspires trust and confidence that the funeral home shares the feeling of the client (Bernadette et al, 1985).

Employee satisfaction at funeral homes shall result to high product quality whereby the services of body preservation, embalming, postmortem, linkages to other related services and funeral directorship shall be delivered to the expected customer standards. The technical capacity of funeral homes ensures that the employee have the appropriate machine, tools and equipment shall create the satisfaction to the employees leading to

high quality services (Walter, 1990). In summary, satisfaction of employees at funeral houses shall result to high quality of service in terms of product, delivery, relativity, functional and image.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Employee satisfaction is a function of leadership in the organization, job satisfaction, physical environment, organization culture, work groups and teams as well as the orientation of the organization towards learning as shown in figure 2.1.

Independent variables

Employee satisfaction

- Leadership or Management
- Job satisfaction
- Physical environment
- Organisation culture
- Career growth
- Work groups and Teams

Dependent

Service quality

- Dependability
- Recovery
- Trust
- Personal attention
- Empathy

Source: Author (2015) Figure 2.1 – Independent variables of employee satisfaction and dependent variables of service quality

Employees shall be satisfied upon increasing the levels of independent variables in the organization. The outcome of employee satisfaction shall be; improved services quality that meets service quality measurements of dependability, recovery, trust and personal attention.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the methodology used in the research study. It describes the procedures which were followed in undertaking the study. The chapter covers research design, population, sampling, and data collection methods and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Descriptive research design was used in the study. Cooper and Schindler (2006) suggest that descriptive study defines the subject, creates profile of a group of problems, people or events through the collection of data and tabulation of frequencies on research variable or their interaction.

Descriptive design method provided qualitative data which was used to answer research questions on the subject under the study. The data collected was analyzed using appropriate analysis tools. The tools included tables, pie charts, graphs etc. which shall capture the information from the various strata.

3.3 Target Population

The target population of the study comprised all the employees working at funeral homes in Nairobi and the customers at funeral homes. The employees shall provided data in regard to employee satisfaction while customer provided data in regard to customer satisfaction. Customers were satisfied out of the quality service delivered by the employees. The funeral homes from where the population of the study was got are indicated in Table 3.1

3.4 Sample Design

Stratified sampling method was applied to generate the research sample. The method recognizes existence of strata with distinct characteristics in the sample train. Kothari (2000) states that stratified sampling method ensures that the sample is a representative of the population by ensuring that data collected from each stratum represents the characteristics of the stratum. The various categories or stratus of funeral homes in Nairobi are; public, institutional and private funeral homes.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommends that 10% or more of the target population is representative of population where the appropriate method of sample design is applied. The sample was composed of employees working in funeral homes and customers using funeral home services. Employees were further categorized into managers and non managers to accommodate the difference in satisfaction needs. Employees provided data on employee satisfaction while customers provided data on service quality. An equal number of customers to that of the employees in each category was used to ensure proportionate weighting of funeral homes. The sample size was decomposed to 38 employees and 36 customers.

Table 3.1: List of Funeral Homes in Nairobi City County

Funeral homes	Population (No. of Employees)	Managers	Non- managers	Total	Customers
Public Funeral Homes					
City Mortuary	120	6	6	12	12
Total	120	6	6	12	12
Institutional Funeral Homes					
Chiromo Parlour	35	2	2	4	
Kenyatta National Hospital	54	3	3	6	
Kenyatta University	43	2	2	4	14
Total	132	7	7	14	14
Private Funeral Homes					
Lee Funeral	20	1	1	2	
Montezuma	42	2	2	4	
Umash	67	3	3	6	12
Total	129	6	6	12	12
GRAND TOTAL	373	19	19	38	38

Source: HR Departments of the Funeral homes, 2015

3.5 Data Collection

The study used primary data, collected through the use of questionnaires. Leading et al (2001) states that questionnaires are effective instruments of data collection in research because they enable the researcher to focus on important areas that address the research directly. Open ended questions as well as structured and unstructured questions were used in the questionnaire. Cooper and Schneider (2008) suggest that structured questions

are effective in reducing data collection time while unstructured questions encourage the respondent to give in depth responses, thereby enhancing quality of data collected.

Questionnaire were standardized to ensure validity and reliability. The researcher guided the respondents through the questionnaire. Reliability and clarity of the questionnaire was confirmed through pre-testing with a selected funeral home. The pretest was done by the researcher. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that the accuracy of the data collected depends on the instruments in terms of validity and reliability.

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher directly to the employees and customers. There were questionnaires: one for the employees and the other for the customers. Employee's questionnaire was divided into 2 sections: section A or bio-data where the researcher asked on the personal information of the respondent: section B adduces the variables of employee satisfaction to determine the level of employee satisfaction. Customer's questionnaire had 3 sections: section A was on the background information about the customer: section B was on the overall organization service measures against the variables of service quality measurement: and section C is on employee's service delivery on each of the service measurement criteria.

3.6 Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyse the data collected. Mean scores and frequencies were used as descriptive statistics while multiple regression analysis was used to establish relationship between dependent and independent variables. The model to be applied in the analysis was expressed as follows:

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \mu$$

Where:

Y = service quality = Dependability, Recovery, Trust, Personal attention and Empathy

X_1 = Leadership of the organization

X_2 = Job satisfaction

X_3 = Career Growth and Development

X_4 = Organization culture

X_5 = Work Groups and Teams

X_6 = Physical Environment

μ = Error term

In the model, a = the constant term while the coefficient β_{1-6} was used to measure the sensitivity of the dependent variable (Y) to the predictor variables. μ is the error term that captures the unexplained variations in the model.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The research objective was to establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and service quality at funeral homes in Nairobi City County. This chapter presents the analysis, findings and the discussion with regard to the objective. The analysis is presented in mean and standard deviations while the findings are presented in frequency distributions and tables. There were two sets of questionnaires issued. The first set was distributed to the Morgue attendants to establish their level of job satisfaction and in the same funeral home another set of questionnaire was distributed to the customers to determine their level of satisfaction.

4.2 Demographic Information

The demographic information considered in this section included the gender, current job position, number of years worked and the current level of education. A total of 76 questionnaires were issued out. The completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency. Of the 76 questionnaires distributed, 58 were returned. The returned questionnaires' represented a response rate of 76% and this response rate was deemed to be adequate for the realization of the research objectives.

4.2.1 Gender

This section of the questionnaire sought to establish the gender of respondents. The results are presented in Table 4.1

Table 4. 1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	39	67	67
Female	19	33	100.0
Total	58	100.0	

The results indicate that 67% of the respondents were male while the female morgue attendants formed the other 33% were female. This findings implies that being a morgue attendant is no longer the preserve of male workers alone but instead has attracted the interest of female workers as well.

4.2.2 Length of service with the Funeral Home

The length of service that a respondent will have worked in an organization will determine the level of satisfaction with the working condition. The results of the respondents length of service with the funeral homes is presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 : Length of service with the Funeral Home

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
5-10 years	15	26	26
Over 10 years	23	40	66
Less than 5 years	20	34	100
Total	58	100	

The results show that 38.5% of the respondents have worked in the funeral home between 5-10 years and over 10 years. The results indicate that majority (77%) of the respondents

had been working in the morgues for more than 5 years. The means that they have better understanding of the workings of the homes and how it influences their level of job satisfaction.

4.2.3 Highest Level of Education

This section sought to establish the level of academic qualifications that the respondents have attained. It is expected that, all other factors remaining constant, a higher level of education of a respondent will be able to understand and answer the questions more appropriately than one with a lower level of education. The results are presented in Figure 4.3

Table 4.3: Level of education

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Diploma	28	48	48
University	8	14	62
Secondary	22	38	100
Total	58	100.0	

The findings above show that majority of the respondents had attained diploma level of education (48%) while the university level of respondents constituted 14%.

4.3 Employee Satisfaction

Satisfaction level of an employee is a concept reflecting the degree to which the individual needs and desires are met and the extent to which this is perceived by the employee. It is therefore important to establish the factors that affect the level of employee satisfaction. This section sought to find out how leadership management, job satisfaction, career growth and development, organizational culture and physical work environment affected the morgue attendants level of job satisfaction. The range was ‘Not

at all. (1) to ‘very large extent (5). The scores of disagreeing have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 0 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale ;($0 \leq S.E < 2.4$). The scores of ‘Neutral’ have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous Likert scale: ($2.5 \leq M.E. < 3.4$) and the score of both agree and strongly agree have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 on a continuous Likert scale; ($3.5 \leq S.A. < 5.0$). A standard deviation of > 1.0 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

4.3.1 Leadership Management

Employee satisfaction is influenced by management or leadership style of exercising and communicating power. The respondents were asked to indicate how the Funeral Home leadership management influences their performance. The results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Leadership Style

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Management observes working hours and allows employees enough time to relax by offering wellness facilities	4.1058	1.0954
Management considers employees performance and qualifications when making rewards.	3.9091	0.8312
Management is open, accessible and listens to employees problems and offers solutions which are satisfactory.	3.8182	0.8135
Management involves employees when making decisions.	3.7196	1.1281
Management effectively communicates to employees	3.6727	0.9037
Overall Mean	3.845	

The findings indicate that the management of the funeral homes do observe stipulated employee working hours (M=4.1058, SD= 1.0954). However, this practice had a high standard deviation and this could be explained by sometimes these funeral homes having to call upon their staff to put in extra hours during peak season and also due to the possibility that some of the funeral homes are more busy than other and it is possible that these homes will work for more number of hours than the average homes. The practice whereby the management considers employees performance and qualifications when making rewards (M=3.8182), and also the management style of involving employees when making decisions (M=3.6727) were found to be moderately practiced in the homes.

4.3.2 Job Satisfaction

Employee's job satisfaction and performance is affected by presence of different attributes to the working environment such as skills variety, tasks identity, task significance and autonomy. The results on the level of job satisfaction among the staff in the funeral homes is presented in Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Job Satisfaction

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am committed to my job because it's interesting and challenging	4.5294	.6242
My job is stressful because it involves interacting with different customers or external persons	4.4706	1.0675
My skills are effectively applied in the job which I undertake.	4.0588	1.1974
The job I perform is repetitive and routine requiring little creativity	3.6471	1.5387
I make decisions on my work area with minimal guidance from the managers	3.5882	1.5024
Overall Mean	4.059	

From the findings, the employees are committed to their job because they find it interesting and challenging (M=4.5294), while the job is less stressful because it involves interacting with different customers or external persons (M= 4.4706). The suggestion of job perform is repetitive and routine requiring little creativity as evidenced by the high standard deviation (SD=1.5387) as well as need to make decisions on our work area with minimal guidance from the managers (SD=1.5024).

4.3.3 Career Growth and Development

The extent to which the prospect of employee growth and development in the funeral home was sought and the results are presented in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Career growth and development

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Promotions are awarded on merit, skills and performance	4.5882	.6183
There is a clear path of growth to various positions in my career	4.3529	.9963
Individual training is continuously offered by the organization	4.2941	.7717
Management is keen on my career growth and development	4.1765	.9510
I shall be on the same position doing similar task in the next five years	4.1176	1.2187

From the results, in the funeral homes, promotions are awarded on merit, skills and performance (M=4.5882) and there exist a clear path of growth to various positions in their career. The organization and individual training is continuously offered by the organization (M=4.2941). At the same time the study found that employees are more certain to be in the same position doing similar task in the next five years (M=4.1176,

SD=1.2187). The high standard deviation can be explained by the difference in the employee training and educational level that might explain the possibility of changing employment.

4.3.4 Organizational Culture

Organization culture enables an entity to create a shared pattern of rules for employees to act in a common manner and also to determine how to act in various circumstances. With an established organizational culture, one is able to mobilize employees to the attainment of a common goal. The results on the state of organizational culture and how it influences the level of employee performance in the funeral homes is presented in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Organizational Culture

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization always considers customers when making decisions.	4.6471	.7018
The culture of quality in all the organization activities	4.5882	.6183
There is high exercise of authority by the managers and employees are expected to take instructions	4.5882	.5073
The organization emphasizes on continuous improvement of its activities	4.4706	.7174
The organization has a culture of quality in service delivery	4.6471	.7018
Overall Mean	4.588	

The above findings strongly acknowledges that the funeral homes always consider customers when making decisions that affect the employees (M=4.6471) and culture of quality in all the organization activities is reinforced and high exercise of authority by the

managers and employees are expected to take instructions. However the organization emphasizes on continuous improvement of its activities (M=4.4706) as well as culture of quality in service delivery (M=4.6471).

4.3.5 Physical work environment

The physical work environment that an employee operates in will affect the level of employee satisfaction. Towards this end, the different physical work environment conditions were investigated and the results are presented in Table 4.8

Table 4.8: Physical work environment

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
The work environment is free from hazards that may cause injury	3.8947	.99413
Adequate protective work clothing are provided by the organization and are timely replaced when worn out.	3.6316	1.01163
There are established methods of solving conflicts at the work place	3.5789	1.16980
There is enough air ventilation and circulation at the work place	3.5263	.96427
The work environment is free from threats and intimidation and employees are held with high esteem by the management	3.1579	.89834
Overall Mean	3.558	

The above findings suggest work environment is free from hazards that may cause injury (M=3.8947) and also that the employees are provided with adequate protective work clothing that is replaced on timely basis (M=3.6316). Further, the work environment was

found to a large extent to be free from threats and intimidation and employees are held with high esteem by the management (M=3.1579).

4.4 Quality of service offered to Customers

The customers were to give their independent opinion on how they consider the service quality being provided at the funeral homes in a five point Likert scale. The range was 'To a very large extent (5)' to 'not at all (1). The scores of less serious have been taken to present a variable which had mean score of 0 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale ;($0 \leq S.E < 2.4$). The scores of 'Neither serious have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 pm the continuous Likert scale: $2.5 \leq M.E. < 3.4$) and The score of both least common have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 on a continuous Likert scale; $3.5 \leq L.E. < 5.0$). A standard deviation of > 1.0 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

The service quality measurement parameters were assessed using the level of dependability, trust, personal attention and empathy that they can place on a particular funeral home. The results are presented in Table 4.9

Table 4.9: Level of customer satisfaction

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dependability		
Employees timely deliver the services by being prompt in carrying out their activities	4.2247	0.8555
There is team working by the employees and no unstable service lapses	4.0158	1.0571
Employees demonstrate a high degree of commitment in their work	3.9143	1.0674
Trust		
Employees have credibility and worthy being trusted.	4.7429	.6108
Employees demonstrate a high level of skills and professionalism at their work and can be trusted	3.6571	1.1741
Employees keep their promises and can be trusted.	3.4286	1.2609
Employees are honest to the clients and can be trusted	3.4286	1.2609
Recovery Factor		
Employees are quick to note a service delivery problem and offer solutions	4.4053	.7746
Employees are quick to respond to customers complaints by offering solutions	4.3143	.8737
Employees cautiously explain to customer for mistakes and offer solution or alternative	4.1571	1.2141
Customers complaints are taken seriously by employee and given appropriate attention	3.8286	1.2715
Personal Attention		
There is personalized attention in delivering the service by employees.	4.6861	.6761
Employees are alternative in listening to the customers without being destructed.	4.0173	.9074
Every case is treated separately with employees displaying a personalize service to customers.	3.8259	.7326
Employees are quick to recognize the client and their needs on a second meeting	3.1714	.8440
Employees prefer giving generalized solutions as opposed to personalized ones	4.6861	.6761

Empathy		
Employees treat their work casually and routine demonstrating little feeling.	4.1249	.9631
Employees demonstrate a feeling of customer's psychological feeling.	4.1143	1.0508
Employees are cautious in their talk while dealing with customers	3.8857	1.1825
Employees make follow ups and go an extra mile in offering services	3.7429	1.2209
Employees are quick to console	4.1249	.9631

The findings in Table 4.9 shows that employees timely deliver services by being prompt in carrying out their activities (M=4.2247) and this increases their dependability, their level of trust was also found to be high due to their capacity to offer high level of skills and professionalism at their work place and can be trusted as well. The respondents in addition agreed that there is team working by the employees and no unstable service lapses (M=4.0158). On the question of whether they receive personalized attention during service delivery, the customers noted that indeed personalized attention in delivering the service by employees and also listening to the customers without being destructed was the norm in these mortuaries. This could be explained by the recruitment of customer service staff who are tasked to handle customer affairs and not necessarily the mortuary attendants like before.

In terms of the level of personal attention that is provided to the customers, the study found that the funeral homes staff are quick to highlight a service delivery problem as well as being quick to respond to customers complaints by offering solutions (M=4.3143). Further the employees cautiously explain to customer for mistakes and offer

solution or alternative. Further, there is a personalized attention in delivering the service by employees and employees have been trained to be listening to the customers without being distracted (M=4.0173). However, because of the higher standard deviation, it shows that there was a non-uniformity in the answers provided by the respondents and this implies that some funeral homes staff were not customer friendly in their dealings with their customers. In terms of the funeral home staff showing empathy to the bereaved, the findings show that employees treat their work casually and routinely demonstrate and to a low extent are they cautious in their talk while dealing with customers. The same negative treatment of customers was exhibited in following up customer complaints and also going an extra mile in offering services.

4.5 Regression Equation

For quantitative analysis the study used regression analysis to establish the relationship between the level of employee satisfaction and the service quality in the funeral homes in section 4.4. To determine the same, the relationship between the overall mean of each of the employee satisfaction and covered under section 4.3 was regressed with the resultant mean from the service quality in section 4.4. From their overall means of each factor, a regression was established and as Gill and Beger (2012) noted, when using multiple regression analysis, there is a possibility of endogeneity occurring whereby when certain variables are omitted, it leads to measurement errors. To minimize endogeneity issues, the most important variables that constitute service quality and employee satisfaction were used.

Table 4.10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.224 ^a	.502	.468	.123660

Source: Research data, 2015

The adjusted R^2 , also called the coefficient of multiple determinations, is the percent of the variance in the dependent explained uniquely or jointly by the independent variables. The model had an average coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.502 and which implied that only 50.2% of the variations in funeral homes service quality performance can be explained by the level of employee satisfaction.

Table 4.11: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	2.789	3	0.9297	6.938	.009 ^b
1	Residual	5.213	35	0.134		
	Total	2.864	38			

Critical value = 2.697

From the ANOVA statics, the study established the regression model had a significance level of 0.9% which is an indication that the data was ideal for making a conclusion on the population parameters as the value of significance (p-value) was less than 5%. The calculated F-value was greater than the tabulated value ($6.938 > 2.697$) an indication that the independent variables have a significant effects on the service quality.

The following tables gives the coefficients which helps in establishing the regression line.

Table 4.12: Table of Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.177	0.229		0.773	.000
	Organizational leadership	0.610	0.143	0.459	4.266	.003
	Job satisfaction	0.099	0.142	0.076	0.673	.048
	Career growth	0.605	0.142	0.565	4.261	.002
	Organizational Culture	0.611	0.113	0.513	4.927	.001
	Work groups and teams	0.615	0.154	0.557	3.994	0.00
	Physical environment	0.586	0.123	0.529	4.764	.004

The established regression equation was

$$Y = 0.177 + 0.610X_1 + 0.099X_2 + 0.605X_3 + 0.611 X_4 + 0.615 X_5 + 0.586 X_6$$

The analysis was undertaken at 5% significance level. The criteria for comparing whether the predictor variables were significant in the model was through comparing the obtained probability value and $\alpha=0.05$. If the probability value was less than α , then the predictor variable was significant otherwise it wasn't. From the regression model below, it is can be deduced that, holding all independent variables constant the service quality will have a measure of 0.177 (17.7%).

4.5 Discussion of the Findings

This study set to establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and the level of service quality in the funeral homes in Nairobi. From the study findings, it is evident that with those funeral homes whose staff are satisfied, their level of service quality increases. In addition, in line with Mosahab (2010) position, the link between employee satisfaction and service quality came out strongly and that the perception created by the service provider will determine the extent to which the customers will be satisfied. As Victor Vroom (1964) expectancy theory identifies there is a correlation between the effort expended in a work place by the employees and their level of performance. This position was supported by the findings because it was found that the employee's effort was positively correlated to performance. In cognizance of this, it was found that the funeral homes appropriately rewarded their employee's performance in order to positively reinforce the employee in repeating or improving the performance. Instrumentality or the rewards offered are predictive in that the employee shall expect a future improved performance and this will result to rewards and hence increased performance and satisfaction.

Satisfied employees at the funeral homes was evidenced by increased empathy, trust, personalized attention and dependability among the staff. The services provided are considered timely and promptly to meet the short deadlines that are associated with the burial process. The measures that were found to be applied by the funeral homes in enhancing their employee satisfaction was found to be multifaceted in nature and this is consistent with the Herzberg (1987) view that the employee satisfaction can be achieved the provision of both motivators and hygiene factors. The high service quality among the

funeral homes customers were evidenced by the improved level of body preservation, embalming, postmortem, linkages to other related services which were found to be delivered to the expected customer standards. Customer satisfaction is used as the standard of determining the quality of service offered because the customer is the end consumer of the service. Zeithmal et al (2006) view satisfaction as the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether it meets the customers' needs and expectations. The ultimate goal of a service provider is to deliver a service of high quality and to increase customer satisfaction (Spreng et al, 1996).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of the study findings, conclusion and recommendations. The chapter is presented in line with the objective of the study which was to establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and service quality of the funeral homes in Nairobi.

5.2 Summary

The study reinforced the view that the level of employee satisfaction was a factor of different parameters which an organization should endeavour to sustain. In the study it came out that funeral homes staff level of satisfaction was affected by type of leadership being exercised in the organization, the level of job satisfaction, career growth and development as well as the physical work environment. It came out that the employees were not keen with one particular factor but instead the multiplicity of the factors that will influence their level of satisfaction. Therefore, the working environment as well as the level job characteristic was found to influence the level of service quality being rendered by the staff.

The customer perception of the level of service quality was assessed based on service dependability, level of trust that they bestow upon the institution, personalized attention and showing of empathy the bereaved considering that they will have lost a loved one. The study findings show that indeed those funeral homes whose employees were satisfied

were found to offer excellent services compared with those that had a low level of employee satisfaction.

5.3 Conclusion

From the study findings it can be concluded that even though all the employee satisfaction dimensions are important for service quality, some dimensions were found to be more important than others. Thus an institution will have to identify the most critical variables that affect its employee's performance and try to reinforce the same in order to improve the effectiveness of service quality.

Members of staff or workers are an important asset for any organization that intends to meet its goals. Therefore it is very vital that funeral homes takes more initiative in making the lives of their staff better so that their motivated attitude can result to success in service delivery and financial output. There is no work that can be done successfully if matters that affect staff are not taken into consideration by management. It is therefore an issue of urgency that the funeral homes management look into all discussed staff factors which include aspects such as offering training to their staff, fair and just promotions, better salaries for staff, positive organization culture, ensure good relations among staff both from top to bottom and also ensure that staff are aware of their expectations so as to improve service delivery at the institutions.

5.4 Recommendation for Policy

The research findings highlight the role of the employee satisfaction in offering an efficient service delivery. This implies that the senior management of the firm should consider their internal reward system as well as working environment for their employees

because they were found to affect their performance and therefore job satisfaction. The managers should consider their internal strategic management processes, training and development process so that these practices can motivate their staff and this will increase their satisfaction and as the study show it will increase the service quality. It was also found that different funeral homes had adopted to a different extent employee satisfaction have adopted different forms of change programs but the results are not immediate. Consequently, it is imperative for managers to know that changes in the level of employee level of satisfaction will have a profound effect on the quality of service being offered by the same employees.

5.5 Limitation of the Study

The major weakness in this study is that it was limited in scope. This means that the findings cannot be over generalized. This study was conducted with a strong presence of employees' working in the funeral homes in Nairobi. It is possible that this exposure and working environment contributed significantly to their perceptions of their level of employee satisfaction. There is need therefore to increase the number of respondents in each of the funeral home and target also the senior level and junior managers in the institutions. Further, the study used a descriptive research design and there is need to employ various inferential techniques to validate further the results. This study was also limited by other factors in that some respondents may have been biased or dishonest in their answers considering that they were all commenting on their employer. More respondents would have been essential to increase the representation of respondents in this study and allowed for better check of consistency of the information given. However,

despite the above limitations, the findings presented in this paper have important policy implications.

5.6 Recommendation for Further Research

In light of these limitations, future research is recommended to use mixed methods research in order to validate the results of this research, and apply a longitudinal study to better capture the relationships between employee satisfaction and service quality. Conducting a replication study with random sample selection can enhance the methodological rigor of the study and increase the possibility of having a better and a supported external validity.

This study established that, there is a positive relationship between employee level of satisfaction and service quality. Future researchers may concentrate on trying to identify the other factors that influence the service quality in the funeral homes other than the employee level of satisfaction. Future researchers' area of interest maybe researching more on most of the factors influencing service quality and customer satisfactions in other sectors of the economy. Such as a retail, banking, hospitality sectors etc., also the extent to which each of the employee satisfaction dimensions influence service quality should be further researched.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

Telephone: 020-2059162
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter FRANCIS KIRAGU

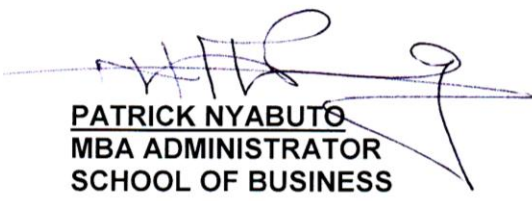
Registration No. D01170170/2008

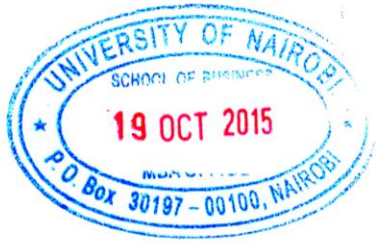
is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.


PATRICK NYABUTO
MBA ADMINISTRATOR
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



APPENDIX II: EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear participants,

I am currently undertaking an academic research project on relationship between employee satisfaction and quality of service for funeral homes in Nairobi. Your response is of great importance for the success of this study.

Your response shall be accorded the highest level of confidentiality and shall solely be used for the purpose of this study.

Thank you very much

SECTION A : PERSONAL DETAILS

1. Gender : Male Female
2. Current Job title.....
3. For how many years have you worked in the organization.....
4. What other positions have you held in the organization? (Specify).....
5. What is the highest level of education and training attained.....

SECTION B : EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

On a scale of 1-5 please indicate in the table below the degree to which each of the employee satisfaction clearly describes you.

Tick (✓) as appropriate where:

- (1) To as very large extent (2) To a large extent (3) To some extent (4) To a small extent
(5) Not at all.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION		1	2	3	4	5
1. LEADERSHIP/ MANAGMENT						
1	Management involve employees when making decisions.					
2	Management effectively communicates to employees					
3	Management is open, accessible and listens to employees problems and offers solutions which are satisfactory.					
4	Management considers employees performance and qualifications					

	when making rewards.					
5	Management observes working hours and allows employees enough time to relax by offering wellness facilities					
2. JOB SATISFACTION						
1	My skills are effectively applied in the job which I undertake.					
2	I make decisions on my work area with minimal guidance from the managers					
3	The job I perform is repetitive and routine requiring little creativity					
4.	I am committed to my job because its interesting and challenging					
5.	My job is stressful because it involves interacting with different customers or external persons					
3. CAREER GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT						
1	There is a clear path of growth to various positions in my career					
2	Individual training is continuously offered by the organization					
3	Promotions are awarded on merit, skills and performance					
4	Management is keen on my career growth and development					
5	I shall be on the same position doing similar task in the next five years					
4. ORGANISATION CULTURE						
1	The organization has a culture of quality in service delivery					
2	The organization always considers customers when making decisions.					
3	The organization emphasizes on continuous improvement of its activities					
4	The culture of quality in all the organization activities					
5	There is high exercise of authority by the managers and employees are expected to take instructions					
5. PHYSICAL WORK ENVIORNMENT						
1	The work environment is free from hazards that may cause injury					
2	There is enough air ventilation and circulation at the work place					
3	Adequate protective work clothing are provided by the organization					

	and are timely replaced when worn out.					
4	The work environment is free from threats and intimidation and employees are held with high esteem by the management					
5	There are established methods of solving conflicts at the work place					
6. WORKING GROUPS AND TEAMS						
1	There is team working spirit on the organization					
2	Workmates readily give support to one another					
3	There is sharing of information across the organization					
4	Members of the team give emotional support to each other					
5	Employee work together with a focus to customers					

APPENDIX III: CUSTOMER’S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participants,

I am currently undertaking an academic research project between employee satisfaction and quality of service for funeral homes in Nairobi. Your response is of great importance for the success of this study.

SECTION A: ABOUT THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Have you used the services of this organization before?
 Yes No

3. How did you learn about the organization?

Recommendation Advertisement Others

SECTION B: QUALITY OF SERVICE

On a scale of 1-5 please indicate in the table below the degree to which each of service quality measurement criteria clearly describes your service expenditure with the organization.

Tick (✓) as appropriate where:

- (1) To as very large extent (2) To a large extent (3) To some extent (4) To a small extent
 (5) Not at all.

SERVICE QUALITY	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Dependability</u> The organization keeps its promise in service delivery. The service is delivered as promised – in terms of time management, price and absence of huzzles.					

<u>Trust</u> The organization can be trusted in terms of its service. It has the capacity and competence to deliver service as requested.					
Recovery Factors The organization’s employees are quick to offer solutions even when customer is at difficult situation					
Personal Attention The organization gives a personal “ear” or attention to every customer					
Empathy Employees put themselves in the persons shoes and offer quick solution to reduce the pain and anxiety.					

SECTION C: EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

SERVICE QUALITY & EMPLOYEE	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Dependability</u>					
1. Employees timely deliver the services by being prompt in carrying out their activities					
2. There is team working by the employees and no unstable service lapses					
3. Employees demonstrate a high degree of responsiveness in carrying out their activities.					
4. Employees demonstrate a high degree of commitment in their work					
5. Employees carryout their work diligently, effectively and efficiently.					

Trust					
1. Employees have credibility and worthy being trusted.					
2. Employees demonstrate a high level of skills and professionalism at their work and can be trusted					
3. Employees keep their promises and can be trusted.					
4. Employees are honest to the clients and can be trusted					
5. Employees accurately described the service process to the employee on enquiry.					

SERVICE QUALITY & EMPLOYEE	1	2	3	4	5
<u>RECOVERY FACTOR</u>					
1. Employees are quick to note a service delivery problem and offer solutions					
2. Employees are quick to respond to customers complaints by offering solutions					
3. Employees cautiously explain to customer for mistakes and offer solution or alternative					
4. Customers complaints are taken seriously by employee and given appropriate attention					
5. Employees are regrettable for time lost and explain the delays.					
<u>PERSONAL ATTENTION</u>					
1. There is personalized attention in delivering the service by employees.					
2. Employees are alternative in listening to the customers without being destructed.					
3. Every case is treated separately with employees displaying a personalize service to customers.					
4. Employees are quick to recognize the client and their needs on a second meeting					
5. Employees prefer giving generalized solutions as opposed to personalized ones					

<u>EMPATHY</u>					
1. Employees treat their work casually and routine demonstrating little feeling.					
2. Employees demonstrate a feeling of customer's psychological feeling.					
3. Employees are cautious in their talk while dealing with customers					
4. Employees make follow ups and go an extra mile in offering services					
5. Employees are quick to console					