

**FACTORS AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF CUSTOMER SERVICE IN  
MAVOKO MUNICIPALITY**

**BY**

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## Declaration

This research project report is my original work and has never been presented for a degree examination in any other university.

Signature 

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## Dedication

I dedicate this research report to my dear family members, my employer, and colleagues at the Municipal Council of Mavoko for being supportive throughout my studies.

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I would like to acknowledge the support, advice and tireless efforts of my supervisor Mr. S N M Nzuve during my research work and in writing of this research report, the assistance provided by heads of various departments within the Municipal Council of Mavoko in facilitating interviews with staff from within their departments, the Librarians at the University of Nairobi for allowing me the use of the library facilities.

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## Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the factors affecting the quality of customer service in Municipal Council of Mavoko (MCM). The study used a descriptive research design. The target population of the study comprised of all employees of Municipal Council of Mavoko. This comprised of officers from the top management, the middle level management, and the operational (junior) levels. Stratified random sampling was used to select 70 respondents. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The study used descriptive and analytical methods of data analysis, which were performed using the SPSS data analysis package. The data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative analysis method. This section presents a summary discussion of the findings derived from the study. The findings showed that some of the factors hindering the quality of internal customer service at the MCM include: lack of adequate formal performance standards to measure the ability to provide caring and individual attention to staff and external customers/ stakeholders; lack of adequate resources to implement service enhancement programmes; failure to attend to certain motivational issues; and insufficient investment in office automation. The study has shown that internal customer service at MCM is largely influenced by hygiene factors which, by their presence or absence, determine levels of worker dissatisfaction. Supervision, interpersonal relations, work conditions, salary, and job security. Herzberg's theory suggested that it is difficult to produce positive motivation to deliver quality service to customers if hygiene factors are absent. However, a distinction between hygiene and motivational factors is useful for understanding worker behaviour, even though the distribution of factors between motivation and hygiene may vary in different settings.

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CIT	:	Computer and Information Technologies
ECA	:	Economic Commission for Africa
IS	:	Information Systems
KMC	:	Kenya Meat Commission
LAs	:	Local Authorities
MCM	:	Municipal Council of Mavoko
NPM	:	New Performance Management
RoQ	:	Return on Quality
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TQM	:	Total Quality Management

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

A service is an economic activity that produces time, place, form, or psychological (Bassett, 1992). The main features of a service, which distinguishes it from a product are intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability of production and consumption (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985). These features embrace the essence of uniqueness of service management and dispel the common belief that manufacturing management principles can be applied to services without recognition of the unique nature of the service delivery system. Service quality is defined as a measure of how well the service delivered matches the customer expectation of the service (Lewis, 1991). Parasuraman et al. (1985) developed a service quality model which measures the discrepancy between the expected service and the perceived service. The model shows that customer service expectations are influenced by communications with other customers, personal needs, and past experiences.

Parallel to quality initiatives in government, public organizations have, since the 1970s, taken renewed notice of the benefits of quality management for cultivating a quality improvement culture. The emphasis on total quality in countries such as the United States emerged as a direct response to the quality revolution in Japan, focusing on improving an entire organization's processes via total quality management (TQM). By the end of the 1990s, however, TQM had faded from view in the US, although it was a dominant concept in Europe (American Society for Quality, 2007). In the early 19

the Federal National Performance Review initiative and the call for 'Reinventing Government' pushed government to become both more efficient and more attentive to new approaches to organizational change and improvement. As in the private sector, quality improvement in government requires more than just increased efficiency. It is now viewed by public sector practitioners and academics as an effective vehicle for achieving public organizations' goals that citizens have been promised and that they expect to be fulfilled to their satisfaction (Holzer, Charbonneau and Kim, 2009).

In the 1990s, domestic and external forces started to exert considerable pressure on African governments to liberalize the political space. Consequently, democratic systems were introduced, which embarked upon ambitious programmes of political, institutional and economic reforms. The objectives of those reforms involved changing the role of government, creating an enabling environment for the private sector and civil society to flourish, and establishing an effective civil service by increasing its competence, efficiency, fairness and quality of services. Tremendous progress has been made, although in many African countries, the situation has remained the same or has worsened, due to a combination of internal and external factors. For the most part, governance in Africa has been marked by authoritarianism and state privatization for the benefit of the ruling elite, resulting in institutional disintegration rather than development (Economic Commission for Africa [ECA], 2003).

According to ECA (2003), new performance management (NPM) practices places emphasis on serving individual customers. In applying TQM, the organization should

focus on what the population (customers) want, not what administration thinks they need. To improve efficiency, productivity and integrity in the public service, efforts should be primarily focused on creating a culture of commitment to identifying and meeting customer requirements throughout organizations and within available resources. It follows that serving the customer is more important than serving the organization. This strategy has been the main focus of reforms in Malaysia, Namibia, Singapore and the United Kingdom (ECA, 2003).

Lam (1997) noted that declining morale in the public service organizations is an impediment to the implementation of NPM techniques. The argument is that public sector reform is unlikely to be successful if public servants regard themselves as being involuntarily pledged to perform to externally imposed standards without commensurate remuneration. Fear factors include: fears of being measured and increased possibility of loss of jobs; fears that staff do not have the necessary skills; increased paper work and workload; and health and safety concerns. These fears underlie the resistance to changes embodied in the NPM. Poor pay and inconsistent management practices in many African public services have also contributed to low morale. This study sought to establish the underlying factors to service quality issues within the local authorities in Kenya.

### **The Municipal Council of Mavoko**

There are four types of Local Authorities (LAs) allowed under the Local Government Act and its subsequent amendments; City councils, municipal councils, town councils and county councils. The Local Government Act empowers the Minister for Local Government to establish local authorities. In total there are currently, 175 LAs

comprising 3 cities (one actual-Nairobi-and two nominal ones-Mombasa and Kisumu), 42 municipalities, 63 town councils and 67 county councils (Republic of Kenya, 2008).

Mavoko Municipal Council is situated south east of Nairobi bordering the city at Jomo Kenyatta Airport. It forms boundary with Kajiado District on West at Kitengela a five minutes drive from Athi-River which is a fast growing town. On Eastern side it forms a boundary with Kangundo at Joska urban centre, while on the south it borders Machakos district at Kyumbi urban centre. It is about thirty minutes drive from the city centre of Nairobi. The Municipality's gazetted area is 693 square kilometers comprising mainly rural with various urban centers such as: Mlolongo, Athi-River, Githunguri, Joska, Kyumbi, and Katani. The Municipality is divided into seven elected wards namely: Katani; Muthwani; Kinanie; Athi-River North; Station; KMC/Sofia; and Makadara. The Council has diverse economic bases, ranging from Agricultural to industrial and factories. These include among others six cement factories; six steel factories; and well over one hundred other manufacturing establishments. The Council also houses: Export processing industries; several flower farming enterprises; and building materials processing factories. Other economic bases include: major and mini supermarkets; several warehouses, medium shops and reputable hotels and hardware shops. The outlook of the whole Municipality basically is rural in nature. However, six nodes are rapidly developing into urban characters while the rest of the Municipality is gradually changing into residential areas.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

In Kenya, the government has over the past few years introduced service reforms in a number of its departments. The objective of this was to create a leaner, efficient, motivated and more productive institution that concentrates public finance and human resources on the delivery of core government services (Republic of Kenya, 2003). The introduction of Service Charters in Government Ministries and the recent signing of the performance contracts marked a new beginning in their endeavor to improve service delivery. Through the Charters; the departments, institutions, and agencies commit themselves to effectively carry out their mandate and address the needs of their customers and stakeholders. The local authorities were not an exception either. However, it is the level of Government's commitment to meet the needs of the internal customers (its employees) that determines the quality of service offered to its customers (the citizens).

Local authorities in Kenya face a number of challenges in their endeavour to address issues emanating from both the internal and external environment. The challenges facing the authorities include increased demand for good governance and improved service delivery, the poor image of the Ministry and Local Authorities in the eyes of various stakeholders, poor performance by the Local Authorities, the constraining legal framework and lack of adequate resources for service delivery in the sector (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

According to the Customer Satisfaction Survey conducted by the Ministry of Local Government in 2007, external stakeholders and customers complained of the speed of

service delivery in LAs. All external respondents complained of the speed of delivery of services, including payment of bills in the case of suppliers, approvals of by laws, project plans and other documents was slow. Other service issues highlighted from the survey included poor performance of registry, unsatisfactory support staff, rent seeking to carry out duties, and slow response times (Republic of Kenya, 2007). At the Mavoko Municipality specifically,

From the customer satisfaction survey conducted in 2009 (Mavoko Municipal Council, 2009), the Municipal Council of Mavoko identified the following from a sample of external customers. They include: poor water and drainage services; poor road infrastructure; licensing rates are high and the officers in charge are corrupt and not accountable to the customers; social amenities like public toilets, health centers and schools are inadequate; and garbage collection is not properly managed and causes environmental pollution. The report went further on to identify a number of reasons as to why the customers said they are not satisfied. In regard to service delivery, the customers reported that they receive low quality service. In addition, the customers do not have mechanisms of communicating their concerns to the council. Council employees were reportedly not responsive to the customers, neither friendly nor helpful. The technology available at the council is not appropriate for the needs of the customer therefore the council do not value customer technology requirements. This indicates poor performance by the Council in terms of service delivery, financial management and political governance (MMC, 2009). Empirical studies focusing on the determinants of quality customer service based on the perspective of internal customers (the staffs) are not



explicitly documented. There being no other previous study done on the current (factors affecting service delivery in local authorities), this study therefore sought a long way to introduce ways and means of incorporating good service delivery practices in local authorities. The study sought the opinions of internal customers of MCM.

### **1.3. Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study was to determine the factors affecting the quality of customer service in Municipal Council of Mavoko (MCM).

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

The findings will assist the policy makers especially in the Ministry of Local Government in formulating appropriate regulations to guide service provision within local authorities in Kenya, including the staff-specific issues that need to be enhanced to improve morale for quality service. The findings will also guide the Government in setting a benchmark policy through which quality customer service in public service agencies can be based on. The findings will guide the management of local authorities in determining how various internal human resource practices influence service delivery among employees. This would help in designing a service delivery framework that is able to optimize service output for the councils. The study will also be an important resource for academicians and future researchers who may wish to investigate service delivery quality within public sector agencies in Kenya.

## **CHAPTER TWO:LITRATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This review covers the studies carried out in Kenya and elsewhere on quality of customer service. It examines the global overview of quality of service in public sector organizations. Studies by various author, academicians and researchers are outlined and other relevant literatures in the area are analyzed critically. The chapter is outlined as follows: the concept of service quality (Section 2.2); factors affecting service quality (Section 2.3); Customer service in public sector organizations (Section 2.4).

### **2.2. The Concept of Quality of Customer Service**

'Service quality is one of those slippery concepts in public administration. Attempts to define and measure it to everyone's complete satisfaction are analogous to the challenge of herding cats' (Folz, 2004: 213). This might be why, in a 1999 survey, Streib and Poister (1999) observed that more than two-thirds of the surveyed 1218 senior officials from municipal jurisdictions in the United States had trouble measuring quality at least some of the time. As an example, one of the most straightforward and important public services, the provision of tap water, illustrates the complexity of discerning quality. If we think about quality of tap water, we first think of its color, the absence of foul smell and taste. Folz and Lyons (1986) argued that the concept of service quality is related to the effectiveness concept, but refers specifically to service level, timeliness, convenience, accuracy, and responsiveness.

Consumer behavior and consumer satisfaction research indicates that customer-employee interactions are important in the overall assessment of service quality and customer

satisfaction. For example, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) and Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithaml (1991) defined service quality as the overall evaluation of a specific organization that results from comparing its performance with customers' general expectations of how organizations in its industry should perform.

According to Baker (1994) service quality concerns meeting customers' expectations. On the other hand in a study by Herbert (1995) exploring service encounter satisfaction versus overall satisfaction versus perceived service quality observes that although the three constructs are distinct, they are related attributes of consumer perceptions of service quality. Steenkamp and Hoffman (1995) argue that both price and promotions are marketing signals of service quality. In all, the perception that consumers have of quality of service (as is the case with products) is important in the success of business. The most distinctive feature of service (that may subsequently affect consumer perception of its quality) is the fact that it is intangible. While it is easier to detect product defect before it reaches consumers, a defective service is consumed as it is being produced (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1995). Service quality is also likely to be negatively affected during peak hours (little attention is given to each customer). This may affect the way they perceive the service.

Consumers often judge the quality of a product or service on the basis of a variety of informational cues that they associate with the product. These informational cues have been dichotomized into intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Olson 1977; Olson and Jacoby, 1972). Intrinsic cues involve the physical component of the product (e.g. flavour, colour,

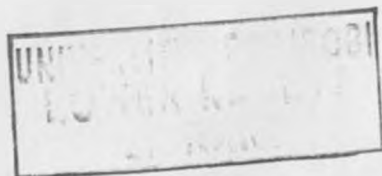
texture etc). In the case of colour for example, a consumer products company developed a "better" window cleaner which was essentially colourless. However, in use tests this "improved" product did not do well against the established until the new product was tinted blue. The colour of the product made the difference. Intrinsic attributes cannot be changed without altering the nature of the product itself and are consumed as the product is consumed (Olson 1977; Olson and Jacoby, 1972).

Extrinsic cues on the other hand are product-related but not part of the physical product itself. They are by definition outside the product e.g. price, brand name, level of advertising, etc. Researchers have identified key lower level attributes used by consumers to infer quality in only a few product categories. These lower level cues include price (Olson 1977, Olson and Jacoby, 1972), Suds level for detergents, size for stereo speakers (Olshavsky, 1985), and produce freshness for supermarkets (Bonner and Nelson, 1985). However, it is worth to note that specific or intrinsic attributes/cues differ widely across products, as do the attributes consumers use to infer quality. Either singly or in composite, such cues provides the basis for perceptions of product and service quality.

Perceived quality is defined relative to an intended purpose and a set of alternatives. The fact that an outlet does not deliver the same level of personal service, quality of merchandise and the same store ambience does not mean that it will have a lower perceived quality. - it may be judged by a different set of criteria perhaps ease of parking, waiting time at checkouts, courtesy of the checkout people and whether desired items are in stock (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1997). Perceived quality differs from satisfaction. A

customer can be satisfied because he or she had low expectations about performance level. High perceived quality is also not consistent with low expectations. Perceived quality also differs from attitude - a positive attitude could be generated because a product of inferior quality is very inexpensive. Conversely, a person could have a negative attitude toward a high quality product that is overpriced. Perceived quality is an intangible, overall feeling about a brand.

Perceived quality is a brand association that is elevated to the status of a brand asset for several reasons (Aaker, 1996) : - (i) among all brand associations, only perceived quality has been shown to drive financial performance. ii) Perceived quality is often a major (if not the principal) strategic thrust of a business. iii) Perceived quality is linked to and often drives other aspects of how a brand is perceived. Perceived quality is a key variable for many firms. Total Quality Management (TQM) has been central to many firms for the past decade and perceived quality is usually the end goal of TQM programs. Many firms explicitly consider quality to be one of their primary values and include it their mission statements (Aaker, 1996). In a study in which 250 business managers were asked to identify the sustainable competitive advantage of their firms, perceived quality was the most frequently named asset (Aaker, 1989). Perceived quality is often the key positioning dimension for corporate brands. In one survey of managers, quality was the most mentioned basis of strong differential advantage. Some brands are price brands and others are prestige or premium brands. Within these categories, the perceived quality position is often the defining point of differentiation.



## 2.3. Factors Affecting Quality of Customer Service

### Staff Motivation

Staff morale is a by-product of staff motivation. According to Belinda (2002), recognition and good treatment of staff members is essential in enhancing their morale to serve customers. Staffs are more likely to feel valued if they are treated well, in particular, if they feel recognized and supported in their work. Where senior managers have made a sincere effort to get to know staff and their areas of work, this gives a very positive impact on staff morale. In the public service, Good morale and motivation are essential both for a healthy workforce, and for effective implementation of the Government's plans. They also have positive effects on customer care. Evidence from studies into 'magnet' hospitals in America – which had been shown to be successful in attracting and retaining nurses – suggested that higher nurse-staffing levels, investments in the education and expertise of nurses, and involving staff in organizational decision-making were critical to building good morale and motivation (Aiken, Havens, and Sloane, 2000).

The factors affecting morale and motivation of staff can be grouped under four categories namely the working environment (Allen, 2001); Feeling valued (Graham and Steele, 2001); Job Satisfaction (Bevan, 2000); and Resources and pay (Bevan, 2000). In regarding to the working environment, the environment in which people work (for example, levels of staffing), and degree and speed of reform, affect morale and motivation (Bowman, Martin, and Stone, 1997). Too much rapid change and too much political control are demotivating (Graham and Steele, 2001).

In regard to 'Feeling valued', the morale and motivation of staff are affected by whether staff feel valued in their own immediate workplace and elsewhere in their organization. Involvement has suggested that the employers who involve staff in decisions, planning and policy-making have a happier, healthier, better motivated workforce and reduce staff turnover. In regard to job satisfaction, job satisfaction is linked closely with morale and motivation (Graham and Steele, 2001) and with people's intentions to leave their jobs. Employees who offer poor service to the customers of the firm (Collins et al, 2000). The nature of the job, whether there are opportunities for professional or skills development, and what other employment opportunities are available all affect job satisfaction. Finally, in regard to Resources and pay, how well resourced the service as a whole is, and how individual staff are rewarded, influence morale and motivation. Staff dissatisfaction with pay has been well documented.

In a research conducted on an educational setting using professors (employees) and students (customers), Snipes et al (2005) found that the direct path connecting feelings of employee empowerment and customers' perceived service quality was not significant. However, their study revealed through a post hoc analysis that feelings of empowerment had a significant and indirect effect on customers' perception of service quality through job satisfaction. Using hotel employees and their respective customers in the research design, Hartline and Ferrell (1996) found that employee empowerment, under suitable conditions, plays a significant role on job satisfaction and customers' perception of service quality. Linking the above findings to the "Cycle of Success" model proposed by Schlesinger and Heskett (1991), it is found that if employees feel a high level

empowerment they would be more satisfied with their jobs, have a better sense of task control, thus facilitating employees' work actions that are required to make changes to improve the quality of service of their respective restaurants.

The relationship between job satisfaction and service quality has been suggested by the "Cycle of Success" model (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991). This model proposes that employee satisfaction, which is influenced by internal service quality, leads to increased employee performance, which in turn leads to customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and increased financial performance of a firm. Job satisfaction has also been empirically tested and positively related to customers' perception of service quality in several service industries such as banking (Reynierse and Harker, 1991; Yoon, Beatty and Suh, 2001), hotels (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996), and education (Snipes et al., 2005). The uniqueness of Snipes et al. (2005) study was that it investigated the effect of Spector's (1997) 10 job satisfaction facets on customer's perception of service quality, whereas the others used one-item global job satisfaction measures. Snipes et al.'s (2005) results showed that only 3 of the initial 10 facets (customers, benefits, work itself) had a direct and positive effect in predicting customers' perceived service quality. Additional studies have also found a positive relationship between employees' job satisfaction and employees' perception of service quality (Karatepe et al., 2004; Schlesinger and Zornitsky, 1991).

### **Computerization**

Computer and Information Technologies (CIT) refer to three different subsets: the use of electronic databases, extent to which programmes are coupled, and the level of programmable automation. Integrated and overlapped problem solving requires frequent



bi-directional information exchanges between all functional areas of an organization. In a manufacturing context, the frequency of communication between design and manufacturing is an important determinant of the organization's success in implementing its primary goals (Clark and Fujimoto, 1991; Hauptman and Hirji, 1996). While upward communication provides information to upper management about the activities of the organization, horizontal communication is meant to exist within and between departments. Preliminary (i.e. partial or tentative) information sharing and usage has been proved to be a source of competitive advantage in service institutions and it can also be utilized to improve service and performance as well.

There are two major classes of CIT: tools that facilitate communication and tools that facilitate analysis. The computer-based tools that facilitate communication include integrated databases, electronic communication tools, and others. They enable rapid information exchanges and the application of a range of analytical frameworks that are necessary in cross-functional design work. The computer-based tools that facilitate analysis include, but not limited to, the use of expert systems, shared databases, and decision support systems. Expert systems help employees in making decisions faster resulting in a faster service delivery (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 1994).

Information Systems (IS) managers are under increasing pressure to justify the value and contribution of IS expenditures to the productivity, quality, and competitiveness of the organization. IS assessment is not well established and recent studies show that more research is needed (Clark, 1992; Saunders and Jones, 1992). Service quality perspective

views organizations as a collection of multiple processes with the goal of providing the customer with a high-quality service. Service quality is applicable to the IS function, since IS can be considered a service function that serves the information technology needs of the larger organization. The growth of end-user computing, decentralization, and the available choices for sources of IS services, promotes greater discretion by the customers of the IS function in their use and procurement of IS services. To meet the demands of this increasingly market-driven environment, the IS manager must be sensitive to the expectations of their customers and understand the perceived value placed on their services by their customers (Kettinger and Lee, 1994). Moreover, customers recognize and appreciate quality in service areas such as responsiveness to special needs, reliability, courtesy, and communication just as much as, if not more, than the technical specifications of a product or the appropriateness of the information provided (Ferguson and Zawacki, 1993).

According to Babbar (1992) the service quality model included system hardware and networking requirements and the dynamics of system operation and control. Nath (1992) used the work of Parasuraman et al. (1985) to develop a framework to improve service quality. His framework involves the examination of the interfaces between the customer, the employee, and the existing IS applications to detect where applications of information technology will alter the interfaces in a positive way either for the customer or the organization. The effect of the change on the customer should be evaluated in terms of how it influences the ten determinants of service quality listed above. Funston (1992) developed a service quality model and depicted gaps in service quality, communication,

delivery, and design where measurement and improvement are possible. Performance evaluation should be linked to service quality at all levels and the customer should be built into these evaluations. Return on quality (ROQ) provides a method for evaluating the financial impact of service quality improvements to the business (Rust et al., 1995).

Information systems can improve the quality and productivity of individuals, groups, and organizations, only if they are actually used. DeLone and McLean (1992) provide a lengthy list of IS use studies. In addition, Markus and Keil (1994) suggested that organizations should approach system development as business process reengineering and ensure that implementability, or use, is built in. According to DeLone and McLean (1992), user satisfaction is probably the most widely used single measure of IS success. In their study of the *Information Week 500*, Brynjolfsson and Hitt (1995) found that three broad strategic goals for IS investments emerged: Some focused on costs savings and improved management control while others had a customer orientation and made investments in quality, customer service, flexibility, and speed. Even though the productivity analysis was based on hard numbers such as revenue, labor costs, and capital costs, the customer-oriented companies had significantly better productivity performance and also achieved higher profits. Kelley's (1994) findings show that with programmable automation technology, manufacturers can produce the same output in about three-fifths of the time it would ordinarily take on conventional machinery. Even greater reductions in production time on the new technology are found with greater experience, more extensive use of the technology, and changes in the organization of work. She was successful in showing the value of investment in IT by focusing on the process innovation

by the IT application as the unit of analysis (rather than the entire plant or organization) and by using a time-based indicator of productivity, unit production hours, while controlling for product attributes and eleven other factors.

### **Organizational Structure**

According to Robbins (2000), an organization structure defines how job tasks are formally divided, grouped, and coordinated. For instance, Johnson & Johnson has historically grouped activities into semi-autonomous companies organized around products and allowed managers of these companies considerable decision-making latitude. In designing a proper organizational structure, the managers need to address six questions. These are: to what degree are tasks subdivided into separate jobs? On what basis will jobs be grouped together? To whom do individuals and groups report? How many individuals can a manager efficiently and effectively direct? Where does decision-making authority lie? And finally, to what degree will there be rules and regulations to direct employees and managers? The answers to these questions are provided by work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization and formalization.

According to Robins (2000), the essence of work specialization is that, rather than being done by one individual, a job is broken clown into steps, each step being completed by a separate individual. In essence, individuals specialize in doing part of an activity rather than the entire activity. Departmentalization refers to the basis by which jobs are grouped together so that common tasks can be coordinated. One of the most popular ways to group activities is by functions performed. The chain of command is an unbroken line of

authority that extends from the top of the organization to the lowest echelon and clarifies who reports to whom. It answers questions for employees such as, "Who do I go to if I have a problem?" and "Who am I responsible to?"

How many employees can a manager efficiently and effectively direct? This question of span of control is important because, to a large degree, it determines the number of levels and managers an organization has. Narrow spans have their advocates. By keeping the span of control to five or six employees, a manager can maintain close control. But narrow spans have three major drawbacks. First, as already described, they're expensive because they add levels of management. Second, they make vertical communication in the organization more complex. The added levels of hierarchy slow down decision-making and tend to isolate upper management. Third, narrow spans of control encourage overly tight supervision and discourage employee autonomy (Robbins, 2000).

Organizational structure can be divided into two distinct groups of thought namely formal and informal (Fincham & Rhodes, 1992). Formal organizations are technical and process orientated in nature. Informal organizations are much more socially orientated. This is far too simplified, however, and is not the case in practice (Checkland, 1993). In systems thinking, the organization is considered as a mixture of formal and informal subsystems (Mullins, 1996). Also, the interaction between the organization and external factors is taken into consideration.

Formal organizations are deliberately planned (Mullins, 1996). They are structured in a hierarchical way with objectives stated, tasks specialized and relationship of authority and responsibility defined. Their main concern is the coordination of activities. Relating to service delivery, structured or technical (bureaucratic) methodologies do not address the social relationships among staff and the customer and therefore it results in lengthy procedures of service (Stapleton, 2000). The primary concern is to get the work done and follow a set of rules and procedures to do so. It is thus impersonal and time consuming as set roles are rigid and thus not easily adjustable to changing organizational roles (Fincham and Rhodes, 1992). Service delivery in the public sector is very much based around the bureaucratic theories of task specialization and organizational functions. That is, where one part of the system or its component does one functions or set of related functions and nothing else (Avison and Shah, 1997).

The main reason for service bureaucracy and formality is as a result of employees' resistance to change (Avison & Shah, 1997). If a company is already bureaucratic, the service delivery will also be marred by bureaucracy. According to Avison & Fitzgerald (1995), if a company is bureaucratic, the entire service delivery system will be built to implement bureaucracy. Therefore, some form of bureaucracy evident in most modern organizations has had trickle-down effects in the delivery of service to customers. Centralized systems tend to be formal in nature (Robson, 1997). Formal organizations and centralized systems share such attributes as task specialization, hierarchies, rigid rules and bureaucracy (Robson, 1997; Mullins, 1996). Informal organizations are flexible and loosely structured (Mullins, 1996). Flexibility, autonomy, reduced bureaucracy and

role variations are important similarities that can be made between decentralized systems and informal organizations (Gordon and Gordon, 2001; Mullins, 1996). Thus, service procedures and processes need to be subjected to autonomy, task variation, cross-functional communication, personal innovation, and flexibility as they execute their routine tasks.

### **Nature of the Physical Service Environment**

The service environment includes numerous dimensions that can be classified into two main themes and they are internal environment and external environment. Literature on the internal environment primarily focuses on organizational culture and the overriding philosophy brought to service provision by management. The external theme focuses primarily in the physical ambience of service setting. Fisk, Brown and Bitner (2000) stated that, correct workplace conditions are important factors for health and performance and are profitable and beneficial in every way. Meanwhile, Rust and Oliver (1994) stated that, improving workplace conditions and health standards would assure employees' performance. To create a physical infrastructure to satisfy internal and external customers and to obtain higher workplace performance and profit will have a direct impact on an organization's success and on the wealth of the community.

Workplace atmosphere meant the styles and appearance of physical environment for service giving and the part experienced by customers on the occasion of service transferring (Bitner, 1992). The atmosphere, smell and all aspects expressed by the physical environment would affect customers' perception and behaviours. The overall atmosphere filled with inspiring delight affect customers to stay longer in certain work or

service zones. It could enhance the willingness for customers' to interact and to communicate with service providers and business performance could be improved (Donavan and Rossiter, 1982; Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoolynn and Nesdale, 1994). Thus, when customers implement touch with service providers, the service providers' service quality to customers include manual attitude and behaviors. Also, the atmosphere of service environment would affect customers' perception of service performance (Kuo and Tsai, 2009).

Research indicates that customers often use price and tangibles as surrogates for quality (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman 1993). For example, a customer would expect a higher level of personal service at a luxurious, expensive hotel than at a budget hotel with basic facilities. This is consistent with Sharma and Stafford (2000), who suggested that environment-based perceptions of a retail store can influence customers' beliefs about the people who work there, and that nicer environments are generally associated with more credible service providers. As a result, it is expected that customers' perceptions of mechanic clues will be positively related to their expectations of the service.

Service environment would also be linked to the service climate. Service climate is defined as "the shared perceptions of employees concerning the practices, procedures, and kinds of behaviours that get rewarded and supported with respect to customer service and service quality" (Schneider et al., 1998, p. 151). That is, service climate is built on foundations of caring for both customers and employees (Burke et al., 1992; Schneider et al., 1992). The importance of the elements of service climate to customers and employees



has been demonstrated in various studies. For example, Rogg et al. (2001) found that service climate facilitates the delivery of customer satisfaction, while Schneider et al. (1998) demonstrated a positive link between the way employees perceive service climate and customers' perceptions of service quality. More recently, Schneider et al. (2002) showed that the strength of service climate has a moderating effect on the link between employees and customers. Additionally, service climate has been found to be related to employee commitment (Lux et al., 1996) and to increase the empowering leadership behaviours of a service worker's supervisor, with flow on effects to the worker (Yagil and Gal, 2002). With its potential implications for both customers and employees, service climate is therefore of considerable interest in regard to this research.

The employee's contribution towards overall business success is based on the premise that effective internal marketing procedures will lead to employee satisfaction, which is likely to result to better customer service performance, and customer satisfaction (Bansal et al., 2001). The internal marketing congruency with the external consumer needs of service quality is supported by the literature on service branding (O'Cass and Grace, 2003; Harris and Fleming, 2005; King and Grace, 2005). Internal service brand attributes are established, in the consumer's mind, mainly through the interface of customer-employee interactions. For example, whether staff are friendly, helpful, and generally agreeable will influence customers views of service quality (Davies et al. 2001).

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

According to Kothari (2003), research methodology gives details regarding procedures used in conducting the study. It includes all techniques, methods and procedures adopted in the research. The issues described in this chapter include the research design, the description of the study, data sources, sampling design, the research instruments, data collection procedures, and the analytical techniques to be applied.

### **3.2. Research Design**

The study used a descriptive research design. Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research design is a description of the state of affairs as it exists at present (Kothari, 2003). The design involved primary research methods. Field research involved the collection of primary data.

### **3.3. Target Population**

The target population of the study comprised of all employees of Mavoko Municipal Council. This comprised of officers from the top management, the middle level management, and the operational (junior) levels. Table 3.1 below presents a breakdown of the target population by these three cadres.

**Table 3.1: Structure of the Target Population**

Cadre	Total Employees as at 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2010
Senior Management Level	15
Middle Management Level	45
Support Staff	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>

**Source: Personnel Registry Extracts MCM (2010)**

### 3.4. Sample size, Sampling Techniques and Procedures

The study applied stratified sampling in selection of the target respondents across the three management cadres of the MCM. A representative sample of 30% was based on the size of the target population as shown in Table 3.2 below. The advantage of stratified random sampling is that it is appropriate for populations to be re-grouped into non-homogenous strata. The sample respondents were then randomly until the target threshold was reached. Table 3.2 below presents the sample design. The design shows that the study targeted sample 70 respondents. The sample was drawn from a list that was obtained from the personnel offices of the MCM.

**Table 3.2: Sample Design and Sample Size**

Cadre	Total Employees	Sampling %	Sample Size
Senior Management Level	15	30%	5
Middle Management Level	45	30%	13
Support Staff	172	30%	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>70</b>

**Source: Researcher (2010)**

### 3.5. Data Collection Instruments and Presentation

Structured questionnaire was used to collect data. It was cost effective and saved time at the analysis stage considering the strict timeline that was assigned to the researcher. According to Borg and Gall (1997), a structured questionnaire refers to questions which are accompanied by a list of possible alternatives from which respondents select the answer that best describes their situation. This tool was appropriate to this study because of the nature data sought. Questions were standardized to ensure all respondents replied to the same questions and the response to each question was by ticking or writing a brief statement on the questionnaire. This enhanced control towards getting specific responses relevant to the study.

The study required both quantitative and qualitative data. The two approaches reinforced each other (Kiggundu et al, 1983). The approaches increased the credibility of research findings due to comparability of data. Questionnaires administration was the principal data collection method used. The questionnaire were delivered by hand to each respondent by the researcher who then instructed him/her on how to complete the questionnaire and also make clarification on any issue that may have required to be clarified. The respondents were thereafter left with the questionnaire to fill in for collection by the researcher after five days. Seventy questionnaires were distributed in total.

### **3.6. Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures**

Before the data is analyzed all the questionnaires were checked to find out whether they were answered adequately. The information was then coded and entered into a spreadsheet and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The study used descriptive and analytical methods of data analysis, which were mainly performed using the SPSS data analysis package. The data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative analysis method. Quantitative analysis involved generation of descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. Qualitative analysis involved compilation of open-ended responses into common themes. The findings were presented by use of tables, bar charts and pie charts.

# CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

## 4.1. Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine the factors affecting the quality of customer service in Municipal Council of Mavoko (MCM). This chapter presents the findings that were gathered in attempt to achieve the above objectives. The chapter is organized as follows: Section 4.2 presents the general profile of the respondents; Section 4.3 presents findings on the various factors affecting the quality of internal customer service at the MCM. The study achieved a response rate of 100% since all the targeted 70 respondents were reached at the filled up questionnaires were found to be valid for the next stage of analysis.

## 4.2. General Profile of the Sample

The findings presented in Table 4.1 below indicate the demographic profile of the sampled respondents. The findings indicate that the sample was largely constituted of male respondents (56.6%) while female respondents comprised 41.4%. The respondents were fairly distributed across the various age categories shown save for the three respondents who were aged above 50 years. The findings indicate that a majority of the respondents (60%) had less than 5 years of experience in serving the council. In addition, 73.5% indicated that they had less than 5 years experience in the public service. This indicates that a majority of the sampled respondents were within their first five year tenure of service in the public service. The findings further indicate that a majority of the

respondents had attained above the secondary level of education. This was due to a mix of the managerial and non-managerial staff cadres in the sample.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of the MMC Staff Sample**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Male	41	56.6%
Female	29	41.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Age Category</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Below 30 years	25	35.7%
31 – 40 years	23	32.9%
41 – 50 years	19	27.1%
Over 50 years	3	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Years of Experience at the Council</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Less than 5 Years	42	60.0%
6-10 years	8	11.4%
More than 10 years	20	28.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Years of Experience in Public Service</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Less than 5 Years	36	73.5%
6-10 years	3	6.1%
More than 10 years	10	20.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Highest Level of Education</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Primary Level	6	8.5%
Secondary Level	35	50.0%
Tertiary College Level	16	22.9%
University Undergraduate	13	18.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### 4.3. Quality of Internal Customer Service at the MCM

#### 4.3.1. Assessment of Council's Performance

The respondents were requested to rate various attributes on the level of importance given to each of the factors in assessing the performance of the council. The findings are presented in Table 4.2 below. The findings indicate that the attribute given extreme level of importance include the council's ability to convey trust and confidence to its staff. The other attributes that were rated as "very important" include: council's ability to complete tasks accurately and dependably; various departments willingness to help and provide prompt service to their internal customers; as well as the appearance of council's physical facilities, equipment and personnel. The findings indicate that key attributes to internal overall service performance are reliability, promptness, and personal image.

**Table 4.2: Attributes applied to Assess Internal Performance of the Council**

	Not important at all		Important		Somewhat Important		Very Important		Extremely Important	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Councils ability to complete tasks accurately and dependably (N=70)	-	-	9	12.9	4	5.7	26	37.1	31	44.3
Various departments willingness to help and provide prompt service to their internal customers (N=70)	-	-	16	22.9	4	5.7	26	37.1	24	34.3
Councils ability to convey trust and confidence to its staff (N=67)	2	3.0	11	16.4	4	6.0	16	23.9	34	50.7
Appearance of councils physical facilities, equipment and personnel (N=70)	2	2.9	11	15.7	2	2.9	31	44.3	24	34.3
Councils ability to provide caring individualized attention to its staff (N=69)	2	2.9	13	18.8	4	5.8	20	29.0	30	43.5

Source: Survey Data (2010)



#### 4.3.2. Knowledge and Understanding of Internal Customers

The findings presented in Table 4.3 below indicate that distribution of responses on the extent the respondents agreed (or disagreed) to various attributes on mechanisms applied to acquire knowledge and understanding of internal customers (staff) by the council. The findings indicate that two attributes elicited “strong” positive response from a majority of the respondents. These include: “The Council regularly collects information about needs of its staff” (44.3%); and “There is free interaction between the top management and junior service employees”. However, the other two attributes received fairly strong positive rating; indicating that they are not given maximum attention as expected. The findings show that the council embraces free interaction between the senior and the junior cadres of employees. Secondly, the council regularly collects information on staff needs, but with little emphasis of their service quality expectations. However, the level of commitment to use market research information to improve internal service processes was reported to be low.

**Table 4.3: Measures to Know and Understand Needs of Internal Customers**

	Strongly disagree		Fairly Disagree		Not sure		Fairly Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The Council regularly collects information about needs of its staff (N=70)	9	12.9	4	5.7	2	2.9	24	34.3	31	44.3
The Council uses market research information that is collected about its internal customers the staff (N=68)	12	17.6	4	5.9	16	23.5	18	26.5	18	26.5
The Council regularly collects information about service-quality expectation of its staff (N=69)	10	14.5	5	7.2	3	4.3	30	43.5	21	30.4
There is free interaction between the top management and junior service employees (N=70)	12	17.1	7	10.0	-	-	21	30.0	30	42.9

### 4.3.3. Measuring Internal Service Performance Standards

The findings presented in Table 4.4 below indicate that distribution of responses on the extent the respondents agreed (or disagreed) to various attributes on measuring performance of various aspects relating to service delivery by the council.

**Table 4.4: Measures to Assess Internal Service Performance Standards**

	Strongly disagree		Fairly Disagree		Not sure		Fairly Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The council has formal performance standards to measure ability to complete tasks accurately and dependably (N=70)	7	10.0	4	5.7	2	2.9	29	41.4	28	40.0
The council has formal performance standards to measure its level of willingness to help and provide prompt service to all stakeholders (N=70)	6	8.6	5	7.1	3	4.3	33	47.1	23	32.9
The council has formal performance standards to measure its ability to convey trust and confidence to its staff and external customers (N=70)	5	7.1	3	4.3	10	14.3	28	40.0	24	34.3
The council has formal performance standards to measure its image to the public (Appearance of physical facilities, equipment and personnel) (N=70)	7	10.0	5	7.1	3	4.3	30	42.9	25	35.7
The council has formal performance standards to measure its ability to provide caring, individualized attention to its staff and external customers (N=70)	2	2.9	13	18.6	4	5.7	33	47.1	18	25.7

The findings of Table 4.4 above indicate that a majority of the respondents (40.0%) strongly agreed that the council has formal performance standards to measure ability to complete tasks accurately and dependably. However, the findings indicate that the council lacks clarity of standards to measure its level of willingness to help and provide prompt service to all stakeholders; to measure its ability to convey trust and confidence to

its staff and external customers; and formal performance standards to measure its image to the public (Appearance of physical facilities, equipment and personnel). The findings therefore indicate the council is well-equipped on how to measure internal processes but lacks adequate formal performance standards to measure its ability to provide caring, individualized attention to its staff and external customers/ stakeholders.

#### 4.3.4. Effectiveness of Working Relationships between Staff and Departments

The findings presented in Table 4.5 below indicate that distribution of responses on the extent the respondents agreed (or disagreed) to various attributes on effectiveness of working relationships between staff within departments in the council.

**Table 4.5: Effectiveness of Working Relationships among Staff**

	Strongly disagree		Fairly Disagree		Not sure		Fairly Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Managers and staff communicate with each other about nature of service output activities (N=70)	1	1.4	6	8.6	-	-	34	48.6	29	41.4
Managers seek suggestions from staff about service output provision activities (N=70)	8	11.4	4	5.7	11	15.7	22	31.4	25	35.7
Managers interact face-to-face with staff engaged in service provision activities (N=70)	1	1.4	7	10.0	1	1.4	21	30.0	40	57.1
Primary means of communication between staff and managers is not through memos (N=68)	18	26.5	6	8.8	5	7.4	26	38.2	13	19.1
Number of layers of management impedes information flow (N=64)	14	21.9	7	10.9	7	10.9	22	34.4	14	21.9

The findings of Table 4.5 above indicate that a majority of the respondents (41.4%) were of the strong positive opinion that managers and staff communicate with each other about

nature of service output activities. In addition, 57.1% strongly agreed that managers interact face-to-face with staff engaged in service provision activities. A fairly large proportion of the respondents (35.7%) seemed to agree that managers seek suggestions from staff about service output provision activities. The findings therefore indicate that the nature of service environment at MCM is “friendly”, considering that managers there is close day-to-day consultative interaction between the top management cadres and the middle level or junior cadres.

#### 4.3.5. Organizational Commitment to Formalizing Internal Processes

The findings presented in Table 4.6 below indicate that distribution of responses on the extent the respondents agreed (or disagreed) to various attributes on organizational commitment to formalizing the internal customer service management process at the council.

**Table 4.6: Organizational Commitment to Formalizing Internal Processes**

	Strongly disagree		Fairly Disagree		Not sure		Fairly Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
The Council commits sufficient resources to service quality (N=70)	1	1.4	2	2.9	9	12.9	35	50.0	23	32.9
The Council has programmes to improve service quality (N=70)	3	4.3	2	2.9	2	2.9	29	41.4	34	48.6
Staff are rewarded for giving priority to service (N=70)	18	25.7	3	4.3	13	18.6	20	28.6	16	22.9
Emphasis in on putting service before internal efficiency (N=68)	8	11.8	10	14.7	1	1.5	29	42.6	20	29.4
The Council has formal process for setting service goals (N=70)	6	8.6	2	2.9	3	4.3	34	48.6	25	35.7
The Council is monitored against specific service goals (N=70)	-	-	5	7.1	9	12.9	25	35.7	31	44.3

The findings presented in Table 4.6 indicate that a majority of the sample respondents were of a strongly positive opinion that the council has put much emphasis on the

following aspects: putting in place programmes to improve service quality; and monitoring service performance against specific preset goals. However, deficiencies in organizational commitment are notable in the following aspects: commitment of sufficient resources to service quality; rewarding staff members who are demonstrating commitment to quality service; prioritizing service to internal efficiency; and establishment of formal processes of setting goals. The findings indicate that even though the organization has put in place measures to enhance internal service quality, such measures are hindered by lack of adequate resources as well as failure to attend to certain staff motivational issues such as rewards.

#### 4.3.6. Actions for Improving Internal Customer Service

The findings presented in Table 4.7 below indicate that distribution of responses on the extent the respondents agreed (or disagreed) to various attributes on actions for improving internal customer service at the council.

**Table 4.7: Actions for Improving Internal Customer Service**

	Strongly disagree		Fairly Disagree		Not sure		Fairly Agree		Strongly Agree
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
The Council effectively uses automation to achieve consistency of service provision (N=70)	6	8.6	3	4.3	8	11.4	33	47.1	20
Programmes exist to improve operating procedures that can result in greater consistency of service (N=69)	2	2.9	1	1.4	6	8.7	31	44.9	29
The Council has capability to meet internal customer service needs (N=70)	-	-	7	10.0	-	-	34	48.6	29
Operating systems are appropriate for meeting customer needs (N=70)	5	7.1	2	2.9	2	2.9	33	47.1	28

The findings of Table 4.7 above indicate that a majority of the sample respondents had strong positive opinion on the three out of aspects indicated. These include: existence of programmes to improve operating procedures that can result in greater consistency of service; capability to meet internal customer service needs; and availability of operating systems that are appropriate for meeting customer needs. However, the findings indicate that the council has not adequately invested in automation, as a measure to achieve consistency of service provision.

#### **4.3.7. Nature of Internal Customer Service Environment**

Empirical studies have shown that the quality of customer service is dependent on the nature of the service environment. The findings presented in Table 4.8 below indicate that distribution of responses on the extent the respondents agreed (or disagreed) to various attributes defining the nature of the internal customer service environment at MCM. The findings indicate that according to a majority of the sampled respondents, there is extreme level of satisfaction on the following aspects: teamwork and team spirit; a sense of responsibility in helping others; team cooperation and collaboration; recognition; feeling of confidence in execution of tasks; competence at work; freedom to execute tasks; knowledge and understanding of job description; communication of what's expected; and ability to effectively adapt to changes in the departments. The findings therefore indicate that the respondents demonstrated high level of satisfaction with the nature of the internal service environment at MCM.

**Table 4.8: Factors Defining the Nature of Internal Service Environment**

	Strongly disagree		Fairly Disagree		Not sure		Fairly Agree		S
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
I feel I am part of a team (N=68)	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	27.9	45
Everyone in my department contributes to team effort (N=70)	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	28.6	50
I feel a sense of responsibility to help others in a team (N=68)	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	25.0	51
My team members and I co-operate more than we compete (N=68)	-	-	2	2.9	-	-	18	26.5	48
I feel I am an important member of my department (N=70)	-	-	-	-	4	5.7	19	27.1	47
I feel confident in being able to perform my job well (N=68)	-	-	-	-	4	5.9	15	22.1	49
The Council hires people qualified to undertake their jobs (N=68)	7	10.3	6	8.8	-	-	20	29.4	35
The Council provides tool or equipment that I need for my job (N=67)	12	17.9	11	16.4	-	-	16	23.9	28
I spend time resolving problems over which I have little control (N=66)	13	19.7	15	22.7	-	-	23	34.8	15
I have freedom to carry out assigned tasks (N=70)	2	2.9	8	11.4	1	1.4	19	27.1	40
There is no control because too many customers seek help at same time (N=66)	25	37.9	12	18.2	2	3.0	17	25.8	10
I can depend on others to help respond to customers demands (N=70)	8	11.4	1	1.4	5	7.1	24	34.3	32
I am appraised on my ability to serve internal and external customers (N=70)	8	11.4	4	5.7	8	11.4	26	37.1	24
Special effort to assist customers is not rewarded (N=69)	13	18.8	9	13.0	5	7.2	11	15.9	31
Level of paperwork makes it hard to do my job well (N=64)	23	35.9	14	21.9	4	6.3	16	25.0	7
My supervisor and I share similar views about nature of my job (N=68)	9	13.2	6	8.8	3	4.4	25	36.8	25
I understand all the tasks associated with job role (N=70)	-	-	-	-	2	2.9	25	35.7	43
I receive the information needed to do my job effectively and on time (N=70)	2	2.9	4	5.7	2	2.9	26	37.1	36
I am able to keep up with changes within my department (N=70)	6	8.6			1	1.4	25	35.7	38
I am adequately trained in serving the needs of our customers (N=69)	11	15.9	8	11.6	1	1.4	24	34.8	25
I understand which issues are considered in my appraisal (N=69)	3	4.3	3	4.3	3	4.3	26	37.7	34

# CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations derived from the findings of the study. Section 5.2 is a brief discussion of the research findings. Section 5.3 provides the conclusions. Section 5.4 provides the recommendations. Section 5.5 finally provides the limitations of the study.

## 5.2. Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to determine the factors affecting the quality of customer service in Municipal Council of Mavoko (MCM). The study used a descriptive research design. The target population of the study comprised of all employees of Municipal Council of Mavoko. This comprised of officers from the top management, the middle level management, and the operational (junior) levels. Stratified random sampling was used to select 70 respondents. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The study used descriptive and analytical methods of data analysis, which were mainly performed using the SPSS data analysis package. The data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative analysis method. This section presents a summary discussion of the findings derived from the study.

The findings established that internal overall service performance of the council is assessed on the basis of reliability, promptness, and personal image of staff. The findings



showed that the council embraces free interaction between the senior and the junior cadres of employees. In addition, it regularly collects information on staff needs, but with little emphasis of their service quality expectations and commitment to use market research information for internal service processes' improvement. The findings indicated that the council is well-equipped on how to measure internal processes but lacks adequate formal performance standards to measure its ability to provide caring, individualized attention to its staff and external customers/ stakeholders. The findings showed that even though the Council has put in place measures to enhance internal service quality, such measures are hindered by lack of adequate resources as well as failure to attend to certain staff motivational issues such as monetary and non-monetary reward schemes. Although the Council has put in place internal service procedures, it emerged that the council has not adequately invested in automation, as a measure to achieve consistency of internal service provision. The respondents finally demonstrated high level of satisfaction with the nature of the internal service environment at MCM.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

The findings showed that some of the factors hindering the quality of internal customer service at the MCM include: lack of adequate formal performance standards to measure the ability to provide caring and individualized attention to staff and external customers/ stakeholders; lack of adequate resources to implement service enhancement programmes; failure to attend to certain staff motivational issues; and insufficient investment in office automation. The study has shown that internal customer service at MCM is largely influenced by hygiene factors which, by their presence or absence, determine levels of worker dissatisfaction (e.g., supervision, interpersonal relations, work conditions, salary,

and job security). Herzberg's theory suggested that it is difficult to produce positive motivation to deliver quality service to customers if hygiene factors are absent. However, a distinction between hygiene and motivational factors is useful for understanding worker behaviour, even if the distribution of factors between motivation and hygiene may vary in different settings.

## **5.4. Recommendations**

### **Management of the Council**

Closer interaction between the supervisors and the employees is needed to create an atmosphere of free communication that will allow the supervisors to improve perceptions of employees' motivators and de-motivators to enable them deliver quality service. The management should strive towards the establishment, implementation and maintenance of realistic bonus and incentive schemes in the motivation of employees in practice. This will enhance productivity levels through a better working relationship between the management and employees by way of a mutually beneficial situation. The employees should be given job assignments that are in line with their professional qualifications to ensure that their work environment is interactive and motivating. A positive work environment is important as well. The work environment consists of the physical nature of the offices as well as the formal and informal organization communication and morale. Allowing staff to make their contribution as regards their needs can pay major dividends. Placing individuals in single or shared offices or open space without their input often leads to frustration. A positive work environment extends to emotional issues of the staff. The atmosphere should be friendly with free communication at all levels of staff. The

staff should be encouraged to remember the organizational mission and the quality promise statement.

### **Employees**

Within the workplace, staff should aim routinely to thank each other for their exceptional achievements and share compliments. Senior managers should invest time in gaining understanding all parts of their organizations and the people who work in them. Managers at all levels should involve people in decision-making wherever possible, encourage opportunities for staff development, and ensure these are not compromised by external and internal pressures. Everybody within the Council should strive to make a good place to work. Likewise, everyone should work to ensure there is a balance between supporting people when a mistake is made, and ensuring appropriate accountability.

### **Research**

Further research should be done on the appropriate Human Resource Development (HRD) strategies that can help improve on morale and working conditions for employees in the public sector(s) organizations. Further research can also be done to find out if there are any other additional factors that affect the quality of service in the public sector. Further research can also help in highlighting some of the best practices from the private sectors that can be applied in enhancing service delivery in public sector service departments. Further research can seek to shed more light into the issues under study by casting in a wider sample from a cross-section of local authorities within the city and beyond. The study was also limited to issues of internal customers of MCM. Fu

research may seek to integrate or compare between a cross-section of both internal and external customers.

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## Appendix I: Questionnaire Cover Letter

28<sup>th</sup> September, 2010

**Dear Respondent,**

I am a MBA student at the University of Nairobi, School of Business. In partial fulfillment of the course requirements, I am conducting a study on **FACTORS AFFECTING THE QUALITY OF CUSTOMER IN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF MAVOKO**. I would appreciate if you could spare a few minutes of your time to fill in the blanks in the attached list of questions to the best of your knowledge. The information in this questionnaire will be strictly confidential. The information will not be used for any other purpose other than for this research. Your assistance in facilitating the same will be highly appreciated.

**Thank you in advance.**

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**Joyce Kyengo**

## Appendix II: Questionnaire for Employees

This questionnaire is meant to collect information on factors affecting the quality of customer service in selected local authorities. Kindly answer the questions by writing a brief statement or ticking in the boxes provided as will be applicable.

### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

- a.  Male
- b.  Female

2. Age category

- a.  Below 30 years
- b.  31 – 40 years
- c.  41 – 50 years
- d.  Over 50 years

3. Highest level of education attained

- a.  Primary Level
- b.  Secondary Level
- c.  Tertiary college Level
- d.  University Undergraduate
- e.  University Postgraduate

4. Which Department are you serving in? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Years of experience in the council \_\_\_\_\_

6. Years of experience in the public service \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION B: INFORMATION ON QUALITY OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

7. Using the scale shown below, what is your rating on the level of importance given to each of the factors in assessing the performance of the council? Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on the level of importance given to each of the factors in assessing the performance of the council?</i>		Not important at all [1]	Important [2]	Somewhat Important [3]	Very Important [4]	Extremely Important [5]
a	Council's ability to complete tasks accurately and dependably	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Various departments' willingness to help and provide prompt service to their internal customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Council's ability to convey trust and confidence to its staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Appearance of council's physical facilities, equipment and personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	Council's ability to provide caring individualized attention to its staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Using the scale shown below, to what extent do you agree (or disagree) to various attributes indicated on mechanisms applied to acquire knowledge and understanding of internal customers (staff) by the council? Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on mechanisms applied to acquire knowledge and understanding of internal customers by your council (staff)?</i>		Strongly Disagree [1]	Fairly Disagree [2]	Not sure [3]	Fairly Agree [4]	Strongly Agree [5]
a	The Council regularly collects information about needs of its staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	The Council uses market research information that is collected about its internal customers (the staff)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	The Council regularly collects information about service-quality expectation of its staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	There is free interaction between the top management and junior (service) employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Using the scale shown below, to what extent do you agree (or disagree) to various attributes indicated on measuring performance of various aspects relating to service delivery by the council? Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on the following aspects of service delivery performance measurement?</i>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b> [1]	<b>Fairly Disagree</b> [2]	<b>Not sure</b> [3]	<b>Fairly Agree</b> [4]	<b>Strongly Agree</b> [5]
a	The council has formal performance standards to measure ability to complete tasks accurately and dependably	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	The council has formal performance standards to measure its level of willingness to help and provide prompt service to all stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	The council has formal performance standards to measure its ability to convey trust and confidence to its staff and external customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	The council has formal performance standards to measure its image to the public (Appearance of physical facilities, equipment and personnel)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	The council has formal performance standards to measure its ability to provide caring, individualized attention to its staff and external customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Using the scale shown below, to what extent do you agree (or disagree) to various attributes indicated on effectiveness of working relationships between staff within departments in your council? Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on the following aspects of working relationships between staff within departments in your council?</i>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b> [1]	<b>Fairly Disagree</b> [2]	<b>Not sure</b> [3]	<b>Fairly Agree</b> [4]	<b>Strongly Agree</b> [5]
a	Managers and staff communicate with each other about nature of service output activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Managers seek suggestions from staff about service output provision activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Managers interact face-to-face with staff engaged in service provision activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

d	Primary means of communication between staff and managers is not through memos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	Number of layers of management impedes information flow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Using the scale shown below, to what extent do you agree (or disagree) to various attributes indicated on organizational commitment to formalizing the internal customer service management process in your council? Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on the following aspects of organizational commitment to formalizing the internal customer service management process?</i>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b> [1]	<b>Fairly Disagree</b> [2]	<b>Not sure</b> [3]	<b>Fairly Agree</b> [4]	<b>Strongly Agree</b> [5]
a	The Council commits sufficient resources to service quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	The Council has programmes to improve service quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Staff are rewarded for giving priority to service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Emphasis in on putting service before internal efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	The Council has formal process for setting service goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	The Council is monitored against specific service goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Using the scale shown below, to what extent do you agree (or disagree) to various attributes indicated on actions for improving internal customer service in your council? Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on the following actions for improving internal customer service in your council?</i>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b> [1]	<b>Fairly Disagree</b> [2]	<b>Not sure</b> [3]	<b>Fairly Agree</b> [4]	<b>Strongly Agree</b> [5]
a	The Council effectively uses automation to achieve consistency of service provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Programmes exist to improve operating procedures that can result in greater consistency of service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	The Council has capability to meet internal customer service needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Operating systems are appropriate for meeting customer needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Using the scale shown above, rate your level of agreement (disagreement) with respect to the following aspects of the internal service environment in the council.

Use a tick (☑) or a cross (☒) to indicate your choice.

<i>What is your rating on the following aspects of the internal service environment in your council?</i>		<b>Strongly Disagree [1]</b>	<b>Fairly Disagree [2]</b>	<b>Not sure [3]</b>	<b>Fairly Agree [4]</b>	<b>Strongly Agree [5]</b>
a	I feel I am part of a team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Everyone in my department contributes to team effort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	I feel a sense of responsibility to help others in a team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	My team members and I co-operate more than we compete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	I feel I am an important member of my department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	I feel confident in being able to perform my job well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g	The Council hires people qualified to undertake their jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h	The Council provides tool/equipment that I need for my job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	I spend time resolving problems over which I have little control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j	I have freedom to carry out assigned tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k	There is no control because too many customers seek help at same time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l	I can depend on others to help respond to customers' demands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m	I am appraised on my ability to serve internal and external customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n	Special effort to assist customers is not rewarded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o	Level of paperwork makes it hard to do my job well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p	My supervisor and I share similar views about nature of my job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q	I understand all the tasks associated with job role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r	I receive the information needed to do my job effectively and on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s	I am able to keep up with changes within my department	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t	I am adequately trained in serving the needs of our customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u	I understand which issues are considered in my appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



14. What recommendations would you make in regard to improvement of quality of service delivery in Local Authorities?

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSES**

