THE CONTRIBUTION OF CUSTOMER SERVICE TO SERVICE QUALITY IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY IN UGANDA: A CASE STUDY OF MTN UGANDA

BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE HIGHER DEGREES DEPARTMENT IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE MASTERS DEGREE IN MANAGEMENT STUDIES (PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT) O F UGANDA MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

DECLARATION

I, John Leonard Tumusiime, declare that the work presented in this dissertation is entirely my original work and has never been submitted for any academic award in any university or other institution of learning.

SIGNATURE: ……………………………………..

DATE   :   …………………………………...

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation has been submitted in approval of the appointed supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father , Mr. Lawrence Nturwabakye and my mother, Mrs. Betty Nturwabakye who taught me to greatly value education plus my brothers and sisters for there prayers and words of encouragement.

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I wish to extend my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to all who assisted me in one way or another in preparing this report. Without their support, this work would not have been produced.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

DV   Dependent Variable

GSM   Global Systems for Mobile Communications

ITU   International Telecommunication Union

IV   Independent Variable

MTN   Mobile Telephone Network

NRM   National Resistance Movement

SHS   Shillings

SPSS   Statistical Package for Social Scientist

UCC   Uganda Communication Commission

UMI   Uganda Management Institute

UPL   Uganda Posts Limited

UPTC   Uganda Posts and Telecommunications Corporation

UTL   Uganda Telecommunication Limited.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. The specific objectives were; to examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN, to find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN and to examine the extent to which products and services offered contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda. The respondents included MTN staff, customers, dealers and sub dealers and with relevant characteristics such as age, sex, education were considered. The research design was a case study design, which was cross sectional in nature. The study population included and were selected using various sampling techniques. The researcher used triangulation method for data collection. The study had a population of over 5, 000,000 from which a sample of 400 was selected. Data analysis was done by use of SPSS, a computer package. The findings revealed that; in order to access the call centre one had to dial five or more times, implying that the call centre is inaccessible. The respondents agreed that channels of distribution were accessible. The findings also revealed that staff had the required skills and knowledge to perform their duties implying that professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda. The findings further revealed that MTN offers a variety of products and services to its customers, implying that products and services offered contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda. The conclusions in the study were supportive of the hypothesis tested. Recommendations adopted from the study results were provided in the study and these include; MTN should develop other avenues for accessing the call centre like use of mobile call centers, other channels of distribution of MTN products were recommended in addition to the existing ones. MTN should carry out continuous training in order to improve the social and interactive skills of staff. Products and services have to be tested before they are lunched.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Chapter one includes the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, hypotheses, scope, significance of the study and definition of terms and concepts.

This study aimed at examining the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda, with a case study of MTN Uganda. In this study, customer service was the independent variable whereas service quality was the dependent variable.

1.1   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1.1   Historical Background

A customer is a generic term referring to anybody who receives a service or product from some other person or group of people (Hayes, 1998). Customer service is defined as the service provided in support of a company's core products. Customer service most often includes answering questions, taking orders, dealing with billing issues, handling complaints and perhaps scheduling maintenance or repairs (Zeithaml &Bitner 2005).

The international telecommunications union (ITU) defines quality of service as '' the collective effect of service performance which determines the degree of satisfaction of a user of the service.''   Simply defined, however, quality of service is the level of quality of a particular service (UCC, 2008). However service quality is generally viewed as the output of the service delivery system especially in the case of pure service systems (Jain &Saakshi., 2009). Hayes (1998) (as citied in Montgomery, 1996) emphasizes that they are two types of quality: that is quality of design and quality of conformance.

The development of improved communication systems after World War II, in particular the telephone and television, helped to bring about a consumer revolution. It became much easier for consumers to exchange information and the developed commercial broadcasting, firstly in the United States and then in the UK, meant that viewers were exposed to increasing amounts of advertising. Customers were becoming much more aware of the choices open to them (Cartwright, 2000). Shirley (2000) states that the quality revolution of the early 1990s made organizations pay real attention to customer service/ care. 'The customer is the king' was the great exhortation and virtually all front line employees went through customer care training. However, customer satisfaction levels are overall no higher now than before this `revolution`. This could be partly because their expectations have risen. Indeed, it may have risen as a result of improved customer service.

In 1996 the government of Uganda prepared a national telecommunications policy that set out, among other things, the following

- A regulatory agency for the telecom sector established

- The telecommunication sector be liberalized

- UTL be privatized

- The postal and telecommunication operations of UPTC be unbundled into Uganda Post Limited (UPL) and Uganda Telecommunication Limited (UTL).

The core motivation driving this policy was that telecom service should be both affordable and widely accessible (and that service quality- with respect to factors such as connection time and service continuity-should improve (Econ one research, 2002)

The Uganda Communication Commission (UCC) is the regulatory body of the communication sector in Uganda. It was established by the communication Act (Cap106 Laws of Uganda) to license and regulate telecommunication. It also makes it imperative for service providers, targeting consumers to provide efficient and effective customer tailored

products and services. Customers should also be in position to make informed choices of these services and products as well as the level of quality of services (UCC, 2008).

Customers tend to view quality of service depending on the user perception or what the customer believe they have experienced from a particular service provider. If a user is satisfied with a service, then the level of quality is acceptable. The level of quality offered by the service provider may be driven by the demands of a customer (UCC, 2008).

1.1.2 Theoretical Background

In this study, the Integrated Gaps Model of Service Quality (Zeithaml& Bitner, 2004) was the dominant model of service marketing and guided this study. The gaps model was chosen because it looks at the gap between customer expectations and perceptions and tries to close. Using the integrated gaps model, the key concepts, strategies and decisions in service marketing are presented in a manner that begins with the customer and builds the organization's task around what is needed around to close the gap between customer expectations and perception. The central focus on the gaps model is the customer gap, the difference between customer expectations and perceptions. Firms need to close this gap- between what customers expect and receive- in order to satisfy their customers and build long term relationships with them. To close this all- important customer gap, the model suggests that four other gaps – the provider gaps- need to be closed. The following are the four provider gaps.

Gap1-Not knowing what the customers expect.

Gap2- Not selecting the right service designs and standards.

Gaps3- Not delivering to service standards.

Gaps4- Not matching performance to promises.

(Zeithaml &Bitner 2005)

However, there are other theories that were used: the SERVQUAL measurement scale, which is based on the comparative judgment of expectations versus perceived performance

(Parasuraman, 1988). According to this model, service quality is a function of perception and expectations.

The SERVPERF model investigates the relationship between service quality, consumer satisfaction and purchase intentions. This performance based model theorizes that consumer satisfaction not service quality influences purchase intentions. Therefore the model looks at performance (Parasuraman 1988, Nitin, 2005)

1.1.3 Conceptual Background

The key concepts that guided this study were customer service and service quality. According to Zeithaml &Bitner (2005) Customer Service is the service provided in support of a company's core products. Customer service most often includes answering questions, taking orders, dealing with billing issues, handling complaints, and perhaps scheduling maintenance or repairs. Customer service can occur on site (as when a retail employee helps a customer find a desired item or answers a question) or it can occur over the phone or internet. Many companies operate customer service call centers, often staffed around the clock. Typically, there is no charge for customer service. Quality customer service is essential to building customer relationships.

Cartwright (2000) says it is only in talking to customers that you can find out what they want. Tom Peter stresses the importance of talking to your customers, not just for a hard sell, but to find out what their wants and needs are. It isn't enough to know what the customer requires and feels; a system needs to be in place to communicate the information through the organization. Thus through communication you will find out about the customers perception about the service.

Hayes (1998) defines quality as the extent to which products meet the requirements of people who use them. Wal (2000) further says quality reflects the extent to which a product or service meets or customers expectations. For companies to understand how customers

perceive their quality, they must measure customers' satisfaction with their products and service. What is delivered is as substantial as how it is delivered.

1.1.4 Contextual Background

Uganda's telecommunication infrastructure was among the least developed not only in Africa, but also in the whole world. For example, more than 70% of the communication services were in the same period concentrated in urban areas, leaving out the rural areas which contribute a significant portion to the country's wealth (UCC, 2001).

In 1993, competition was introduced into the telecommunication sector with the licensing of Celtel (now Zain). Celtel (Zain). Uganda began to provide services in 1995 to selected areas in the urban suburbs of Entebbe, Kampala and Jinja. The government prepared a National Telecommunication policy early in 1996 which led to the liberalization of the telecommunication sector (UCC, 2001).

To attract significant investment at a time when Uganda was not considered viable, the government of Uganda adopted a strategy which was internationally common at the time, of granting exclusivity to the entrants. This exclusivity was granted to MTN Uganda Limited (UCC, 2001).MTN entered the market as the second national operator. A year later it had more subscribers than the first mobile company in the country. After six months- on 21 October 1998, MTN Uganda launched its services. Entering a market already occupied by formidable competition required a unique and innovative approach to product innovation, pricing and marketing- a feat that easily propelled MTN to industry leader position. (Super brands 2007).As opposed to the existing market positioning where mobile phones were the preserve of the rich and priced exorbitantly, MTN made mobile phones affordable. It also traded in the Ugandan Shilling, making it easier for the population to understand. One of MTN s most passionately pursued goals is making telecommunications accessible to the wider population. The prepaid option where customers get an MTN line at UG shs 3000 /-

pay upfront for their credit , as well as the availability of affordable handsets on the market has greatly aided this objective(www.mtn.co.ug; accessed on 15/10/08)

With the passing of time, the market share of MTN (Uganda) has gradually been reducing. MTN has been losing some of its subscribers to rival networks. MTN market share now stands at 52% (www.mtn.co.ug). There is a concern for the high churn of subscribers.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

MTN entered Uganda as the second national operator and on the 21st October 1998 it launched its services. Within a year it was the leading telecommunication company with a market share of over 75 % (www.mtn.co.ug).   MTN has been losing some of its subscribers to rival networks. MTN market share now stands at 52% (www.mtn.co.ug; 15/10/08). There is a concern for the high churn of subscribers. The main concern for management is to ensure that customer service/ care of MTN continually improve in order to strengthen its competitive position in the market.

 Whereas Management has tried to improve its services by upgrading the network, opening up more service centers and improving on the channels of distribution, the market share of MTN Uganda has gradually been reducing (from a market share of 75% to 52%)

Therefore the study examined the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i)   To examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda.

ii)   To find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda.

iii)   To examine the extent to which products and services offered contributed to service quality at MTN Uganda.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

i)   To what extent does accessibility contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda?

ii)   How does professionalism contributed to service quality at MTN Uganda?

iii)   What is the contribution of products and service offered to service quality at MTN Uganda?

1.6 HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were applied and tested in the relationship between customer service and service quality at MTN Uganda.

   i)   Accessibility contributed significantly to service quality at MTN Uganda.

   ii) Professionalism contributed greatly to service quality at MTN Uganda.

   iii) Products and Services offered have contributed significantly to service quality at MTN Uganda.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Sekaran (2003) states that a conceptual flame work helps to postulate or hypothesize and test the certain relationships which improve the understanding of the situation

The conceptual framework showing the relationship between customer service and service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda as illustrated in Fig 1 below.

Independent Variables (IV)

Customer Service

Dependent Variable (DV)

Service Quality

Accessibility

-Call Centre

-Distribution Network

Professionalism

- Time (speed)

-Skills of staff (competency, courtesy)

-Product knowledge (brand awareness strategy)

-Attitude (employee/ customer relations)

Product & Services

-Product& service innovation

Success call rate

- Congestions

Network Coverage

-Network Availability

Intervening variable

Competition

- Unfair prices

- Damaging and cutting of cables

Source: *Adapted from Uganda Communications Commission, Researcher, 15/10/08 and modified for the relevancy of the study.*

In the conceptual flame work (figure1) above, customer service was conceptualized that it has an effect on service quality. Customer service was conceptualized as the independent variable and service quality as the dependent variable. An independent variable is the variable that influences the dependent variable in either a positive or negative way (Sekaran, 2003: 89, Amin, 2005:93). A dependent variable is the variable of primary interest to the researcher and the researcher s goal is to understand and describe the dependent variable (Sekaran, 2003: 88, Amin, 2005:92). Customer service was conceptualized to into 3 elements which made up the objectives and these included 1. Accessibility had variables like, the call Centre and the distribution network; 2. Professionalism had time (speed), skills of staff, product knowledge and attitude and 3. Products and service offered had product and service innovation. However the study also intervening variables which had competition which had variables like unfair prices and cutting and damaging of fibre cables.

1.8   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study aimed at examining the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. The Findings and recommendations from this study were of great significance to the researcher because it helped the researcher get a deeper understanding of the concept.

Organizations engaged in the service industry may find this study helpful and may improve on their existing approaches to customer service. Policy makers shall be able to understand and appreciate the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda.

1.9   JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Customer service has strategic importance and requires companies to continually enhance customer experience and satisfaction, to deliver quality in a competitive market place. Customer service refers to the process and actions that make it easier for customers to do business with a company. Customer service creates a perception about the service. Therefore this was the reason for carrying out the study (The contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda).

1.10   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In terms of content scope, the study critically examined the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. It utilized the literature on customer service and service quality. Customer service aspects that were looked at included accessibility, professionalism, product and services offered by MTN Uganda. While service quality had success call rate and network coverage.

The study was conducted in Kampala Central in Kampala District and the respondents included MTN customers, MTN staff, dealers, sub dealers. Kampala district was chosen because it has the highest number of subscribers in Uganda. (www.mtn.co.ug).   Kampala district has both high and low end users which describe the characteristics of the subscribers of MTN Uganda.

In terms of time scope, the study covered the period from 2000 to 2008. While examining the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN.

1.11   OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Customer   Is a generic term referring to anybody who receives a service or product from some other person or group of people (Hayes, 1997)

Customer service   Is the services provided in support of a company's core products (Zeithaml &Bitner, 2005).

Expectations   Are beliefs about service delivery that function as standards or reference points against which performance is judged.

Perceptions   The process by which people select , organize and interpret information to form a meaningful picture of the world or can be defined as past experiences (Jain& Saakshi,2009).

Product   Anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects , services , persons , organizations and ideas(Jain& Saakshi,2009)

Customer   service   Is defined as the service provided in support of a company's core products (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2005).

Service quality   This refers to the provision of services that meet the needs of the customers beyond his/ her expectations. In other words, it refers to the services whose quality matches customers' expectations (Wal, 2000).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzed the key concepts and variables of the study (The contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry with a case study of MTN Uganda) as outlined in the conceptual framework. Each objective was given a theme and relevant literature on the indicator was reviewed. However, the review of the literature was preceded by a description of the theoretical and conceptual backgrounds. The chapter thus is structured under (1) the theoretical review, (2) the conceptual frame work and (3) actual review of the literature which is arranged under the themes derived from the objectives of the study.

2.2   THEORETICAL REVIEW

The Integrated Gaps Model of Service Quality was the dominant model of service marketing and it guided this study. The integrated gaps model positions the key concepts, strategies and decisions in service marketing in a manner that begins with the customer and builds the organization's task around what is needed to close the gap between customer expectations and perception. The central focus on the gaps model is the customer gap, the difference between customer expectations and perceptions. Firms need to close this gap- between what customers expect and receive- in order to satisfy their customers and build long term relationships with them. To close this all- important customer gap, the model suggests that four other gaps – the provider gaps- need to be closed. The following are the four provider gaps.

Gap1-Not knowing what the customers expect.

Gap2- Not having the right service quality designs and standards.

Gaps3- Not delivering to service standards.

Gaps4- Not matching performance to promises.

Customer perceptions are subjective assessments of actual services experiences; customer expectations are standards of, or reference points for, performance against which services experiences are compared. The sources of customer expectations consist of market controlled factors, such as advertising, as well as factors the market has limited ability to affect, such as innate personal needs. Ideally, expectations and perceptions are identical: customers perceive that they get what they think they will and should. In practice, a customer gap typically exists.

Fig 2: Gaps Model of Service Quality
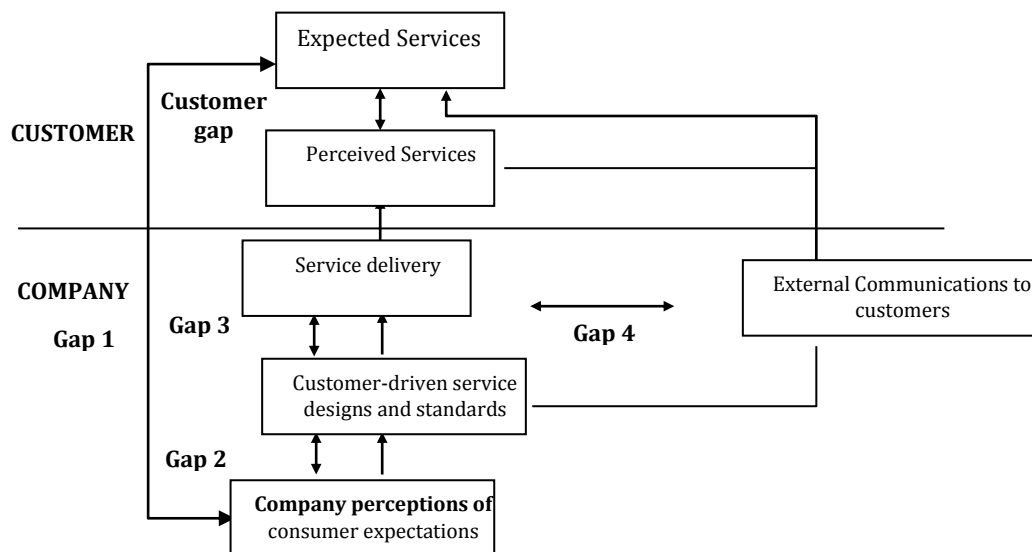
Source: adopted from Zeithaml & Bitner, 2004

Gap 1- Not knowing what the customers expect.

Provider gap1 is the difference between customer expectations of service   and company understanding of those expectations.

Gap 2: Not having the right service quality designs and standards.

A recurring theme in service companies is the difficulty experienced in translating customer expectations into service quality specifications. These problems are reflected in the provider gap 2, the difference between company understanding of customer expectations and development of customer driven service designs and standards.

Gaps 3- Not delivering to service standards.

Is the discrepancy between developments of customer driven service standards and actual service performance by company employees. Even when guidelines exist for performing service well and treating customers correctly, high quality service performance is not a certainty.

Gap 4- when promises do not match performance.

Provider gap 4 illustrates the difference between service delivery and the service provider's external communications. Promises made by a service company through its media advertising, sales force and other communications may raise customer expectations that serve as standards against which customers access service quality (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2004).

Jeffrey E. Disends (as citied in Jain &Saakshi, 2009) correlates the gaps model with the concept of service quality. He maintains that poor service is a result of the gap, or a large difference between what is expected and what is delivered. When what is delivered matches with what is expected, customers find the service acceptable.

The definitions of service quality presented in the Gaps Model recognizes that expectations are subjective and neither static nor predictable.

2.3   CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between customer service as the independent variable (IV) and service quality provided by MTN as the dependent variable (DV). Customer service was conceptualized and had the following variables; accessibility, professionalism and products and services, while service quality had the following variables;

success call rate and network coverage. In the diagram(fig 1), it was further conceptualized that there are other factors that support or influence both the independent and dependent variables and these are known as intervening factors. However the study focused on the DV and the IV.

The independent variable focused on the different dimensions of customer services at MTN namely, accessibility, professionalism and products and services whereas the dependent variables focused on the dimensions of service quality at MTN, which included; success call rate and network coverage.

2.4   CUSTOMER SERVICE

Kyt and Kyj (1994) states that customer service is viewed as an organized corporate philosophy consisting of a comprehensive and related set of activities. Specifically customer service is not a generic abstraction, but rather a series of specific activities prior to the transaction, during the transaction and after the transaction. While there is a broad agreement that these elements are commonly associated with customer service, the degree of importance attached to each respective service varies from industry to industry. The question of why customer service is so important should be relatively simple to answer; no work, no income and no jobs. Customer relation is more than just providing excellent service and care at the point of a transaction. If the customer has no choice or relatively few choices and wants the product then they may have little alternative but to accept poor service (Cartwright, 2000).

According to the marketing concept, an organization must determine what customers want and use this information to create satisfying products and services. Excellent customer service is achieved by three dimensional processes that include a well conceived service strategy, customer driven systems and customer friendly frontline people. Each dimension must reflect the important needs and wants of the customer. A well – conceived service

strategy includes the three important elements. Market research to discover customers' needs and wants; a clear vision of the firm's reason for being around (Jain& Saakshi, 2009).

Baggs (1996) argues that customer service includes the overall picture that an organization presents to the public: simply having low prices or great selection will not induce customers to shop at a particular shop. The store must offer a complete package of service to entice the customer. And if a company scores high on its customer service rating, it's performing well on all aspects of the business. The reason according to Baggs, management should design its customer services in order to bring services closer to the people.

2.4.1   Accessibility

Accessibility is a general term used to describe the degree to which a product (e.g. device, service) is accessible by as many people as possible. Accessibility can be viewed as the ability to access the functionality, and possible benefit, of some system or entity. Customer service has a strategic importance and requires companies to continually enhance customer satisfaction to deliver quality in market places. Customer service refers to the processes and actions that make it easier for customers to do business with a company. In particular , there has been growth in customer contact that is to say, personal communication channel such as face to face, mail , phone and the web that impact on the way a customer may interact with business. The growth of customer points provides opportunities for a business to practice proactive customer responsiveness. That is; an organization to communicate their understanding of, and ability to meet, individual customer needs (Mathew & Lawley, 2006). For example MTN has service centers, dealerships and connect stores, were they are able to communicate and interact with customers. MTN looks at accessibility in two terms that is outgoing and incoming calls both locally and internationally. MTN has 45% as the target for accessibility onto the network (www.mtn.co.ug. 20th February, 2010).

2.4.2 Call Centre

A call centre is a centralized office used for the purpose of receiving and transmitting a large volume of requests by telephone. Alison (2002) says a call centre is a dedicated operation with employees focused on customer service function. MTN operates a call centre to administer incoming products support or information inquiries from consumers. Outgoing calls for telemarketing, clientele and product service, and debt collection are also made through the MTN call centre. Staff employed at the call centre are each provided with a customer value guide which contains guidelines that look to foster complete customer satisfaction. Call centre staff are expected to take ownership of each call received and further manage each request correctly and efficiently. The mission of the call centre is " To attain the No. 1 position as a contact center through taking ownership of each call received, managing each request correctly and efficiently and treating The Customer Value- guide as a living document, to ensure complete customer satisfaction, is the core of our existence." (www.mtn.co.ug. 18th June 2010).

2.4.3 Distribution Network

Distribution is one of the four elements of marketing mix. An organization or set of organizations involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or service available for use or consumption by a consumer or business use. Frequently there may be a chain of intermediaries; each passing the product down the chain to the next organization, before it finally reaches the consumer or end user. The process is known as the distribution chain or the channel. Businesses may choose to sell the product directly or through intermediaries. According to Chopra (2005:1), every manufacturer needs the right channel to deliver goods and services at the right time and at the right cost. The economic responsibility of an organization is to be profitable by following ethical principals and delivering a good quality product at fair price to its customers (Korchi & Rombaut, 2006).

A distribution channel consists of individuals, systems and tools responsible for taking the product from the production stage to the consumption stage (Jain &Saakshi, 2009). MTN has the most extensive distribution network in the country covering all major areas, it has got 12 dealers,3 connect stores,5 service centres,400 footsoldiers,1000 direct sales team,300 direct sales delivery and over 45,000 outlets in Kampala central. The MTN Public Access, formerly known as MTN village phone and Publicom operates in partnerships with micro institutions and has created opportunities for poor rural individuals to become village phone operators even in areas where electricity is unavailable or where the MTN network is accessed with only a booster antenna (Channels and Distribution dept report, May, 2009, Products and Services staff handbook, 2010)

2.5 PROFESSIONALISM

Cook (2002) argues that customers want to deal with people they can trust; people who are knowledgeable; and technically able, and at the same time polite and friendly to the customer. In providing training to staff to improve customer service, MTN focuses on the hard skill-product knowledge, technical skill. Williams (2002) further argues that customer contact employees play an important role in affecting customer perception of services quality. In general it is important for managers to identify the relevant intrinsic and extrinsic cues used by consumers in orders in order to communicate to them the relevant quality signals. MTN has a Customer Management and Training section which is responsible for imparting key skills and knowledge to staff and dealers through regular training. Furthermore, staff in customer service are subjected to monthly tests to check their understanding of the concepts and information communicated through the training sessions. The company's objective for training staff is to enrich and increase the skill level, competence or character of the staff (www.mtn.co.ug .16th June 2010)

2.5.1 Time

Cartwright (2000) says that time is a precious resource. Customers can become very angry if they feel that a member of staff has not got the time to deal with them properly. MTN realizes that a member of staff may have had to answer the same query time and again during the day and may be frustrated, but for the individual customer it will be the first time they have asked and the feeling of the staff will be of little consequence to such a customer. To that end, management employs a series of training programmes and occasional workshops where the employees are reminded every time of the importance (and thus the need to devote more time) of the customer to the overall attainment of organizational objectives. MTN therefore acknowledges that the time allocated to customers and the attainments of organizational objectives are linearly related.

2.5.2 Skills of staff

In many cases, the customer's first impression of an organization comes during contact with frontline people. The best frontline employees are both – competent and caring. They have a certain level of maturity and posses the social skills needed to build customer loyalty (Jain& Saakshi, 2009)

Cook (2002) argues that customers want to deal with people they can trust - people who are knowledgeable and technically able and at the same time polite and friendly to the customer. In providing training to staff to improve customer service, organizations focus on the hard skill –product knowledge and technical. Research further shows that what is memorable to the customer in terms of service experience is the personal touch rather the material aspect of the service. The social interchange between the customer and the service provider, and the way the process is managed; is pivotal to excellent customer service. Inge (2004) says workers and firms have different interests in investigating in a workers skill. In the short run, these interests are not conflicting. Workers need skills to perform adequately in their jobs and

firms to increase their productivity by employing qualified workers. The long term interests of workers and firms might differ.

Kitching (1999) says the success of a service business depends on the people who staff it. Customers will be turned on or off by the people, so there is need to invest in people skills. At MTN, customer contact staff are expected to posses' six main abilities

- To make people feel special.

- To manage first and last impression

- To maintain a positive attitude

- To communicate clear massages

- To show high energy

- To work well under pressure.

Zeithaml, Bitner& Gremler (2006) argue that provide quality service, employees need ongoing training in the necessary technical skills and knowledge and interactive skills. Service employees also need training in interactive skills that allow them to provide courteous, caring, responsive and empathetic services. They argue that empowerment means giving employees the desire, skills, tools and authority to serve customers.

2.5.3 Product knowledge

A customer has to have faith in the competence of the organization and its employees. Cartwright (2000) has pointed out the dangers of lack of product knowledge. Customers like to feel that they are in a safe pair of hands, and any suspicion that those they are dealing with lack the competence is a fast way of losing the customer. Everybody working at MTN Uganda needs a minimum level of product knowledge. This is enforced through management issuing Products and Services staff handbooks to members of staff containing the necessary information relating to all products and services offered by MTN. The company also has in place a customer management and training policy for staff; this is aimed at ensuring a

consistent customer experience that builds loyalty in all the customer operations staff's interactions with the customer so as to make MTN the benchmark service company in Uganda.

Kotler (1984) a renowned writer on marketing, presents the marketing concept that emphasizes centrality of the customer as follows. The marketing concept holds the key to achieving organizational goals consists of determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than competitors. One can therefore read into the above definition that the concept customer service fine tunes the marketing concept in focusing on customer needs and wants.

2.5.4 Attitude

Kitching (1999) argues that, Customer relations policies can only be effective if the staff in an organization have the right attitude towards the customer. MTN maintains a regime of periodical training of their staff – especially those in the customer service operations. In addition to training being tailored to achieve rapid success in instilling the right attitude in the worker towards the customer, it also helps that the initial recruitment process through which new candidates and existing ones are subjected before they qualify to work in the customer operations department is a rigorous one; one that checks for the necessary interpersonal skills considered crucial in dealing with customers. The right attitude is one that recognizes the importance of the customer to the well-being of everybody in the value chain. Kitching (1999) says that when reporting dissatisfaction with the quality of service they receive, customers frequently observe that the problem comes down to staff attitude. The attitudes adopted by the service Launchpad. Attitudes shape behaviors and responses. Awareness of our basic attitudes helps greatly in service situations.

2.6   PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The products service is a concept whereby services are additionally offered with products to increase their value (Kimita & Shimomura, 2009). Consumers do not only look for goods or services , they demand a much more holistic offering including everything from information about how to best and safest use or product to delivering, installing ,repairing , maintaining and updating solutions they have bought. The yello network gives you the freedom to select from options that gives value for your money for example , MTN offers different types of airtime(scratch cards, mobile money top up, ATM distribution(Automated Teller Machine),pay as you go express),short message service (SMS) (Product and Services Staff Handbook,2010).

2.6.1 Product innovation

Alegre, Lapiedra and Chiva (2006) argue that product innovation consists of successful exploitation of new ideas. Therefore it implies two conditions: novelty and use. They further argue that product innovation is becoming more and more relevant, mainly as a result of three major trends: intense international competition, fragmented and demanding markets and diverse and rapidly changing technologies. Firms that offer products that are adapted to the needs and demands of customers and market them faster and efficiently than their competitors are better. MTN is a company that has come to be defined by its leadership in product innovation in the Ugandan telecommunications market. Product innovation will ensure there is a wide variety of products and services from which the customers can choose. MTN has several products and services on the market which include among others:

Pay As You Go Express-which refers to Electronic voucher distributor which is an easy and convenient system that enables Pay As You Go customers to load airtime without scratching a card. ATM Distribution (Automated Teller Machine)-this service enables customers to purchase airtime vouchers using your ATM card at selected banks countrywide.

Virtual Top Up-this service is available where a customer walks in and pays for any airtime denomination they would like to load on their phone and its automatically loaded by the advisor directly from the system without having to print the voucher.

MTN Prepaid-this is a service designed for customers who only want to pay for what they will use. MTN Post Paid-this is a post paid mobile contract service particularly suitable for users who make frequent calls and wish to enjoy preferential call charges.

MTN Pay As You Go Per second-a service which allows the subscriber to be charged per second used compared to 60 second increments (per minute billing) as is the norm.

MTN Zone-is a discount service that encourages subscribers to change their calling patterns by offering them variable discounts on their call charges according to available capacity and their geographical location. The discount provided is in relation to the percentage displayed on your cell broadcast. MTN Mobile Money-this is an MTN value added service which enables both Mobile and Non-Mobile money users to send and receive money.

MTN Voicemail to Email- is a service accessed from the web and guarantees that a customer never misses any important communication. MTN offers the above listed products and services in addition to the general products and services also offered by its competitors such as the SMS and Calling services. The researcher sought to determine whether the wide range of products and services offered by MTN as discussed above contribute significantly to the MTN service quality.

2.7   SERVICE QUALITY

Service quality is generally viewed as the output of the service delivery system, especially in the case of pure service systems. Moreover, service quality is linked to consumer satisfaction (Jain &Saakshi, 2009). Service quality is a concept that has aroused considerable interest and debate in research of literature because of the difficulties in both defining and measuring it with no overall consensuses emerging on. There are a number of different 'definitions'' as to

what is meant by service quality. One that is commonly used defines service quality as the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations (Lewis and Mitchell; Dotchin and Oakland; Asubonteng et.al. Wisniewski and Donnelly). Service quality can thus be defined as the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less satisfactory and hence less satisfaction occurs (Parasuraman et.al. Lewis and Mitchell) (as citied in Jain &Saakshi, 2009).   Muddie & Cottam (1999)   in their works "The Management and Marketing of services `` point out that quality service or products   plays a large part in the decision of customers on whether to use it or not. This is similar to what Gibson Ivancevich (1990) said about the role quality plays on repeat sales, loyalty to customers and testimonials of existing customer. Burroughs & Edgar (2008) argue that service quality is more than simply meeting specifications and that the customers' point of view on quality is important because quality is what the customers says it is. They state it is the customer who sets the quality and value of the service not the company. They further argue that recent studies indicate that customers consider reliability, durability and timely service delivery as indicators of superior service quality.

2.7.1 Success call rate

A success call is one which terminates: with 'no' answer on voice mail service, announcement that the subscriber is not available, with a busy signal, with an announcement that a wrong number has been dialed, or in conversation. For the intra network the success call rate should be greater than 99% (UCC). UCC further defines good quality calls as calls within the range good quality range .the good quality range is one in which the received signal quality of the network is good enough to guarantee two way end to end connection of a call for the entire duration of the call. The target for MTN is 98% of the random access success rate (www.mtn.co.ug. 20th February, 2010).

2.7.2   Congestions

According to UCC (2008) Congestion is the probability of not accessing a channel on the network that carries the traffic. Technically referred delivered to as the traffic control Congestion. The target should be for the traffic control channel should be less than 0.5%.

2.8   NETWORK COVERAGE

It is widely acknowledged that a world class telecommunications infrastructure is a key element in attracting business to any jurisdiction, (Yilmaz, Hayes & Dinks ,2002).The communications sector is well positioned to both demonstrate its green credentials and help curb environmental impact through installation of towers and base stations country wide. Adequate infrastructures are vital in attracting businesses and workers. To maintain their cutting edge reputation, telecommunication companies make significant investments in their network infrastructure. MTN Uganda has for the past two years been upgrading its network infrastructure and has about 1000 towns and villages covered with their network. MTN Uganda invested a total of US$60 million in upgrading its networks to meet the challenges of the phenomenal growth of its subscribers in 2008.The expansion meant that the network could accommodate a lot more calls at any one time. The upgrades were also necessary considering the increasing capacities of customers on the MTN network. As a result, service delivery has been enhanced and a number of products and services have been promoted through the network expansion scheme. MTN also built an additional 90 new sites during the upgrade, increasing its coverage footprint to new, previously uncovered areas. Erik van Veen,(the then Chief Operations officer of MTN) Uganda reported that, "this coverage expansion had provided access to telecommunications to another 1.3 million people who were previously not served, with nearly 400 base stations sites throughout the country, the company provides telecommunication services in more than 200 towns to over 75% of Uganda's population." "The expansion has ensured that MTN maintains its significant

network coverage advantage both in terms of national breadth and urban development (www.mtn.co.ug18/06/10).Telecommunication services and telecommunication infrastructure, as Graham (1997) explains, tend to be invisible and, weaving through and under the urban, rural and regional milieus (Lawrence, 1997). As access to communication has improved, people have chosen to distance themselves while simultaneously improving their ability to communicate with each other (Hughes 1994). With over 90% coverage, MTNU remains the undisputed leader in terms of the local network coverage; covering thousands of towns and villages (Products and Services staff handbook, 2010). Regionally, with MTN Home & Away, MTN has partnered with the largest telecommunications providers in the region, so that the company's customers can stay in touch with their business associates on their MTN number while in Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda just as they would at home. Internationally, with MTN International Roaming, MTN has international roaming agreements with over 225 GSM operators in 107 countries so that travelling customers can stay in touch and connected with their associates in Uganda and around the world on the same number. For instance in Europe & America, customers can roam with MTN in countries such as Austria, Canada, Germany, Spain, Argentina, United Kingdom, USA, France, Russia just to mention but a few. In Africa, customers can roam with MTN in countries such as, Algeria, Congo, Namibia, Cameroon, Gabon, Sudan, Chad just to mention but a few. In Asia & Pacific, customers can roam with MTN in countries such as Australia, Georgia, Israel, Philippines, Azerbaijan, Hong Kong, India, Turkey just to mention but a few. The wide network coverage has ensured that wherever the company's customers go, they are always covered on the network.

2.8.1 Network Availability

This is a measure of degree to which the access network is operable at any point in time and / or time that network resources are available to the customer and/or the percentage time the link where the bandwidth is accessed from the operator by the customer is available. The

network availability / percentage up time should be greater than (UCC). MTN looks at availability in terms of Prepaid availability (call ability), Recharge availability(recharge ability), SMS Success rate(mobile Outgoing) , the target is 99.50% (www.mtn.co.ug. 20th February, 2010).

2.8.1 Summary of the Literature Review

In conclusion, this chapter has presented the scholarly opinions from different scholars on the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry. Customer service refers to the processes and actions that make it easier for customers to do business with a company. Definitions of service quality revolve around the idea that it is the result of the comparison that the customer makes between their expectations about a service and their perception of the service is performed. In the study it was seen that excellent customer service is achieved by a three dimensional process that includes a well conceived service strategy, customer driven systems, and customer friendly frontline people. The quality of a service is a perception created as the customer keeps on interacting with the service provider (Zeithaml 2005). From the literature it is discovered that service industries experience a difficulty in translating customers' expectations into service quality specifications. The chapter further revealed that if a company scored high on its customer service rating, then it would be said to be performing well on all aspects of business. An organization must determine what customers want and use this information to create satisfying products and services. In order to maintain its market leadership position. The quality of a service is a perception created as the customer keeps on interacting with the service provider. Therefore customer service contributes significantly to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda. In conclusion this chapter presented the scholarly opinion from the different scholars on the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry with a case study of MTN of Uganda.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology that was used in examining the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. This chapter further presents the research design, the study population, the sample size, the data collection methods and their corresponding data collection instruments, measures of reliability and validity, data management and analysis procedures, as well as steps that were taken to ensure validity and reliability during the study.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design relates to the strategy or schedule used to collect evidence, to analyze the findings and from which to draw conclusions. A cross- sectional descriptive case study design was used in accordance with Amin (2005), which he regards as the most appropriate and commonly used in social sciences and aims at selecting representative elements of the cross section of the population in the communities at a particular time (Amin, 2005). The study design was proposed because it investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, as cited by Amin, 2005). It was conducted across the selected sample over a short period of time. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were applied in the process of data gathering, data analysis and in the presentation of the findings in order to achieve a higher degree of validity and reliability. According to Brewerton (2001), the notion of combining qualitative techniques in a case study research offers the promise of getting closer the "whole" of the case in a way that a

single method could not achieve. This idea is based on the triangulation technique which collects and analyses data from both qualitative and quantitative methods with a view of obtaining convergence on the issue. Quantitative data measures actions, tendencies and levels of knowledge while qualitative data provides information about attitudes, perceptions and motivations.

3.3   POPULATION OF STUDY

Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics; in other words it is the aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The study population consisted of MTN customers (from Kampala central in Kampala district), MTN staff, dealers and sub dealers of MTN Uganda. Kampala central has the largest number of subscribers (as per report from MTN Uganda).Thus the research had a study population of about 5,010,812 people as shown in table 1 below

Table 1: Sampling Frame of MTN key stakeholders

Sample frame(category)	Total population
Employees	800
Customers	5 ,000,000
Dealers	12
Sub dealers	10,000
Total Population	5,010,812

Source: *(MTN Uganda Distribution department report & Researcher 15/12/09).*

3.4   SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION

A sample size is a subset of the population (Sekaran, 2003). A sample is a smaller group obtained from the accessible population; each member in the sample is referred to as a subject (Mugenda& Mugenda, 1999)

From the total population, a sample was selected for the study. Selecting an appropriate sample size is critical aspect in research and in this study; the appropriate sample size was selected using the formula by fisher et al (Mugenda& Mugenda, 1999) to determine the sample size of a large population >50

$$n= \frac{Z^2pq}{d^2}$$

Where   n = the desired sample size (if the target population is greater than 10,000)

z = the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level.

p = the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being   measured.

q = 1-p

d = the level of statistical significance set.

Mugenda& Mugenda (1999) further says that if there is no estimate available for the target population assumed to have the characteristics of interest, 50% should be used as recommended by Fisher *et al*.

$$n= \frac{Z^2pq}{d^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2(.50)(.50)}{(.05)^2}$$

$$n = 384$$

The sample size in the study had a total population of 384 and was determined by the above formula. This was rounded off to 400 sample subjects spread across the various stakeholder categories and selected using different sample strategies as described.

The key informants comprised of managers, supervisors and some few staff who where purposively selected. A total of 7 people were interviewed.

Table 2: Key Informants

No	Informant	Number of Informants	Basis for selection
1.	Distribution Manager	1	Heads of distribution department , develops the distribution strategy
2	Service centre manager	2	Actively interacts with customers
3	Call centre manager	1	Manages the call centre
4	Call centre supervisors	3	Interacts with both external and internal customers
	Total	7	

Source: Researcher 15/12/09

3.4.1 Sampling technique and procedure

Using probability and non probability sampling technique, respondents in each category were selected. A simple random sample is a sample obtained from the population in such a way that samples of the same size have equal chances of being selected (Amin, 2005). The advantage of this technique is that the researcher picks his desired sample.

Non probability sampling methods like purposive were used for selecting managers. The reason being that the researcher used his own judgment or common sense regarding the participants from whom information will be collected (Amin, 2005).

Table 3: Sampling techniques and sample population

Sample frame (category)	Total population	Sample population	Sample %	Sample technique
Employees	800	60	7.5	Simple random technique & purposive
Customers	5,000,000	300	0.01	Simple random technique
Dealers	12	3	25	Simple random
Sub dealers	10,000	37	0.37	Simple random
Total Population	**5,010,812**	**400**	**32.8**	

Source: *(MTN Uganda & Researcher).*

From table 3 above, the total number of employees was 800 and sample of 60 was selected, MTN Customers were5, 000,000 and a sample of 300 was chosen, MTN dealers were 12 and a sample of 3 was chosen and Sub dealers were 10000 and 37 were chosen. The researcher used both purposive and simple random sampling techniques.

PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Purposive sampling technique was used   to select the sample of key informants from the target population. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique where the researchers purposively choose subjects who are in his / her opinion are thought to be relevant to the research topic (Sarantos, 1998:152). The technique was deemed appropriate because not all respondents of the study could be interviewed and the desired information could be obtained from the key informants.

SIMPLE RANDOM SAMPLING

Simple random sampling technique allows a reasonable number of subjects have an equal chance of being selected and thus representing the target population. Therefore that was the

reasons why the researcher used simple random technique (Amin, 2005). Being a case study research, a sample size of 32.8% of the population was accessible. And this is acceptable in descriptive research, Ary &Jacobs (1996).

3.5   SOURCES OF DATA

The sources of data were primary and secondary data.

Primary data is the data that is collected for the first time and nobody has ever used it and secondary data involved reviewing of already existing literature from journals and MTN records.

3.6   DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Primary data and secondary data was collected using questionnaires, observation method, interviews and documentary review.

3.6.1 Administration Of Questionnaires

Sekaran (2000) defines a questionnaire as a pre-formulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives. The advantage is that questionnaires are an efficient data collection mechanism when the researcher knows what is exactly required. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaires. The close ended questionnaires were pre-tested and standardized. The researcher then administered questionnaires to the respondents. These had questions that focused on issues of the dependent and independent variables, which were measured using a five- likert scale of coding.

3.6.2 Interviewing

An interview is an oral administration of a questionnaire. Interviews are face to face encounters. To obtain accurate information through interviews, a researcher needs to obtain

the maximum co-operation from respondents. The researcher must therefore establish a friendly relationship with the respondents prior to conducting the interview. Interviews are advantageous in that they provide in depth data which is not possible to get using a questionnaire (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2000). Qualitative data was collected using an interview guide which consisted of structured interview questions. An open ended interview guide was used for key informants. The interviews consisted of structured interview questions framed around the independent and dependent variables (customer service and service quality)

3.6.3 Documentary review

In addition to information obtained from questionnaires and interviews, supplementary information was used to generate opinions of what other researcher have talked about the study variables. Information was obtained from articles, reports and journals. The documentary analysis was used to generate both qualitative and quantitative information. According to Denscombe (2000) document analysis provides the foundation and better analysis of the subject because a social researcher can undertake empirical research based on documents which incorporate as wide and as inclusive data. The researcher used the above method to generate more information and conclude the study.

3.6.4 Observation method

Structured observation checklist was used, which employed a formal and strictly organized procedure, with a strictly well-defined observation categories and this enabled the researcher get first- hand information from respondents. The observation method was used in Kampala central and with likert rating scale of **YES** or **NO** responses (In Appendix IV). The observation method was used to record data and information that was not captured in the questionnaires and interview guide.

3.7   Data collection instrument

Research instruments are used to collect necessary information. In social science research, the mostly commonly used instruments were: questionnaires, interview schedules (Mugenda& Mugenda, 1999).

3.7.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were formulated, structured and closed ended were used. These consisted of a structured likert scale with a standardized rating scale of 1-5(5- strongly agree, 4- agree, 3- Note sure, 2 – disagree and 1- strongly disagree.). Structured questionnaires were more convenient because they elicit specific responses, and they are economical in terms of time (Amin, 2005). The researcher had two types of questionnaires, employees, dealers and sub dealers had one (refer to appendix iii) and customers had another (refer to appendix ii).

3.7.2 Interview Guide

According to Sekaran (2003), one method of collecting data is to interview respondents to obtain information on issues of interest. Interviews can be unstructured or structured and conducted either by face to face or by telephone.

Interviews were conducted with selected   members of staff from customer service and channels and distribution departments of MTN Uganda. An interview guide was developed and   was used to obtain information from the stake holders. Interview guide (Appendix 1) was used to obtain information from the different stakeholders. The researcher wanted to obtain more information from the above, they are more knowledgeable.

Purposive sampling was used to select the interviewees so as to obtain information from them.

3.7.3 Documentary Review Check list

In addition to information obtained from questionnaires and interviews, supplementary information was obtained through analysis of written documents, reports. The documentary analysis generated both qualitative and quantitative information. That helped in the analysis of the problem.

3.7.4 Observation Guide.

Structured observation checklist was used which employed a formal and strictly organized procedure , with a set of well defined observation categories and this enabled the researcher to get first hand information from the respondents(Amin,2005).

3.8 Procedures for data collection

3.8.1 Introductory letter

Upon approval of the proposal by UMI, the researcher was given an introductory letter (refer **to appendix VI**) to MTN. He presented the letter to the concerned departmental manager at MTN Uganda who in turn introduce him to the various section heads i.e. call centre manager, service centre managers, channels and distribution manager.

Reason being that the introductory helped researcher get all the information he required for the study.

. ii) Pre – test of the questionnaire

The two questionnaires were separately pre tested and were administered to forty (40) respondents. The reason for pre testing was to determine the validity and reliability of the data that was obtained through the pre tested questionnaire and also ensure that the questionnaire was understood. A pre test is required because it measures the dependability, consistency, trustworthiness and reliability of the content.

iii) Appointment of research assistants

The researcher appointed research assistants. Due to the costs involved only two research assistants (salim and bob) were appointed. These research assistants were deemed necessary in the distribution of questionnaires.

The research assistants were met and trained by the researcher. He briefed them about the importance of the study, objectives, time frame and expected respondents.

iv) Distribution of the questionnaire

The distribution of the questionnaire to respondents was done by the researcher and the research assistants. The research assistant distributed the questionnaires for the customers, dealers. While the researcher sent questionnaires to staff by mail and they returned them by mail and some respondents returned printed questionnaires.

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.9.1 Reliability

 A pilot study which is the preliminary trial of the research measures and techniques was carried out during the pretest of the instruments .The questionnaires were administered were administered to a group of 60 respondents, outside the final sample and 40 the respondents returned the questionnaires. This provided ideas, approaches and clues not foreseen prior to the pilot study and reduced errors in the instruments (Amin, 2005). It had a reliability cofficiency 0.783 from the questionnaires that were pretested.

3.9.2 Validity

Validity refers to the evidence that the instrument, technique or process used to measure a concept does indeed measure the intended concept (Sekaran, 2009). To determine the content validity of the instrument, a list of objectives and research questions that guided the

construction of items in the questionnaire and interview schedule and items constructed were used. In this study, content validity was determined and the following questions were addressed in measuring validity.

a) Is the instrument valid

b) Is the questionnaire detailed enough to collect all the information that was required for addressing the purpose.

c) Is the instrument appropriate for the sample.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT

Data was analyzed in order to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda.

The purpose of editing that data was for accuracy, consistency and completeness. Similarly the purpose of coding the data was that all answers obtained from the different respondents were classified into different categories for the next step of data analysis.

Data was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods by the application of SPSS computer programme

i) Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative raw data was collected, coded, edited and entered into the SPSS data editor. Data was represented in either tables or diagrams to describe the characteristics of the data collected. The data was given numerical codes and analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics such as the measure of central tendency were used to describe and summarize the data. They included the mean and frequency. These enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe a distribution of the scores using the available statistics. Correlation analysis was used to measure the relationship between customer service and service quality. The coefficients for each of the variables indicates the amount of change one would expect in examining the contribution of customer service to service quality, given that all other variables are constant. The t- statistics help one determine the relative importance of each

variable in the model. Useful predictor involves values of t well below -2 or above +2. Coefficients having a p- value of 0.05 or less would be statistically significant. A result is called significant if it's unlikely to have occurred by chance.

ii) Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data was analyzed by grouping it into patterns, themes and categories using the thematic approach. The researcher then evaluated and analyzed the data to determine the adequacy of the information and credibility, usefulness, consistency and validation or non validation of the hypotheses. This was done in answering of the research question

(Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).   Qualitative data was obtained from the interviews and documents and was analyzed for content or for the language used (discontent analysis). Data gathered from the interviews was used to draw conclusions and come up with possible recommendations of the study. Opinions and perceptions and suggestions from customers, dealers, staff and sub dealers were used to draw conclusions and recommendations of the study.

3.11 Summary

In summary this chapter discusses   the introduction, research design, the study area, population, sample size and selection procedure, data collection methods and procedure, data collection instruments , validity and reliability of research instruments , data management and analysis that was important for the researcher to come up with valid and reliable results concerning the variable of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH
FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study under taken to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. The general objective was to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. The study was designed to:

- To examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda.

- To find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda.

- To examine the extent to which products and services offered contribute to service quality at Uganda.

  The chapter presents the response rate and the demographic findings from the key stakeholders of MTN who participated in the study i.e. gender distribution, age of respondents, marital status, level of education, category of respondents and number of years in employment. Information was gathered from questionnaires, interviews and document analysis. It also critically discusses and analyses the results for the different variables as represented in the descriptive statistics, whereas correlation studies were key in the interpretation of the findings and testing hypotheses. The data in the study was quantified and frequencies were used. The analysis of this study used both descriptive statistics and SPSS (statistical package for social sciences) to cross tabulate the independent variables with the dependent variables.

4.2   RESPONSE RATE

From the total population of 5,010,812, a sample of 400 was selected using the scientific procedures and a total of 282 respondents returned the survey instruments representing a response rate of 70.5% which according to Bailey (1999) is acceptable in social research. The response rate for the categories of respondents in the study is as shown in the table below;-

Figure 3 : Response Rate of Respondents
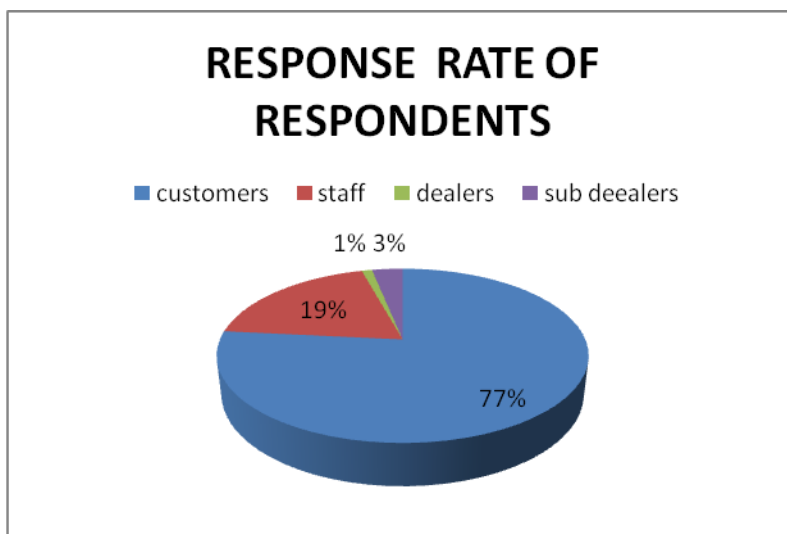
Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher as of 15/12/09*

Results from figure 3 indicated that, MTN customers had the highest response rate at 77% (216) followed by MTN staff at 19 %(54), sub dealers of MTN 1 %(3) and 3 %(9) dealers of MTN. This result compares well with the existing facts regarding the total population of the MTN stake holders that MTN has many customers compared to the dealers who provide service to the customers. This is an indication that majority of the MTN Customers willingly participated in answering questionnaires and it further showed that the customers willingly participated   in answering the questionnaires   and it further showed that the customers were concerned with the service MTN provides. According to Bernard (2000), a low response rate could be attributed to the length of the questionnaire administered which

the researcher discovered that the dealers and sub dealers were non committal in responding to the questionnaires.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

The researcher wished to establish the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The characteristics of the respondents included sex, age, marital status, religious affiliations, and number of years in employment and category of employment. This was very important in establishing the categories of people who participated in the research.

The demographic characteristics were captured through two sets of questionnaires administered to customers (Appendix 11) and staff, dealers and sub dealers (Appendix111).

 Qualitative data was also captured from interviews conducted for staff and dealers. The demographic characteristics are presented below.

Table 4: Sex of the respondents: Staff ,Customers, Dealers and Sub dealers.

	Frequency	**Percentage**
1. Male	171	61
2.Female	111	39
Total	**282**	**100**

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher as of 15/12/09*

From the findings in table 4 above, of the 282 respondents, 111 (39%) of the respondents were female and 171(61%) were male. Implying that more male respondents participated in the study than the female respondents. This means that MTN has more male customers than female ones. Clearly this indicates that more male can afford to have phones than female. Related to the existing facts that more males are employed compared to the females in Uganda. Thus   the reason for having more males.

Table 5: Age of respondents for customers, staff ,dealers and sub dealers

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage
below 25 years	74	26
25-34 years	145	51
35-44 years	41	15
Above 45 years	22	8
Total	**282**	**100**

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher as of 15/12/09*

From table 5 above , of the 282 respondents 74(26%) were below 25 years of age, 145 (51%) were between 25 and 34 years of age, 41 (15%) were between 35 and 44 years of age and 22(8%) of the respondents were above 45 years of age. Implying that majority of the respondents were young people who have just left school. This means that majority of the MTN customers are young people aged between 25 – 34 years**.** This clearly showed that MTN is a company which has young as its customers

Table 6: Marital status of staff , customers and dealers

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	101	40.9
Single	172	59.1
Divorced	7	2.5
Widowed	2	0.7
Total	**282**	**100**

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

The findings from table 6 above indicated that of the 282 respondents, 101(40.1%) of the respondents were married, 172 (59.1%) were single, 7(2.5%) were divorced and 2(0.7%)

were widowed. Implying that majority of the respondents were single.   Implying that majority of the MTN customers are young people and single.   This was in conformity with the findings in table 5

Table 7:   Level of education

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	90	32
Diploma	55	19
Degree	120	43
Masters	10	4
Other qualifications	7	2
Total	**282**	**100**

Source: *Primary Data by to the Researcher 15/12/09*

From table 7 above, of the 282 respondents, 32% (90) of the respondents were certificate holders, 19% (55) were diploma holders, 43% (120) of the respondents were degree holders, 4% (10) of the respondents were masters' degree holders' and2% (7) of the respondents had other qualifications. Implying that majority of the respondent were degree holders. This also meant that all categories were represented (from certificate holders to other qualifications). This meant that most of the MTN customers are educated and are aware of the service needs.

The respondents were asked how long they had been using the MTN network.

The results of the study were illustrated on the pie chart below.

Figure 4: How long have you been using the MTN network?
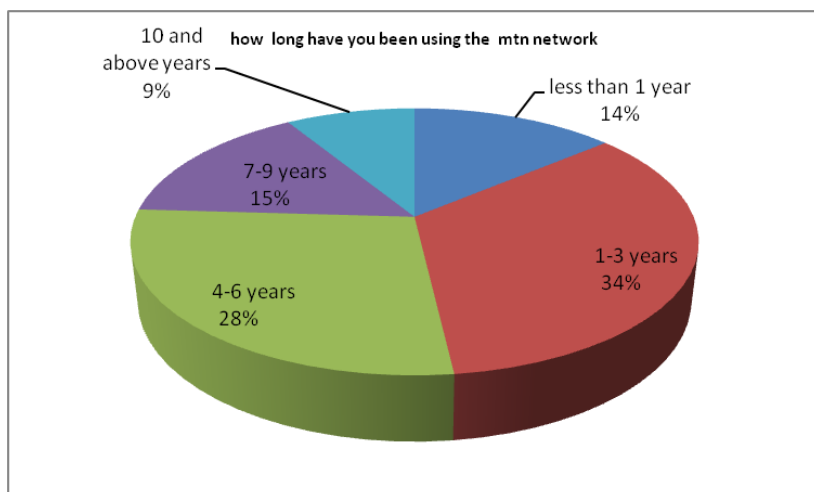
Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

From the figure 4 above , 34% of the respondents had been using the MTN network for the past one to three years(1-3 years), 28% of the respondents 4- 6 years, 15% of the respondents 7-9 years, 14% of the respondents less than 1year and 9 % of the respondent had been using the MTN network for more than10 years. Implying that majority of the respondents had just started using the service.

Have you contacted MTN Customer Service?

It was important to establish whether the respondents had ever contacted MTN customer service. This was to ascertain whether the information given was right. And the study revealed results are tabulated in table below.

Table 8: Have you contacted MTN customer service?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1. Yes	278	98.6
2. No	4	1.4
Total	**282**	**100**

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

The findings in table 8 above showed that of the 282 respondents, 98.6 % (278) of the respondents said **YES,** they had ever contacted customer service and1.4% (4) of the respondents said NO, they had never contacted customer service.

Implying that majority of the respondents had ever contacted customer service and they were MTN customers.

Table 9: Number of times you tried calling before you successfully got   connected to the call centre(staff, dealers, customers and sub dealers

Number of attempts you tried calling before you got connected.	Frequency	Percentage
One attempt	10	3.5
Two attempts	26	9.2
Three attempts	45	16
Four attempts	39	13
Five or more attempts	135	47.9
Failed to go through	27	9.6
Total	**282**	**100**

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

From the findings in table 9 above, out of the 282 respondents , 3.5%(10) of the respondents had accessed the call centre on one attempt, 9.2% (26) of the respondents had accessed the call centre on two attempts, 16% (45)of the respondents had accessed the call centre on three attempts, 13% (39) of the respondent had accessed the call centre on four attempts, 47.9% (135) of the respondent had accessed the call centre on five or more attempts and 9.6% (27) of the respondents had failed to go through. Implying that majority of the respondents had accessed the call centre after trying for five or more times. This means that MTN customers find it hard to access the call centre as per the findings above.

4.4   RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.4.1   The contribution of accessibility to service quality at Uganda

This objective aimed at examining the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda. Data was collected using questionnaires administered to customers, staff, dealers and sub dealers. Data was collected through interviews, observations and documentary reviews.   Two sets of questionnaires were used to collect data. MTN customers had a questionnaire (refer to appendix ii) and employees, dealers and sub dealers also had another (refer to appendix iii).   Accessibility had the following parameters, the call centre and the distribution network.   The table below shows the descriptive results from the customer's questionnaire (refer to appendix ii)

Table 10:   Accessibility of customer service by the customers

	Agree %	Not sure %	Disagree %
ACCESSIBILITY OF THE CALL CENTRE			
Whenever I try calling the call centre the phone is engaged.	81		19
Whenever I try calling the call centre the phone is not answered immediately	79		21
I always have to redial many times before I get through the call centre.	85		15
DISTRIBUTION NETWORK			
Channels of distribution are accessible when and where I need them.	100		
Operating hours are convenient to the customers	77		23
The enviroment at the outlets is pleasant.	100		
There is safety at the MTN outlets.	100		

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

Accessibility of the call centre.

The results from table 10 revealed that 81%(175) of the respondents agreed that whenever they tried calling the call centre the phone was engaged and 19% of the respondents disagreed. Implying that majority of the respondents agreed that whenever they tried calling the call centre the phone was engaged.

During the interview with one of the respondents , he noted that' *he had given up on calling the helpline*, *because the phone was always engaged*"

The findings also indicated that 79%(224) of the respondents agreed that whenever they called the call centre the phone was not answered immediately and 21%(45) of the respondents disagreed. Implying that majority of the respondents agreed that whenever they

call the centre the phone was not answered immediately. 85% of the respondents agreed that you had to redial many times before you got through the call centre. and 15% of the responded disagreed. The findings are in agreement with the number of subcriber growth of MTN, in that they cant all access the call centre at ago. In conclusion therefore the call centre is inaccessible. According to Alison(2002) a call centre is a dedicated operation with employees focused on customer service functions. A call centre is operated by a company to administer imcoming product support or information inquiries from consumers. Outgoing calls for telemarketing , clientele, product service and debt collection are also made. According to UCC(2002) customers tend to view quality of service depending on the users perception or what customers believe what they have experianced from a partcular service provider. If the user is satisfied with a service, then the level of quality is acceptable. The level of quality may be driven by the demands of a customer. For example , a customer using data applications requires high speeds which requirements a service provider needs to be mindful of if they are to meet the customers level of quality of service requirements. According to Bart,Roland & Paul(1998), the reasons for dissatisfaction are usually the same for large and small customers alike. Working on structurally improving the service process and offering will usually benefit all customers. However , since the large customers are limited in number , analysing only the (hopefully limited number of) dissastified accounts may not provide a root cause of customer dissastifaction. From the findings above accessing the call centre was one of the root cause of dissatisfaction. Therefore causing a negative perception about service quality.

Distribution network

In regards to the distribution network, all the respondents (customers) agreed that the channels of distribution were accessible when and where they need them, 77%(218) of the respondents agreed that the operating hours were convenient to the customers and 23%(64) of the respondents disagreed. All the respondents agreed that the enviroment at the outlets

was pleasant and that there was safety at the outlets. The findings were in conformity with the results obtained from the interviews which indicated that 'they are 12 dealers in Kampala Central, 3 connect store, 5 service centres,400 footsoldiers, 1000 Direct sales team,300 direct sales delivery and over 45, 000 outlets in Kampala Central'. Thus confirming that the distribution network is accessible.

Chopra(2005) argues that every manufacturer needs the right channel to deliver goods and service at the right time and right cost. The economic responsibility of an organisation , then , is to be profitable for principals by deliverying a good quality product at a fair price is due to customers(Korchi& Rombaut, 2006).

Table 11: Correlations results : accessibility

	accessibility	Service quality
Accessibility **Pearson Correlation** **Sig.(2tailed)** **N**	**1.000** 216	**431**** **.000** 216
Service quality **Pearson Correlation** **Sig.(2tailed)** **N**	**.431**** .000 216	**1.000** 216

Correlation is significant at the 0.01(2- tailed)

The correlation results above indicated that accessibility had a positive impact on service quality($r=0.431; p<0.01$). Correlation analysis was done between customer service and service quality. According to Fink (1995), correlation coefficients are not easy to interpret based on the values of +1, 0 and -1 so he recommended another statistic: the coefficient of determination or r^2 which tells the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable associated with the variations or changes in the independent variable. Therefore for a

correlation co-efficient of 0.431** (sig.0.01) as presented in the correlation matrix from the findings of customer service &service quality presented in table 14 below, the coefficient of determination would be 0.431

Correlations was done between accessibility and service quality at MTN and the following results were obtained and are shown in the table below.

There was a positive correlation between accessibility and service quality at MTN.

Table 12: Results from staff, dealers and sub dealers about accessibility (questionnaire 2)

	Agree%	Not sure %	Disagree %
ACCESSIBILITY OF THE CALL CENTRE			
Whenever MTN customers try calling the call centre the phone is engaged.	**83**		**17**
Whenever customer try calling the centre the phone is not answered immediately	**79**		**21**
MTN customers have to redial many times before they access the call centre	**76**		**24**
DISTRIBUTION NETWORK			
Channels of distribution are accessible where and when customers need them.	**100**		
Operating hours are convenient to the MTN customer	**100**		
The enviroment at the outlets is pleasant.	**100**		
There is safety at the MTN outlets	**100**		

Source: *Researcher 15/12/09*

Accessibility of the call centre

According to the findings presented in table12 above ,out of the 66 respondents 83% (55) agreed that whenever MTN customers tried calling the call centre the phone was engaged and 17% disagreed. Implying that majority of the respondents agreed that whenever MTN customers tried calling the call centre the phone was engaged .

79% of the respondents agreed that whenever customer tried calling the call centre the phone was not answered immediately and 21% of the respondents disagreed. Implying that majority of the respondents agreed that whenever customer tried calling the centre the phone was not answered immediately.

76% of the respondents agreed that MTN customers had to redial many times before they accesed the call centre and 24% of the respondents disagreed. Implying that majority of the respondents agreed that MTN customers have to redial many times before they accessed the call centre. This means the call centre is inaccessible.

 According to UCC(2002) customers tend to view quality of service depending on the users perception or what they have experienced from a particular service provider. If the user is satisfied with a servce, then the level of quality is accepable. The level of quality may be driven by the demands of a customer. For example, majority of the customers would love to access the call centre as soon as they dial there phone. When they fail to access the call centre then the service quality is not good.

Distribution network

All the respondents agreed that the channels of distribution are accessible where and when customers need them.   All the respondents (staff, dealers and sub dealers) agreed that the operating hours are convenient to the MTN customers, the enviroment at the outlets was pleasant , and there was   safety at the outlets. systems and tools for taking the product . A distribution consists of individuals ,systems   and tools responsible for taking the product

from the production stage to consumption. Use of distribution channel in the aforesaid processing increases the efficiency and ensures the product reaches the right customer in a cost effective manner. This was in line with the information obtained from MTN that they are 12 dealers in kampala central, 3 connect stores, 5 service centres, 400 foot soldiers , 1000 direct sales, 300 direct sales delivery and 45,000 outlets. Meaning channels of distribution are accessible.

Interview results for accessibility.

During the interview with staff in customer service it was noted that the call centre was accessible . However because of the numbers , customers think that the call centre is not accessible. However MTN was trying to improve that perception and Customer service has created different segements of the helpline through which one can access the call centre ie high end users have special lines, having MTN services on the simcards, calling the customers who failed to go through.

During the interview with one of the staff in channels he noted that " they are 12 dealers in Kampala Central, 3 connect store**,** 5 service centres,400 foot soldiers, 1000 Direct sales team,300 direct sales delivery and over 45, 000 outlets in Kampala Central". Implying that the products are well distributed . This proves what the distribution manager said that' MTN has the largest distribution network in Kampala".

Table 13: Correlation results for accessibility and Service Quality

	Accessibility	Service Quality
Accessibility Pearson Correlation	1.000	. 406**
Sig(2-tailed)	.	.001
N	66	66
Service Quality Pearson Correlation	.406**	1.00
Sig(2 – tailed)	.001	.
N	66	66

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

The correlation results from above show that there was a positive relationship between accessibility and service quality. Implying that accessibility had positive impact on service quality. This can be confirmed by the correlation results above.

The hypothesis that accessibility contributes greatly contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda is supported by the correlation results above. There was a positive correlation between accessibility and service quality   at MTN Uganda. The test using the Pearson Correlation returned a result of 0.406 confirming that the strength of the relationship is statistically significant at 0.01 level of significance.

4.4.2   The contribution of professionalism to service quality at MTN Uganda .

The second objective aimed at finding out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda. Professionalism had the following parameters that were used explore the variables; time (speed), skills of staff (competency & product knowledge) and attitude.

Data was obtained from the key stakeholders (i.e. customers, staff, dealers and sub dealers) of MTN Uganda through interviews and questionnaires, documentary reviews and observation.

During the interview with one of the supervisor of MTN customer service he had this to say that the workforce management "involves ensuring that the call centre has a right number of agents with the relevant skills to answer customer queries at all times."

Table 14: **A Summary of the findings from MTN customers about the contribution of professionalism to service quality at MTN Uganda.**

	Agree%	Not Sure%	Disagree%
TIME TAKEN TO BE SERVED			
Service delivery is fast within MTN Customers.	78		22
The systems are fast within MTN	69		31
The systems are reliable within MTN	66		34
My telephonic and emails problems are dealt with effectively.	100		
SKILLS OF STAFF			
MTN staff display the skill and knowledge required to perform their services effectively	100		
MTN staff have customer complaints resolved satisfactory	100		
Staff at MTN use expressions which are not too technical to understand.	100		
Employees within customer service are approachable and friendly.	100		
PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE OF STAFF			
MTN staff have a good understanding of the products they offer.	80		20
MTN staff refer you immediately to a person who knows.	100		
I rarely have problems with MTN staff when they are explaining the products.	89		11
ATTITUDE(EMPLOYEE/ CUSTOMER RELATIONS)			

MTN staff display a high degree of politeness	100		
MTN staff is competent and informed.	100		
MTN staff are approachable and friendly	100		
MTN staff is welcoming.	100		
MTN staff listen and provide feedback to customers.	100		

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

Time taken to be served

The findings in table 14 revealed that, 78% of the respondents agreed that service delivery was fast within MTN and 22% of the respondents disagreed. 69 % of the respondents agreed that systems are fast within MTN and 31% of the respondents disagreed, 66% of the respondents agreed that systems are reliable with in MTN and 34% of the respondents disagreed and all the respondents agreed that there telephonic and email problems are dealt with effectively. This is in line with the company strategy where by customers are supposed to be served within 24 hours and issues concerning data are worked on worked within 48 hours. According to Wirtz and Lovelock (2007) many services are delivered in real time while customers are physically present. Today's customers are the most sensitive in history and are in more of hurry and see wasted time as a cost to avoid. Another concern of customers is how much time elapses between making a request of service and receiving a finished output. Successful service markets understand customer time constraints and priorities and strive to minimize customers waiting times and they seek to make waiting less burdensome and according to the guidelines issued by UCC, customers tend to view the quality of service depending on the users ' perception or what the customers believe they have experienced from a particular service provider. If a user is satisfied with a service, then the level of quality is acceptable. The level of quality offered by the service providers may be driven by the demands of a customer. For example, a customer using data applications

requires high speed which requirements a service provider needs to be mindful if they are to meet customer's level of quality of service.

Skills of Staff

All the respondents agreed that MTN staff have the required skills and knowledge to perform their duties, MTN Staff have customer complaints resolved satisfactory and staffs in MTN are approachable and friendly. Wirtz and Lovelock (2007) argue that despite technology advances, many services will require direct interaction between customers and contact personnel. The natures of these interactions strongly influence how customers perceive service quality. Knowing that (dis) satisfaction with service quality often reflect customers' assessment of frontline staff, successful service firms devote significant effort to recruiting, training and motivating employees.

According to Jain& Saakshi (2009) the customers' impression of an organization comes in contact with the frontline people. The best frontline employees are both competent. They have a certain level of maturity and posses the social skills to build customer loyalty. Omagor (1984) argues that what is memorable to customers in terms of service experience is the personal touch rather than the material aspect of the service. Customers more often those not use the employees as surrogates of judging the quality of services to be delivered.

Zeithaml, Bitner and Gremier (2006) argue that to provide quality service, employees need ongoing training in the necessary technical skills and knowledge and interactive skills. Service employees also need training in interactive skills that allow them to provide courteous, caring, responsive and empathetic services. They argue that empowerment means giving employees the desire, skills, tools and authority to serve customers. This can be proved by the above findings.

Product Knowledge.

80% of the respondents agreed that staff at MTN have good understanding of products and service offered, 20% of the respondents disagreed. All the respondents agreed that staff do not refer you to a person who knows. 89% of the respondents agreed that they rarely have problems with staff when explaining the products and services offered and 11% of the respondents disagreed. This was in confirmation with the information obtained from MTN that all staff are trained on the different products and service offered by the company every year. Staffs within customer service operation are given monthly test with a pass mark of 95%. This enables staff have the required product and service knowledge. This has greatly contributed to staffs product and service knowledge. A customer has to have faith in the competence of the organization and its employees. Cartwright (2000) has pointed out the dangers of lack of product knowledge. Customers like to feel that they are in a safe pair of hands and any suspicion that those they are dealing with lack the competence is a fast way of losing customers. Everybody working for an organization needs a minimum level of product knowledge. That s why MTN has a Product and Service handbook for staff. Kotler (1984) a renowned writer, presents the marketing concept that emphasizes centrality of the customer as follows. The marketing concepts hold the key to achieving organizational goals consists of determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than competitors. One can therefore read into the above definition that the concept that customer service fine tunes the marketing concept in focusing on customer needs and wants. That's why MTN has been able to develop different products for its customers. Plus developing a product and service hand book for its staff.

Altitude (Employee/ Customer Relations)

From the findings in table 14, all the respondents agreed that MTN staff display high degree of politiness, MTN staff are competent and informed , MTN staff are approachable and friendly, MTN staff are welcoming and Staff in customer service listen and provide feedback

to customers. Customer relations policies can only be effective if the staff in an organisation have the right attitude towards the customer. The right attitude is one that recognises the importance of the customer to the well being of every body in the value chain. Kitching (1999) says that when reporting dissastifaction with the quality of service they receive, customers frequently observe that the problem comes down to staff atitude. Attitudes shape behaviors and responses. Awareness of our basic attitudes help greatly in service situations. When dealing with the customer , you need to consider the value of the entire relationship(with the person or campany) , and not the value of an individual (Jain and Saakshi, 2009) . This can be prooved by the subscriber growth and the increasing numbers(growing) of customers at the different service centres in kampala.

Correlations were done between professionalism and service quality and the results are presented in the Table 15

Table 15:The correlation matrix results: Proffessionalism & Service Quality at MTN

Variables	Proffessionalism	Service quality
Professionalism Pearson Correlation	1.000	.458**
	.	000
Sig(2 –tailed)	216	216
N		
Service quality Pearson Correlation	. 458**	1.000
	.000	
Sig (2- tailed)	216	216
N		

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

The correlation results(r=0.458;p<0.01) showed that there was a positive relationship between proffessionalism and service quality. Implying that professionalism contributes positively to service quality. The hypothesis proved that Professionalism significantly contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda. This was supported by the evidence from the findings. There was a positive correlation between professionalism and service quality at

MTN Uganda. The Pearson correlation test returned a result of 0.458 verifying that the strength of the relationship is statistically significant at 0.01 level significance.

Table 16: **A Summary of the findings from staff, sub dealers and Dealers about the contribution of professionalism to service quality at MTN Uganda.**

	Agree %	Not Sure %	Disagree %
TIME TAKEN TO BE SERVED			
Service delivery is fast within MTN.	100		
The systems are fast within MTN	100		
The systems are reliable within MTN	100		
Customer telephonic and emails problems are dealt with effectively.	100		
SKILLS OF STAFF			
MTN staff have the required skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively.	100		
MTN staff have customer complaints resolved satisfactory	100		
Employees within MTN are approachable and friendly.	100		
PRODUCT KNOWDLGE OF STAFF			
Staff have a good understanding of the products offered by MTN	100		
Staff in customer service refer you immediately to a person who knows.	100		
I rarely have problems with staff when they are explaining the products.	100		
ATTITUDE(EMPLOYEE/ CUSTOMER RELATIONS)			
MTN staff display a high degree of politeness	100		
MTN staff are competent and informed.	100		
MTN staff are approachable and friendly	100		
MTN staff are welcoming.	100		
MTN staff in customer service listen and provide feedback to customers.	100		

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

Time taken to be served.

Staff, dealers and sub dealer agreed that Service delivery was fast within MTN. Information obtained from MTN shows that customers must be served within 24 hours and those handling data the issue must be handled within 48 hours.   While all the respondents agreed that the systems are fast within MTN, systems are reliable within MTN and customer telephonic and email problems are dealt with. According to the guidelines issued by UCC, customers tend to view the quality of service depending on the user perception or what the customer believes they have experienced from a particular service provider. If a user is satisfied with a service, then the level of quality is acceptable. The level of quality offered by the service provider may be driven by the demands of a customer. For example, a customer using data applications requires high speeds which requirements a service provider needs to be mindful if they are to meet the customer's level of quality of service requirements.

Skills of Staff

The results from table 16, showed (customers) that, all the respondents agreed that MTN staff had the required skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively,   all respondents agreed that MTN staff have customer complaints resolved satisfactory , staff within MTN are approachable and friendly. Lovelock& Wirtz (2009) argue that almost everybody can recount some horror story of a dreadful experience with a service business. If pressed, many of these people can also recount a really good service experience. Service personnel usually feature prominently in such dramas. They are either in roles as uncaring, incompetent, mean-spirited villains, or in roles as heroes who went out of their way to help customers by anticipating their needs and resolving problems in a helpful and empathetic manner. Often, service employees are the most visible element of the service, deliver the service, and significantly determine service quality. They further argue that interpersonal skills tend to be generic across service jobs, and include visual communication skills such as making eye contact, attentive listening, body language and even facial expressions.

Technical skills encompass all the required knowledge related to process, machines, rules and regulations related to customer service processes. That's why staffs at MTN are trained regularly and have a training department. This has enabled the staff to have the necessary skills to enable them perform their duties. This can be proved from the findings above that staff has the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively.

Product knowledge of staff.

In regards to product knowledge all the respondents agreed the following that, Staff had a good understanding of the products offered by MTN, Staff in customer service refer you immediately to a person who knows and I rarely have problems with staff when they are explaining the products. This confirms with the information obtained from customer service that all staff are trained on the different products and services offered by the company every year. Staff within customers is given every month and 95% is the pass mark. Therefore this confirms that staff had the required skills to perform their duties. Lovelock & Wirtz (2009) argue that knowledgeable staff are a key aspect of service quality. They must be able to explain product features effectively and also position the product correctly. Of course, training has to result in tangible changes in behavior. If staffs do not apply what they have learned, the investment is wasted. Learning is not only about becoming smarter, it is also changing behavior and improving decision making. To achieve this, practice and reinforcement are needed. Supervisors can play a crucial role by following up regularly. That's why staff in customer service do monthly test as a follow up on product knowledge and other staff have been given a Product and Service handbook to ensure that staff are knowledgeable.

Attitude (employee / customer relationship)

All the respondents agreed that MTN staff display high degree of politeness, staff are competent and informed, MTN staff are approachable and friendly, staff are welcoming and staff in customer service listen and provide feedback to customers.

Table 17 :The correlation matrix results: Proffessionalism & Service Quality

Variables		Proffessionalism	Service quality
Professionalism	Pearson Correlation	1.000 .	.536**
	Sig(2 –tailed)		.000
	N	66	66
Service quality	Pearson Correlation	. 458**	1.000
	Sig (2- tailed)	.000	
	N	66	66

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

The correlation results(r=0536;p<0.01)   showed that there was a positive relationship between proffessionalism and service quality. Implying that professionalism contributes positively to service quality at MTN Uganda

The second hypothesis proved that Professionalism significantly contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda. This is supported by the evidence from the findings. There is a positive correlation between professionalism and service quality at MTN Uganda. The test using the Pearson correlation returned a result.

4.4.3 The contribution of products and services offered to service quality at MTN Uganda.

The third objective of the study was to examine the extent to which products and services offered contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda.

Product and services offered were conceptualized as product and service innovation. Data was obtained from the key stakeholders (i.e. customers, staff, dealers and sub dealers) of MTN Uganda through interviews and questionnaires, documentary reviews and observation. From the interviews, majority of the employees interviewed indicated that MTN has got a

wide of products offered onto the markets. However they noted that some of the products are not well marketed or developed.

Table 18:   Descriptive results of customers for   the contribution of product and services offered at MTN Uganda

PRODUCTS & SERVICE OFFERED	Agreed	Not Sure%	Disagreed%
MTN offers a variety of products to its customers	100		
MTN understands my product needs.	80		20
MTN makes an effort to identify other product requirements.	100		
MTN products are well developed.	72		28

 Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher 15/12/09*

 Products and Services offered.

The results from table 18 above showed that, all the respondents agreed that MTN offers a variety of products, 80% of the respondents agreed that MTN understands customer product needs and 20% of the respondents disagreed, all the respondents agreed that MTN makes an effort to identify other products needs. 72 % of the respondents agreed that MTN products are well developed and 18 % of the respondents disagreed. The following are some of the products and services offered by MTN : MTN pay as you go (flat),MTN pay as you go plus yello go, MTN cash back, MTN talk time , MTN friends and family , MTN home and away, MTN zone ,MTN broad band, MTN mobile money , MTN mobile internet, Black berry from MTN, MTN broad band and MTN offers value added services like SMS, who called (notify me) ,MTN cash back, MTN help lines, and MTN mobile teleconferencing.

 According to Jain & Saakshi (2009) customers are surveyed to determine the level of satisfaction with the existing service. Information obtained from MTN shows that the company normally carries out research using Research International to ascertain the level of satisfaction of customers with the products and services offered. The company also carries

out research internally for its internal customers. Reason being that MTN wants to find out if they are providing and meeting the needs of the customers.

Table 19: Correlation matrix Results: Products & services offered

		products and service	service quality
products offered	Pearson Correlation	1	0.445
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0
	N	216	216
service quality	Pearson Correlation	0.445	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	.
	N	216	216

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

The correlation results (r=0.445; p<0.05 showed that there was a positive relationship between product and services offered and service quality. Implying that the products and services offered have a positive impact on service quality at MTN Uganda

The hypothesis proved that Products and service offered significantly contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda. This is supported by the evidence from the findings. There was a positive relationship between products and services offered at MTN Uganda.

Table 20: The findings from staff , dealers and sub dealers about the contribution of products offered to service quality at MTN Uganda.

	Agree%	Not Sure%	Disagree%
MTN offers a variety to its customers	100		
MTN understands the product needs of its customers	100		
MTN makes an effort to identify other product	100		

requirements			
MTN products are well developed.	82		12

The findings in table 20 showed that all the respondents agreed that MTN offers a variety products and services to its customers. This is in conformity with the information obtained from MTN Uganda and the following are some of the products offered by MTN : MTN pay as you go (flat),MTN pay as you go plus yello go, MTN cash back, MTN talk time , MTN friends and family , MTN home and away, MTN zone, MTN broad band, MTN mobile money , MTN mobile internet, Black berry from MTN, MTN broad band and MTN offers value added services like SMS, who called (notify me) ,MTN cash back, MTN help lines, and MTN mobile teleconferencing.

All the respondents agreed that MTN understands the product and service needs of its customers. That is why MTN has offered over 32 products and services to its customers. All the respondents agreed that MTN makes an effort to identify other product requirements. That is the reason MTN is always developing products and services to its customers. 82% of the respondents agreed that MTN products are well developed and 12% disagreed.

Alegre, Lapiedre and Chiva (2006) argue that product innovation consists of successful exploitation of new ideas. Therefore it implies two conditions: novelty and use. They further argue that product innovation is becoming more and more relevant, mainly as a result of three major trends: intense international competition, fragmented and demanding markets and diverse rapidly changing technology. Firms that offer products that are adapted to the needs and demands of customers and market them faster and efficiently than their competitor are better. That s why MTN offers a variety of products to its customers. Customers are able to choose products and service that suit them.

The product service is a concept whereby services are additionally offered with products to increase their value. Consumers do not only look for goods or services, they demand a

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much holistic, offering including everything from information about how to best and safest way to use or delivering, installing , repairing ,mataining and updating solutions they have bought(Kimita & Shimomura,2009).

Table 21: Correlation Matrix for Product& Services Offered

Variables	Product & Services offered	Service Quality
Product &Services Offered Pearson Correlation	1.000	.542**
Sig.(2- tailed)	.	.000
N	66	66
Service Quality Pearson Correlation	.542**	1.000
Sig.(2- tailed)	.000	66
N	. 66	

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

 The correlation results from above showed that there was a positive relationship between product and service offered and service quality at MTN Uganda. Implying that the products and services offered by MTN had an impact on service quality.

The hypothesis proves that Products and service offered significantly contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda. This is supported by the evidence from the findings. There is a positive relationship between products and services offered and service quality in at MTN Uganda. The test using the correlation returned a result of 0.542** verifying that the strength of the relationship is statistically significant at 0.01 level significance.

 Findings on Service Quality

Service quality was the dependent variable and was assessed using parameters like success call, Congestation, and network coverage and network availability. The results presented below:

Table22:   Descriptive results for service quality for customers.

Variables	Agree%	Not Sure%	Disagree%
I trust the quality of service received from MTN customer service	88		12
MTN makes an effort to identify others service requirements	100		
MTN customer service provides prompt services to all its clients.	67		33
The MTN network is not always busy and one can make a call.	76		24
Customer experience temporary interference in the service.	93		7
The MTN network can handle the capacity of its clients.	98		2
The MTN network covers most areas.	100		
The network is available all the time.	68		32
The network is available on the weekend.	100		
I don't hassle with the MTN network	99		1

Source: *Primary Data by the Researcher* *15/12/09*

The findings in table 22 showed that 88 % of the respondents agreed that they trust the quality of services received from MTN and 12 % of the respondents disagreed. Within customer service department, customer management and training team manages service quality and this is done through the help of quality assessors and team leaders. Reports from UCC indicate that there are parameters and targets for service quality for the national telecom operators' i.e.   Faulty recovery should be cleared within 24hours or72 hours of every year,

95% of the calls should be complete and the grade of service should be 0.015, the traffic control congestion should be less than 0.5%. Therefore all the operators must follow the above guidelines. All the respondents agreed that MTN makes an effort to identify others service requirements. 67% of the respondents agreed that MTN provides prompt services to all its clients and 33% of the respondents' disagreed. That is why MTN has developed a strategy where customers have to be served within 24 hours and this enables MTN to be prompt with its services.

76% the respondents agreed that the MTN network is not always busy and one can initiate a call, 24% of the respondents disagreed. Reports indicate that that MTN is to invests over 16m US dollars this year for the network upgrade and last it was over 30m US dollars to cater for the growing number of subscribers.

93% of the respondents agreed that customers experience temporary interference in the service and 7% of the respondents disagreed, 98% of the respondents agreed that the MTN network can handle the capacity of its clients and 2% of the respondents disagreed.

All the respondents disagreed that the MTN network covers most areas; the findings further reveal that 68% of the respondents agreed that the network is available all the time while 32% of the respondents disagreed. Implying that majority of the respondents agreed that the network is available all the time.

All the respondents agreed that the network is available on the weekend while 99% of the respondents agreed that they don't always hassle with the MTN network and 1% of the respondents disagreed. According to the guidelines from UCC that are given to the operators is that the network availability/ percentage up time should be greater than 99%. According to UCC network availability/ percentage up time is a measure of the degree to which the access network is operable at any point in time and / or time the network resources are available to the customer. Service quality can thus be defined as the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance,

then perceived quality is less satisfactory and hence satisfaction occurs (Parasuraman et.al. Lewis and Mitchell) (as citied in Jain &Saakshi, 2009). Muddie & Cottam(1999) in their works " The Management and Marketing of Service'' point out that quality service or product plays part in the decision of customers on whether to use it or not. Burroughs & Edgar (2008) further argue that service quality is more than simply meeting specifications and that the customers' point of view on quality is important because quality is what the customers says it is. They state it is the customer who sets the quality and value of the service not the company. They further argue that recent studies indicate that customers consider reliability, durability and timely service delivery as indicators of superior service quality.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The central objective of this study was to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda with a case study of MTN Uganda. The chapter presents the summary, conclusion, limitations of the study and area for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to examine the contribution of customer service to service quality in the telecommunication industry with a case study of MTN Uganda. This study was carried out in Kampala central in Kampala District. The findings are true representative of the views of MTN's key stakeholders who included MTN staff, dealers, customers and sub dealers. The study was guided by the following objectives: to examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda; to find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda ; to examine the extent to which products and services offered contribute to service at MTN Uganda . The study used questionnaires and interview guides to collect primary data whereas secondary methods of collecting data were mainly through document reviews and reports. Correlations analysis was adopted to establish to establish the relationship between variables. In qualitative data, content analysis was used to establish the relationship between variables. In qualitative data, content analysis was used to establish the themes and sub themes. From the study, the findings revealed that accessibility contributes significantly to service quality at MTN Uganda. The findings further revealed

that 98.6% of the respondents had accessed customer service of MTN Uganda. From the findings, accessibility contributed significantly to service quality at MTN Uganda. The correlation results from MTN customers and dealers, sub dealers and staff (406**; p<0.01) and (r=0.431; p<0.01). The results from MTN customers and dealers, sub dealers and staff showed that accessibility had a positive significance on service quality at MTN Uganda. The findings further revealed that the respondents had a problem in accessing customer service.

The study also discovered that professionalism had an impact on service quality at MTN Uganda. The correlation results (=.458**; p<0.01) showed that all the 4 parameters of professionalism had a positive impact on service quality. The parameters included time, skills of staff, product knowledge and attitude.

Product and service offered were also analyzed in the study. The correlation between products and service offered and service quality at MTN Uganda (0.542**; p<0.01) & (0.445**; p<0.01). Showing a positive relationship between products and services offered and service quality at MTN Uganda. The findings further revealed that MTN offers a wide variety of products and services to its customers.

5.3 Conclusions:

The following conclusions were drawn from the study.

5.3.1 To examine the contribution of Accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda.

In conclusion the research findings were able to examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality in the telecommunication industry. The two variables under accessibility (call Centre and the distribution network) had a significant relationship with service quality.

Accessibility of the call centre:

The most outstanding revelation was that the call Centre was inaccessible. The few, who had tried accessing the call centre, had to dial five or more times in order to access the call centre.

Staff to acknowledge that the call centre was in accessible. Therefore management needs to improve on the accessibility of the call centre because it's affecting the perception of the accessibility of the call centre. Thus affecting the service offered. All in all accessibility of the call centre was found to be critical in examining the contribution of accessibility to service quality. Because it creates the perception about the service offered.

The distribution network:

The research findings further revealed that the channels of distribution were accessible where and when customers needed or wanted them. Respondents emphasized that the operating hours for the channels of distribution were convenient to them. Channels of distribution had a positive impact on service quality at MTN Uganda. The hypothesis that accessibility contributes significantly to service quality at MTN Uganda was supported by evidence from the findings and accordingly adopted.

5.3.2 To find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda.

The research variables for professionalism were time (speed), skills of staff (competency, courtesy), product knowledge and attitude (employee/customer relations). The research findings revealed that service delivery is fast within MTN, telephonic and email queries are dealt with very fast, staff are approachable and friendly, staff display a high degree of politeness, staff have a good understanding of the products and service offered. The findings revealed that professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda. MTN Uganda needs to continuously train their staff because of the technology advances; many will require direct interaction between customers and contact personnel. The nature of these interactions strongly influences how customers perceive the professionalism displayed by staff. Therefore customers measure the nature of professionalism thus affecting their perception about service

quality. The hypothesis professionalism greatly contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda was greatly supported by the evidence from the findings and supported accordingly.

5.3.3 To examine the extent to which products and services offered contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda.

The parameters that were used to examine the extent to which products and services offered contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda included product and service innovation. The outstanding results revealed that MTN Uganda offers a variety products and services to its customers. This was in conformity with the information obtained from MTN Uganda. The products offered by MTN included , MTN pay as you go(flat), MTN Cash back, MTN yello go, MTN talk time, MTN friends and family, MTN home and away, MTN zone, MTN broad band, MTN mobile internet, MTN mobile teleconferencing, value added services like ,SMS, who called(notify me) and MTN help lines. MTN makes an effort to identify other products and services requirements and MTN products and services are well developed. Therefore the hypotheses that products and services offered significantly contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda was supported by the findings and adopted accordingly. In conclusion, the findings showed that there is a positive relationship between products and services offered and service quality at MTN Uganda.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Customers evaluate service quality by comparing what they expected with what they perceive they received from a particular supplier. According to UCC (2002) customers tend to view quality of service depending on the users perception or what customers believe what they have experienced from a particular service provider. If their expectations are met or exceeded, customer believes they have received high quality service.

5.4.1 To examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda.

The first objective aimed at examining the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda.

According to the findings majority of the respondents agreed that they had to dial five or more times in order to access the call centre According to UCC(2002) customers tend to view quality of service depending on the users perception or what customers believe what they have experienced from a particular service provider. The following recommendations were identified in the study and need to be addressed.

- MTN should develop strategies for improving accessibility of the call Centre. For example mobile call centers which will help on improving the accessibility of customer service, develop regional call Centres which will decrease on the congestion, use of IVRs and ensure simcards have more functions that will reduce on the traffic going to the call Centre

- MTN was recommended for having a large distribution network. However MTN should develop other avenues for channels of distribution apart from the ones in existence. Reason being that there is stiff competition in the telecom industry in Uganda. For example electronic distribution of products.

5.4.2 To find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda

- The social and interactive skills of staff should always be improved. The reason being that they give the impression of the organization and allows employees to be responsive and serve customers better. MTN should continuously train its staff in order improve the skills of its staff. According to Cook (2002) what is memorable to the customers in terms of service experience is that personal touch rather than material aspect of the service. That's why needs to continuously train its staff.

- Staff should always be trained and equipped with skills of how to handle irate customers who are in the lines before they are served.

5.4.3 How products and services offered contribute to service quality MTN Uganda.

- Products and services need to be tested before they are lunched. The company needs to do a pilot test before they launch the products and services. Consumers do not only look for goods or services, they demand for a much holistic offering including everything from about how to use and safest way to use.

- MTN was recommended for having a variety of products and services offered to the customer.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The researcher was constrained in analysis of the results owing to the revision of the SPSS statistical packages that were non-compatible with the package purchased originally. This also contributed to the delay in finishing and compiling findings. However the UMI based supervisor devised other ways of analyzing the data by importing findings in a friendlier version.

- The researcher did not have enough time for administering the questionnaires to the responded. However he overcame the problem by appointing two research assistants to administer the questionnaires to the respondents.

- The researcher faced the problem of accessing important information /data for the study because some of the information was regarded confidential. The researcher had to get an introductory letter from the institute and present it to the heads of various departments to enable the researcher access the confidential information.

5.6 Contribution of this study.

To examine the contribution of accessibility to service quality at MTN Uganda

- The study will help improve on the existing body of knowledge in areas of customer service and service quality in the telecommunication industry. Recently in Uganda they a lot of media reports about customer service and service quality (For example MTN customers are complaining that the helplines are always busy and the call Centre cannot be accessed). Recommendations will be of great help policy makers.

- The study identified possible areas of further research which may be adopted to generate more information on the subject.

  To find out how professionalism contributes to service quality at MTN Uganda

- The social and interactive skills of staff should always be improved continuously. The social interchange   between the customer and the service provider and the way the process is managed is vital to excellent customer service. Employees are very crucial components of the moments of the truth.

- Training is a crucial component in the telecommunication industry.   Training contributes to service quality than recruitment and selection. Therefore MTN should continuously train its staff.

  How products and services offered contribute to service quality at MTN Uganda.

- Service quality is defined as the extent to which a service or product meets customer needs or expectations. Therefore service companies need to meet customer needs or expectations in order for customers to have good perception about them.

- An organization must determine what customers want and use this information to create products and services that are suitable for the customers.

- Service quality is more than simply meeting specifications and that the customers' point of view on quality is important because quality is what the customers says it is. They state it is the customer who sets the quality and value of the service not the

company. They further argue that recent studies indicate that customers consider reliability, durability and timely service delivery as indicators of superior service quality.

5.7 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The future research could explore the following areas.

- The contribution of service quality to customer service in the telecommunication industry in Uganda.

- Given that the study was carried out in one telecom organization; it is recommended that a more extensive study be carried out in other telecom companies and service industries. Results will be interesting and good for comparison in order to understand the subject.

- There is need to carry out research on professionalism and how it affects service quality in the telecommunication industry

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APPENDIX I:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

<u>Background Information</u>

1. Briefly talk about yourself and your responsibility (Position held, experience with company)

2. What is your understanding of customer service?

3. What does it mean to your organization?

4. What are the challenges of customer service to MTN?

5. What is service quality?

6. What does it mean to your organization?

7. How do you manage service quality at MTN?

ACCESSIBILITY

1. What is the meaning of accessibility (in the telecom industry)?

2. What role is played by the following   a) call Centre

   b) Distribution Network

3. How does one access the call Centre?

4. What do you mean by distribution network?

5. How do subscribers benefit from the distribution network?

6. How does the organization benefit from the distribution network?

PROFESSIONALISM

1. How do the following contribute to service quality   a)skills of staff   b) time c) product knowledge d) Attitude

2. What factors do you consider when employing staff in the above section?

3. What effect have they got on service quality?

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

1. What is the meaning of products and service?

2. Are they any differences between the two and if so what is the difference?

3. What are the different products and services you offer?

4. How do they differ?

5. How do subscribers benefit from this?

6. How does the organization benefit from this?

7 Do they have any effect on the company if not offered?

8 Describe the meaning of product and service innovation?

9. How does it contribute to service quality?

SERVICE QUALITY

1. Do you understand the term service quality?

2. What does success call rate mean?

3. How does organization benefit from this

4. Explain the following (a) congestation   **b**) network coverage c) Network availability

5. What effects do the above have on service quality

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CUSTOMERS

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this study is to examine the contribution of customer care to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda. As a key stakeholder of MTN, your own opinions will be useful in generating knowledge for the study. The information that you will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Please tick the right boxes and fill in the right blank spaces.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR RESPONDENTS

1. Sex   Male ☐   Female ☐

2. Age

 Below 25 years ☐   25-34 years ☐   35-44years ☐

above 45 years ☐

3. Marital status

 Married ☐   Single ☐   Divorced ☐   Widowed   ☐

4. Level of education

 Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Masters ☐

Other qualifications   ☐

SECTION B

5. How long have you been using the MTN network?

      a) Less than 1 year   ☐

      b) 1- 3 years   ☐

      c) 4-6 years   ☐

      d) 7-9 years   ☐

      e) 10 and above years ☐

6. Have you personally been involved or had any contact with MTN customer service?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

7. Please circle the number of times you tried to call before you successfully got connected to the call centre.

Number of attempts before being connected	Number	Tick
1 attempt	1	
2 attempts	2	
3 attempts	3	
4 attempts	4	
5 or more attempts	5	
6. failed to go through		

SECTION C

Using the scale below please indicate whether you are in agreement or disagreement with statements given by writing the corresponding code in the box below

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree			
5	4	3	2	1			

ACCESSIBILITY OF CALL CENTRE	5	4	3	2	1
Whenever I try calling the call centre the phone is engaged	5	4	3	2	1
Whenever I call the call centre the phone is answered immediately.	5	4	3	2	1
I always have to redial many times before I get through the call centre.	5	4	3	2	1
DISTRIBUTION NETWORK	5	4	3	2	1
Channels of distribution are accessible when and where customers need them.	5	4	3	2	1
Operating hours are convenient to me.	5	4	3	2	1
The environment at the outlets is pleasant	5	4	3	2	1
There is safety at the MTN outlets	5	4	3	2	1
TIME TAKEN TO BE SERVED	5	4	3	2	1
Service delivery is fast within MTN customer service.	5	4	3	2	1
The systems are fast within MTN.	5	4	3	2	1
The systems are reliable within MTN	5	4	3	2	1

My telephonic and email queries are dealt with effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
SKILLS OF STAFF	5	4	3	2	1
MTN employees display the skill and knowledge to perform their service effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN Staff have customer complaints resolved satisfactory	5	4	3	2	1
Sometimes MTN staff use expressions which are too technical to understand.	5	4	3	2	1
Employees within Customer service are approachable and friendly.	5	4	3	2	1
PRODUCT KNOWDLGE OF STAFF	5	4	3	2	1
MTN staff have a good understanding of the products they offer	5	4	3	2	1
MTN staff Refer you immediately to a person who knows.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN staff listen to you and refer you to someone else if they cannot solve the problem	5	4	3	2	1
I rarely have problems with MTN staff when they are explaining the products	5	4	3	2	1
ATITUDE(EMPLOYEE /CUSTOMER RELATIONS)	5	4	3	2	1
MTN Staff display a high degree of politeness towards their customer.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN Staff are competent and informed	5	4	3	2	1

MTN Staff are approachable and friendly	5	4	3	2	1
MTN Staff are welcoming	5	4	3	2	1
MTN Staff listen and provide feedback to customers	5	4	3	2	1
PRODUCTS OFFERED	5	4	3	2	1
MTN offers a variety of products to its customers	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service understands my product needs.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service makes an effort to identify other product requirements.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN products are well developed.	5	4	3	2	1
SERVICE QUALITY	5	4	3	2	1
I trust the quality of service received from MTN customer care.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service makes an effort to identify other service requirements.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service provides prompt services to all its customers.	5	4	3	2	1
Where I work, MTN customer service has a good reputation.	5	4	3	2	1
Am satisfied with the quality of service offered by MTN customer service.	5	4	3	2	1
CONGESTATION ON THE NETWORK	5	4	3	2	1
The MTN network is always busy and one cannot initiate a call.	5	4	3	2	1

Customers experience temporary interference in the service	5	4	3	2	1
The MTN network cannot handle the capacity of its clients	5	4	3	2	1
NETWORK COVERAGE	5	4	3	2	1
The MTN network covers most areas.	5	4	3	2	1
You can see the mast but there is no network.	5	4	3	2	1
There are specific locations which do not have network.	5	4	3	2	1
NETWORK AVAILABILITY	5	4	3	2	1
The network is available all the time.	5	4	3	2	1
The network is available on the weekend.	5	4	3	2	1
I always hassle with the network.	5	4	3	2	1

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF, SUB DEALERS& DEALERS

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this study is to examine the contribution of customer

care to service quality in the telecommunication industry in Uganda.

As a key stakeholder of MTN, your own opinions will be useful in

generating knowledge for the study. The information that you will

provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Please tick the right boxes and fill in the right blank spaces.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR RESPONDENTS

1. Sex   Male   ☐   Female   ☐

2. Age

 Below 25 years   ☐   25-34 years   ☐   35-44 years   ☐

above 45 years   ☐

3. Marital status

 Married   ☐ Single   ☐ Divorced ☐   Widowed   ☐

4. Level of education

   Certificate ☐   Diploma   ☐ Degree   ☐   Masters   ☐

Other qualifications   ☐

SECTION B

5. Category of respondents

    a) MTN staff   ☐

    b) Dealer shop staff ☐

    c) Sub dealer   ☐

6. Number of years in employment

    a) Less than 2 year ☐

    b) Between 2- 4 years ☐

    c) Between5-7 years ☐

    d) Between 8-10 years☐

    e) Over 10 years   ☐

Using the scale below please indicate whether you are in agreement or disagreement with statements given by writing the corresponding code in the box below

Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree			
5	4	3	2	1			

ACCESSIBILITY OF CALL CENTRE	5	4	3	2	1
Whenever MTN customers try calling the call centre the phone is engaged	5	4	3	2	1
Whenever MTN customers call the call centre the phone is answered immediately.	5	4	3	2	1
Customers have to redial many times before they get through the call centre.	5	4	3	2	1
DISTRIBUTION NETWORK	5	4	3	2	1
Channels of distribution are accessible when and where customers need them.	5	4	3	2	1
Operating hours are convenient to MTN customers.	5	4	3	2	1
The environment at the outlets is pleasant	5	4	3	2	1
There is safety at the MTN outlets	5	4	3	2	1
TIME TAKEN TO BE SERVED	5	4	3	2	1
Service delivery is fast within MTN customer service.	5	4	3	2	1
The systems are fast within MTN.	5	4	3	2	1

The systems are reliable within MTN	5	4	3	2	1
SKILLS OF STAFF	5	4	3	2	1
I have the required skills and knowledge to perform my duties	5	4	3	2	1
MTN Staff have customer complaints resolved satisfactory	5	4	3	2	1
Sometimes MTN staff use expressions which are too technical to understand.	5	4	3	2	1
Employees within Customer service are approachable and friendly.	5	4	3	2	1
PRODUCT KNOWDLGE OF STAFF	5	4	3	2	1
I have a good understanding of the products they have offered	5	4	3	2	1
MTN staff listen to you and refer you to someone else if they cannot solve the problem	5	4	3	2	1
I rarely have problems with MTN staff when they are explaining the products	5	4	3	2	1
ATITUDE(EMPLOYEE /CUSTOMER RELATIONS)	5	4	3	2	1
Staff display a high degree of politeness towards their customer.	5	4	3	2	1
Staff are competent and informed	5	4	3	2	1
Staff are approachable and friendly	5	4	3	2	1
Staff are welcoming	5	4	3	2	1

Staff listen and provide feedback to customers	5	4	3	2	1
PRODUCTS OFFERED	5	4	3	2	1
MTN offers a variety of products to its customers	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service understands my product needs.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service makes an effort to identify other product requirements.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN products are well developed.	5	4	3	2	1
SERVICE QUALITY	5	4	3	2	1
I trust the quality of service received from MTN customer care.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer care makes an effort to identify other service requirements.	5	4	3	2	1
MTN customer service provides prompt services to all its customers.	5	4	3	2	1
Where I work, MTN customer service has a good reputation.	5	4	3	2	1
Am satisfied with the quality of service offered by MTN customer service.	5	4	3	2	1
CONGESTATION ON THE NETWORK	5	4	3	2	1
The MTN network is always busy and one cannot initiate a call.	5	4	3	2	1

Customers experience temporary interference in the service	5	4	3	2	1
The MTN network cannot handle the capacity of its clients	5	4	3	2	1
NETWORK COVERAGE	5	4	3	2	1
The MTN network covers most areas.	5	4	3	2	1
You can see the mast but there is no network.	5	4	3	2	1
There are specific locations which do not have network.	5	4	3	2	1
NETWORK AVAILABILITY	5	4	3	2	1
The network is available all the time.	5	4	3	2	1
The network is available on the weekend.	5	4	3	2	1
I always hassle with the network.	5	4	3	2	1

Name: ……………………………………. Location:

Time: ………………………………….

DISTRIBUTION NETWORK	Yes	No
Channels of distribution are accessible when and where customers need them.		
There is safety at the MTN outlets		
TIME TAKEN TO BE SERVED		
Service delivery is fast within MTN customer service.		
SKILLS OF STAFF		
MTN employees display the skill and knowledge to perform their service effectively.		
Employees within Customer service are approachable and friendly.		
PRODUCT KNOWDLGE OF STAFF		
MTN staff have a good understanding of the products they offer		
MTN staff listen to you and refer you to someone else if they cannot solve the problem		
ATITUDE(EMPLOYEE /CUSTOMER RELATIONS)		
MTN Staff display a high degree of politeness towards their customer.		
MTN Staff are competent and informed		
PRODUCTS OFFERED		
MTN offers a variety of products to its customers		
MTN customer service understands my product needs.		