

**SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN UGANDA
REGISTRATION SERVICES BUREAU (URSB)**

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


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DECLARATION

I NANTUME LUKIA, declare that this research report is my own original work and has not been submitted for any other award to any university or other higher institution of learning. All the information resources used herein have been acknowledged and referenced.

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APPROVAL

This is to certify that NANTUME LUKIA with a research report topic: "service quality and customer satisfaction in Uganda Registration services Bureau (URSB)", has been conducted under my guidance and supervision. It is being submitted with my approval to the Department of Finance and accounting of Uganda Christian University.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family for their unwavering support, patience, and encouragement throughout my academic journey. Their belief in me has been a constant source of motivation.

I also dedicate this study to my lecturers and mentors, whose guidance, insight, and commitment have greatly contributed to my growth and understanding.

Finally, this work is dedicated to all individuals who strive for knowledge and self-improvement, as a reminder that persistence and dedication remain key to achieving one's goals.

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction at the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). The research is grounded in the SERVQUAL model and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, focusing on five key dimensions of service quality: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. A cross-sectional research design was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected from 27 URSB clients through structured questionnaires and supplemented with interviews from selected staff.

The findings reveal that overall service quality at URSB is perceived as satisfactory, with assurance emerging as the most significant determinant of customer satisfaction, followed by reliability and tangibility. Responsiveness and empathy, although positively related, were found to have a weaker and statistically insignificant influence on customer satisfaction. Regression analysis indicates that service quality explains approximately 50.7% of the variation in customer satisfaction.

Despite ongoing reforms such as digitalization and decentralization, challenges including service delays, system downtimes, and limited personalized attention persist. The study concludes that improving service quality—particularly staff professionalism, system reliability, and communication efficiency—can significantly enhance customer satisfaction, trust, and service utilization. The research provides practical recommendations for URSB management and policymakers to strengthen service delivery and public sector performance.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The chapter has provided background of the research, the statement of the problem, purpose and objective of the study, research questions, research hypotheses, scope of the study, justification, importance of the study and conceptual framework. The chapter gives the setting of the research by establishing the meaning of quality of service in establishing customer satisfaction in the institutions within the public sector. The particular consideration is the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) which is an indispensable factor in formalisation of business and safeguarding of intellectual property, civil registration, and insolvency management in Uganda. The quality of services offered is directly connected with satisfying the clients, the confidence of the population and the work of URSB.

1.1 Background of the Study

The question of service quality has been gaining traction among the organisations both in the governmental and corporate world. The world governments have been involved in reforms in the public sector in an attempt to improve efficiency, transparency, accountability and customer satisfaction. The majority of the developed countries have come up with digital platforms, standards of customers service and performance management systems within the institutions that have been entrusted with the functions of registration and licensing services as a platform of ensuring improved service delivery and enhancing the degree of public confidence.

The experiences across the globe have revealed that an improvement of the quality of services within registration agencies contributes to the ease in conducting business, a superior compliance and economic prosperity. Very digitised registration systems have been adopted in other countries such as Rwanda and Estonia that have reduced the processing time and user experience. With these changes, it is obvious that the efficiency of systems, responsive staff, and delivery of the services to the customers should be at the center of the state institutions.

Nevertheless, within African context, the institutions of the state sector are forced to grapple with the challenges of bureaucracy, low working efficiency, inadequate infrastructure, low employee attitude and insensitivity towards customer needs. The way such challenges normally turn out is through a customer dissatisfaction and lack of trust in governmental bodies. Nevertheless, some

reforms have been implemented in the African states such as digitalisation, decentralisation, and staff capacity development as a way of improving service delivery. A good example is the case of Rwanda, Office of the Registrar general where the online registration service reduced the processing time by almost half to less than six hours and this has increased customer satisfaction.

In Uganda, Uganda Registration Services Bureau in 1998 came about as a semi-autonomous statutory organ of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. URSB has the duty to conduct business registration, intellectual property registration, civil registration of births, marriages and deaths as well as the management of insolvency. Throughout the years, URSB has been engaging in a number of reforms to improve the services delivery of the services like Electronic Business Registration System (eBRS) in which it has decentralised the services by opening regional offices, customer care units and simplifying the registration processes.

Despite these reforms, it has still been experienced that the citizens were complaining of delays in processing services, system downtimes, bad communication and worker attitude. These issues bring about the question about the effectiveness of service quality initiative and whether they have any implications on customer satisfaction in URSB. The understanding of service delivery as determined by the perception of the clients towards the quality of services as well as how the perception affects satisfaction of the clients makes it necessary to improve service delivery and realization of the mandate of the URSB.

The quality of service provided at state-operated institutions such as URSB may be evaluated with the help of the SERVQUAL model due to the five dimensions used in the model, including the reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. The reliability aspect involves the ability to offer the services correctly and consistently, the aspect of responsiveness involves whether the staff members are willing to assist the client when it is necessary, the aspect of assurance with competence and professionalism and the ability of the staff to inspire trust and the aspect of empathy is related to the delivery of a personalised attention to clients and the aspect of tangibility deals with the physical buildings, equipment, and machinery. These dimensions should be properly handled to enhance customer satisfaction and trust among the citizens.

Customer satisfaction is one of the performance indicators of the public institutions. The satisfied clients are likely to trust the government agencies and follow the rules and regulations and utilize formal systems. In URSB, the service quality may lead to the discouragement of the formalisation of business and undermine the efforts of increasing the compliance and economic growth. Even though the dimension of quality of services is crucial, little empirical data exists concerning the impact of single dimension of service quality on customer satisfaction at URSB. The objective of the paper is therefore to explore the relationship between customer satisfaction and the quality of service in Uganda registration services bureau.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Uganda Registration Services Bureau ideally is expected to offer efficient, reliable, timely, transparent and customer-centred customer satisfying or even exceeding services to the clients. It should also affect the customer satisfaction, compliance, formalisation, and challenge the customer trust on the institution because customer satisfaction with high quality of service in the registration services will increase customer satisfaction, improved compliance, formalisation, and trust in the institution.

Although URSB has undergone the reforms consisting of automation, decentralisation, and customer care programs, one can still see the customer dissatisfaction. The customers have continued to complain of processing delays of the services, uncivil servants, uncoherent processing and system breakdowns. These concerns suggest that there is a gap between expectations of the customers and the quality of offered services in the reality.

Despite the fact that the problems with the service quality at URSB have been widely reported, the connection between the individual aspects of service quality (i.e.: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility) and customer satisfaction at URSB is not well-researched empirically. Particularly, it is not clear what aspects of service quality are the most effective in terms of customer satisfaction, and in what areas the enhancement of the sphere is necessary.

Such lack of knowledge may compromise the efforts of URSB in improving service delivery, trustworthiness among people and compliance with the registration requirements. The study is therefore intended to measure the relationship between the level of service quality and customer satisfaction in URSB to come up with evidence based information that can be applied in the development of service improvement initiatives.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this research paper is to establish the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality of Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB).

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

To establish the relationship between quality of service and customer satisfaction in the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB).

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

- (i) To investigate the quality of service provision at URSB to the customers.
- (ii) To establish how satisfied customers are at URSB clients.
- (iii) To determine the relationship between the service quality and customer satisfaction at URSB.
- (iv) To identify the problems that affect the quality of service delivery at URSB.

1.5 Research Questions

- (i) What is the strength of the quality of the services provided by URSB to its customers?
- (ii) Customer satisfaction of URSB customers?
- (iii) What is the level of customer satisfaction with URSB in respect of the quality of services?
- (iv) What are the issues that are entailed in the service delivery in URSB?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

H: The quality of the services does not have a significant correlation with customer satisfaction in URSB.

H02: Service reliability is not an important factor in customer satisfaction at URSB.

H03: Customer satisfaction at URSB is not significantly dependent on the responsiveness and empathy.

H04: URSB does not have significant customer satisfaction in terms of tangibility and assurance.

1.7 Scope of the Study

1.7.1 Geographical Scope

The study is inclusive of URSB headquarters at Kampala and the sampled regional offices at Mbarara, Gulu, and Mbale. They are some of the main business centres with different experiences with clients.

1.7.2 Time Scope

The time frame is interested in 2015-2024 covering the digitalisation reforms, decentralisation and customer service improvement of URSB.

1.7.3 Content Scope

The study is dedicated to the relations between the satisfaction of the customers and the quality of services. Service quality is verified on the dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility of SERVQUAL, and customer satisfaction is measured based on the total experiences of the clients regarding services.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Although URSB is still undergoing the process of reform, there are still complaints on delays in delivery of services, malpractices in the use of the systems, as well as communication gaps between different components of the system. Very minimal empirical studies have been conducted to examine the effect of URSB on its services and customers satisfaction. This study is therefore justified due to the evidences, which can be applied to authenticate the modifications in the customer service policies, employee training, and operational efficiency.

The study can also be considered in the framework of the Uganda Vision 2040 and National Development Plan III which considers efficient and customer-centred provision of the public services as one of the drivers of socio-economic development.

1.9 Significance of the Study

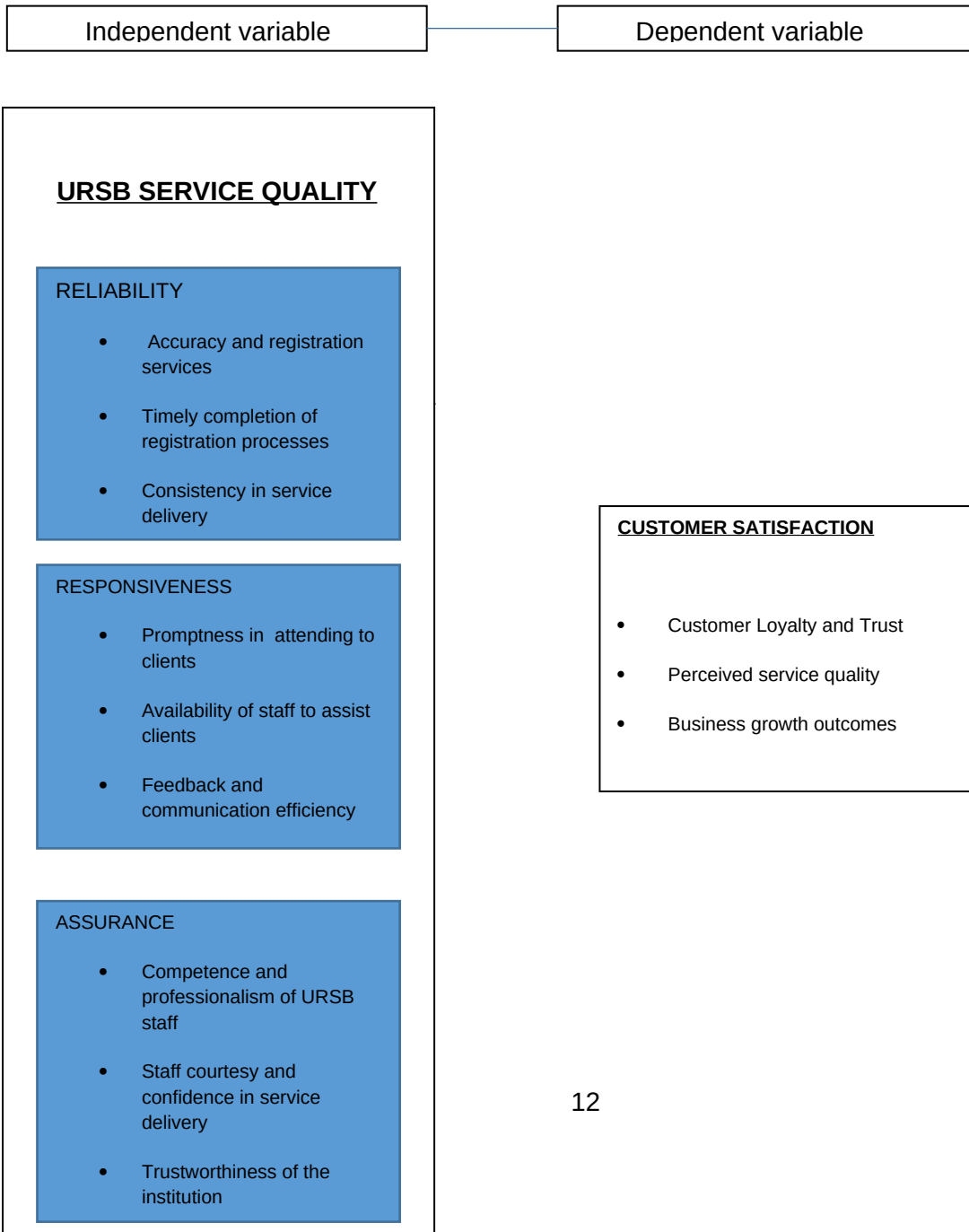
The research to URSB Management provides information about the areas of strength and weakness in the service delivery that enable the identified improvements.

The results are evidence to the policy makers who can utilize the same to draw policies that will assist in service delivery within the state organizations.

To the Clients and the Public, the study demonstrates the areas which can be handled to achieve accessibility, responsiveness and satisfaction of the service.

The researchers will contribute to the body of knowledge on the topic of the service quality and customer satisfaction in the institutions that belong to the public sector to the Researchers and Academicians.

1.10 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework demonstrates the relationship between customer satisfaction and the quality of services. Service quality (important factors are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility) is the independent variable and customer satisfaction is the dependent variable.

The anticipated outcome of the performance improvement in the service quality facets include customer satisfaction, trust, and additional application of URSB services. Conversely, the weaknesses of service quality are likely to result in dissatisfaction and the inability to trust the populations.

Source: Developed on the conceptualisation of the researcher, based on SERVQUAL model.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter offers a literature review on the theoretical, conceptual and empirical literature that is relevant in the dimension of service quality and customer satisfaction relative to the institutions of the public sector. The purpose of this review is to provide a strong academic background on the research of the relationship between quality of service and customer satisfaction of Uganda Bureau of Registration Services (URSB).

The theoretical coverage of the chapter is starting with SERVQUAL model and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory that are the leading ideologies of this research work. It goes on to examine the conceptual definitions of customer satisfaction and quality of service, particularly of the case of the public institutions. Finally, it analyses the outcomes of the empirical researches that have been conducted in the world, regionally, and within the institutions of the public service that identify gaps in research that legitimize the present research.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Throughout the research, theoretical frameworks are required in the association of variables and explanation of research results. This study is based on two key theories, namely, the SERVQUAL model and the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory.

2.2.1 SERVQUAL Model

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Bery (1985) developed SERVQUAL model as an instrument of identifying the quality of service by comparing the expectation of the customers with the perceived performance of the service delivery. The authors later reduced the model to a multi-item scale that measured the perceived service quality in five dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), service quality is the gap that connotes the expectation that the customers had concerning a service and their perception concerning the service they attended. Where the perceptions exceed the expectations service quality is said to be high, where the expectations exceed the perceptions service quality is said to be poor.

There are five dimensions of the quality of the services, which are defined in SERVQUAL:

Reliability- the ability to perform the service offering of the service in a reliable and accurate way.

Responsiveness - the willingness to support the customers and provide them with the necessary assistance.

Assurance- the familiarity, politeness, and ability of the employees to trigger trust and confidence.

Empathy -caring, intimate customer service.

Tangibility- appearance of the material facilities, equipment, people and communication materials (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

The SERVQUAL model is widely used on both private and public sector organizations to assess the performance of service delivery (Zeithaml et al., 2018). Accuracy in documentation, consistency in the procedures, responsiveness may be linked with timely feedback, assurance may be linked with professionalism and competence of the staff, empathy may be linked with respect and attention to the individual and tangibility may be linked with the infrastructures and computer networks are some of the attributes of reliability of the public institutions.

The model has been one of the most frequently utilized in the measurement of service quality despite the observation by some scholars that the dimensions of SERVQUAL may not be usable in other types of service context due to its brevity, framework and empirical validation (Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

When applied to URSB, SERVQUAL provides the systematic approach to the evaluation of how the services such as business registration, intellectual property registration, and civil registration are offered in a way that proves reliable, fast, professional, and customer oriented.

2.2.2 Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory.

The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT), developed by Oliver (1980), is one of the theories that underlines the development of customer satisfaction. The theory states that satisfaction is achieved as the perceived performance and former expectations of the customers are compared.

Oliver (1980) also observed that customers are satisfied when there is realized performance greater than what is expected (positive disconfirmation). In the situation when the perception of performance is lower than anticipated (negative disconfirmation) dissatisfaction will occur. Confirmation occurs in instances where the level of performance is at par thus leading to a neutral satisfaction.

The customers develop expectations based on their previous experience, personal recommendation, their impression of the organization, as well as, messages communicated (Oliver, 1997). These expectations on the case of the public institutions can include the timeliness of the service, transparency, professionalism, fairness and efficiency.

When associating the experience of the services offered by URSB, the clients compare it to what they had imagined. An example to explain this is the breakdown of the system and failure to promptly address registration documents, which could be a source of negative disconfirmation but an address by professionals and documentation of registration documents by professionals could be a source of positive disconfirmation.

The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory is particularly relevant in the institutions of the state sector as the citizens tend to have a high level of expectation as far as efficiency, accountability

and transparency is concerned (Oliver, 1997). Therefore, the level of customer satisfaction is directly referenced to the perceived quality of services.

The combination of both the Servqual and the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory provides an effective theoretical framework on the study of customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions correlation in URSB.

2.3 Conceptual Review

This part is a critique of the underlying theories on which the study has been carried out and that is, service quality and customer satisfaction.

2.3.1 Service Quality

Service quality is considered to be a general rating of a service by the customers based on the perceived view about the service in regards to its performance against expectation (Parasuraman et al., 1988). It is regarded as a long-term position, which occurs due to the experience of specific services (Zeithaml et al., 2018).

According to Zeithaml et al. (2018), the term service quality denotes the perceptions of superiority or excellence of service to the customer. It entails process reliability, professionalism of employees, code of communication, accessibility and efficiency of services.

The institutions within the public sector have a better quality of service than the aspect of profitability; the services provided there are accountable, transparent, efficient, and trusted by the citizens. Good service delivery ensures accuracy of documentation, the timeline ensures responsiveness in dealing with the concerns of the customers, assurance builds trust by being competent, empathy demonstrates caring and tangibility demonstrates an institutional ability as portrayed through the infrastructure and systems (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

The quality of the services in URSB may consist of:

Time registration of process.

- Issuing of certificates accurately.
- Professional and skilled employees.
- Good communication channels.
- Electronic registration systems among others.

Quality of service in such institutions will help in formalization of business, compliance with the law and trust of citizens to the government agencies.

2.3.2 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to the overall evaluation of the performance with regard to the service based on the experiences of the customers (Oliver, 1980). This is a psychological implication of the gap between the expectations and the perceived performance (Oliver, 1997).

Customer satisfaction is considered as a temporary emotional reaction to service encounter and service quality provides a long term attitude to service (Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

One of the measures of institutional effectiveness with respect to a public sector institution is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction will be higher:

- Become a believer in government institutions.
- Comply with regulations

Still using formal systems.

- Refer services to others.

Customer satisfaction is quite critical in the example of URSB because absence of customer satisfaction can discourage formalization of business, protection of intellectual property and registration requirements.

Therefore, the customer satisfaction is an outcome variable, which is influenced by the perceived service quality.

2.4 Empirical Review

This part is a review of the empirical research of relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction and with emphasis on the public sector institutions.

2.4.1 Customer Satisfaction Quality of Service.

Numerous empirical research studies have formed a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. When a study was conducted by Parasuraman et al. (1988) customer satisfaction was found to increase with perception of quality of the service. Similarly, Cronin and Taylor (1992) also found out that service quality also predicts satisfaction in service industries very well.

The studies of civic bodies reveal that the trustworthiness, confidence, and materiality of products bring the customer satisfaction level to a high extent (Zeithaml et al., 2018).

2.4.2 Customer Reliability and Customer Satisfaction.

The reliability was observed to be one of the effective predictors of customer satisfaction in the empirical studies (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Customers will be able to trust and have confidence in services they take when they are done correctly and in a consistent manner.

Poor documentation, time wastage and lack of consistency in government institutions have a negative effect on the satisfaction, not to mention the reduced institutional credibility.

2.4.3 Customer Satisfaction and responsiveness.

Responsiveness was discovered to have an impact on satisfaction particularly when speed of communication and service is a factor (Zeithaml et al., 2018). Long queues and poor feedback systems are the greatest causes of dissatisfaction in institutions of the people.

However, according to other reports, responsiveness may not be a critical issue in highly bureaucratic organizations as compared to reliability and assurance (Cronin and Taylor, 1992).

2.4.4 Customer Satisfaction and Assurance.

It is also common that confidence is a decisive factor of satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Trust and confidence with service givers are achieved through courtesy, competency and professionalism.

The public registration institutions in this case ought to have knowledgeable staff that ought to make the entire procedure very lucid to the customers and this would go a long way in customer satisfaction and perception of fairness.

2.4.4 Customer Satisfaction and Assurance.

Satisfaction is also mostly ascertained based on decisive factor of confidence (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Politeness, ability and professionalism will build trust and confidence towards service givers.

Knowledgeable personnel in the case of the public registration institutions should make the process very clear to the customers and this would play a long way towards the customer satisfaction and perception of fairness.

2.4.5 Customer Satisfaction and Empathy.

Empathy brings about customer satisfaction because it assists customers in making them feel that they are being respected (Zeithaml et al., 2018). Individual treatment enhances emotional attachment.

However, personalized care can be limited by the number of cases and overload of the system in big institutions of the population.

2.4.6 Customer Satisfaction and Tangibility.

Tangibility influences satisfaction in regards to physical infrastructures, orderly-organized service points and functionality of electronic systems (Parasuraman et al., 1988). There is also a positive effect of physical cleanliness, appropriate ICT systems, and appearance of professional staff on the perception of customers.

It has system failures and bad infrastructures, which affect confidence negatively.

2.5 Research Gaps

Although the services of quality and customer satisfaction are widely researched, most studies are performed in relation to the entities of the private sector. Empirical literature on the details of the public registration institution in Uganda, particularly URSB, is lacking.

Also, there is no evidence to investigate the role that each SERVQUAL dimension plays in customer satisfaction in the Ugandan context of the public sector.

The researchers make a step to address these gaps in this research since they analyze the correlation between reliability and responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibility, and customer satisfaction at URSB, and do it in an empirical manner.

2.6 Summary

This chapter has reviewed empirical evidence of service quality theoretical backgrounds, conceptual, and customer satisfaction. Theoretical underpinnings are good in SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988), and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980).

It has been empirically shown that customer satisfaction has a positive correlation with quality of services. Nonetheless, the research under the specialization of URSB is underserved, and this fact makes this research relevant.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe the research design that has been adopted to conduct the research on quality of service and customer satisfaction at Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). It gives an account of research design, research population, the sample size, sampling, data sources, data collection methods and data collection instruments, data collection process, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data processing and data analysis procedure. The methodological strategy was designed such that the data collected were reliable, valid and adequate to respond to the study objectives and test the formulated research hypotheses.

3.2 Research Design

The type of research design employed by the study was quantitative and qualitative research studies that were cross-sectional research. The choice of the cross-sectional design was reasonable because the research had to access the information about the respondents at a specific moment, and the researcher was interested in assessing the present status of the interconnection between the quality of service and customer satisfaction at URSB without manipulating the research variables.

The quantitative approach was used to measure the numerical data on the dimensions of the service quality perceptions of the clients including the reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility, and the overall customer satisfaction rates. This made it possible to do statistical analysis which were founded on descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between quality of service and customer satisfaction.

Qualitative method has been employed to obtain specific information about the employees of chosen URSB on matters related to service delivery processes, customer treatment and practices, operational issues and institutional responsiveness to clients. The triangulation of the data and the validity and completeness of the study findings were improved due to the combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.3 Study Population

The sample of the research covered URSB customers and a sample of police officers and clerks of the URSB that were involved in the process of service provision. The clients of URSB were individuals and business representatives, who had access to their services such as, registration of business names, incorporating a company, registering intellectual property, and even civil registration services.

The employees of URSB also had officers that handled customer care, registration processes and service delivery at both the managerial and the operational level. This study was conducted in head quarters of URSB in Kampala and the regional offices in Mbarara, Gulu and Mbale that are major business centres with significant experiences with clients.

According to the administrative documents of URSB, the time frame of the study performed estimated that the number of active clients who used the services provided by the given offices was approximately 420 and the number of staff members involved in the direct service delivery was approximately 60.

3.4 Sample Size

The research sample consisted of 30 URSB clients whom were selected to participate in the research. This sample size was considered adequate in an undergraduate research study and the sample size would allow effective data collection and analysis due to the resource and time constraint.

In addition to this, the number of URSB employees randomly chosen to be interviewed was minimal to provide qualitative data on the practice and challenges of service delivery.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

Probability and non-probability sampling were used in the study. The sample of the clients of URSB was selected using simple random sampling in such a way that all the clients had equal opportunities of being included in the study. The approach minimized the degree of selection bias, as well as enhanced sample representativeness.

The staff at URSB was sampled purposely to interview the staff. This approach was appropriate because the staff members were selected based on their positions, experience, and their personal involvement in the provision of services and contacts with customers. Such respondents were expected to be having relevant information that would be applied to achieve the study objectives.

3.6 Data Sources

The study used primary and secondary data. The direct interviews and surveys to the URSB clients and staff were used in the primary data collection. The sources of secondary data were URSB annual reports, government policy documents, service charters, as well as other academic literature. The two sources of data helped in the data triangulation and the validity of the study results.

3.7 Data Collection Methods and Instruments.

The structured interview guides and questionnaires were used to gather primary data. Quantitative data was obtained with the help of structured questionnaire which was self-administered and applied to the URSB clients. The questionnaires were closed ended questions, with the measurement of the five point Likert scale to Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

The questionnaire would be used in the collection of data on two dimensions of service quality reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy dimension and the dimension of tangibility and indicators of customer satisfaction that included the general satisfaction, intention to use and refer URSB services.

Interview guide was implemented to collect information about the selected URSB employees according to the process of qualitative data gathering. The interviews also gave the respondents a chance to elaborate on their answers to the problems of service delivery and operational constraints and how the quality of the services can be improved.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection was preceded by providing the researcher with an introductory letter of the School of Business. This was later followed by the pursuit of authorization on behalf of URSB management of the headquarters and the regional offices where URSB is located.

The questionnaires were distributed physically by giving them to the chosen URSB clients at the time of the service delivery and sufficient time was given to the respondents to fill the questionnaire. The interviews with the URSB employees were carried out in the most convenient time and place to the respondents. Post data quality check was data analysis and data entry; this was on the already completed questionnaires.

3.9 Research Instrument validity and Reliability.

The validity of the research instruments was facilitated by academic supervisor and other professionals checking questionnaire items because they had to measure the relevance, clarity, and adequacy of the questionnaire items. The validity of the questionnaire was calculated using Content Validity Index (CVI) whereas the validity of the questionnaire was considered as 0.70 and above and all the questions with CVI of 0.70 and above were accepted.

The pre-testing was implemented to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire and the internal construction of the items were checked with the help of the corresponding reliability measures. These processes made the research instruments used in the research give credible and consistent results.

Data Processing and Analysis Data analysis will be done through content analysis approach.

The information gathered using questionnaire was analyzed using the statistical package social sciences (SPSS) where the data was edited, coded and keyed into the SPSS. The features and perceptions of the respondents concerning the service quality and customer satisfaction were outlined in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations.

The correlation with Pearson and multiple regression were conducted as the inferential statistics to test the hypotheses of the study, the relationship between the dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction.

Thematic analysis using coding and interpretation was used to analyse the qualitative data realized during the interviews to determine the major themes and pattern pertaining to service delivery and customer experiences at URSB.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.

4.1 Introduction

The chapter summarises, assesses and makes inferences on findings of the study on the quality of service and customer satisfaction of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). It is the analysis regarding the objectives and hypotheses of the study and regarding the data given on the URSB clients by use of the structured questionnaires. Correlation of the service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction, the level of customer satisfaction, and the service quality level were determined using descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

4.2 Response Rate

Now the direction of the research was 30 people who were the customers of URSB. It used 30 questionnaires, 27 of which represented the response rate of 90percent, which were completed and returned as seen in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Response Rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Questionnaires issued	30	100
Questionnaires returned	27	90
Questionnaires not returned	3	10

The response rate was deemed to be sufficient to conduct analysis and interpretation and means that there is a high degree of cooperative respondents. This increases the validity of the results and indicates that findings are quite encompassing of the opinions of URSB clients.

4.3 Background Characteristics of Respondents

The section contains the demographic features of the respondents such as gender, age, and frequency of interaction with URSB services. These features give a background to the perceptions of quality of services and customer satisfaction by respondents.

4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

The distribution of respondents by gender is presented in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: gender distribution of respondents

Gender	frequency	Percentage
Male	16	59.3
Female	11	40.7
Total	27	100

The findings indicated that 59.3 percent of the participants were male with 40.7 percent being female. This means that both sexes actively utilize URSB services, though, clients of male gender somewhat dominated a sample. The fact that both genders are included increases the representativeness of the results.

4.3.2 Age Distribution of the Respondents.

Table 4.3 shows the age distribution of respondents

Table 4.3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18-25 years	5	18.5
26-35 years	12	44.4
36-45 years	7	25.9
Above 45 years	3	11.2
Total	27	100

The results revealed that the majority of the respondents (44.4 percent) were between 26 and 35 years with the other respondents between 36 and 45 years (25.9 percent). It means that the URSB services are mainly used by members of the economically active population, who have more chances to be involved in business registration and in compliance-associated activities.

4.3.3 Occurrence of Interaction with URSB Services.

The results of how often the respondents interact with urSB services are presented in table 4.4

Table 4.4: Frequency of urSB service usage

Frequency of use	Frequency	Percentage (%)
First-time user	6	22.2
Occasional user	14	51.9
Frequent user	7	25.9
Total	27	100

Over fifty percent of the respondents (51.9 percent) used URSB services occasionally with 25.9 percent of them using them often. This is an indication that the respondents had enough experience using the available URSB services to give informed responses on service quality and customer satisfaction.

4.4 Descriptive Study Variables Analyses.

This section includes descriptive statistics of the dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. The interpretation of the perceptions of the respondents was done through mean scores and SDs where the higher the mean score the higher the respondents agreed with the statements.

4.4.1 The reliability of Services at URSB is as follows.

Respondents were asked to rate statements relating to timeliness of registration, accuracy of documentation and consistency of service delivery.

The results are presented in table 4.5

Table 4.5: Descriptive results for Reliability

Reliability items	Mean	Standard deviation
URSB complete registration within the promised time	3.41	1.02
Documents issued by URSB are accurate and error-free	3.67	0.89
Services are delivered consistently across visits	3.52	0.94
Average mean	3.53	

The results obtained showed the mean score of reliability to be 3.53, which shows that the respondents tended to perceive URSB services as reliable. The highest mean was achieved with accuracy of documentation, which implies that clients put their trust on the accuracy of the documentation issued by URSB. Nevertheless, the speed of service provision scored comparatively lower, and it can be concluded that the delays in service processing are still the issue. This indicates that URSB is very accurate, but future speed in processing the data may contribute to increasing the overall reliability interpretation.

4.4.2 Staff responsiveness at URSB.

Responsiveness is the readiness and possibility of URSB staff to help the clients in timely manner and give feedback on time. Table 4.6 demonstrates the descriptive results

Table 4.6 Responsiveness of URSB staff

Reliability items	Mean	Standard deviation
Staff attended to clients promptly	3.33	1.08
staff are willing to help when challenges arise	3.59	0.97
Clients receive timely feedback on applicants	3.22	1.11
Average mean	3.38	

The responsiveness mean score was equal to 3.38, and it was moderate. Respondents admitted that employees were ready to assist when some issues occurred, but the quick feedback and immediate response to the clients achieved lower average scores. It is an indication that the timing of communication and responding to the customer can adversely influence customer experiences.

4.4.3 Assurance

Assurance is associated with personnel capability, professionalism, politeness, and confidence inspiring capability among clients. The table of results is shown in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Descriptive results for Assurance.

Assurance items	Mean	Standard deviation
Staff are knowledgeable about registration procedure	3.74	0.88
Staff behave professionally and courtesy	3.81	0.84
Clients feel confident when dealing with URSB staff	3.70	0.91
Average mean	3.75	

The highest average mean score recorded was 3.75 in Assurance, which implies that the URSB employees are most agreeable that the employees are well informed, professional and polite. Clients usually had confidence when engaging with URSB employees. This result points to the confidence as one of the primary strengths of URSB service delivery and a crucial element in the creation of customer trust and satisfaction.

4.4.4 Empathy

Empathy is the degree at which the URSB staff members give personalized care and awareness of the needs of clients. The findings are presented in table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Descriptive results for Empathy

Empathy items	Mean	Standard deviation
Staff gives personal attention to clients	3.26	1.56
Staff understand clients' specific needs	3.30	1.01
Clients feel respected and valued	3.56	0.96
Average mean	3.37	

The average mean score of empathy was 3.37, which means that the level of individualized attention is moderate. Although respondents tended to feel respected, individual attention and awareness of individual client needs was more erratic. It implies that URSB should reinforce the client-focused service strategies.

4.4.5 Tangibility

Tangibility refers to the physical facilities, equipment, digital systems, and appearance of staff at URSB. The findings are presented in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Descriptive results for Tangibility.

Tangibility items	Mean	Standard deviation
URSB offices are clean and well organized	3.63	0.90
Digital systems and platforms are functional	3.18	1.14
Staff appearance is neat and professional	3.78	0.82
Average mean	3.53	

The average mean score of tangibility was 3.53 showing that there were positive perceptions about the physical facilities and staff appearance of URSB. Nevertheless, mean scores were lower with the functionality of digital systems, which indicates that there were concerns on the issue of system downtimes. Enhancing the reliability of the systems may consequently boost the efficiency of the service and the customer satisfaction.

4.4.6 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction reflects clients' overall evaluation of URSB services. The descriptive results are shown in table 4.10

Table 4.10: Descriptive results for customer satisfaction..

Customer satisfaction items	Mean	Standard deviation
Overall satisfaction with URSB services	3.59	0.93
Willingness to continue using URSB services	3.74	0.88
Willingness to recommend URSB to others	3.48	0.99
Average mean	3.60	

Mean score on customer satisfaction was 3.60, which suggests that customers are mostly satisfied with the services of URSB. The highest mean score was on willingness to remain on the URSB services, whereas the willingness to recommend URSB services was average. This implies that clients are contented although service quality can be further developed to improve advocacy and positive publicity.

4.5 The correlation between Customer Satisfaction and the Quality of their Service.

To establish the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction at the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. Service quality was measured using SERVQUAL dimensions, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibility.

Table 4.11: Correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction.

Variable	Customer satisfaction
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Reliability	0.521**
Responsiveness	0.486**
Assurance	0.603**
Empathy	0.447*
Tangibility	0.509**

*correlation is significant at 0.05 level

**correlation is significant at 0.01 level

Pearson correlation analysis showed the positive and statistically significant relationship on all the service quality dimensions with customer satisfaction. Assurance had the best correlation, the next one was reliability and then tangibility with empathy having the least and still significant relationship. It means that customer satisfaction can be expected to increase when the quality of service is improved at URSB.

4.6 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the combined effect of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and to identify the most significant predictors.

Table 4.12: Regression model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error
1	0.712	0.507	0.478		0.548

The multiple regression analysis revealed that the dimensions of service quality combinedly expressed 50.7 percent of the difference in customer satisfaction. The regression model was found to be statistically significant which affirmed that the quality of service is one of the determinant of customer satisfaction at URSB.

One of the strongest and the most effective predictors of customer satisfaction was assurance, and then tangibility and reliability. The predictors that were not statistically significant were responsiveness and empathy, although they had a positive relationship with customer satisfaction. This implies that the competence, professionalism, and reliability of the system of the staff is more critical in determining the customer satisfaction as compared to responsiveness and empathy only.

4.7 Hypotheses Testing

The hypothesis that service quality and customer satisfaction do not have significant relationship was rejected. The hypothesis on reliability, tangibility and assurance were also rejected because these variables also played a significant role in customer satisfaction. The null hypothesis that responsiveness and empathy cannot have significant roles in customer satisfaction was accepted.

4.8 Discussion of Findings

The results of the research are in line with SERVQUAL model and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, which hold the opinion that customer satisfaction is dependent on the quality of the

services. The high impact of assurance is consistent with the past research that has placed competence and professionalism of the staff as the key satisfaction attributes in the open institutions. The importance of reliability and tangibility supports available literature that emphasizes the importance of proper service delivery and working systems. The lack of importance of responsiveness and empathy can be indicative of the institutional limitations of workload and system in the areas of public service.

4.9 Summary of Findings

The article determined that URSB customers tended to rate the quality of the services and customer satisfaction as positive. Assurance is the most significant factor which determines customer satisfaction and then came tangibility and reliability. Responsiveness, and empathy, though significant, did not make a significant prediction of customer satisfaction. In general service quality was established to have a significant impact on customer satisfaction at URSB.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, the conclusion, the recommendation, the study limitation and the area of research that would be discovered following the research on service quality and customer satisfaction at the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). The chapter is built on the premise of the rigorous compliance with the empirical findings described and discussed in Chapter Four and is organised based on the study purpose and hypotheses. The purpose of this chapter is to decode the results and make evidence-based conclusions as well as sensible recommendations that will assist to enhance service delivery and customer satisfaction at URSB.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The conclusion of the research is provided, according to the particular purposes of the research.

5.2.1 Quality of Level of Service at URSB.

The study established that the quality of service at URSB was generally satisfactory. The five dimensions of service quality, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility had the average score that was more than the neutral scale five, which indicated that the clients had mostly positive perceptions.

The consistency in the services offered by URSB registered an average of 3.53 that is a good sign that the services were quite consistent and accurate. Clients believed that the report created by URSB was valid. However, the timeliness of service delivery was relatively low and this translates to the fact that delays in applications have not been eradicated.

The mean score of responsiveness was 3.38 that showed that there was moderate responsiveness. Even though it was perceived that the staff was quite willing to help, the clients complained that it takes long to respond to feedbacks and communicate and this indicates that it has flaws in responding to and communicating.

The highest mean score was on assurance of 3.75 which indicated that clients felt that URSB staff was knowledgeable, professional and courteous. This outcome shows that the key strengths of the URSB service delivery are the competence and professionalism of their staff.

Empathy had a mean score of 3.37 that shows moderate scores in individualised attention. Respect was normally provided to clients, but personal attention and understanding of the needs of the client was not necessarily provided.

The mean score of tangibility was 3.53, which implied that it has positive perceptions of physical facilities and appearance of the staffs. The digital systems were however not as functional since the mean scores were less concerning the problems related to system downtimes and technical inefficiency.

5.2.2 Level of Customer Satisfaction at URSB.

The findings showed that URSB clients were rather content with the services they enjoyed and the mean total was 3.60. Most of the respondents shared that they are willing to continue consuming URSB services implying that they have not stopped believing in the institution. Nevertheless, the willingness to suggest URSB services to other individuals was mediocre, which means that the customer satisfaction and favorable recommendations could be improved with the help of service quality improvement.

5.2.3 Customer Satisfaction-service Quality Relationship.

The correlation analysis revealed that the customers satisfaction had some positive and statistically significant relationships with all the dimensions of the services quality. The most significant between Assurance and reliability and tangibility in relation to customer satisfaction, empathy was the least, yet important association.

The regression analysis also indicated that the dimensions of the service quality were utilized to explain the customer satisfaction (50.7 percent). Assurance with tangibility and reliability was next the strongest and most significant predictor of customer satisfaction. The latter was not statistically correlated with the responsiveness and empathy that had positive correlations with customer satisfaction in the level of 0.05.

5.2.4 The Issues that affect the quality of service at URSB.

The study has discovered that the key problems that affect the quality of services provided at URSB were delays in service delivery, frequent system failures, the absence of feedback systems and the absence of personalised approach to clients. The problems were reflected in a comparatively poor mean score in timeliness, responsiveness, empathy, and the functionality of systems.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the analysis results, the following conclusions have been made:

Firstly, the study concludes that customer satisfaction heavily depends on quality of services offered to the customers of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau. The alterations of the quality of the services rendered will most probably lead to further growth of customer trust, compliance, and usage of URSB services.

Secondly, assurance was also established to be the most conclusive factor that can be used to determine the level of customer satisfaction. The good customer experience and the trust in URSB are not possible without professionalism, competence, and polite behaviour of the staff.

Third, reliability and tangibility were seen to influence customer satisfaction to a very high extent. Customer satisfaction is enhanced by proper documentation, conformity to service delivery and appropriately arranged centres of service delivery and functional systems.

Fourth, responsiveness and empathy did not have any significant predictive ability on customer satisfaction although there was a positive relationship. This means that their overall impact on customer satisfaction is reduced since feedback response is delayed, communication and the absence of individualised attention.

5.4 Recommendations

As the study and conclusions conducted will show, the aim is to recommend the following:

5.4.1 Some Recommendations to the URSB Management.

The URSB management must step up on the continuous staff training programmes so that the assurance can be even more enhanced particularly in customer handling, communication and procedural knowledge areas.

URSB should invest in amplifying stability and reliability of its digital systems to cut down on the system downtimes and delay of service. On a regular basis, maintenance of the system and enhancement of infrastructure should be done.

The management must work on improvement of the communication and feedback systems to be more receptive. These may include automatic progressions on their application status, improved customer care systems and clearly stipulated response time limits.

The URSB must also promote customer oriented culture of service by encouraging the staff to be more personal with customers and show empathy with the clients in service excellence programs and performance review systems.

5.4.2 Policy Recommendations

The government and the policy makers should sufficiently fund and support with policy digitalisation and enhancement of quality of services in the public sector. The use of the policy that emphasises on accountability, monitoring performance and customer-centred service delivery will also require strengthening.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

One of the weaknesses of the study was the use of a relatively small sample size that may affect the generalisability of the results. In addition, the study was conducted within one open organization and had a cross-sectional design, excluding the opportunity to assess the changes in the quality of the offered services and customer satisfaction at any point in time.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

It is possible to enhance the research with larger samples and comparison with other public institutions in future studies to enhance generalisability. The longitudinal studies can also be considered to trace the patterns of service quality and customer satisfaction with the course of time. Other customer satisfaction variables include organisational culture, type of leadership and policy implementation in institutions of the public services as can be found in subsequent studies.

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