AN ASSESSMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY AMONG INTERNAL CUSTOMERS: THE CASE OF THE BOTSWANA MASCOM WIRELESS COMPANY

JULIA MPOPI MOGOTSI

North-West University
Mafikeng Campus Library

Mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Business Administration in Marketing at the Mafikeng Campus of the North-West University

Supervisor: Prof. S. M. Kapunda

OCTOBER 2012
# Table of Contents

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................... ii
List of Tables and Figures ................................................................................................. v
DECLARATION .................................................................................................................. vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..................................................................................................... vii
ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................ viii

CHAPTER ONE .................................................................................................................... 1
INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................ 1
1.1 Background Information ............................................................................................. 1
1.2 Problem Statement ...................................................................................................... 2
1.3 Objectives .................................................................................................................... 3
1.4 Significance of the study ........................................................................................... 4
1.5 Format of the Study .................................................................................................... 4

CHAPTER TWO ................................................................................................................. 5
OVERVIEW OF SERVICE QUALITY AMONG INTERNAL CUSTOMERS IN BOTSWANA AND THE MASCOM WIRELESS COMPANY ........................................................................... 5
2.1 Introduction ................................................................................................................ 5
2.2 Status of Service Quality among Employees at Botswana ......................................... 5
2.3 Internal Service Quality in Botswana ......................................................................... 6
2.4 Status of Internal Service Quality at Mascom Wireless Company ................................ 7
2.4.1 Background Information about the Company .................................................. 7
2.4.2 Internal Service Quality at Mascom Wireless .................................................... 7
2.5 Failure to Recognise Internal Customers ................................................................... 8
2.6 Conclusion ................................................................................................................ 9

CHAPTER THREE ............................................................................................................. 10
LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................................................................... 10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Theoretical Literature Review</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Internal Customers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>Internal Service Quality</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>Internal Customer Requirements and Needs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.4</td>
<td>Internal Customer Satisfaction</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.5</td>
<td>Internal Customer Interaction</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6</td>
<td>Internal Service Quality Dimensions</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6.1</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6.2</td>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6.3</td>
<td>Assurance</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6.4</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.6.5</td>
<td>Tangibility</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.7</td>
<td>Internal Marketing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Empirical Literature Review</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Research Design

4.2 Target Population

4.3 Sampling

4.4 Survey Instrument

4.4.1 Questionnaire

4.4.2 Research Questions

4.4.3 Pilot Study

4.4.4 Administration of the Questionnaire

4.5 Sources and Collection of Data

4.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Validity and Reliability</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND THEIR INTERPRETATIONS

5.1 Introduction | 24
5.2 Research Findings and Interpretations | 24
5.3 Conclusion | 36

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction | 37
6.2 Conclusion | 37
6.2.1 Research Findings | 37
6.2.2 Application of Service Quality Dimensions | 40
6.3 Policy Implications and Recommendations | 41
6.3.1 Recommendations for the Internal Customers and Internal Suppliers | 41
6.4 Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Further Research | 42

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE | 44

References | 48
List of Tables and Figures

Table 5.1: Definition of Internal Customers ................................................................. 24
Figure 5.1: Availability of Internal Customers .............................................................. 25
Table 5.2: List of Internal Customers ........................................................................ 25
Figure 5.2: Are you an Internal Customer? ................................................................. 26
Table 5.3: Their Internal Service Suppliers ................................................................. 26
Table 5.4: Respondents' Relationship with Internal Service Providers .................. 28
Figure 5.3: Service Satisfaction Level ....................................................................... 28
Figure 5.4: Customer Worthiness ............................................................................. 29
Table 5.5: The Quality of Service Customers Receive from Management ............ 30
Figure 5.5: Willingness of Service Providers to Assist .............................................. 30
Table 5.6: Service Providers' Response to Customers' Queries and Requests ....... 31
Table 5.7: Sharing Responsibility to Solve Problems ................................................ 31
Table 5.8: Communication between Respondents and Service Providers .......... 32
Table 5.9: The Overall Quality of Service in Mascom .............................................. 32
Table 5.10: Problems that can arise from Poor Working Relationships ............... 33
Table 5.11: Major Suggestions ............................................................................... 34
Figure 5.7: Measures in Place to Ensure Quality Service ......................................... 34
Table 5.12: List of Measures in Place to Ensure Quality Service .......................... 35
DECLARATION

I, Julia Mpopi Mogotsi, do hereby declare that this mini-dissertation is a result of my assessment and research and has never been submitted neither in part nor in full for any degree to any University.

Julia Mpopi Mogotsi

Date
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to my Supervisor, Prof. S.M. Kapunda, who despite the limited time we had together due to my parting with my initial supervisor, worked with me tirelessly to ensure that I met the deadlines. His profound knowledge, patience and commitment helped me to work hard and thus achieve my goal.

I will always be grateful to my mother and my daughter, Constance, who steadfastly stood by me through all this time and the late nights they endured waiting for me to come home from my studies.

One other person who tirelessly supported me with his encouragement is my friend, Johannes Tsimako. He has been a pillar of strength; someone who lifted my spirits whenever I was feeling low. He always encouraged me to be positive and never wanted to hear anything negative.

I am also indebted to the Botswana Mascom Wireless Company and the management for allowing me to conduct the research among the company employees who have also helped me by heeding my request for help in responding to the questionnaires.
ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study is to assess the internal service quality at Mascom Wireless. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to establish the number of employees who are not happy with their internal service quality and to find out what they suggest could be done to solve the problems that exist. A total of 110 employees out of 280 were given the questionnaire and only 64 of the sampled people responded. A random sampling technique was used to include respondents from each division in the company.

The study has revealed that about half of the respondents knew the correct meaning of internal customers. About 6 percent confirmed that they had excellent relationship among themselves, however almost 34 percent assessed the relationship to be better than satisfactory. About 44 percent assessed the rendered service to be satisfactory.

The study finally draws conclusions from the implications and makes recommendations before recommending areas for further research. One of the effects of poor working relationships that was revealed by the study was poor service delivery and lack of team spirit. Some recommendations given in the study are sensitisation of employees about internal customers and the need for proper communication between staff.

Keywords: internal customers, quality of service, internal service suppliers, quality dimensions, internal customer satisfaction, internal marketing
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Customer service involves implementing a set of activities and represents the output of a service system, according to Yan and Chen (2000:273), but they acknowledge that the meaning of customer service varies from one firm to another. They state that this topic has received widespread attention over the past number of years due to the demands of the global market.

The key component in a customer-focused environment is the customer. Without the customer, there is no reason for an organisation to exist. Employees have either internal or external customers, and there must be a continuing consciousness of the need to provide exceptional enthusiastic customer service (Lucas, 2005:22).

Many people in the workplace have a mistaken idea of what an internal customer is and they will tell you that they do not have “customers”. Lucas (2005)’s study defines internal customers as co-workers, employees of other departments or branches, and other people who work within the same organisation and who rely on one another in their organisation to provide services, information, and/or products that enable them to do their jobs. The study further underscores that recognising this formidable group of customers is important and crucial for on-the-job success. Other definitions of internal customer are provided in the literature review in Chapter Three.

The relationship between employees must be strengthened and harnessed by management through the human resources division, as the division tasked with the welfare of employees. The division has to come up with means of ensuring that there are good interpersonal relationships among employees, which will ultimately transform into greater rewards to the company in respect of service to internal customers. Rostamy and Takanlou (2007:5) define service quality as the comparison of service expectations with actual performance perceptions. It is the delivery of superior services to customers according to their desire and expectations. This is usually geared towards
external customers who bring the profit for the companies and organisations. This is supported by a study by Paraskevas (2001:285), in which it was found that the vast body of relevant hospitality research literature is focused on organisations serving the external customer and neglecting the importance of the quality of internal service encounters. According to Irfan, et al., (2009:1223), service quality has become a key to success for the service organisations, and a motivated human resource plays an important role in delivering superior quality. Employees bring the company competitive advantage and they have to be happy in order for them to treat customers well. This research seeks to establish the relationship between employees in order to establish their relationship with external customers.

1.2 Problem Statement

Juna and Caib (2010:205) state that the concept of “customer-focused quality” has long been contemplated throughout the history of total quality management (TQM) and that it continues to be a hot topic addressed by much academic and trade literature today such as Anderson, et al., 1994; Dean and Bowen, 1994; Flynn and Saladin, 2001; Sila, 2007. Their study, however, cites Stanley and Wisner, (2001), as saying that while strong emphasis has consistently been placed on external customer service quality, relatively little attention has been paid to internal customer service quality.

Cannon’s, (2002:87) study further states that although there have been numerous modifications and adaptations of TQM, the essential principles of this management philosophy are fundamental to most continual improvement processes. The study states that one of the TQM elements that is particularly relevant in the delivery of the intangible hospitality product of service is the involvement of those delivering these product-employees. Successful service organisations fully understand the importance of carefully monitoring and managing customer satisfaction. This means also understanding that customers may be from within the organisation as well. This is confirmed by the study by Chatterjee (2001:500), which finds that most large
organizations house a wealth of customers and it is in such set-ups that the concept of customer satisfaction is of significant importance.

Service quality has a marked effect on customer satisfaction, loyalty, retention, and firms' performance superiority according to Rostamy and Takanlou (2007:2). To the best of the author's knowledge, the studies concerning internal customers are very few; those that focus on Botswana are hardly visible. This research seeks to add to the few studies done on internal customers and quality service among employees (Gunawardane, 2009; Chatterjee, 2001; Chasten, 1994; Miguel, et al., 2006) to establish how at Mascom, employees render service to each other and in the process to sensitise respondents in respect of the importance of good working relationships among themselves.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to assess service quality among internal customers with the focus on the Mascom Wireless Company, and to identify the challenges and mitigations that can be utilised to remedy the situation.

Specific objectives are:

a) to establish whether or not employees understand the concept of internal customers;
b) to investigate how employees interact with each other professionally in terms of service delivery;
c) to assess the quality of services provided;
d) to establish the implications of poor working relations among co-workers and to make suggestions on what can be done to improve the situation; and
e) to establish what management is doing to ensure that there are good working relationships among employees and between themselves and employees.
1.4 Significance of the study

The study will at a great extent help individuals and organisations understand the importance of good interpersonal relationships. They will understand a crucial role that internal customers play in the success of the company or any institution as a whole. Management will also start taking care of employees and nurturing them towards achieving desired results. Odgers (2004:7) maintains that employees should respect and serve internal customers as if they were paying clients, it further states that, the way in which internal customers are treated translates into how a company is perceived by its external customers.

The study is also intended as an input for policy makers, researchers and others who have a keen interest in internal customer studies.

1.5 Format of the Study

The rest of the study is organised as follows:

Chapter Two provides the overview of service quality among internal customers in Botswana and the Mascom Wireless Company in particular. The literature review is covered in Chapter Three, outlining what other researchers say about the topic and thus putting this study into perspective. Research methodology is presented in Chapter Four. This shows how the study was conducted. Chapter Five presents analyses and discusses the findings of the study and their interpretations. Chapter Six provides conclusions, implications and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW OF SERVICE QUALITY AMONG INTERNAL CUSTOMERS IN BOTSWANA AND THE MASCOM WIRELESS COMPANY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the quality of service among internal customers in Botswana and the Mascom Wireless Company in particular. It sets out by investigating on the internal service quality in Botswana as a whole. The chapter then proceeds to research the internal service quality at the Mascom Wireless Company.

2.2 Status of Service Quality among Employees in Botswana

Service quality in Botswana and elsewhere is an issue that is always talked about both in the public and the private sector. Customers face the challenge of not being treated with respect. This has prompted institutions to come up with measures that will ensure that customers are given quality service that is acceptable, such as suggestion boxes for customers in which to lodge their complaints and mystery shopping. In inspire of all these initiatives to ensure that the external customer is given quality service, there are no initiatives to ensure that the internal customer is provided with the quality of service that is provided to other customers. A key performance area has been developed that deals with customer care. This customer care is for external customers and the suggestion boxes and query logs are created to ensure that they are served properly. All that is used to monitor whether internal customers respect each other is the personal attribute that deals with good interpersonal skills but there are no mechanisms in place to measure if they really serve each other well.
2.3 Internal Service Quality in Botswana

Good customer service is a phenomenon that is very much respected in Botswana especially after President Seretse Khama Ian Khama placed significant emphasis on the delivery of service to the public (Mathala, 2009:2). This happened after his inauguration in April 2008. It gained momentum after the introduction of performance improvement initiatives such as Work Improvement Teams (WITS) and the Performance Management System (PMS). According to Pansiri and Mmereki (2012:221-222), the government of Botswana, through the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM), an employer for the public service, adopted WITS as one of the reform initiatives. This in turn led to the creation of the Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC).

According to the study, WITS was designed so that groups of civil servants or other public officers from the same unit, irrespective of their divisional status, are able to meet regularly to identify, examine, analyse, and solve problems pertaining to their work and to identify and examine improvement opportunities, propose and implement improvement measures and conduct studies on how to improve, among others quality of service in the public sector. The PMS was meant to enhance productivity and service quality throughout government ministries and departments. Though WITS and the PMS were mainly established for the public sector, BNPC was established to spearhead performance in respect of the whole country and all economic domains.

In an article by Mathala (2009:2), the President urged the Ministers and councillors to work hard and deliver to the nation. This was to be taken to the different ministries and departments. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications informed his staff of the emphasis on service delivery and to abide by the public service charter, which is a guide to quality public service delivery. This was to ensure that Batswana are given the quality of service that is desirable. All these initiatives on the delivery of service are to ensure that external customers are served appropriately. Nobody ever wonders about the people who are providing this service: whether they are provided with the required means to execute their duties well, whether
they are satisfied with their work, or whether resources are there to aid them in their service delivery.

2.4. Status of Internal Service Quality at the Mascom Wireless Company

2.4.1 Background Information about the Company

The Mascom Wireless Company is a company employing mostly young people; more than 50% of employees are below 35 years of age and the majority of them are men, according to the Human Resources Service, a department that deals with staff issues in the company. The company has a staff complement of about 280 employees. It is situated in Gaborone and has three outlets in Gaborone and three others outside Gaborone in Francistown, Gantsi and Maun.

2.4.2 Internal Service Quality at Mascom Wireless

Regular staff interactions indicate that there is little understanding about the concept of internal customers in the company; to such an extent that there are no sound interpersonal relationships. Employees fear approaching each other when they want service. The fear is stems from interaction with each other. The responses that employees usually get from each other are the ones that hinder people from requesting for assistance. Employees tend to target those that they can relate to better for assistance and avoid those that they fear. The reason for fearing other colleagues results from the responses they usually receive when they ask for service. These responses are also shared by colleagues amongst themselves and it tends to bring about mutual animosity.

The officers have never realised that they are each other’s customers. They do not seem to be aware that, if, for example a person from IT comes to them for assistance they may in the same way be knocking at the IT door looking for assistance. According to Lucas (2005:22), in the internal customer chain, an employee is sometimes a
customer and at other times a supplier. There is too much taking each other for granted, resulting in colleagues being treated like strangers. The study by Odgers (2005:7) confirms that unfortunately in many firms, internal customers are often ignored or taken for granted, which is an attitude that compromises the productive flow of work throughout the company, Gunawardane's (2009:22) study states that empirical work has shown that poor internal service quality is likely to have a negative impact on the quality of services provided to external customers. This also applies to the Mascom Wireless Company.

Management at Mascom do not have an understanding of how employees are treating each other because they are given the best service by virtue of their positions. The findings in this study highlight conditions pertaining to internal customers at the Mascom Wireless Company.

2.5. Failure to Recognise Internal Customers

There are many challenges that are faced on account of a failure to understand that internal customers are the key to the success of the company or any institution. More often, as the article has already mentioned, companies fail to notice the importance of their employees and the need to nurture them as their assets. According to Lucas (2005:22), recognising this formidable group of customers is important and crucial for on-the-job success. They fail to understand that employees bring them the competitive edge that places them where they are. According to Zailani et al.'s (2006:3) study on the hotel industry, understanding internal action on service quality is a vital fundamental in ensuring customer satisfaction that contributed to better hotel business performance. Recognition of employees must start with management in order to ensure that the company policies recognise an employee as the most valuable person in their system. By understanding their importance they will then instil a sense of worth in their staff so that it becomes the culture of the company or the institution.

The way colleagues treat each other also determines how they are going to treat customers. Failure by colleagues to treat each other well breeds dissatisfaction that
ultimately cuts across different cadres in the institution. Management may not be treating their subordinates well, they may not be giving them the necessary assistance in order for them to be able to do their job, and supervisors may also not be particularly helpful, especially with regard to junior employees. Gronroos (cited by Zailani et al., 2006:3), states that every service operation comprises internal service functions, which support one another and argue that, if poor internal service exists, final service to customers will be damaged. According to Hart (cited by Farner et al., 2001:352) internal guarantees improve organisational performance: firstly, a true spirit of teamwork and partnership develops between different parts of the organisation, secondly, an environment of blameless error takes hold, wherein employees are rewarded, not punished for identifying problems instead of sweeping them under the rug or blaming someone else, and thirdly, continuous dialogue and feedback begin with progress, problems, and processes.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of how internal customers are regarded both in Botswana as a whole and at the Mascom Wireless Company in particular. Employers need to realise that emphasis on external customers does not work if the people who are at the forefront of giving quality service to them are themselves not given quality service. Internal customers do not directly bring money to the company but they bring the money indirectly through giving quality service to external customers, thereby instilling loyalty in them.
CHAPTER THREE
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides both the theoretical literature review and the empirical literature review. Section 3.2 examines the theoretical literature covering internal customers, internal service quality, internal customer satisfaction, internal service quality dimensions and internal marketing. Section 3.3 focuses on the empirical literature before the concluding remarks are made.

3.2. Theoretical Literature Review

3.2.1 Internal Customers

According to Pantouvakis (2011:12-13), the concept of internal customers emerged during the mid-1980s, suggesting that every department within a company has both internal and external customers, and that employees (internal suppliers) should provide services that meet the expectations of all their customers.

The key component in a customer-focused environment is the customer. All aspects of the service organisation revolve around external customers (Lucas, 2005:22). Gunawardane (2009:21) states that service quality is considered from the viewpoint of the customer who is the recipient of the service, i.e., the "external customer" and the efforts that have been focused on identifying the dimensions of quality in this "external service encounter". In addition, the study outlines that in recent times, researchers have also highlighted the existence and the importance of "internal customers" and the need to identify the dimensions in the "internal service encounter".

Internal customers as defined by Juna and Caib (2010:205), are individuals of other departments within an organisation that an internal supplier serves. Pride and Ferrell (2010:48), simply defines internal customers as the company's employees. They are
internal customers because they serve each other. They request service from each other. According to Gunawardane (2009:21), the basic tenet of the internal customer service concept is that each department (or sometimes an individual employee), either receives work from and/or performs work for other departments (or other employees). The department or individual performing the work is the internal service producer and the receiving department or individual is the internal customer, therefore their interaction is referred to as the internal service encounter.

There are unique aspects of internal customers according to Finn et al., (1996:38). They state that unlike final consumers, who consume both product and services, most internal customers consume only services. Another aspect is that final consumers have a choice of where to do business but internal customers have little or no choice at all. They are only able to resist prescribed products and standards or just choose not to cooperate.

3.2.2 Internal Service Quality

Quality, according to Blythe (2009:371), is the relationship between what customers expect and what they get. If a customer’s expectations are low, then he or she will not be disappointed. If, however, the customer has been led to expect a high quality product or service and is in fact given a poor quality service, he or she has the right to feel aggrieved. Blythe (2009) further states that perception of quality is closely related to the customer’s views on what constitutes value for money. Looking at this notion, it would appear that just because internal customers do not use money to be served they do not attach quality to the service they are given. Cant et al., (2006:308), outline that in the United States of America executives came to a consensus that service quality is one of the most important problems facing management today, and the study by Dawkins and Riechbel (cited by Zeithaml et al., (1996:31) states that delivering quality of service is regarded as an essential strategy for success and survival in today’s competitive environment.
Mosahab et al., (2010:13), defines service quality as the situation in which consumer's perception of service performance meets or exceeds their expectations of what the service firm should do. Delivery of high-quality services according to Pride and Ferrell (2010:48) is one of the most important and most difficult tasks any service organisation faces because services, by nature of their characteristics are difficult to evaluate.

3.2.3 Internal Customer Requirements and Needs

According to Saxena (2009:15), an internal customer has basic requirements. These requirements include the need for colleagues who are friendly and willing to help, show courtesy and respect, are efficient, friendly and knowledgeable, adopt a pleasant approach and fulfil expectations. He outlines what he calls the 3 C’s of internal customer orientation, which are ways of taking care of internal customers. This 3 C’s are care and concern, cooperation and collaboration and communication.

3.2.4 Internal Customer Satisfaction

Successful service organisations understand the importance of carefully monitoring and managing customer satisfaction. This also means understanding that customers may also be from within the organisation. This is confirmed by the study by Chatterjee (2001:500), which points out that most large organisations house a wealth of customers and it is in such set-ups that the concept of customer satisfaction is of significant importance. Service quality has a marked effect on customer satisfaction, loyalty, retention, and a firm’s performance superiority, according to Rostamy and Takanlou (2007:2). In their study Iliopoulos and Priporaz (2011) state that employees as internal customers have to be satisfied with their job first before they are able to satisfy the customers of the organisation.

In order to evolve as a customer-centred organisation, it is important that firms also take care of their internal customers (Saxena (2009:13). In other words, internal customer focus is as important as external customer focus. This is because customer satisfaction
is a process and not just an end product. Saxena’s study reveals that it is a well-known fact that customer satisfaction cannot be achieved until and unless all personnel within the organisation understand the importance of the external customer and are connected to them. Internal customer care therefore, involves each department and individual understanding the needs, expectations and problems of the next-in-queue department or individual.

Cant et al., (2006:310) state that this satisfaction leads to loyalty, loyalty leading to productivity, productivity leading to value, value leading to external customer satisfaction, which will lead to customer loyalty and ultimately to profitability and growth. By outlining this they are saying the company cannot hope to gain much profit if the internal customers are not themselves satisfied and are able to derive satisfaction from the way they are treated internally, but Juna and Caib (2010:209), state that very few studies have addressed the relationship between internal customer service quality dimensions and internal customer satisfaction. They therefore find it necessary for this to be investigated. When the importance of internal customer relationship is understood by staff members, according to Boshoff and Du Plessis (2009:207), it is relatively easy to change their attitude towards appreciating that a satisfied customer of the organisation refers to both an internal and an external customer.

3.2.5 Internal Customer Interactions

Lucas (2009:177-178) outlines suggestions that might enhance employees’ interactions with each other and thus lead to internal customer satisfaction. The study finds that employees must stay connected. This means that they should make contact with each other periodically. In addition employees need to honour all obligations. Employees rely on each other for supplies, materials, products and information that they use to serve external customers and these suppliers may negatively affect the execution of the end results, because they may delay or withhold the items needed, intentionally or unintentionally, depending on the relationship between them. To prevent this from
happening, it is important to honour commitments as promised and within the time agreed upon.

A further suggestion by the study is not to dwell on emotions. This means that employees must not hold on to anger, frustrations and other negative emotions but should get them out into the open and deal with them. The study argues that this may lead to disgruntled internal customers, damage customer-supplier relationships and damage people’s reputations. This in turn could therefore affect future working relationships. The last but one suggestion is to build a professional reputation by letting your customers know that you will do whatever it takes to create an environment in which internal and external customers are important. The last suggestion is to adopt a good-neighbour policy. This means avoiding negative situations and acting in a manner that preserves sound working relationships. These include being truthful, and avoiding office politics and gossip.

3.2.6 Internal Service Quality Dimensions

According to the study by Parasuraman et al., (cited by Juna and Cain, 2010:207), customer-perceived service quality may be defined as a global judgement or attitude related to the superiority of a service relative to competing offerings. The study states further that perception pertains to the consumer’s beliefs concerning the received or experienced service. The study by Parasuraman et al., (1988) has uncovered ten dimensions of service quality that are generic and relevant to services in general. These dimensions are: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, security, competency, courtesy, understanding the customer and access. These ten dimensions were condensed into five, namely: tangibles, reliability, assurance, empathy, and responsiveness. According to the study by Gunawardane (2009:21), since the pioneering work of Parasuraman et al., (1988), dimensions of service quality has been an active area of research among operations management and service marketing researchers. They are used to measure the quality of service and according
to Gunawardane (2009:21); they are dependent on the nature of the internal service relationship.

Pansiri and Mmereki (2010:224-225) define the five dimensions as follows:

3.2.6.1 Reliability

This is the ability of the service provider to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. This is because nothing upsets customers faster than a promise made but not fulfilled.

3.2.6.2 Responsiveness

It is the willingness or readiness to help customers and to provide prompt service. When a customer experiences problems with a service, the customer's confidence is shaken but probably not destroyed unless the problem reflects a pattern of negative experiences with the service provider.

3.2.6.3 Assurance

Assurance is the service quality dimension that focuses on the ability to inspire trust and confidence. It includes communication, credibility, security, competence, and courtesy.

3.2.6.4 Empathy

This is defined as the service aspect that stresses the treatment of customers as individuals. It refers to the provision of caring and individualised attention to customers by the service provider. It includes understanding/knowing customers and access.

3.2.6.5 Tangibility

Tangibility focuses on the elements that represent the service physically. This refers to physical facilities, equipment, and the appearance of personnel. All five dimensions are used by customers to measure the quality of service rendered to them.
3.2.7 Internal Marketing

Internal marketing, according to Pride and Ferrell (2010:48), is a management philosophy that coordinates internal exchanges between the organisation and its employees to achieve successful external exchanges between the organisation and its customers. According to Kotler and Keller (2009:64), internal marketing ensures that everyone in the organisation embraces appropriate working principles, especially senior management. They further state that smart marketers recognise that marketing activities within the company can be as important, if not more important than marketing activities directed outside the company.

It is a philosophy of treating employees as customers and it is based on the idea that employees are a first, internal market for the organisation (Boshoff and Du Plessis, 2009:207). They state further that the implementation of the principle of internal marketing demands a focus on good internal relationships between staff at all levels in the organisation and customers in order to create a service oriented culture among contact employees, support staff, team leaders, supervisors and managers. Palmer et al., (2007:249), state that it is an activity that unites the workforce behind organisational goals.

The role of employees in service marketing cannot be over emphasized, according to Rao (2007:59). An efficient and well-motivated employee performs well, even when there are some failures in the design, systems and support services. On the other hand, an inefficient and demotivated employee may not perform well in spite of support from all departments. According to him, the concept of internal marketing suggests that the philosophy of the management should be to satisfy its employees first. The employee should be viewed as the first market for the service organisation to serve. Proper pay, promotion and other benefit packages should be designed in such a way as to meet their expectations. Steps should also be initiated to motivate employees and to promote their morale. The ultimate goal in internal marketing is to prepare the employee to serve the customers with motivation and commitment.
3.3 Empirical Literature Review

Internal service quality has received little attention in the empirical literature, according to Hallowell et al., (1996), though certain aspects thereof have been discussed theoretically. The cross-disciplinary nature of internal service quality may explain why it remains relatively unexplored empirically. This can be explained by the fact that quality service differs from organisation to organisation because of different tasks and employees.

According to the study by Gunawardane (2009:22), studies indicate that, in general, the quality of the internal service encounter is not satisfactory. The study cites Trondsen and Edfelt (1989) who reported that in a 1989 study of 300 internal service users in the UK, only 20% were very satisfied with their company's internal service providers. They claimed that the internal service providers focused on operational efficiencies and cost rather than on internal user needs.

Gunawardane's research further cites the article by Seibert and Lingle (2007), which reported a 1993 study showing only a 32% favourable internal customer satisfaction rating and a comparison survey in 2006 of 1266 American Society of Quality members still showing only a 48% satisfaction rating. In both surveys over 80% of respondents agreed that high levels of internal customer service are important to their business success.

Finn et al., (1996:36) carried out a study on total quality management and internal customers. The study wanted to measure the internal service quality because in order to establish if the internal service efforts are successful, managers need a means by which internal service quality can be measured. The setting of this study is the corporate purchasing department of Alcon Laboratories, a large pharmaceutical manufacturing firm. The questions at the core of the investigation here were to find out what the users wanted from the department and whether they were getting it.

One-on-one interviews were conducted with 59 customers and two group interviews were conducted with twelve customers each. The findings of the study revealed six requirements that the customers expected from their service providers, namely
• to be courteous;
• communication;
• flexibility;
• manage the vendors;
• to be bought materials; and
• to be listened to,

In measuring the service rendered to customers, the department needs to know what the customers expect from them in order to develop strategies of how they are going to meet those expectations and to what degrees.

3.4 Conclusion

Most of the available literature sources reveal that internal customers are equally as important as external customers because if the internal customers are not satisfied, the external customers will not receive the service as expected. The study has shown that though a large quantity of literature has focused on external customers, relatively little attention has been paid to internal customers' service quality, according to Stanley and Wiser, (2001) (cited by Juna and Caib, 2010:205). The literature sources indicate that internal service quality is widely understood and acknowledged but implementation on how to measure and monitor it is a challenge as compared with monitoring quality service to external customers.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Research Design
This study adopted both the qualitative and the quantitative approach. The study used the qualitative approach to solicit the views of the respondents regarding internal service quality and their recommendations. The quantitative approach was used to arrive at the statistical analysis and assessment of quality of service in the company.

4.2 Target Population
The study was done among Mascom employees from different departments. The company has 280 employees spread over eleven divisions and each division has several departments. The reason why the study focused on Mascom employees was because it was convenient for the researcher to interview respondents, to hand out questionnaires, as well as to collect completed questionnaires. The company is divided into eleven divisions, which have some staff housed at headquarters and others at six branches.

4.3 Sampling
The researcher used simple random sampling because respondents were selected from different divisions. The number of respondents from each division depended on the number of people in that division. The numbers varied because some divisions have more departments than others and some departments have only their managers and no junior staff. A sample of 110 employees was used and only 64 responded to the questionnaires.
4.4 Survey Instrument

A survey approach was employed to solicit the views regarding the internal customers' idea of internal service quality. A survey questionnaire was developed and given to sampled employees from different departments. The questionnaire established the employees understanding of service quality, how they viewed themselves as internal customers and how they thought their relationships with one another could be improved. According to Wong et al., (2012:209)'s study, a questionnaire is a data collection tool or instrument and is vital for the credibility of the research project. It serves four basic purposes, which are to collect the appropriate data, to make data comparable and amenable to analysis, to minimise bias in formulating and asking questions, and to make questions engaging and varied.

4.4.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was structured into open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was developed electronically and sent to respondents by e-mail. The questions were aimed at employees as both internal customers and internal service providers. They were given to supporting departments, such as Human Resources and Finance, and to core departments like commercial departments and technical departments at head office. Employees at the branch offices in Francistown, Gantsi and Maun were also given questionnaires, because they consume service from headquarters.

4.4.2 Research Questions

The research questions were drawn from the five determinant or dimensions of service quality, namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. Because this study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods the questions were asked in such a way as to reflect the five dimensions. The questionnaire comprised of sixteen questions of which six used a 2-point Likert type scale of "A-yes" and "B-no."
and seven questions used a 5-point Likert type scale ranging between A-Excellent, B-Very Good, C-Satisfactory, D-Fair and E-Poor. Five questions were open-ended questions. Questions can be seen in the Appendix.

4.4.3 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted using a draft questionnaire. It was given to five respondents to answer. This was to ensure that the tool is reliable and well understood by the respondents. The responses were used to refine and modify the questionnaire before being distributed to the other respondents. The respondents who were used for the pilot study were not included in the final study.

4.4.4 Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaires were also given to management as the people who make the decisions in the company. This group of people has to be aware of what is happening in the company, and how employees deal with each other. Members of senior management are mostly detached from the happenings in the company and they always assume that everything is going well because they are given quality service, while in actual fact the employees lower down on the ladder are having a hard time. As members senior management they will help the situation by assessing it and stopping it from getting out of hand if need be as decision makers.

4.5. Sources and Collection of Data

Secondary data were collected from scholarly articles and journals on the Internet. Web sites such as Google Scholar were also accessed. Data was also sourced from library books from the North West University and the University of Botswana. In addition research was conducted through the library of Mancosa University, Botswana branch.
Data was collected through the e-mails. The questionnaires were sent to the respondents by e-mail so that they could be completed and sent back. E-mail was used because it is economical and quicker for the questions to reach the respondents furthest away, such as the respondents at the Mascom branch offices and quicker for them to be sent back. E-mail was also used because everyone has electronic mail. Respondents were given at least two weeks to respond and thereafter the responses were analysed.

4.6 Data Analysis

After the questionnaires were collected, each question was checked, looking at how many people had responded as per the variables given. The study established how many respondents understood the concept of internal customers and the satisfaction they derived from the service they received from their co-workers. The data was analysed using the computer. It was entered into the computer and similar responses were added together to establish whether Mascom employees were satisfied with each other or whether there was need for intervention.

The study focused mainly on investigating how the internal customers of Mascom Wireless, Botswana’s largest Communication business company, interact with their internal customers in terms of service. In order to analyse and interpret data, the statistical package for social science (SPSS) software was used. Different procedures such as custom table, multiple response table, frequency analysis, cross tabulation and charts were used to identify the relationships and the distribution of data. The results are displayed using tables and figures in Chapter Five.

4.7 Validity and Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire used for the study was ensured through the pilot study in which five employees were used to undertake the survey. The responses were examined and the necessary adjustments were made.
4.8 Ethical Considerations

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Respondents were not forced to take part in the process. To put the respondents at ease, they were assured that their responses would be treated confidentially.
CHAPTER FIVE
FINDINGS AND THEIR INTERPRETATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the findings from the data collected from the sampled respondents at the Mascom Wireless Company. The chapter also includes interpretations from the findings.

5.2. Research Findings and Interpretations

The first objective of the study was to investigate whether employees understood the concept of internal customer and how they viewed the concept. The following findings are in order. Questions one and two of the questionnaire addressed this objective and the results are shown in Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 below. In Table 5.1, 54.7% of the respondents understand it to be people in the organisation who rely on them for internal service. They understand that internal customers are the people within the organisation who rely on them for internal service.

Table 5.1: Understanding of Internal Customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People within the organisation who rely on you for internal service</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People within the department who you assist</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues within the department</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal customers or fellow workers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments within the organisation you support</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question two tries to establish if the respondents have internal customers or not and requires the respondents list their internal customers. The results are shown in Figure 5.1 and Table 5.2. About 81.2% of the respondents claimed to have internal customers. This included people who partially understand the meaning of internal customers. However, 18.8% responded that they do not have internal customers.

**Figure 5.1: Availability of Internal Customers**

![Pie chart showing availability of internal customers with 81.2% Yes and 18.8% No]

Table 5.2 outlines the internal customers according to the respondents. About 75% included all the employees at Mascom except 17.2% who only denote a section of the company as their customers. 7.8% of the respondents did not respond.

**Table 5.2: List of internal customers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total=64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All employees within Mascom</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retails Sales and Corporate Sales</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff in different departments within Mascom</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The study further explored whether the respondent is an internal customer or not. The response is summarised in Figure 5.2 below.

**Figure 5.2: Are you an internal customer?**

In order to establish if the respondents really understand this concept of internal quality service, question three asks if the respondents consider themselves as internal customers and to list their internal service providers. These are the different departments within Mascom who internal customers deal with or seek or get help from. More than half of the respondents listed the departments in the Mascom Wireless Company. See Table 5.3 for more details.
Table 5.3: Their Internal Service Suppliers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departments</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total=64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any employee</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Divisions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Control</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock Control</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second objective of the study was to investigate how internal customers and service providers relate to each other in terms of service delivery. Questions four, five and six of the questionnaire addressed this objective. Question four shows that the respondents and their internal service providers have a satisfactory relationship at 35.9%. 28.1% reported that the relationship is very good. Table 5.4 shows that 70.3% of the respondents have satisfactory to excellent relationship with their internal service providers as opposed to 29.7% who have a fair to poor relationship with their internal service providers.
Table 5.4: Respondents' Relationship with Internal Service Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total=64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question five tries to establish if internal customers are happy with the service provided to them by their internal service providers. Figure 5.3 below shows that 53.13% are happy with the service provided by their internal service providers as opposed to 45.31% who are not happy with the service. 1.56% of the respondents did not give feedback.

Figure 5.3: Service Satisfaction Level
Figure 5.4 depicts the response to question six, which seeks to establish if respondents are considered worthy of good quality service by their internal service providers. 53% of the respondents believe service providers do not consider them as worthy of good quality service. However, 40.6% feel that they are considered worthy of quality service. 6.3% did not respond to the question.

Figure 5.4: Customer Worthiness

Objective 3 aims at assessing the quality of service rendered to respondents. The objective is addressed by questions seven to thirteen. Question seven tries to establish how the respondents rate the quality of service they receive from management. Table 5.8 reveals management’s ability to render quality service to the internal customers and the study showed that more than half of the results were satisfactory and above. Only 35.9% of the results were fair to poor.
Table 5.5: The quality of Service Customers Receive from Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you rate the quality of service you get from management</th>
<th>Total =64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the question of the willingness of service providers to assist internal customers, 53.1% believe that service providers are willing. However, 40.6% view their internal service providers as unwilling to assist them. 6.3% of the respondents did not respond to this question.

Figure 5.5: Willingness of Service Providers to Assist

The study further identified the way in which service providers respond to queries and requests made by internal customers. According to 40.6%, they provide a satisfactory response to customers' queries. 25% believe their assistance is fair and another 17.2%
responded with very good. However, 9 respondents (14.1%) believe that their response is poor. Only 2 respondents responded with excellent regarding their service to customers’ queries. See Table 5.6 for more details.

Table 5.6: Service Providers’ Response to Customers’ Queries and Request

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total=64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sharing responsibility is important for solving problems. The study investigates how employees within the organisation share the responsibility of solving problems. The finding shows that it is generally satisfactory according to 45.3%. Another 18.7% believe it is very good and for 17.2%, it is fair. However, 9 respondents (14.1%) believed that it is poor and only 3 respondents responded with excellent. Table 5.7 shows the details.

Table 5.7: Sharing Responsibility to Solve Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total=64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below assesses how internal service providers communicate with their internal customers. 43.7% believe that communication is satisfactory. For 21.9%, it is
fair and another 14.1%, it is very good. However, 11 respondents (17.2%) say the communication is poor.

Table 5.8: Communication between Respondents and Service Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating of Employees Service</th>
<th>Total =64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall quality of the service at Mascom was also assessed. The study shows that the overall quality is satisfactory according to 54.7% of respondents. For 20.3%, the service is very good. Another 4.7% responded that it was excellent. See Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: The overall Quality of Service in Mascom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total =64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fourth objective aimed at assessing the implications or problems that may arise from poor quality service. Among other things, the major concerns were poor service delivery (43.8%) followed by lack of cooperation between staff / lack of team work. Poor communication, slow work, loss of revenue due to lack of commitment towards work, lack of motivation, and poor communication between staff were other problems found by the study. See Table 5.10 below for more details.

**Table 5.10: Problems that can arise from a Poor Working Relationship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Total =64</th>
<th>Percentage=100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor communication</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor service delivery</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of revenue</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slow work</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No creativity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of cooperation between staff /lack of team work</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing customers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.11 seeks to establish what suggestions internal customers are able to come up with as measures to improve the relationship between employees themselves and their service providers. Among other things, some of the important suggestions were that staff should develop proper communication skills between themselves to identify problems and to find solutions. Orientation programmes and training programmes should be set up to understand the quality of service and customer relationships. Service level agreements, development of inter-personnel skills, recognition of hard work, appraisal and rewards, and team-building exercises were some of the other suggestions made by respondents.
Table 5.11: Major Suggestions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All employees should be trained properly to provide better service and to understand the concept of internal customer importance.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation programmes should setup</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need proper communication between staff</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees should respect each other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of hard work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need Service Level Agreement (SLA’s)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal and reward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fifth objective tried to assess whether there are measures in place from management to ensure that employees as internal customers are provided with quality service and called for suggestions as to what could be done to rectify the situation. The following table and figure show that 50% believe that there are measures in place to provide quality service. However, 46.9% believe that there are no measures in place to control quality service.
Figure 5.6: Are there Measures in Place to Ensure Quality Service?

Table 5.12: What measures are in place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Level Agreement</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Fun days</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call monitoring</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISO standard (9001/14001)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnaround times for service delivery</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open channels of communications</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction between employees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Applications</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly and timely reporting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Monitoring System (BMS)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No measures in place</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The multiple response table shows the different measures that Mascom implements to ensure quality services to internal customers. The most important measures according to most respondents were: following standards such as ISO 9001 and 14001 (17.2%), Service Level Agreement in every department (14.1%) and procedures (7.8%). Other measures are to open channels of communication, turnaround times for service delivery, Interaction between employees, call monitoring and following BMS. These measures are to ensure that there is provision of quality service to the internal customers. 21.9 % of the respondents believe that there are no measures in place to ensure that there is quality service, while 3.1% did not respond.

5.3 Conclusion
The study explored various problems faced by internal customers when they deal with their service providers in terms of assistance and support. Even though the overall performance of Mascom is satisfactory according to most respondents, there are areas that need considerable improvement. The study found that there is a need for increased communication between staff within the organisation to improve better understanding and better service delivery. Some departments consider internal customers as nuisance to their work and are reluctant to assist their subordinates. There is a need for developing respect among employees regarding their work. Mascom should conduct various training and orientation programmes to educate employees to render better service to their internal, as well as external customers.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction
The conclusions drawn from the findings of the study and the recommendations are made in this chapter. The chapter also recommends areas for further research after outlining the limitations of this study.

6.2. Conclusion
The findings from the study have revealed how internal customers at Mascom Wireless rate each other and how they relate to each other. It has been shown that there is lack of team cohesion, which requires management to go back to the drawing board in order to unite the company and not compartmentalise. The study showed that more than half of the respondents are not satisfied with the service rendered.

6.2.1 Research Findings
The research started by investigating the definition of who an internal customer is. According to 71.9% of the respondents, internal customers are people within the organisation who seek help from another different department. 26% of the respondents understand them to be colleagues or fellow workers, while 1.6% of the respondents clearly do not understand what internal customers are because they defined them as creditors. (Table 5.1)

Regarding the question of whether they have internal customers Figure 5.1 shows that 81.2% of the respondents acknowledge that they do not have internal customers. However, 18.8% responded that they don't have internal customers. They were then asked to list their internal customers and Table 5.2 shows that at least 75% of
respondents understand that all colleagues are internal customers, except those who only outlined some sections of the company as their customers.

The question that followed established if respondents consider themselves as internal customers and almost half (53.13%) consider themselves as internal customers whereas 45.31% of the respondents do not consider themselves as internal customers (Figure 5.2). They were, however, asked to list their internal service suppliers. Only 26.6% acknowledged that any employee is an internal supplier while 70.3% only listed single departments as their internal service suppliers and 3.1% did not respond (Table 5.3).

The study showed that the relationship between internal customers and their service providers are satisfactory according to 35.9% of the respondents. 28.1% reported that the relationship is very good. For 23.4%, the relationship is fair followed by 6.3% who experienced the relationship as excellent. Three respondents (6.3%) reported the relationship as poor. Generally the relationship is positive (Table 5.4).

Respondents were asked if they are happy with the service they receive from their internal service providers and 53.13% reported that they are happy with the service while 45.31% were not happy with the service and 1.56% did not respond (Figure 5.3).

The study investigated whether the internal service providers considered internal customers as being worthy of quality service. 40.6% responded that service providers consider them as worthy of good quality service, while 53.1% believe that service providers do not consider them as worthy of good quality service (Figure 5.4).

The study analysed Management's ability to render quality service to the internal customers. The results showed that 43.8% responded that it was satisfactory. 15.6% responded that it was very good and 28.1% that it was fair. This shows that more than half of the results were satisfactory and below. Less than 20% of the results were very good or excellent (Table 5.5).

Regarding the element of whether the internal service providers are willing to assist the internal customers, 53.1% believe that the service provider is willing to assist. However,
40.6% do not believe that they get assistance from service providers. 6.3% did not respond to this question (Figure 5.5).

On the question of how internal service providers help the internal customers in terms of their queries or requests, 40.6% of respondents regarded it as satisfactory. However, 25% believe that their assistance is fair and another 17.2% responded with very good. 9 respondents (14.1%) believe that their response is poor. Only 2 respondents responded with excellent (Table 5.6). The responses show that internal service providers help in attending to queries and requests.

Regarding the matter of sharing responsibility for solving problems within Mascom, 45.3% believed that it was satisfactory. Another 18.7% believed that it was very good and for 17.2%, it was fair. However, nine respondents (14.1%) responded with poor and only three respondents responded with excellent (Table 5.6). This generally shows that internal service suppliers share in solving problems.

Communication between internal customers and internal service suppliers is satisfactory at 43.7%, followed by fair at 21.9%. Eleven respondents at 17.2% view communication as poor, while 14.1% of the respondents regarded the communication as very good and 3.1% viewed it as excellent (Table 5.8). According to the responses above the communication between the respondents and their internal service suppliers is bad.

The overall quality of the service at Mascom was also assessed. The study shows that the overall quality is satisfactory according to 54.7% of respondents. For 20.3%, the service is very good and fair respectively. 4.7% of the respondents felt that the overall quality of service that they received was excellent, while none regarded it as poor. The overall quality of service as shown by the table is positive (Table 5.9).

Respondents were requested to outline problems that could arise from poor quality service as analysed by the study. Among other things, the major concerns were poor service delivery at 43.8% followed by lack of cooperation between staff / lack of teamwork at 14%. Poor communication is at 9.4 percent, slow work at 9.4%, loss of revenue
due to lack of commitment towards work at 7.8%, lack of creativity at 9.4%, losing customers at 6.2% and poor communication between staff at 9.4% (Table 5.10).

Several suggestions were made by respondents to improve the relationship between employees themselves and their service providers. Among other things, 45.4% of respondents were of the opinion that orientation programmes and training programmes should be set up for staff in order for them to understand the quality of service and the customer relationship, and 28.1% of the respondents suggested that staff should develop proper communication between themselves to identify problems and solutions. Service Level Agreements and team building exercises, both at 7.8%, should be used to improve the relationship between employees. 4.7% of the respondents thought that an appraisal and reward system could help improve the relationship, while 3.1% of respondents thought recognition for hard work and respect between employees could also improve relationships (Table 5.11).

Figure 5.7 indicates the responses to the question whether there are measures in place to ensure that employees are provided with quality service and the measures respondents believed were in place. 50% of the respondents believed that there were measures in place to ensure quality service, while 46.9% thought that there were no measures to ensure quality service. 3.1% did not respond. They were also requested to list the measures that are in place to ensure quality service. 75% of the respondents listed the measures, which they thought were in place to ensure quality service. 21.9% of the respondents believe that there are no measures in place while 3.1% did not respond.

### 6.2.2 Application of Service Quality Dimensions

According to the study there are five dimensions of service quality, namely responsiveness, empathy, assurance and reliability and tangibility. The researcher has concluded that all of them are addressed by the findings except one, which is tangibility. These questions answer the third objective, which assesses the quality of service provided to internal customers. Responsiveness is the willingness to help customers
and to provide prompt service. The results for the responsiveness of the service providers are varied, depending on the questions. As shown by the findings above most respondents do not have a good relationship with their internal service providers, as 65.6% rated responsiveness of service providers between satisfactory and poor. Most of the findings therefore depict satisfactory to poor results.

The aspect of empathy has also been addressed by the study. Empathy is defined as the service aspect that stresses the treatment of customers as individuals. Figure 5.4 shows that more than half of the respondents feel that they are not considered worthy of quality service by their internal service providers.

With regard to the dimension of reliability, which is defined as the ability to deliver the promised service dependably and accurately, the findings do not show that the internal service providers are capable of being depended or relied on to produce efficient service. This is because only 53.13% are happy with the service rendered to them and the percentage is not satisfactory. These findings further do not give internal customers assurance. Assurance is the service quality dimension that focuses on the ability to inspire trust and confidence. The findings shown do not assure the internal customers that they are able to trust their service providers.

6.3. Policy Implications and Recommendations

The study investigated the level of interaction and the way in which internal customers receive services from their internal service providers. Various suggestions were proposed by respondents and other stakeholders to improve the service delivery and interaction. Some of the recommendations are:

6.3.1. Recommendations for the internal customers and internal suppliers

Recommendations for the rest of the employees based on the findings:
• There should be training and orientation programmes to promote a good relationship among workers.
• There should be better communication between employees within the department and between departments.
• Poor service delivery not only affects internal customer’s morale, it affects the revenue of the company, as competitors provide a more attractive service, which means losing customers, therefore the company should nurture its employees, knowing that they are the key to the success of the company.
• The company appraisal system must be improved and made transparent to address what it is supposed to address: rewarding those employees who do hard work. This can motivate employees.
• There should be proper communication between employees within the department and between departments. There must be an open-door policy in the company that is visible and not just advocated.
• The company should often conduct inter-departmental meetings and team-building exercises to explore the potential of employees.
• Benchmarking exercises can help employees to understand industry standards internationally and regionally. This could help employees to identify their weaknesses and limitations.
• Employees themselves should respect each other to improve the morale and to uphold standards.
• Managers must respect their juniors as people worthy of respect.
• The company must be seen to be rewarding hard work.

6.4. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Further Research

As this study only focuses on one company which is Mascom Wireless and only concentrates on the understanding of internal service quality, there is considerably more
that could be researched, such as the actual impact of the lack of internal quality service on the company. Further research should also be conducted to cover internal quality service in other companies, including the public sector in Botswana. Extensive research on the topic could highlight employee relationships and their impact on service quality in general.
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1). What is your understanding of internal customers?

2). Do you have internal customers? If yes, who are they?
   Yes
   No

3). Are you an internal customer? If yes, to whom?
   Yes
   No

4). How is your relationship with your internal service providers with regard to service delivery?
   A. Excellent
   B. Very Good
   C. Satisfactory
   D. Fair
   E. Poor

5). Are you happy with the quality of service you receive from your internal service providers?
   Yes
   No
6). Do you think they regard you as a customer worthy of good quality service?

Yes

No

7). How do you rate the quality of service you get from management?

A. Excellent

B. Very Good

C. Satisfactory

D. Fair

E. Poor

8). Are your internal service providers always willing to assist you?

A. Yes

B. No

9). How is the response of your internal service providers regarding any request or query?

A. Excellent

B. Very Good

C. Satisfactory

D. Fair

E. Poor
10). How do you rate your internal service provider in respect of sharing the responsibilities of solving problems?

A. Excellent
B. Very Good
C. Satisfactory
D. Fair
E. Poor

11). How do you rate the manner in which your internal service provider communicates with you?

A. Excellent
B. Very Good
C. Satisfactory
D. Fair
E. Poor

12). How do you rate the overall quality of service at Mascom?

A. Excellent
B. Very Good
C. Satisfactory
D. Fair
E. Poor
13). Are there measures in place to ensure that employees as internal customers are provided with quality service and what measures are in place?

Yes

No

14). What do you think are the problems that can arise from poor working relationships?

15). What do you think can be done to improve the quality of service among internal customers and internal service providers at Mascom?
References


