

**CUSTOMER SERVICE PROVISION PERFORMANCE IN
PUBLIC ORGANIZATION IN TANZANIA
THE CASE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES AGENCY: -
KIGOMA REGION**

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PUBLIC ORGANIZATION IN TANZANIA
THE CASE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES AGENCY: -
KIGOMA REGION**

**By
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**A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the Requirements for Award of
the Degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA - CM) of Mzumbe
University
2014**

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that we have read and hereby recommend for acceptance by the Mzumbe University a dissertation entitled: **Customer Service Provision Performance in Public Organization in Tanzania: The Case of Weights and Measures Agency Kigoma Region**, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the Degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA - CM) of Mzumbe University

Major Supervisor

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In all, without the protection and direction from the most high, all other supports given would not have passed through. Thank you, Jehovah God, for being my refuge in my life. To you God I give all the Glory.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife Agatha and children; Anesius, Neema, Teclar, and Gasto for their precious support and prayers during the whole process of completing this academic marathon.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AMCOS	-	Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CWM	-	Commissioner for Weights and Measures
EAMET	-	East Africa Community Metrology Technical Sub – Committee
KSF	-	Key Success Factors
MAB	-	Ministerial Advisory Board
MSEs	-	Micro and Small Enterprises
NBS	-	National Bureau of Statistics
OIML	-	International Organization of Legal Metrology
OPRAS	-	Open Performance Review and Appraisal System
PMO-RALG	-	Prime Minister Office – Regional Administration and Local Governments
PO-PSM	-	President’s Office Public Service Management
PSRP	-	Public Service Reform Program
SADCMEL	-	Southern Africa Development Cooperation in Legal Metrology
SQMT	-	East African Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing
TAA	-	Tanzania Airports Authority
TBS	-	Tanzania Bureau of Standards
TUGHE	-	Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees
WMA	-	Weights and Measures Agency
WMB	-	Weights and Measures Bureau

ABSTRACT

Tanzania introduced in the country, the agency operation model as a solution to problems of bureaucracy in providing public services. The government's expectations were that the agencies could operate in a business-oriented context to improve effectiveness of the services provision in improving customer service satisfaction.

This study aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the government organizations in provision of customer service satisfaction, WMA- Kigoma being the case of the study in which the population of the study involved WMA employees and customers. Moreover, the sample for the study involved 21 respondents obtained through purposive sampling techniques where data collection methods involved interview, observation and documentary review.

The study findings reveal that, although WMA has improved its performance in terms of revenue collection and financial management, matters relating to customer service provision and customer satisfaction levels are still not satisfactory in the sense that customer care is poor and customer service satisfaction levels are still low caused by poor service provision environment. This situation makes the agency to provide ineffective services hence customers' dissatisfaction.

The recommendations from the study are; the agency should invest more in training of employees, improve its human resource management, and provide sufficient public education to traders on legal aspects pertaining to weights and measures services to reduce customer complaints and therefore improve effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction.

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM SETTING

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the background information, background of the problem, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions, significance of the study, as well as the scope of the study.

1.1 Background information

According to Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of PO-PSM report (2004), government agencies are semi-independent public institutions, designed to operate at arm's-length from their parent Ministries where a Ministerial Advisory Board (MAB) exerts an oversight of them. The report notes further that, generally, government agencies have well defined customers as well as some degree of financial autonomy. In Tanzania, the Government Agency operation model started in 1996 as a solution to the problems of bureaucracy in public services delivery in the country. It is overarching a legacy of the state socialism established by Julius Nyerere's government (Mukandala, 1994).

According to Mwera (2005), since independence, Tanzania government through its Parastatal organizations committed itself to the provision of wide range of goods and services in such a way that, the government was director of the development, protector of manufacturing industry, the owner of enterprises, subsidy provider, and major employer. It is further noted that, consequently, this situation over burdened and over centralised the public sector leading to its inefficiency and ineffectiveness in public service delivery due to declining ability of the government to manage economic activities and core services and therefore necessitating the need for public service reform with the aim of improving efficiency in service delivery (ibid).

According to Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of PO-PSM report (2004), in pursuit of public service provision improvement, the government resorted to institutionalized change that included the Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) as an extensive overhaul of public sector structure.

In this regard, by considering the long term problems of the Parastatal organizations, the introduction of Government Agency Model was seen as a solution in which public services, would be kept within the government while promising efficiency and effectiveness improvements by allowing the required autonomy and flexibility to operational managers (Madembwe, 2005).

In Tanzania, the process of forming Government Agencies began in 1996 where by December 2004; twenty Agencies were in existence (PO-PSM, 2004). Their process of formation included:

- (i) Extensive training, at virtually all levels of employment
- (ii) Extensive planning and restructuring, including the preparation of strategic and business plans
- (iii) The commercialization of accounts, including the preparation of a balance sheet and the valuation of the Agency's assets
- (iv) The recruitment of a chief executive officer and other upper level management positions, on a competitive and open basis

Tanzania established Government Agencies under Executive Agencies Act Cap245 (R.E.2002) with the following objectives as stated in section 3(2) of the Act:

- (i) To improve the delivery of public services;
- (ii) To create an environment conducive to efficient and effective management;
- (iii) To improve the quality of services hitherto provided by the department concerned
- (iv) To promote the potential for the continuous improvement of the services provided by the proposed executive agency

In performing their functions, the Act provides further under section 4(2), that, Executive Agencies were to observe the following principles:

- (i) To provide its services to its customers and the public in the most efficient and effective manner;
- (ii) To manage its affairs in a business-like and cost-effective manner and in accordance with modern management practices and techniques and, in

particular, to apply to its operations the best standards of financial management and accounting; and

- (iii) To ensure that its operations provide the best services to its customers, and maintain a high degree of responsiveness to customer needs.

The government therefore expected that the agencies operating in a business-like manner would be able to improve provision of public services in terms of good governance, increase in revenue collection, improved productivity, improved customer service, and quality of their services.

1.2 Transformation of Weights and Measures Bureau (WMB) into Weights and Measures Agency ((WMA)

According to WMA-SP (2013 – 2018), Weights and Measures Agency (WMA) is an Executive Agency responsible for fair trade transactions, safety, health and environment through certification of measuring instruments. Its establishment started in 2002 in pursuance to the Executive Agencies Act Cap 245 to replace the then Weights and Measures Bureau (WMB) under the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Presently, WMA is operating under the Ministry of Industry and Trade its operations guided by the Weights and Measures Act Cap 340 (R.E.2002) and Executive Agencies Act Cap 245 (R.E.2002). The Agency is under the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is also the Commissioner for Weights and Measures (CWM). In order to make services accessible to its esteemed customers, the Agency has Regional Offices in almost all Regions in Tanzania Mainland except four newly established regions of Katavi, Simiyu, Njombe, and Geita.

According to WMA-SP (2013 – 2018), given the general objectives to all Executive Agencies, the transformation of WMB into WMA aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) Improve the delivery of weights and measures services in a cost effective manner
- (ii) create an environment conducive to efficient and effective management of weights and measures offices in Tanzania Mainland

- (iii) improve the quality of services in verification and re-verification and monitoring of measurements used or intended to be used in trade, health, safety and environment in Tanzania Mainland and
- (iv) Promote the potential for continuous improvement of calibration, verification, and inspection of measuring instruments used in trade, health, safety and environment services.

In order to achieve these objectives, the agency's roles; as stipulated under the Weights and Measures Act (Cap.340), the East African Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Act, 2006, and the Executive Agencies Act (Cap.245) are to:

- (i). Protect consumers in trade, safety, health and environment in relation to weights and measures;
- (ii). Protect society from the consequences of false measurements in public and private transactions;
- (iii). Approve or ensure approval by another designated institutions measuring instruments to be used for a public or private transaction in trade, safety, health and environment sectors;
- (iv). Control the use of measuring instruments in public and private transaction.
- (v). Control pre-packaging of products;
- (vi). Liaise with regional and international organizations with similar objectives;
- (vii). Give effect to the decisions and recommendations of the OIML Council and Committee with regard to legal metrology;
- (viii). Provide information on Legal Metrology in general; an
- (ix). Ensure that legal metrology measurement standards are traceable to national and International measurement standards.

Pursuit of aforementioned roles the agency focuses at achieving the following current six main strategic objectives as stipulated in WMA's Strategic Plan (SP) for the period of five years starting from fiscal year of 2013/2014 to 2017/2018.

- (i). Consumer protection in relation to Weights and Measures improved;
- (ii). WMA's public image improved;
- (iii). Human resources management improved;
- (iv). Planning, financial management, and accountability improved;
- (v). WMA's good governance, ethics, gender, and environmental issues strengthened and;
- (vi). HIV/AIDS infections reduced and supportive service to people living with HIV/AIDS improved.

To achieve the aforementioned strategic objectives, WMA faces the challenges on improving customer service provision and creating customer-focused culture to cope with competitive business environment. In order for the agency to overcome these challenges, the following are its core values as put in WMA- SP (2013 – 2018), reflecting what WMA considers important:

- (i). **Result-Oriented:** All WMA staff shall be motivated by the production of results in terms of service delivery;
- (ii). **Team work:** WMA employees shall demonstrate highest level of commitment, by working together, collaborating and coordinating in discharging their duties;
- (iii). **Professional Excellence:** WMA staff shall strive to achieve the highest standard of work efficiency and actively look for opportunities to improve those standards through competence and skills training;
- (iv). **Customer focus:** WMA staff shall demonstrate high level of respect, impartiality, courtesy, timeliness in the course of discharging their duties to their customers.
- (v). **Transparency:** WMA staff shall exercise openness, impartiality, accuracy and promptness in sharing the information with all the stakeholders and
- (vi). **Accountability and Responsibility:** WMA employees shall be accountable for exercising due diligence and responsible for their actions to duty and optimum use of resources.

1.3 Statement of the problem

According to Mwera (2005), before the above noted government reforms , most of the government departments were characterized by poor planning, offering free services, lack of financial discipline, politically driven decisions with no regard to financial implications and lack of commitment to work, a situation which resulted into worsening of quality standards, efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.

It is further noted that, an establishment of Government Agencies whose main objective was to change the orientation of former government departments into business-oriented units for efficient and effective delivery of public services, is still facing a big challenge of making most of the agencies becoming customer focused (ibid).

According to Public Service Management guidelines (Public Service reform policy, 1993), one of the key features of Government agencies is that, they use modern business planning methods, financial management and accounting system, and use the best practices in human resource management to enable them operate in a competitive environment. Impliedly, in the researcher's view, the Government agencies should change in culture to suit the competitive environment and become customer focused. Since its establishment in 2002, WMA has shown significant improvements and changes in transformation efforts to offer quality services. The improvements are reflected by the increase in revenue collections as per (WMA SP, 2013/2014 – 2017/2018) which unveils that annual revenue collection increased from TShs. 900 million in 2002/2003 to TShs.2.5 billion in 2009/2010 up to TShs.9.2 billion in 2011/2012.

According to WMA SP (2013/2014 – 2017/2018), this improvement, among other factors, has been contributed by improved working environment in terms of working tools such as vehicles and other technical equipment, office renovations, improved incentive package, good management and best leadership practices. With regard to changes in organizational culture towards becoming, a customer focused Government Agency, there are some operational problems, which WMA should

solve to make the organization focus more to customers and offer quality services to satisfy them.

According to President's Office Public Service Management (PO – PSM), Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) report 2005, when government agencies were established, they adopted the same staff and same facilities from their respective former government ministry departments.

To the researcher's view, this implies that, when WMA was established it assimilated the same staff, working facilities, and organizational culture.

Kishweko, in (The guardian: Friday 28 October 2011), notes that cotton growers in Lake Zone regions including Mwanza, Shinyanga and Mara regions are complaining that cotton buyers temper with their weighing scales where in some cases, a 550kg bale of cotton weighs 500kg with short weight of 50kg. This implies that WMA customers, who use weighing instruments in their businesses transaction, are not satisfied with quality of weights and measures services provided by the agency to them.

According to Manase (2000), the monopoly situation in Tanzania weakened the marketing concept almost in all organizations that were state owned resulting into less emphasis on customer satisfaction, because customers had no choice of alternative service provider. In this light, WMA provides weights and measures services under monopoly type of market in the sense that it is the sole service provider in weighing and measuring instruments verification and certification enforced by the Weights and Measures Act Cap 340 (R.E.2002). This could be the reason why there are service provision complaints from WMA customers. However, WMA strategic objectives as indicated in its SP (2013/2014 – 2017/18), do not include customer service provision improvement as an important element in quality service delivery to the organization which operates in a business- like manner. This necessitates conducting the study to assess customer service performance in Weights and Measures Agency.

The agencies have been in operation for fourteen years but the complaints of customer dissatisfaction from services provided by the agencies are still the big cry. The situation has impact on performance of the agencies as customers are currently regarding the agencies as barriers to receiving quality services and experiencing happy services receipt. They see no difference from the former public organization, which provided services in high bureaucracy. Hence losing trust with the agencies in which case Weights and Measures Agency is part. According to Mutegoa (1994) in the research conducted to assess the effectiveness of WMB in consumer protection noted that, WMB was not effective in protecting consumers because of poor communication with customers, poor organization structure, poor internal customer service provision, and lack of education to consumers. In the researcher's view, since WMA assimilated the same staff, same working facilities, and organizational culture there is the possibility of such inheritance to have impact on the agency's efforts to become customer focused.

James (2008) conducted the research on customer satisfaction to the services offered by Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) Metrology Laboratory. The research findings reveal that customers are satisfied with competence of metrology staffs and accessibility to the services, prices (fees) charged for services, quality of services, communication procedures used, and value for money. However, the research further reveals that the declining demand, falling of market share and difficulties in retaining customers is due to the bureau's failure in time quality dimension. It further notes that, TBS did not deliver services on agreed time, and waiting time was longer comparing to customers' expectations.

Moreover, according to TCCIA report (2004) on Weights and Measures practices in Tanzania, effective practices of Weights and Measures is critical in ensuring accuracy of measures used. It further reveals that WMA does not properly protect producers, traders and consumers and that the government is not able to collect its revenue due to inaccurate statistical analysis of production level, which depends on proper use of weights and measures practices. The report observes that because Weights and Measures Agency is under resourced it is not effective in application of

proper weights and measures practices as expected by its customers. The report however, did not document on the level of agency's performance in customer service provision.

The research by Kelvin (2000) to examine service quality as a determinant of customer satisfaction in Prime Minister Office – Regional Administration and Local Governments (PMO-RALG) reveals that, organizations especially in public sector agree that customer service is one of the most vital factor that contribute to reputation and credibility in the eyes of the public. It further noted that the public complaints of long queues, poor service delivery, and insufficient physical facilities affect the image and level of service quality in the public sector.

The above research findings suggest that, despite the efforts of the government in improving public service offering by public organizations, the problems of insufficient and poor quality service provision have persisted. However, there have been few researches conducted in the area of customer services provision performance and most of them did not cover service provision performance in public organization especially in WMA. Together with what the researcher had noted in the literature review. There was a need of assessing the performance of customer service improvement in WMA, following its transformation from WMB to WMA. This would provide an insight of how WMA considers customer service as an important element to the achievement of its establishment objectives. Therefore, the researcher intended to describe the effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction, identifying sources of customer complaints, and challenges facing the agency in the provision of satisfactory customer service and suggest alternative ways of solving them. This was the crux of the study.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The main objective of this study was to describe customer service performance in Weights and Measures Agency.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

Specifically, the study intended to;

- (i) Describe the effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction in Weights and Measures Agency
- (ii) Identify sources of customer complaints
- (iii) Identify challenges facing Weights and Measures Agency in the provision of satisfactory customer service

1.5 Research questions

The study attempted to answer the following questions;

- (i) How effective are services in ensuring of customer satisfaction?
- (ii) What are the causes of customer dissatisfaction regarding the services offered by the Agency?
- (iii) What challenges face the Agency in meeting customer expectations?

1.6 Significance of the study

Customers are vital determinants of the survival and success of any organization. The ability to attract and retain customers depends on understanding and satisfying their needs and wants effectively, efficiently, competitively and profitably. This study, intended to see whether the transformation of government departments into executive agencies, has succeeded to change the performance in their operations so that they are able to improve their effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services.

Therefore, the study has the following significance;

- (i). The outcome of this research will enable WMA to spot the flaws in customer service provision, which cause customers complaints.
- (ii). Through this research, it will be possible for WMA to recognise the challenges it encounters in satisfying its customers and devise alternative approaches towards improvement of customer service provision.
- (iii). Research findings will enable the agency to understand the status of its effectiveness in service delivery to satisfy customers.

- (iv). It will enable the government to assess the efficacy of reforms and spot flaws that need its attention as well as strengths, which it can embrace as a foundation for more improvements in service delivery.
- (v). It will make the public know the role of executive agencies in improving the performance of public institutions in quality service provision to the society.
- (vi). It will be a basis for other researchers to know the status of agencies specifically WMA and use it for future studies.

1.7 Scope of the study

This study was limited to only one executive agency in the group of those which are revenue-collecting agencies and which are therefore required to operate in a business-like manner. However, the study focussed to only one group of customers (i.e., those MSEs that use weighing instruments in their business transactions). In the context of this study, customers who use weighing instruments in their business transactions include retail shops using weighing scales and butcherries. Therefore the researcher conducted the study in Weights and Measures Agency - Kigoma office in which MSEs in Kigoma municipality using weighing scales in their business transaction were included.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents theoretical framework for the study. The chapter introduces the definitions of the terms service, and customers. Moreover, it discusses the concepts of customer service, components of customer service, characteristics of service, categories of service mix, factors influencing effectiveness of customer service, marketing strategies for service firms, the importance of customer service, and measuring service performance.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.1 Definition of terms and concepts

2.1.1.1 A service

Kotler and Keller (2009) define service as any act or performance one part can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result into ownership of anything. This definition applies most to WMA that is a purely service organization. Thus, customer service in WMA and particularly in the weighing instruments context refers to a number of services offered to customers including; Metrological control on type or pattern approval, testing, certifying, and inspection of weighing scales used or intended to be used for trade and other public services.

Therefore, excellent Customer service is realized when the organization provides these services to customers at the specified and accepted standards. In the researcher's point of view, the services provided by WMA therefore, should meet the standards specified in the Weights and Measures Agency's client service charter of 2009 in order to satisfy its customers.

2.1.1.2 Customers and customer service

According to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2000), customer refers to a person or an organization that buys something from a shop/store or business. Murphy (2001) defines customer as the next user of a good or service. Moreover, Smith Ian (2003) defines customer as an individual or group of individuals to whom you supply

one or more goods or services. This study adopted the definition from Smith Ian to give the meaning of the word customer.

In any business, there exist customers who make the business survive. The customer is the end goal of businesses, this is because it is the customer, who pays for supply and creates demand. Consequently, successful existence of a business organization depends on its ability to deliver quality services or goods that meet customer satisfaction. The ways in which organizations strive to meet customer satisfaction and where possible to exceed them, is the customer service (Mwera, 2005).

According to Institute of Customer Service of UK (2007), Customer service is the sum total of what an organisation does to meet customer expectations and produce customer satisfaction. Thus, it encompasses all activities and initiatives that an organization undertakes to facilitate service delivery and meet customer expectations. However, as Turban et al. (2002) notes, Customer service is a series of activities designed to enhance the desired level of customer satisfaction – that is, the feeling that goods or services have met the customer expectations.

Gamba and Shem (2003), define customer service as providing what the customer wants at an acceptable price and value, within the operating constraints of the business. They emphasise that, customer service is not a smile campaign; it is a way of corporate life, a process by which every member of the organization from the gatekeeper to the apex becomes committed and dedicated to providing customer services of high quality at all time. Moreover, Zeithaml and Bitner (2003), define customer service as the services provided in support of company's core products.

Valarie and Mary (2006), define customer service as those activities that occur at the interface between the customer and the corporation. They further noted that, these activities enhance or facilitate the sale and use of corporation's products or services into the following temporal sequence; pre-transaction, transaction, and post-transaction.

For the case of weights and measures services, pre – transaction is the time when a customer brings to weights and measures officer his weighing instrument for testing, verification and certification or the way the officer handles the customer through telephone or other means of communication. Transaction could involve the whole process the officer takes to examine, test, and make decision on whether the instrument is fit for use for trade or not. While post-transaction could also involve inspection of the verified instrument in the users' business premises to see whether the instruments are still performing within the prescribed limits of errors or not and give professional advice accordingly. In all definitions there is a common thing, that is, customer service is the phenomenon in which all organization's resources are committed to meeting or where possible exceeding customer expectations in the services delivered.

2.1.1.3 Characteristics of a service

The special characteristics of a service result in challenges in managing, marketing or even studying and measuring a service quality. The characteristics presented here, apply to the service directed to both internal and external customers.

Most common approach in defining services has been the comparison of differences between services and physical products. According to Palmer (1994), services have five characteristics when compared to products. The characteristics of services are; intangibility, inseparability, variability, perish-ability and ownership.

Intangibility of a service means that services do not have tangible properties customers can observe before consuming the service. Customers cannot touch, feel, smell, taste, or otherwise study the properties of the service before the purchase. The intangible characteristics of the service, e.g. reliability, personal care, attentiveness of the staff, their friendliness can only be verified when a service has been purchased and consumed.

The intangibility, i.e. lack of physical evidence makes it difficult for customers to evaluate competing services in advance (Palmer, 1994: Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

Inseparability means that we cannot separate service from its means of production. Typically, Production and consumption of service occur simultaneously. Producers and consumers must normally interact during service production process and the consumers must be present during the entire production process. The inseparability occurs regardless the producer is human or a machine such as the case of a bank Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) (Kotler, 2003; Palmer, 1994).

Because of the variability, services are difficult to standardize. The variability depends on the customers, as they always are part of the service production and the outcome. In service delivery, it is impossible for pre-delivery inspection and rejection, i.e. quality control to ensure consistent standards for the service. Moreover, the employees of the same company may provide services that are quite different from each other's (Palmer, 1994; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

Perish-ability of a service refers to the fact that services cannot be stored, and its consumption occurs during the production process. The life span of a service tends to be very short and if service providers are not able to estimate the demand of a service accurately, they will then suffer unnecessary costs due to unused service employees and facilities. Because of the perish-ability of services, service providers should pay attention to scheduling service production to follow peaks and troughs in the service delivery demand (Palmer, 1994; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007).

A service has no ownership, which relates to intangibility and perish-ability of a service. When purchasing goods buyers generally acquire ownership of the goods. However, in services no transfer of ownership is from the seller to the buyer after purchase. In the service production, the buyer merely buys a right to a service process, e.g. for the use of a car park (Palmer, 1994).

2.1.1.4 Categories of Service Mix

According to Kotler and Keller (2009), five categories of service mix include;

- (i) Pure tangible goods in which the offering consists of primarily of a tangible good such as book. No services accompany this product.

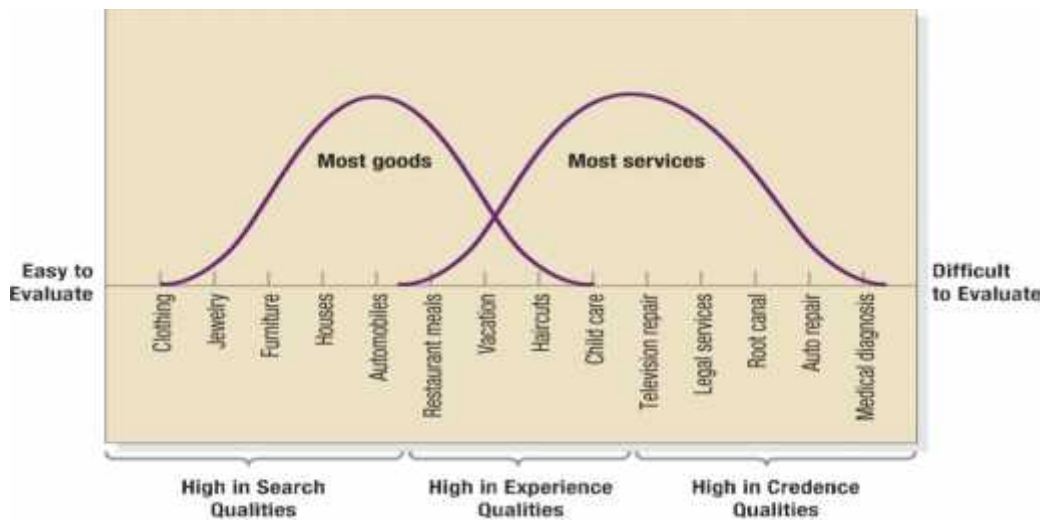
- (ii) Tangible good with accompanying services; in this category the offering consists of a tangible good, accompanied by one or more services. Typically, the more technologically the product, the greater the need for a broad range of high- quality supporting services. For instance, cars, computers, cell phones etcetera.
- (iii) Hybrid category; in this category, the offering consists of equal parts of goods and services. For example, people patronize restaurants for both foods and its preparation.
- (iv) Major service with accompanying minor goods and services in which the offering consists of a major service along with additional services or supporting goods. For example, though a trip includes a few tangibles such as snacks and drinks what airline passengers buy is transportation. The service requires a capital-intensive good - an airline for its realization, but the primary item is service.
- (v) Pure services; in the offering consists primarily of a service. Examples include legal services, massage and psychotherapy.

They further noted that services vary on the following dimensions; as to whether they are equipment based or people based, processes of delivery, client's presence during the service delivery, the service is for personal needs or business needs, service providers objectives (profit or non-profit), and ownership (private or public).

Kotler and Keller (2009) noted further that, customers could not judge the technical quality of some services even after they have received them. Fig 2.1 shows various products and services according to difficulty of evaluation. At the left are goods high in search qualities – i.e., characteristics the buyer can evaluate before purchase.

In the middle are goods and services high in experience qualities – i.e., characteristics the buyer can evaluate after purchase. At the right are goods and services high in credence qualities – i.e., characteristics the buyer normally finds hard to evaluate.

Fig.2.1 Continuum of Evaluation for different types of Products



Source: Kotler and Keller (2009)

Kotler and Keller (2009) concluded that because services are generally high in experience and credence qualities, there is more risk in purchase with the following consequences. First, service consumers generally rely on word of mouth rather than advertising. Second, they rely heavily on price, personnel and physical cues to judge quality. Third, they are highly loyal to service providers who satisfy them. Fourth, because switching costs are high, consumer criteria can make it challenging to entice a consumer away from a competitor.

2.1.1.5 Components of customer service

Whilst many organizations have some good practices and facilities in place, most appear to lack synchronization of endeavour. As Murphy (2001) notes, the customer service integration framework facilitates this essential synchronization and systemization. He listed six factors to consider, which when integrated together result in excellent service delivery. The first is customer focus, which refers to an extension of understanding customers and emphasizes the logic of developing and fostering customer relationships. The second is process and systems.

This underpins the absolute importance of formalization of activities to ensure consistency of performance. Third is involvement of employees, as service excellence is largely dependent on employees' activities, the active involvement of employees is vital (Murphy, 2001).

The forth component is employee training whereby employees must be constantly motivated and informed thereby demonstrating the need for education and training. The fifth is measurement. Measuring is an essential practice for qualification of performance and continuous improvement. The sixth is continuous improvement which itself should be an ongoing philosophy. In many organizations, the integration process will affect or change the organizational culture (Murphy, 2001). However, Payne et al. (2001), notes that organizational culture is a critical determinant of organizational ability to deliver superior service and quality to its customers.

2.1.1.6 Factors influencing effectiveness of customer service

Factors influencing effective customer service differ depending on nature of business an organization is undertaking. These factors are those referred to as key success factors (KSF). Aaker (1995) maintains that, key success factors are assets and skills that provide the base for effective customer service. A KSF may be either a strategic necessity or strategic strength. A strategic necessity is that asset or skill which does not necessarily provide an advantage because it must be there and its absence will create a significant weakness.

For example, in WMA it includes skills of testing, adjusting, and certifying traders' measuring instruments (weighing scales). On the other hand, strategic strength includes those assets or skills at which an organization excels, that are superior and provide a base of advantage.

Moreover, Strictland (1984) elaborates that, KSF can serve as the cornerstone on which to build business strategy, and that to build effectiveness of customer service an organization should concentrate on one or several KSFs and performing them in a manner that is superior and suffices customer needs and wants. However, as pointed out above KSFs differ from one business to another over a period.

It is essential therefore, that an organization must understand KSFs of its business and match with its distinctive competences, so that it develops sustainable customer service relevant to the business it is operating.

2.1.1.7 Marketing strategies for service firms

According to Kotler and Keller (2009) at one time, service firms lagged behind manufacturing firms in their use of marketing because they were small or they were professional business that did not use marketing or faced large demand or little competition. In the researcher's perspective, this observation seems to apply to government agencies in Tanzania including WMA whereby because of little or no competition (monopoly nature) they do not use marketing.

However, Parasuraman et al. (1988) offer ten lessons that are essential for improving service quality in the service firms including government agencies;

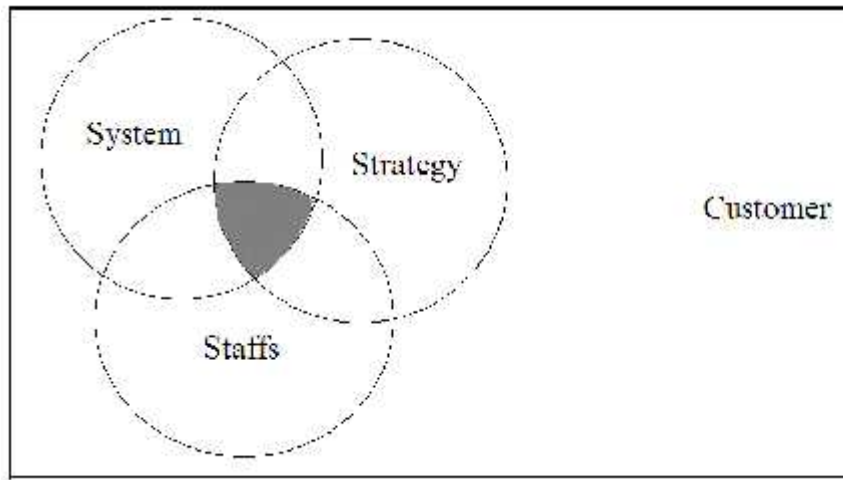
- (i) Listening – Understand what customers really want through continuous learning about the expectations and perceptions of customers and non-customers. Impliedly, WMA should continuously learn what are expectations and perceptions of weighing scale users and the public (consumers).
- (ii) Reliability – Reliability is a single most dimension of service quality and must be service priority. To WMA, it means that, the Agency should be able to perform weights and measures promised services dependably and accurately.
- (iii) Basic service – Service organizations must deliver the basics and do what they are supposed to do, i.e. keep promises, use common sense, listen to customers, keep customers informed, and be determined to deliver value to customers.
- (iv) Service design – Develop a holistic view of the service while managing its details. In this aspect, WMA should design weighing scale verification and testing procedures in a holistic view of service while managing regal requirements for testing and verifying the instrument.
- (v) Recovery – To satisfy customers who encounter a service problem, service companies should encourage customers to complain (and make it easy for

them to do so), respond quickly and personally and develop a problem-resolution system.

- (vi) Surprising customers – Although reliability is the most important dimension in meeting customer expectations, process dimensions such as assurance, responsiveness, and empathy are equally most important in exceeding customer expectations. For instance, WMA can surprise its customers with uncommon swiftness, grace, courtesy, competence, commitment, and understanding.
- (vii) Fair play – Service companies must make special efforts to be fair, and to demonstrate fairness to customers and employees. In this perspective, WMA should be fair to its external customers in setting weighing instruments verification fees and be fair to employees in formulating recruitment, reward and training policies.
- (viii) Teamwork – Teamwork is what enables large organizations to deliver services with care and attentiveness by improving employee motivation and capabilities.
- (ix) Employee research – Marketers should conduct research with employees to reveal why service problems occur and what companies must do to solve problems.
- (x) Servant leadership – Quality service comes from inspired leadership throughout the organization; from excellent system design, from the effective use of information and technology, and corporate culture.

The above observation by the academic research gurus seem to agree with Debra (1994) who noted that a successful outcome of a business firm means a satisfied customer and to achieve this, three things; strategy, system, and staff need to be focused on customer as indicated in figure 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2 Customer focus model



Source: Debra Allocock; 1994

Prasad (2009) defined Strategy as a unified, comprehensive and integrated plan relating strategic advantages of the firm to challenges of the environment. It ensures achievement of the basic objectives of the organization. While a system is a methodical procedure or process that an organization uses as a delivery mechanism of providing specific goods or services to customers, ([www.business dictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com) visited on 02/12/2013; at 10:07 pm). In view of this definition , a system in WMA can be considered to be methodical procedures or processes used by WMA as a mechanism of delivering weights and measures services to business people using weighing scales in their business transaction.

According to Collins English Dictionary (1979), staffs refer to a group of people employed by a company or individual for executive, clerical, sales work etc. This study, regards staffs as all WMA employees. Manase (2000) noted that, in performing customer service, a firm could have wonderful staffs that deal well with customers and agree things with customers, only to find the system behind them fails. Similarly, he further noted that, there could be good systems that consistently deliver quality products and services only to find poorly trained staff dealing with customers on the front line. Moreover, he observed that, the firm can have the staff

and system working well, only to discover the firm has poor strategies in the sense that they are not customer focused.

Thus, business organizations must consider all three components, by always remembering that the customer is a focal point (ibid).

2.1.1.8 The importance of customer service

Malcom et al. (1993) endeavoured to show the significance of customer service by noting that, people who have received poor customer service will, tell ten others on average about bad experience, and ten percent of those told, will tell twenty other people. They noted further that, unfortunately, good news do not travel as fast as bad ones, only about half that number will pass on the good news when they have been exceptionally well treated. They commented that there is significant payback to the service provider who offered good customer service right from the start. He minimizes adverse comments about the company, increases new customers through recommendations from existing clientele.

Similarly, Kotler and Keller (2002) note that, companies need to be specially concerned today with their customer satisfaction level because the internet provides a tool to spread bad words of mouth as well as good words of mouth to the rest of the world. Moreover, Payne et al. (2001) comment to the importance of customer service, by arguing that ‘in today’s marketing environment, an increasingly important source of competitive advantage is the way we service customers’. Many organizations recognize that one of the most powerful means of achieving differentiation over competitors is through the quality of customer service. Moreover, Rushton et al. (2000) comes with the remarks on the importance of customer service, as a critical success factor for most organizations in recent years. The reason for this resurgence in importance according to him stems from growing realization that satisfying the customer is the key to achieving competitive success.

Generally, if an organization provides satisfactory or good customer services all the time, it gains the following benefits:

- (i) Retain large number of loyal customers hence reduce cost of serving them – attracting new customers is thought to be five times expensive than retaining existing ones.
- (ii) Create new demand for alternative products in the sense that some customers will make decision to buy other services provided by the organization (cross selling advantage)
- (iii) Boost or increases repeated business from existing customers. This is because a satisfied customer will come to get service from you more frequently
- (iv) A good customer service can increase morale and satisfaction to staff because most of the customers will be happy and there will be fewer complaints from customers.
- (v) Become a source of competitive advantage for the organization- a necessary tool used to compete against other companies in the same business
- (vi) Good customer service enhances overall positioning and image of the company i.e., the public develop positive perception on the organization.

By providing good customer service WMA, will be able to improve public image as it is desired in its strategic objectives as stipulated in its SP (2013/14 – 2017/18).

2.1.1.9 Measuring service performance

Performance of service especially those with a high labour content often differ among employees, among customers, and from day to day (Valarie et al. 1998). However, formulated operational procedure and standards set within the organization can help to control performance of employees. On the other hand, the service experience customers have with contact personnel determines customers' expectations.

That is why in most services, quality occurs during service delivery, usually in an interaction between the customer and contact personnel of the service firm (Valarie et al.) *ibid*.

Service quality improvement and customer satisfaction survey determine how the customer thinks you are doing. Internally you must measure the service performance

of your employees by looking into work procedures, and developed objective standards (Richard, 1993). While providing a product or service that meets the needs of a mass market, they must also be effective on one to one, and marketers must be able to elicit information on the specific needs and preferences of their customers. Therefore, their performance criteria will thus need to shift from internal to external measure. Customer awareness, satisfaction, and quality of relationships should gain preference in evaluating the performance of the sales force. Therefore, the organizational structure should change to an inverted structure, where customers are at the top of the pyramid, followed by employees who serve them with the management at the bottom (The East African: 30th August – 5th September, 1999).

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Until 1970s service firms lagged behind manufacturing firms in their use of marketing, George and Barksdale(1974) surveyed four hundred service and manufacturing firms and concluded that in comparison to manufacturing firms, service firms appear to be;

- (i) Generally less likely to have marketing mix activities carried out in marketing departments;
- (ii) Less likely to perform analysis in the offering area;
- (iii) More likely to have an overall sales plan;
- (iv) More likely to handle their advertisement internally rather than going to outside agencies
- (v) Less likely, to use marketing research firms, and consultants and less likely to spend as much on marketing when expressed as a percentage of gross sales (Kotler, 1988).

According to Manase (2000), under this situation, a service-producing firm seemed to leave customers behind because they knew less about customers' needs and wants. It is further noted that, this is the situation which, overwhelmed most of the Governmental organizations, since almost all of them were run under monopoly and planning was done by the central government. However, he further noted that the 1990s experienced changes in business cycles calling for more customer service

improvement. May be these changes were attributed, partly by external pressure towards trade liberalization and globalization and partly by research findings.

According to Mike (1993), researches reveal that, whilst 94% of customers experiencing poor service would not complain about it, 91% would not return but would share their dissatisfaction to an extensive network of friends. He further comments that, these facts taken together show why service providers in competitive markets should take service quality seriously. In its 1994 business report, American Express noted that its new program to set standards, improve work procedures, foster teamwork between departments and monitor performance substantially improved efficiency, productivity and service level. Moreover, the focusing of organization's attention on customer needs improves employees' morale in both the front and back office (Lovelock, 1996).

During 1980s, The British Airways had a major programme on staff training investment, calling it "putting people first". The objective of this training programme was to help staffs concentrate on satisfying customers and beating competition. It did this after the British Airways marketing research findings indicated that staffs' attitude towards and treatment of customers had a strong effect on sales (Nigel, 1994).

Mwera (2005) conducted research to analyse customer care improvement of service delivery by Tanzania government agencies in which Tanzania Airports Authority (TAA) was involved as unit of study. The study revealed that, lack of knowledge and experience in aspects of marketing, finance, and human resource management among the staffs affected the agency's performance. The study further revealed that, the agency was still under the influence of the ministry whose decisions were politically motivated rather than customer motivated.

On evaluating performance problems in government agencies, Madembwe (2005) studied how the establishment of National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) as a government agency affected service delivery, and came up with the following conclusions;

- (i) The delivery of statistical products and services has improved in terms of timeliness, accuracy, relevancy and consistency.
- (ii) NBS faced problems in making timely decisions due to semi-autonomous status of the agencies, a situation which, negatively affected efficiency and effectiveness in delivering public services.

On the other hand, Mutegoa (1994) in his study to evaluate effectiveness of WMB in consumer protection before it became WMA, considered three areas to study:

- (i) Effectiveness of the bureau in protecting consumers through enforcement of the law (The Weights and Measures Act)
- (ii) Awareness of consumers on the presence of the bureau and its roles
- (iii) The bureau's internal structure, to check whether it facilitated consumer protection or not

The following are the findings from the study:

- (i) The law did not guarantee consumer protection
- (ii) Majority of people were not informed about the duties and roles of the bureau
- (iii) The organization structure that existed did not facilitate internal communication between departments. This implies poor internal customer service provision.

A study by Hassan (2006) on effectiveness of customer service management information system in insurance industry; had the following major recommendations and conclusions; that staff training is imperative in all levels to increase efficiency. Moreover, a customer driven organization with detailed customer relations can result in optimal effectiveness and efficiency at the workplace through employees' empowerment. He concluded by noting that the use of appropriate technology in serving customers, leads to customer retention and loyalty.

Literature reviewed has revealed that there are no extensive researches on customer service provision in government agencies. As noted above, all researches conducted on service delivery performance in government agencies did not document on how the establishment of government agencies in Tanzania particularly Weights and

Measures Agency, has improved effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction. This was the research gap for this study.

2.2.1 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is an abstract representation of how the researcher makes logical sense of the linkages among various attributes that are imperative to the problem. It can be represented graphically or descriptive structure (Elliott, 2005; Sekaran, 2000).

Miles and Huberman (1994) defined a conceptual framework as a visual or written product, one that “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the key factors, concepts, or variables—and the presumed relationships among them”. For this reason, the conceptual framework of the proposed study refers to the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs the research. It is a key part of the research design (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2002).

2.2.2 Description of the framework

In order to answer the questions stated in section 1.4, the researcher developed a conceptual model adopted and modified from theoretical model as developed by Rust and Oliver (1994).

In the model, they noted that Service product (technical quality), service delivery (functional quality), and service environment are the main concern in service quality for any organization. According to the related literature, service quality that customers received must be reliable, responsive and emphatic involving service product, service delivery and service environment.

Service Quality

Parasuraman et al. (1988) define quality as the overall experience, which a customer perceives through interacting a product and services. They further propose that there are five specific dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Similarly, (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman et al. 1988; Shepherd, 1999) describe service quality as a form of

attitude, related but not equivalent to satisfaction that results from the comparison of expectations with actual performance. Moreover, according to Bitner and Hubert (1994), Tsoukatos and Rand (2006), service quality is viewed as an impression of the customer about relative inferiority/superiority of a service provider and services provided.

Service quality is one of the key driving forces for business sustainability and is crucial for firms' accomplishment (Rust and Oliver, 1994). Earlier studies have focused on service quality construct by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988, and 1994).

In this regard, not many researchers have attempted to investigate the three-component model as proposed by Rust and Oliver (1994). This model consists of three dimensions, which are service product, service delivery and service environment. Service product refers to the technical quality of the service, whereas service delivery refers to the functional quality of the service. On the other hand, service environment includes the internal and external environments. Furthermore, Kotler and Armstrong (2008) stated, "a service firm's ability to hang onto its customers depends on how consistently it delivers value to them". Customer satisfaction is associated with fruitful customer behaviour from the firm's point of view. Empirical studies did indicate a link between service quality and satisfaction (Fornell, 1992; Taylor and Baker, 1994).

Customer satisfaction

Customers perceive service in terms of quality, but how satisfied they are with the overall experience, is what defines their satisfaction. Kotler et al. (2006) points out that whether the buyer is satisfied after purchase depends on the offer's performance in relation to the buyers expectations. However, Zeithaml et al. (2006) note that, although people use service quality and customer satisfaction interchangeably, there is a distinction. Thus, satisfying customers occurs when the outcome of the service matches the expectations of the service. As pointed out by Looy et al. (2003), even though they differ one is a component of the other. Zeithaml et al (2003) defines it as the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether the product or

service has met his needs or expectations. Failure to meet needs results in dissatisfaction, or a poor perception of the service quality.

As Looy et al (2003), points out the distinction between the two is a very important one. The level of customer satisfaction is the result of the customer's comparison of the service quality expected in a given service encounter, with the perceived service quality. In addition, the distinction is that in measuring customer satisfaction, the actual experience of the customer is the basis of assessments while in service quality measurement the customer experience is not required. Moreover, according to Zeithaml et al, (2006), satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a measure or evaluation of a product or service's ability to meet a customer's need or expectations.

Thus, if organizations satisfy their customers by their services the result is that, customers will be loyal to them and this is positive for the organizations because it could also mean higher profits, higher market share, and increasing customer base.

Service Product

According to Rust and Oliver (1994), service product is the service in its designed delivery form and it often entails specific features, which depend on the nature and type of services. They further noted that, the main managerial decision in the service product is identification of relevant feature or specifications to offer, service specifications, and targets. Rust and Oliver (1994) found that employees who complete the service delivery are also part of service product. Customers consume such service product and finally assess the service quality and consuming values. Sometimes, customers are even participants of service production. In such circumstance, there is no chance that employees can correct service failures without customers' awareness. The characteristics of service product are intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perish-ability (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000). In this regard, bad service product can cause service failures, poor service quality and customer dissatisfaction. Therefore, the concept of service management must also include the component of employee's quality consciousness (Deng and Pei, 2009).

Service Delivery

The service delivery process is synonymous to the role performances. Consumers possess expected sequences of events and provide role expectations with most service encounters. Research into service performances shows that violations of these expectations or the nature of the expectation itself can facilitate or impede critical post encounter behaviours such as re-patronage and complaining (Rust and Oliver, 1994). The organization's management needs to study carefully the service delivery process to monitor the satisfaction of customers. Mohr and Bitner (1995) stated that the performances of service delivery of front-line employee dramatically affect service quality and customer satisfaction. However, many researchers emphasized the importance of customer-contact employees in creating and providing good service quality (Bitner et al. 1990; Hartline and Ferrell, 1996).

Moreover, Ahearne et al. (2007) indicated that salesperson's service behaviours are important in building trust and customer satisfaction. Therefore, when the manager tries to make endeavour of service quality and customer satisfaction improvement, employees' quality consciousness definitely is the critical management topic in today's human resource management and service management.

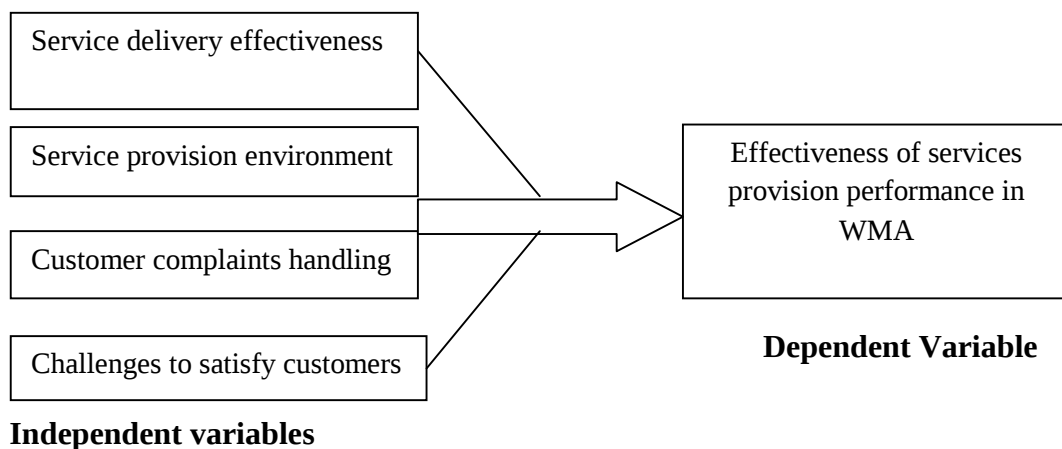
Service Environment

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

2.2.3 Conceptual Framework for the study

Fig. 2.3 below shows the relationship among variables in which the researcher identified four independent variables as; service delivery effectiveness, services provision environment, customer complaints handling and challenges to satisfy customers. The researcher considered these variables to measure the effectiveness of the service provision performance in WMA as the dependent variable.

Figure 2.3 Conceptual model for measuring customer service provision performance



Source: Adopted and modified from Rust and Oliver, 1994

From fig. 2.3 above, the researcher described customer service performance in Weights and Measures Agency by identifying; service delivery effectiveness, service environment, customer complaints handling and challenges that WMA in the efforts to satisfy customer Through these variables, the researcher obtained an insight in WMA's effectiveness of services provision performance to business people using weighing scales in Kigoma region.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the area of study, research design and nature of data, units of inquiry, sampling procedures and techniques employed in data collection, methods of data processing and analysis. Moreover, the chapter discusses ethical issues that the researcher observed, as well as validity and reliability of the study findings. It is a logical and systematic presentation of how the researcher collected, processed, and analyzed data.

3.1 Area of Study

This study involved a single region, which is Kigoma, among the twenty-four administrative regions of Weights and Measures Agency in Tanzania Mainland. The rationale for selecting Kigoma region was the fact that it is among the marginalized regions in Tanzania facing many challenges concerning quality of public services delivery including the services provided by Weights and Measures Agency. Moreover, the majority of WMA's customers in Kigoma region are owners of Micro and Small enterprises (MSEs) using weighing scales in their business transaction which is a specific group of customers in this study. Therefore, because of road infrastructure problems in the region and time constraints, the researcher conducted the study in Kigoma municipality to ensure availability of respondents.

3.2 Research Purpose

Researchers classify research studies in terms of their purpose. Accordingly, they are most often classified as exploratory, descriptive or explanatory (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003).

Descriptive research describes some situation. Generally, it describes things by providing measures of an event or activity. For example, which brands are most preferred? What advertisements are most effective? The answers of such questions come from descriptive research.

Descriptive research designs are usually structured and specifically designed to measure the characteristics described in the research questions. Hypothesis, derived from the theory, usually serve to guide the process and provide a list of what needs to be measured (Hair, Babin, Money & Samouel, 2003). The object of descriptive research is to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations. It is necessary to have a clear picture of the phenomena on which researcher wish to collect data prior to the collection of the data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003).

The purpose of this research was to describe; the effectiveness of the services, and customer complaints handling in WMA and the challenges that the agency face in its efforts to satisfy customers.

3.3 Research Design and Nature of Data

3.3.1 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Newman & Benz, 1998). Qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives (i.e., the multiple meaning of individual experiences, meaning socially and historically constructed, in order to develop a theory or pattern or an insight of a phenomenon) or advocacy/participatory perspectives (i.e., political issue-oriented, collaborative or change-oriented) or both. It also uses strategies of enquiry such as narratives, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory studies or case studies. The researcher collects open-ended emerging data for developing themes from data (Creswell, 2003).

Since the purpose of the study was to gain a better understanding of effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction in WMA Kigoma and because the study did not aim at generalization, qualitative method was more appropriate for this study.

3.3.2 Case Study

Case study is appropriate when the researcher wishes to gain a rich understanding of the context of the research. The data collection method in case study may include questionnaires, interviews, observations and documentary analysis (Saunders et al. 2003). More specifically, Yin (2003) defined a case study as conducting an empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its natural context using multiple sources of evidence, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident. This definition helps to understand case studies and their distinction from other research strategies (Yin, 2003).

When selecting single-case approach in this study, the researcher considered observation by Yin (2003) who explained that the single –case study makes an in-depth investigation regarding a single entity, such as an organization or individual. Thus, the study looked at Weights and Measures Agency as single unit of analysis, within timeframe covering the period of 5 years beginning year 2007/2008 to 2011/2012.

3.4 Units of Inquiry

As elucidated in this study's problem statement, the study evaluated the effectiveness of the service provision performance in WMA. It considered the services offered by the agency, effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction, sources of customer complaints, and challenges facing it in the provision of satisfactory customer service. In pursuit of answering research questions, the researcher assessed how service product, service delivery and service environments situation in WMA Kigoma facilitate or impede the provision of satisfactory services. The study therefore, drew primary and secondary data focusing on the following units of inquiry;

- (i) Kigoma regional WMA top management for obtaining information on the services provided by the Agency, service delivery process, policy documents, and relevant records pertaining to customer service improvement in the Agency.

- (ii) WMA Kigoma workers for getting information on the nature of working environment, training of workers on customer service and customer care, and relationship between workers and customers.
- (iii) Experienced retail shop owners using weighing scales in their business transaction from which the researcher obtained information about how they perceive the quality of services provided by WMA and sources of customers' complaints.

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample size

Data gathering is crucial in research, as the data contribute to a better understanding of a theoretical framework (Bernard, 2002). It is imperative that selecting the manner of obtaining data and from whom the data are acquired be done with sound judgment, especially, since no amount of analysis can make up for improperly collected data (Bernard et al. 1986).

In the course of this study, the researcher employed non-probability sampling. According to Kothari (2004), non-probability sampling is a sampling technique of gathering the samples in a process that does not give all individuals in the population equal chances of involvement. In this respect, the researcher used purposive sampling as one of non- probability sampling techniques. According to Bernard (2002), purposive sampling is a deliberate choice of the units (e.g., people, cases/organizations, events, and pieces of data) due to the qualities they possess.

To get a sample of employees working in WMA – Kigoma region, the researcher included Kigoma regional manager because of his position, knowledge and expertise in weights and measures services in the region. Moreover, the researcher selected experienced five employees from six WMA staff who interact with customers.

Similarly, from the population of approximately 1200 business people in Kigoma municipality using weighing scales in their business transaction, the researcher by purposive sampling selected 16 trades operating retail shops and who have been using weighing scales for not less than 10 years.

The rationale for using a small sample of 16 was the nature of the study (qualitative) that required the researcher to study deeply few units. Thus, by using purposive sampling technique, that require deliberate selection of elements basing on the qualities they possess (using weighing scale in business for not less than ten years), only sixteen people could be obtained.

Moreover, since the main data collection method was personal in- depth interviews if many elements were included in the sample could cause serious time constraint and difficulty in data coding and analysis.

Since the study was on evaluating the performance of customer service provision in WMA basing on both agency's point of view and customers point of view, information obtained from customers, helped in data triangulation because the researcher compared the feedback from traders to information gathered from WMA employees to determine areas of agreement and those of divergence. Moreover, in order to get experienced business people to be included in the study, the researcher sought for assistance from the regional manager by requesting for customers' records kept in WMA Kigoma office.

However, the researcher consulted traders' leaders at each market centre involved in the study in Kigoma municipality to identify experienced business people in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

According to Brown (2005); Tran and Perry (2003), sometimes snowball sampling which is asking an informant to suggest another informant, follows purposive sampling. In this respect however, the researcher asked those identified experienced traders to suggest other informants whom they considered to have the required qualities for being included in the study. The rationale for using purposive sampling and snowball sampling methods was the fact that, the information on how effective WMA service are in provision of customer satisfaction, is held by certain members of traders' community, whom identification of which would be difficult and expensive if other sampling methods were used. Therefore, the selected sampling methods ensured availability of informants who possessed the required qualities for the study. Moreover, because of limited time and financial resources, the use of

above stated methods was more economical as compared to for example random sampling methods.

3.6 Methods of data collection

In the cause of this study, the researcher employed both primary and secondary data guided by interviews, and observation to obtain primary data. However, documentary sources review helped the researcher to get secondary data.

3.6.1 Primary Data

Primary data is a type of information obtained directly from first-hand sources by means of surveys, observation or experimentation (Kothari, 2004). In this context, the researcher obtained primary data from respondents through the following methods/procedures:-

Interview method- According to Creswell (2003) an interview is a conversation between two or more people where the interviewer asks questions to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee. In interviews, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participant, interviews participants by telephone, or engages in focus group interviews with six to eight interviewees in each group (Creswell, 2003). In this study, the researcher used in-depth face-to-face interviews as data collection method by using semi-structured interviews to get detailed ideas about the performance of WMA in customer service provision regarding the use of weighing scales.

There were four persuasive reasons for using interviewing as the primary data source for this study. Firstly, qualitative interviewing is appropriate when studying persons' understanding of the meaning in their lived world (Kvale, 1996). Secondly, the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. "We interview people to find out from them those things we can't observe" (Patton, 1987). Thirdly, qualitative interviews result in thick descriptions of the subject being studied that enable readers to make decisions on transferability of study results (Merriam, 2002). Finally, interviews allow for triangulation of information from other sources and, thus, increase the credibility of study findings (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Merriam, 2002)

The researcher interviewed twenty-one participants for this research study. Interviewing management staff allowed for identifying and soliciting knowledge from those who Patton (2002) calls, “key informants”. Key informants are people who are particularly knowledgeable about the inquiry setting and articulate about their knowledge, and whose insights can be helpful in assisting an observer in understanding events that have happened and reasons why those events happened.

The interview exercise to study’s participants took place between 3rd March 2014 and 15th March 2014 where for convenience, five of the interviews that involved WMA members of staff took place in the participants’ office. However, at the discretion of sixteen business people using weighing scales, their interviews took place at different times in their respective business premises. During interviews, the researcher took handwritten notes for each interview that enabled tracking key points to highlight ideas of particular interest or importance.

As a first step in the interview process, the researcher reminded participants of the purpose of the study, research procedures, expected benefits, their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and protection of confidentiality. Moreover, the researcher asked participants if they had any questions about the research study or research procedures. The researcher used the semi-structured interview approach (Merriam, 2002) and a uniform set of open-ended questions to obtain demographic information on the participants, and participants’ perceptions and experiences on WMA services provided to users of weighing scales in their business transaction (Appendix 1). The researcher used open-ended questions throughout the interviews to encourage participants to respond freely and openly to queries (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Esterberg, 2002). He however, used probing and follow-up questions, when necessary to encourage participants to elaborate on or clarify a response (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The transcription process began after the first interview on 3rd March 2014 and ended on 18th March 2014.

Observation - Marshall and Rossman (1989) define observation as “the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for

study”. It is thus, the process of learning through exposure to or involvement in the day-to-day or routine activities of participants in the researcher setting. The researcher used observation method to obtain information pertaining to some behavioural acts, such as answering customers’ questions, languages used by service providers when talking to customers and complaining towards customer service provision in weights and measures activities.

This method was used to collect data from observable activities like customer handling in the process of serving them, time taken to deliver service, customer reactions in the process of receiving services, WMA employees’ attitude when serving customers, service delivery environment (i.e., tangibles) including equipment and employees’ appearance, and similar aspects. The technique provided the researcher with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, and determine who interacts with whom. Moreover, the researcher was able to grasp how participants communicate with each other, and check for how much time employees spent on various activities. However, by participant observation approach, the researcher checked definitions of terms that participants used in interviews such as ‘scale mechanic’ (in Swahili ‘fundi mizani’). Generally, through observation, the researcher observed situations described in interviews, thereby enabling the researcher to verify the truth of the statements made by informants in interviews and become aware of the distortions or inaccuracies in description provided by those informants.

In this study, the researcher took the “participant as observer stance” this is because the researcher is a member of one of the groups that were studied (Kigoma- Weights and Measures Agency’s employees) and the group was aware of the research activity. In this, phenomenon the researcher was a participant in the group of WMA employees who was interested more in observing than participating as his participation was a given since he is an employee of WMA working in Kigoma region.

3.6.2 Secondary Data Collection Method

According to Kothari (2004) secondary data means data that are already available i.e., they refer to the data previously collected and analyzed by someone else.

Documentary Review - Various documents in the organization such as files, circulars, policies, reports, pamphlets, journals, periodicals, newspaper, WMA-website and various books related to Weights and measures services that contain pertinent information for the study were contacted. The researcher used this method because the data obtained supplemented primary data for the assurance of the facts and issues (Esterberg, 2002; Merriam, 2002). In particular, the researcher reviewed the following WMA documents:

- (i) Weights and Measures Act Cap 340 R.E, 2002 for the role of WMA that constitute the nature and types of services WMA offers.
- (ii) Weights and Measures Agency's Strategic plans 2007 – 2012 and 2013 – 2018 for customer service improvement strategies.
- (iii) Weights and Measures Agency Clients' service charter of 1999 for service standards as the guideline for quality service provision.
- (iv) Weights and Measures Agency's fees regulations for prices charged for different services offered by the agency.
- (v) Weights and Measures Agency's revenue collection reports for determining overall performance of the agency in terms of revenue collection as one of the determinants for improved customer service provision.

3.7 Ethical Issues Consideration

During the study, the researcher avoided infringement of intellectual property rights of business people interviewed. Moreover, the researcher avoided plagiarism, secured permission from relevant authorities such as WMA Regional Manager, and observed research participants' rights (i.e., seeking informed consent before interview, information confidentiality, and anonymity of participants).

3.8 Data Analysis

Qualitative research studies involve a continuous interplay between data collection and data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The researcher began the process of data analysis, after collecting the data. The researcher analysed the data based on frequencies, by comparing the data collected from interviewing employees, to the data collected from interviewing customers and then compare facts to information obtained from observed data and documentary review.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Traditionally, the credibility of qualitative research relates to validity and reliability issues (Patton 1999). In order to reduce the risk of getting wrong answers, the researcher need to pay attention to validity and reliability (Saunders & Thornhill, 2003).

3.9.1 Validity

Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about (Saunders et al. 2003). They further define validity as the extent to which data collection methods accurately measure what they were intended to measure. Moreover, Yin (2003) noted that no single source has a complete advantage over all others. The different sources are highly complementary, and a good case study should use as many sources as possible which increases the validity of scientific study.

In this study, the researcher observed the following steps to ensure validity of the study:-

- (i) Data collection based on in-depth interviews with the open -ended questions, which enabled the researcher to get additional information and feelings of respondents about the issue under study.
- (ii) Data was collected from reliable sources (i.e., from respondents who are more experienced in weights and measures service delivery and those experienced in the use of weighing scales in their business transaction).

- (iii) The researcher formulated interview questions based on literature review and conceptual framework to ensure validity of the results.
- (iv) The researcher collected data in almost four weeks, within this period no major events had occurred that could have changed the state of affairs regarding the related topic.

3.9.2 Reliability

According to Saunders et al. (2003) reliability refers to the degree to which data collection methods yields consistent findings, similar observations would be made or conclusions reached by other researchers or there is transparency in how sense was made from the raw data. Assessing reliability follows three questions; will measures yield the same results on other occasions? Will subsequent observers reach similar observation? Is there transparency in how the researcher made sense from the raw data? (Smith, 2002)

The researcher observed the following steps to ensure reliability of this study:-

- (i) The researcher conducted all interviews within interference- free environments during the whole interview process.
- (ii) The researcher took notes during the interview to ensure capturing of the whole conversation in the interview.
- (iii) The researcher used the same type of questions to respective samples of respondents throughout the interviewing process to ensure reliability although questioning sequence was not consistent.
- (iv) The researcher clearly described the theories that he selected for the study and formulated research questions based on previous theory.
- (v) The researcher collected data based on the frame of reference drawn from the discussed theories. The objective of which is to ensure that if another investigator follows the same procedures and use the same study objects the same conclusions would be made.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS: DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents research findings and analysis of primary and secondary data collected from the field for the purpose of answering research questions and hence achieving research objectives. Qualitative data was presented according to the research questions and variables identified in the conceptual framework along with detailed description of issues raised in the interviews.

4.1 Background

The purpose of this research study was to assess customer service performance in Weights and Measures Agency in Kigoma region by assessing effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction. The following research questions informed this study: (a) How effective are the services in ensuring of customer satisfaction? (b) What are the causes of customer dissatisfaction concerning the services offered by the Agency? (c) What challenges face the Agency in meeting customer expectations?

During the in-depth interviews, study participants described their perceptions and experiences with services offered by WMA to business people using weighing scales. The research findings, that this chapter reports base on analysis of semi-structured interviews, WMA documents, and the researcher's participant observations during weighing scales services delivery. The participants of this study comprised of five Weights and Measures Agency employees working in Kigoma region and sixteen business people selected from eight market centres within Kigoma municipality. The age of respondents ranged from 30 to 59 years old; four were female, and seventeen were male. On average, participants had nine years of experience in services provided by WMA.

The presentation and analysis of data followed the following sequence;

- (i) Identifying and evaluating WMA's service delivery processes, resources, and personnel policies, in order to determine effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction.
- (ii) Identifying customer complaints in WMA's services and their sources as well as mechanisms put in place by the agency to handle them.
- (iii) Evaluating WMA's performance in revenue collection for the period ranging from 2007 to 2012 for identifying the challenges it faces in ensuring of effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction.

4.2 Services offered by the agency

The researcher interviewed MWA –Kigoma Region's employees through face-to-face in-depth interviews. For this research question, two interview questions were involved.

The first question was who are target customers of Weights and Measures Agency in Kigoma region? Responding to this question the respondents (WMA employees) identified WMA target customers as indicated in table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1 Target customers of Weights and Measures Agency in Kigoma region

S/N	Who are target customers of Weights and Measures Agency?	Expected Responses	Response Frequency	Percentage
1.	Business people using weighing scales in their business transaction	5	5	100%
2.	Dealers in petroleum products such as fuel	5	5	100%
3.	Owners of sand and other ballast Lorries (tipper truck).	5	5	100%
4..	Pre-packed goods manufacturers such as milling machines, and salt manufacturers at Nyanza mines	5	5	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

From table 4.1 above the findings reveals further that each group of customers comprises sub groups as follows;

- (i) Users of weighing scales - in this group they elaborated further that it comprises of retail shops, butcheries, milling machines, farmers, healthy service providers, and weighbridge owners such as TANROADS.
- (ii) Petroleum products dealers – in this group the respondents explained that it comprises of owners of petrol stations in which the measuring instruments concerned are fuel dispensing pumps and fuel storage tanks. They further explained that this group also includes owners of fuel tankers (marine, rail, and road tankers), and fuel depot owners.
- (iii) Pre-packed goods manufacturers such as cement factories as well as pre-packed goods importers and sellers.
- (iv) Owners of sand and other ballast Lorries (tipper truck).

Regarding the services that Weights and Measures Agency in Kigoma region offers to customers with respect to weighing scales they use for trade, the researcher conducted the interview to customers and table 4.2 below indicates the findings.

Table 4.2 Services WMA in Kigoma region provides to users of weighing scales

S/N	Does WMA provide the following services to you?	Expected Responses	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%	Total
1.	Verification of weighing scales	16	16	100%	0	0%	0	0%	100%
2.	Surprise inspection of weighing scales in business premises	16	10	62.5%	4	25.0%	2	12.5%	100%
3.	New weighing scale pattern approval	16	0	0%	5	31.0%	11	69.0%	100%
4.	Education on proper user of weighing scale in business	16	6	37.5%	9	56.0%	1	6.5%	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

In view of the findings in table 4.2 above, the percentages of “Yes” response reveal that the services that WMA in Kigoma provides to its customers using weighing scales in their business include; annual verification of weighing scales 100%. Other services are surprise inspection of weighing scales 62.5%, and provision of awareness education to customers on proper use of weighing scales in their business 37.5%. However, 0% in “yes” response shows that the agency in Kigoma does not provide pattern approval services for new types of weighing scales.

Moreover, only 56.0% of the total respondents revealed that WMA in the region does not provide education to its customers on proper use of weighing scales in their business. This implies that the agency should invest more in public education on legal aspects pertaining to the use of weighing scales in business in order to enhance fair trade practices and improve the agency’s performance in customer service provision.

4.2.1 Annual verification of weighing scales

WMA employees explained that they verify weighing scales used for trade at least once in every twelve months. The law requires WMA to inform traders using weighing scales to bring their instruments at a verification centre near their business premises, particularly at market centres. They further revealed that verification is done by comparing trader’s weighing scale to WMA’s working standards to ascertain whether the errors are within prescribed limits of errors or not. The respondents explained further that, if the weighing scale meets the set standards the officer pass it as being fit for trade use and a certificate of correctness issued to the owner, after which the owner pays verification fees whose amount depends on the capacity of the verified weighing scale. The respondents revealed further that if the weighing scale under test does not pass the tests mentioned above, the officer rejects and sends it to the independent and licensed scale mechanic for repair, and then returned to WMA employee for retesting and certifying thereafter. Table 4.3 below indicates the performance of the agency in conducting annual verification of weighing instruments in Kigoma municipality for the period of five years.

Table 4.3 Annual verification of weighing scales in Kigoma municipality for the period of 2007/2008 to 2011/2012

Year	Weighing scales verified	Weighing scales passed	Weighing scales rejected	Percentage of scales passed	Percentage of scales rejected	Total percentage
2007/2008	534	294	240	55%	45%	100%
2008/2009	585	363	222	62%	38%	100%
2009/2010	640	473	167	74%	26%	100%
2010/2011	728	590	138	81%	19%	100%
2011/2012	803	642	161	80%	20%	100%

Source: WMA Kigoma annual verification reports (2007/2008 – 2011/2012)

The findings in table 4.3 above reveal that the number of weighing scales brought by traders to WMA Kigoma for annual verification in Kigoma municipality, increased in ascending order. This implies that as the time goes on traders using weighing scales in their business becomes aware of their responsibility of using verified instruments. However, the average of 70.4% of total number of weighing scales verified in the period of five years passed as being fit for trade use. On the other hand, the average of 29.6% of weighing scales verified in that period were rejected for repair. The percentage of scales rejected was decreasing in an ascending order. This implies that as WMA conducts verification of weighing scales every year, the instruments become more accurate. These results indicate that annual verification of weighing scales used for trade is an important exercise for enhancement of fair trade and consumer protection.

4.2.2 Surprise inspection of weighing scales

On surprise inspection of weighing scales in business premises, the respondents explained that the law requires WMA to make surprise inspections in the traders' business premises. This helps to check whether there are some traders who have tampered with verified weighing scales for delivering short weight (use of unjust weighing scale), or whether there are traders who have not responded to WMA's request to bring their weighing scales for verification.

They revealed that if they find a trader with one or all of the offences mentioned above, legal steps follow including payment of fines or prosecuting the owner in the court of law. Appendix IV (a) shows the results of surprise inspection exercise conducted by the agency in Kigoma municipality for the period of five years from 2007/2008 to 2011/2012. Moreover, the findings show that there is a need for the agency in the region to improve awareness campaign to trades using weighing scales, to make sure all traders concerned, voluntarily bring to the agency their weighing scales for verification. This will help to avoid unnecessary fines charged to traders that render WMA's customer relationship management practice difficult. However, these findings indicate that the services provided by WMA to traders using weighing scales are not voluntary. This is because if traders fail to bring their weighing scales for verification the agency punishes them. This has adverse effect to the agency's efforts to satisfy their customers.

4.2.3 Service delivery processes used by WMA - Kigoma

On service delivery processes used to deliver verification services to traders using weighing scales, the respondents (WMA employees) revealed that after the trader has submitted his/her weighing instrument in WMA office or at a verification centre for verification, the WMA officer use the following steps to verify the instrument as indicated in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Service delivery processes to users of weighing scales in WMA Kigoma

S/no	What processes do you follow to deliver services to traders using weighing scales?	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percentage
1.	Visual examination of weighing scale	5	5	100%
2.	Actual testing of weighing scale	5	5	100%
3.	Balancing and making minor adjustment to unbalanced weighing scale	5	5	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

From the results in table 4.4 above, all respondents revealed that to provide the services to the trader who brings a weighing scale to WMA for verification, they observe three important steps or processes; visual examination of weighing scale, actual testing of the scale, and balancing and adjusting unbalanced scale.

The study revealed further that visual examination of the weighing scales during their verification ensures their entirety and compliance to the law. Moreover, actual testing ensures that, the scale is error free and if it is not properly balanced, the officer balances it before testing. These findings imply that these three steps ensure that the weighing scale complies with all legal requirements before passing it for trade use.

4.2.4 Personnel policies

According to the literature, HR policies in a business organization play an important role on improving service delivery environment. On this view, the interviewer sought to identify personnel policies that enable WMA employees to be empowered for quality service delivery. The results from respondents are as indicated in table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5 HR policies in WMA

S/no	Does WMA have the following HR policies?	Expected responses	Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%	Total %
1.	Recruitment and selection policy	5	4	80%	0	0%	1	20%	100%
2.	Training policy and development	5	0	0%	5	100%	0	0%	100%
3.	Reward and recognition policy	5	0	0%	5	100%	0	0%	100%
4.	Risk management policy	5	0	0%	3	60%	2	40%	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

From the results in table 4.5 above, the only HR policy that WMA has is Tanzania public service recruitment policy (2005). Respondents were not sure of the existence of other HR policies such as training and development policy, reward and

recognition policy, and risk policy. The only reason the respondents put forward for their responses is that they had not seen any of those policies. These findings imply that service environment in the agency is not favourable for employees to deliver quality services to customers.

4.3 Measuring and monitoring service level performance of the agency

The researcher asked Kigoma WMA employees to explain how their office measure and monitor its performance in terms of service level.

The responses in table 4.6 below indicate what they consider mechanism for measuring and monitoring level of the services they provide to customers.

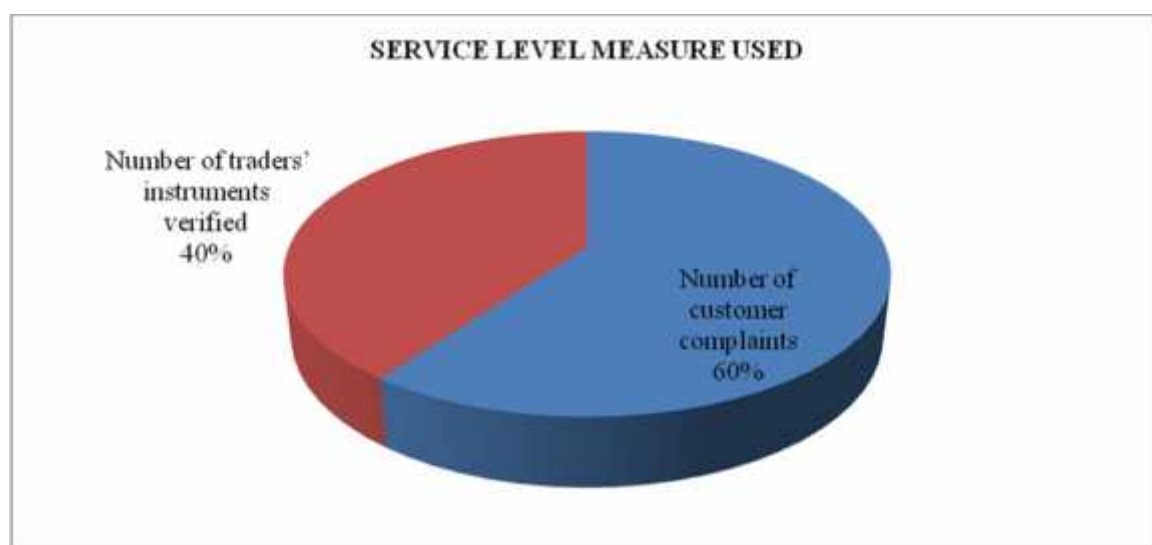
Table 4.6 Service level measures used by WMA Kigoma

S/no.	Service level measure	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percentage
1.	Number of customer complaints	5	3	60%
2.	Number of traders' instruments verified	5	2	40%
Total			5	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

In view of the responses in table 4.6 above, 60% of the respondents consider that by using the number of customer complaints the agency receives on services it offers to traders using weighing scales; it can be able to know its performance in terms of service level. Moreover, 40% of the respondents considered that the increase in number of weighing scales brought by traders to WMA for verification every year signifies the improved service level performance of the agency. These findings imply that without surveys on quality of service and customer satisfaction, those mechanisms the agency considers proper for measuring service level performance are not enough to measure effectiveness of services and customer satisfaction. B Figure 4.1 below shows the same information in the form of a pie chart.

Fig.4.1 Service level measuring mechanism used by WMA Kigoma



Source: Research findings (2014)

However, responding to the question on how they monitor general performance of the agency in the region. Employees responded as indicated in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7 Monitoring of agency's general performance

S/no	Performance monitoring mechanism	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percentage
1.	Surprise inspection	5	2	40%
2.	OPRAS	5	2	40%
3.	Revenue trend	5	1	20%
Total			5	100%

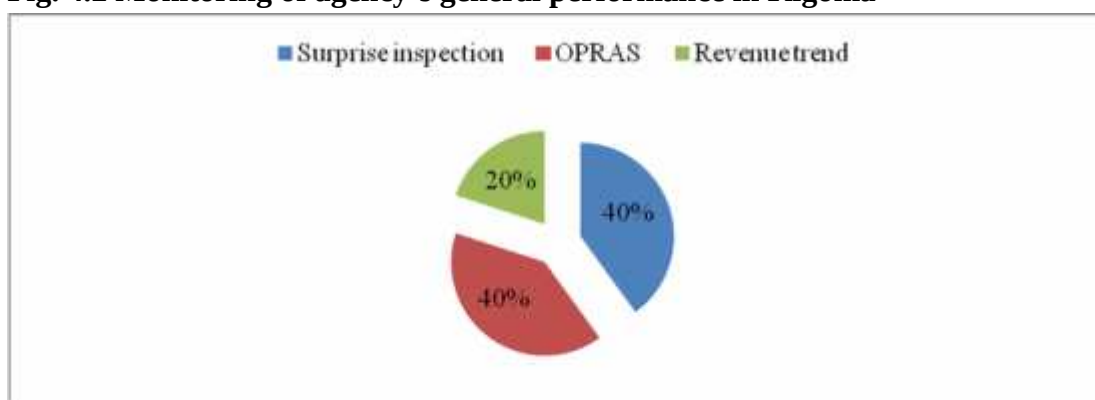
Source: Research findings (2014)

Considering responses in table 4.7 above, 40% of respondents maintained that they use surprise inspection of weighing scales in trader's business premises as a performance monitoring mechanism to see how traders respond to requests by the agency to bring to verification centres their weighing scales for verification.

Another 40% of respondents said that they consider Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) a tool to measure and monitor general performance of employees as the service providers. Moreover, the study revealed that 20% of

respondents consider that through evaluation of revenue collection trend the agency monitors its general performance. Generally, the findings in table 4.7 and 4.8 imply that the agency does not use customer satisfaction survey and clients service charter as the main tools for measuring and monitoring its performance in terms of service level. The same information is shown using pie chart as indicated in figure 4.2 below.

Fig. 4.2 Monitoring of agency's general performance in Kigoma



Source: Research findings (2014)

4.4 Customer complaints on the services offered by WMA Kigoma

Regarding the presence of customer complaints in WMA -Kigoma, the employees of the agency revealed that, there are some customer complaints as indicated in table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8 Customer complaints that WMA employees face in service delivery

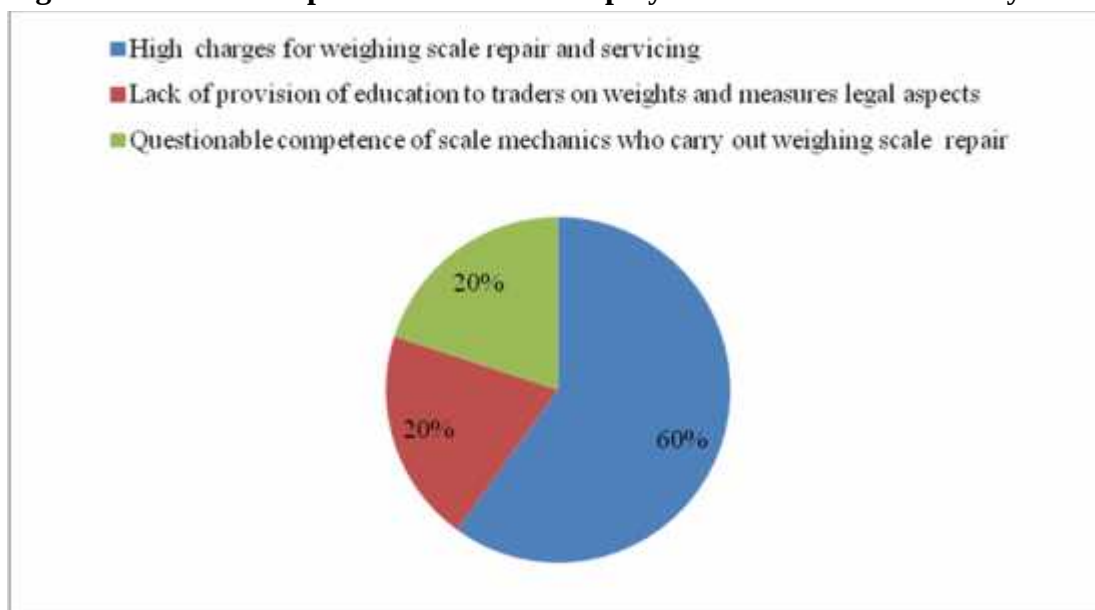
S/No	What service complaints does your office encounter from business people using weighing scales?	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percent
1.	High charges for weighing scale repair and servicing	5	3	60%
2.	Lack of provision of education to traders on weights and measures legal aspects	5	1	20%
3.	Questionable competence of scale mechanics who carry out weighing scale repair	5	1	20%
Total			5	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

Considering table 4.8 above, the results reveal that the majority of agency's customers in Kigoma region, who use weighing scales, complain about the prices of services charged by scale mechanics for repairing their weighing scales. Moreover, they revealed that customers complain about insufficient education to traders that WMA has to provide to users of weighing scales regarding legal aspects governing the trade use of weighing scales.

However, questionable competence of scale mechanics that provide weighing scale repair services in the region is another cause of customer complaints. These results obtained from interviewing WMA employees, align with the findings in table 4.15 where customers revealed that these are the main causes of their dissatisfaction with the services the agency provides to them. The same information is shown using pie chart as indicated in figure 4.3 below.

Fig.4.3 Customer complaints that WMA employees face in service delivery



Source: Research findings (2014)

On the other hand, about the question of what the respondents thought to be the probable causes of customer complaints to services offered by WMA. In this respect, the findings indicated that lack of awareness on part of customers on services the agency provide, inadequate funds needed to provide education to customers, and lack

of clear policy instrument on the level of education of scale mechanics are causes of customer complaints. Moreover, poor economic situation of agency's customers in Kigoma region in terms of income that makes them to consider WMA's charges of services to be high, and insufficient customer care training to WMA employees are other causes of customer complaints in the agency.

Concerning the issue of customer complaints handling mechanism in WMA Kigoma, the findings indicated that there is no any specified mechanism for customer complaints handling. Rather, all employees handle and resolve customer complaints according to how an employee considers a proper way of handling and resolving them. The respondents explained further that to minimize customer complaints the agency's employees in Kigoma region stick on observance of professional ethics.

4.5 Challenges that face the Agency in meeting customers' expectations

To get an insight on the challenges that WMA in Kigoma face in its efforts to meet customers' expectations, the researcher interviewed employees about the following aspects.

4.5.1 The impact of status change from WMB to WMA on overall performance

Regarding the impact of status change from WMB to government agency in 2002 on overall performance, the findings obtained from interviewing both WMA employees and customers revealed that the change of status has improved overall performance of WMA in Kigoma in the aspects indicated in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9 Overall performance of WMA Kigoma due to status change

Sn	Performance improvement indicators mentioned	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percentage of the total
1.	Increase in revenue collection	21	11	53%
2.	Accessibility of services to customers	21	7	33%
3.	Improved public image of the agency	21	3	14%
	Total		21	100%

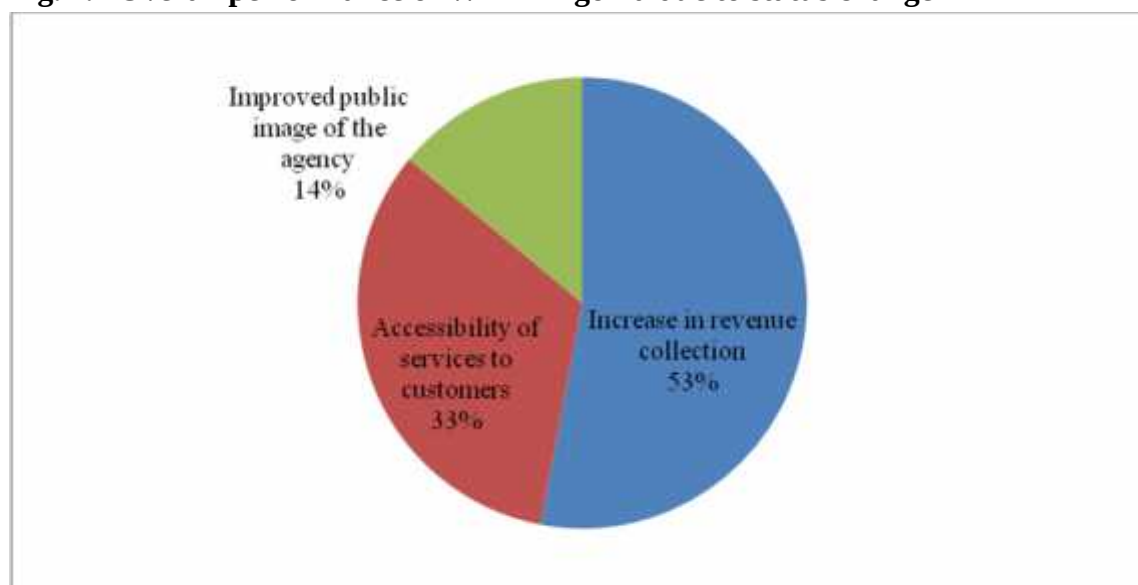
Source: Research findings (2014)

In view of the findings in table 4.9 above, 53% of the respondents revealed that the change of status improved overall performance of the agency by increasing revenue

collection. They attributed revenue collection increase to improved staff motivation in terms of increased salary and other financial incentives.

Moreover, 33% of interviewees revealed that the agency has improved accessibility of services to customers due to reliable transport. In addition, 14% of the respondents mentioned improved public image of the agency to be another indicator of improved overall performance of the agency due increased agency's services publicity. The same information is shown using pie chart as indicated below in figure 4.4

Fig. 4.4 Overall performance of WMA Kigoma due to status change



Source: Research findings (2014)

Furthermore, the researcher proved the assertion of increased revenue through documentary review of monthly revenue collection reports. In this regard, the researcher extracted revenue collection trend from monthly revenue collection reports as indicated in appendix IV (b).

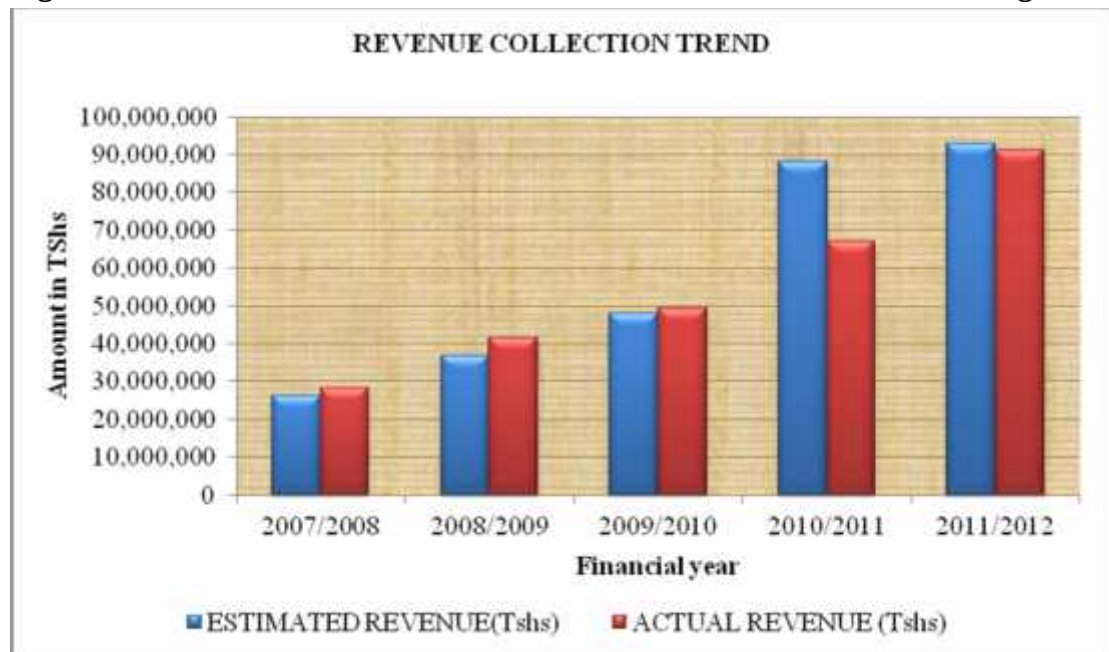
In connection to the findings in appendix 4(b), the respondents attributed the increase in revenue collection in Kigoma region to the agency's becoming semi-autonomous, in which the agency is able to make faster decision concerning service provision improvement and thus reduce bureaucracy. They further maintained that after

becoming the agency, both strategic and operational plans in WMA are prepared at the agency level due to increased powers of CEO.

However, the respondents pointed out that increasing of fees charged by the agency to the services it provides and fines charged to those traders who fail to comply with weights and measures laws contributed much to increase in revenue collection. These findings imply that the increase in revenue collection of the agency was not due improved customer service management but rather due to coercing customers to pay in fearing to breach the law.

However, in terms of customer satisfaction improvement because of change of status, the findings reveals that there is no evidence showing that the change of status from WMB to WMA has improved customer satisfaction performance in WMA Kigoma region. This is because the agency in Kigoma region does not perform customer satisfaction surveys. The revenue collection trend in WMA Kigoma for the period under the study is summarised in fig.4.5 below.

Fig.4.5 Revenue collection trend from 2007/2008 to 2011/2012f WMA – Kigoma



Source: Researcher's construct from WMA-Kigoma revenue collection reports

4.5.2 Resources in Weights and Measures Agency Kigoma region

In terms of resources availability, the interviewees responded as the findings indicated in table 4.10 below.

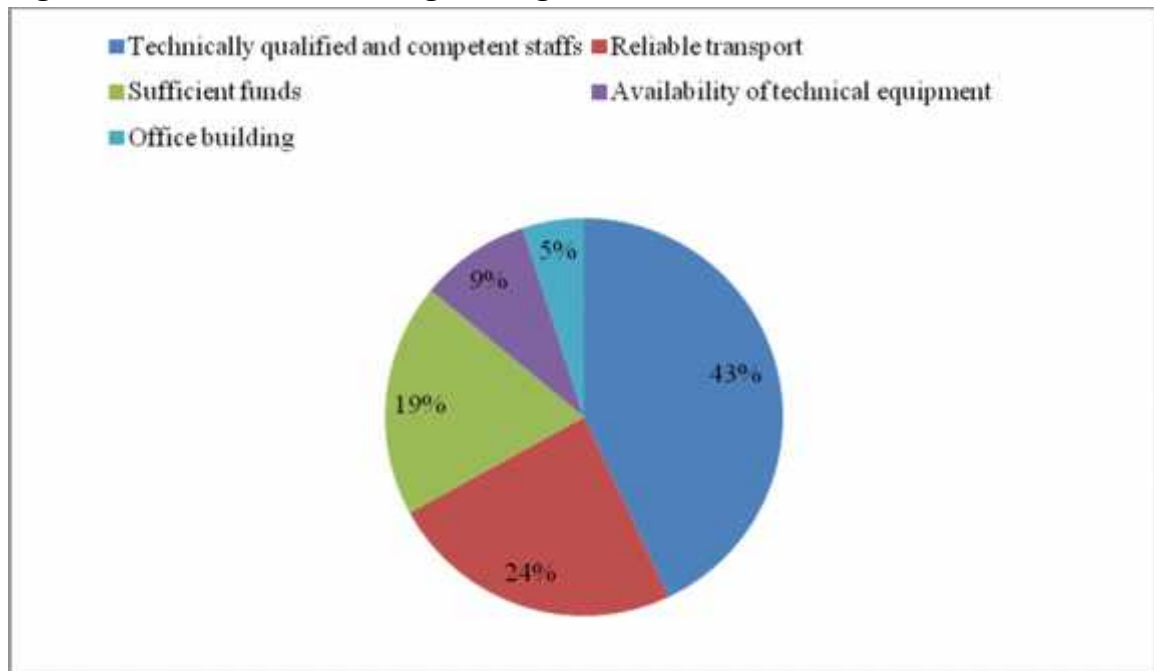
Table 4.10 Resources in WMA Kigoma region

S/no	Type of resource	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percentage
1.	Technically qualified and competent staffs	21	9	43%
2.	Reliable transport	21	5	24%
3.	Sufficient funds	21	4	19%
4.	Availability of technical equipment	21	2	9%
5.	Office building	21	1	5%
Total			21	100

Source: Research findings (2014)

Considering the finding from table, 4.10 above when taken in descending order revealed that WMA has professionally competent staffs that are able to serve customers. The respondents added to say that the office has reliable transport that enables them to perform their duties promptly. For example, attending to verification centres on time and making frequent surprise inspections in traders' business premises. In terms of technical equipment, WMA employees said that technical equipment such as beam scales for testing and adjusting weights used by traders are outdated. The condition of the beam scale used by WMA is as portrayed in the photograph in Appendix III (a). However, on the office building, the findings indicated that the agency in the region has no own building but it is using Regional Administrative Secretary's building with insufficient office space as indicated in a photograph in Appendix III(c). The percentages for the last two items imply that the agency cannot be able to deliver effective customer services to ensure customer satisfaction without adequate technical equipment and favourable working environment in terms of sufficient office space. The same information is shown using pie chart as indicated in figure 4.6 below.

Fig. 4.6 Resources in WMA Kigoma region



Source: Research findings (2014)

4.5.3 Service provision environment in WMA-Kigoma

The researcher studied service environment in the agency by considering its Human Resource practices and tangibles. HR plays a great role in effective services delivery in provision of customer satisfaction to both internal and external customers. Therefore, the researcher asked respondents to explain policies the agency uses to train and reward its employees. Regarding training policy, the findings were as indicated in table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11 Procedures for selecting employees for training in the agency

S/No.	Do you clearly understand the criteria the agency use to select employees for training?	No	Not sure	Total
1.	Response Frequency	4	1	5
2.	Response Percentage	80%	20%	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

The findings in table 4.11 above revealed that 80% of agency's employees in Kigoma do not clearly understand the criteria the agency use to select employees for training.

Moreover, 20% of employees were not sure of what policy the agency use to train its employee. These findings imply that, the agency does not have a documented training policy to facilitate building skills capacity and career development to enhance effective service delivery. However, regarding the existence of recognition and reward policy in the agency, the respondents said that apart from monthly salary, the only reward they know is that the agency provide to best worker during May Day, and the criteria used to get the best worker are as per Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees (TUGHE) directives. Lack of both training policy and reward policy in the agency implies that, the service environment in WMA is not conducive for internal customers to grant effective services for external customer satisfaction.

On services delivery systems, the findings revealed that WMA provide the services to traders using weighing scales by visiting them at their respective nearby market centres. This makes it difficult for WMA to control service delivery environment in terms of tangibles such cleanness of verification centres' premises as it appears in a photograph in Appendix 3(b). However, customers constitute the service provision environment in WMA. In this view, education level of agency's customers plays an important role in facilitating provision of effective services. The research findings on the education level of traders using weighing scales in Kigoma region show that their education range from primary to ordinary level secondary education as indicated in table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12 Education levels for Traders using weighing scales in Kigoma municipality

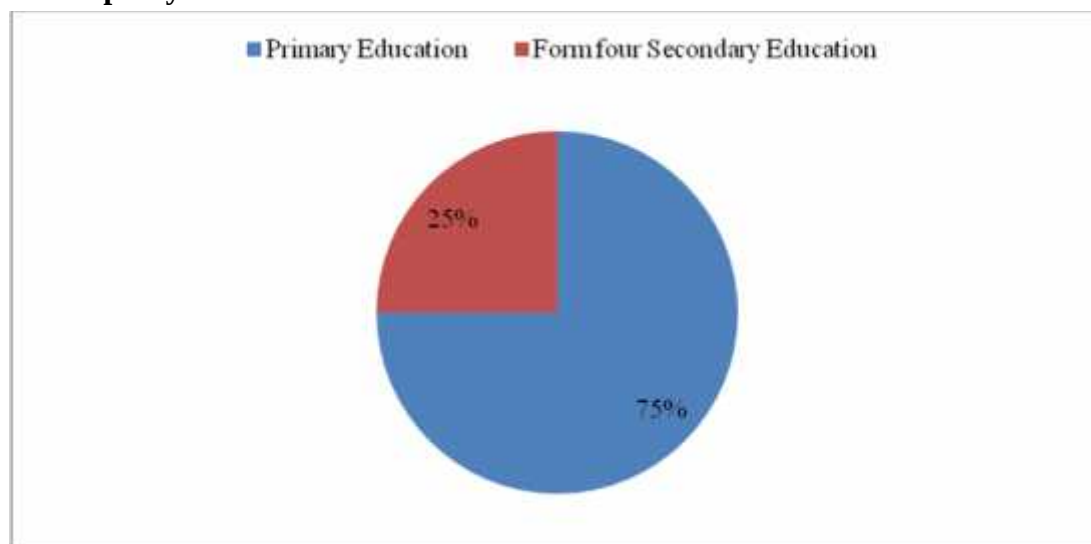
S/no.	Trader's education level	Expected responses	Response frequency	Percentage
1.	Primary Education	16	12	75%
2.	Secondary Education	16	4	25%
	Total	16	16	100%

Source: Research findings (2004)

Considering the above findings in table 4.12, 75% of weighing scale users interviewed has primary education level. This implies that it is difficult for them to read and comprehend weights and measures laws and regulations written in English language.

This phenomenon contributes to traders' complaints of lack of education on matters pertaining proper use of weighing scales. The same above information is shown using pie chart as indicated below in figure 4.7

Fig.4.7 Education levels for Traders using weighing scales in Kigoma municipality



Source: Research findings (2014)

4.6 Customers' perception and experiences on effectiveness of the services provided by WMA in Kigoma region

The researcher conducted in-depth face-to-face interviews with 16 traders who use weighing scales in their businesses in order to seek for their perception and experiences on effectiveness of the services they get from the agency. The point of interest was on customers' knowledge on service delivery processes used by the agency and their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the services they get.

4.6.1 Customer knowledge of service delivery process used by WMA

The researcher sought to get insight in customers' knowledge of service delivery processes used by WMA. According to the prevailing theory, if a customer clearly understands service delivery process he/she is likely to be cooperative to service providers. When the respondents were asked whether they knew service delivery process used by WMA to provide services to users of weighing scales, 56% equal to 9 out of 16 respondents revealed to be familiar with processes as indicated in table 4.13 below;

Table 4.13 Customers' knowledge on service processes

S/No.	Do you understand what processes you have to follow to get your weighing scale verified?	Yes	No	Total
1.	Response Frequency	9	7	16
2.	Response Percentage	56%	44%	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

However, from table 4.13 above, 44% of respondents, who maintained that they are not familiar with weighing scale verification service process used by WMA, claimed that the agency does not give them education on matters related to weighing scales. From these findings, the difference between those respondents who are familiar with the service delivery process in WMA and those who are not familiar is significantly small.

This implies that, there is a need for the agency to provide more education to users of weighing scales in order to minimize customer complaints.

4.6.2 Customers' satisfaction with services provided by WMA in Kigoma region

The researcher-interviewed users of weighing scales regarding their perception and experiences on WMA's service delivery level in provision of customer satisfaction. The results indicates that 5 respondents out of 16 equal to 31% are satisfied with the services provided by the agency, while 11 out of 16 respondents equal to 69% are not satisfied. These findings are as indicated in table 4.14 below:

Table 4.14 Customers' satisfaction with WMA services

S/No.	Are you satisfied with the services provided to you by WMA in Kigoma region?	Yes	No	Total
1.	Response Frequency	5	11	16
2.	Response Percentage	31%	69%	100%

Source: Research findings (2014)

The researcher asked the respondents who claimed to be not satisfied with the services provided to them by the agency to site those service aspects in which WMA does not meet their expectations. The findings of the causes of customer dissatisfaction given by eleven respondents who were not satisfied are as summarized in table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15 Causes of customer dissatisfaction in the agency

S/no	In what aspect of WMA's services are you not satisfied?	Expected response	Response frequency	Percentage
1.	Lack of customer education provision	11	5	46%
2.	High price charge by scale mechanics	11	3	27%
3.	Incompetent scale mechanics	11	2	18%
4.	Poor communication with customers	11	1	9%
	Total		11	100%

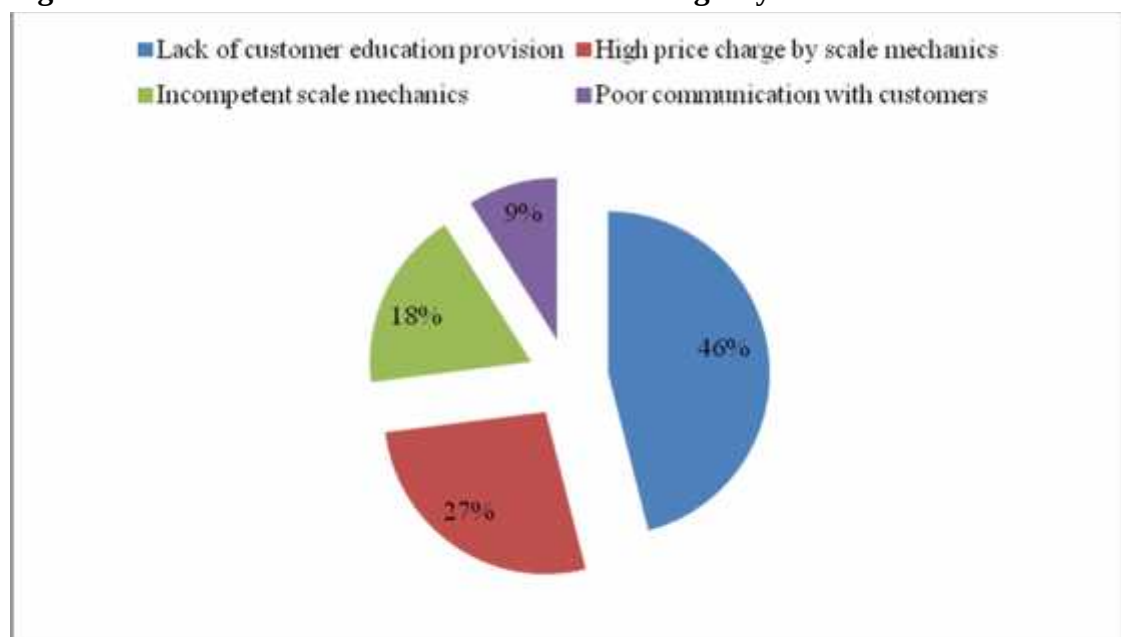
Source: Research findings (2014)

By considering items 1, 2 and 3 in table 4.15 above, the percentage scores in ascending order shows that, 46% perceive that WMA is not providing enough education to its customers. This is followed by those who perceived that the prices charged by scale mechanics for servicing or/and repairing of their weighing scales are high considering value for money and low capital of most of MSEs owners.

Moreover, item four of table 4.15 above indicates that 18% of the respondents shown concern on the competence of scale mechanics. For example, one respondent said, “I brought my weighing scale to the scale mechanic for servicing, to my disappointment my instrument became even worse after being serviced”

These results concur with opinions of WMA employees on the causes of customer complaints in section 4.4. From the findings, only 9% claimed that they are not satisfied with the way WMA employees communicate to them during service delivery encounter. This, however, align with the assertion of WMA employees that one of the challenges WMA Kigoma faces is lack of adequate customer care training to employees. The same above information is shown using pie chart as indicated in figure 4.8 below.

Fig. 4.8 Causes of customer dissatisfaction in the agency



Source: Research findings (2014)

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions made from the collected data, their analysis and interpretations. Moreover, the chapter provides recommendations and areas for further research.

5.1 Conclusion

The study aimed at assessing the performance of customer service provision in government organizations in Tanzania. In particular, that was to describe the effectiveness of the services offered by WMA in provision of customer satisfaction. To measure the effectiveness of the services the researcher considered, the processes used to deliver services, service environment and atmosphere, customer complaints handling and challenges that WMA face to satisfy customers.

5.1.1 Identification of the nature and types of services offered by WMA to traders using weighing scales

Verification and inspection of weighing scales are the major services offered by WMA to business people using weighing scales for trade purposes. These services are pure services in nature, they are high in experience and credence qualities i.e., the buyers normally find it difficult to evaluate even after consumption. Services provided by the agency to this group of customers are people-based services. This makes it important for the agency to invest in improving service provision skills of its employees to ensure effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction.

5.1.2 Description of effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction in Weights and Measures Agency

The following are conclusions on the assessment of services effectiveness of WMA in provision of customer satisfaction.

- (i) Service delivery processes the agency uses to deliver services to traders using weighing scales are as per the weights and measures Act. Cap.340 (R.E.2002)

and regulations made there under. This implies that flexibilities in changing the service delivery process are questionable as it can mean breach of the law. Moreover, legality nature of the services the agency provides does not give customers freedom to choose to consume the services or not as it is mandatory for a trader to verify the weighing scale used for trade.

- (ii) WMA has no service standard guidelines to ensure quality of the services it provides to the customers, which in turn could ensure effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction.
- (iii) The agency has no Human Resource policies that can drive customer satisfaction. Since policies such as training and career development policy, as well as recognition and reward policy have proved to have positive correlation with internal customer satisfaction. It implies that in WMA, employees are not satisfied with the services they get from the agency and therefore they cannot satisfy external customers.
- (iv) WMA measures performance of its employees through Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS). This system measures general performance of an employee. In terms of measuring how its employees deliver satisfactory services to its customers, WMA has no mechanism put in place for that purpose.
- (v) The agency has no complaints handling mechanism in Kigoma region, this makes it difficult for WMA to register and resolve customer complaints.

5.1.3 Identification of causes of customer complaints

Research findings on the main causes of customer complaints have enabled the researcher to make the following conclusions:

- (i) WMA does not set aside sufficient budget for providing education to traders using weighing scales in Kigoma region.
- (ii) The price charged by scale mechanic companies is high regarding the quality of work they do on servicing and repairing a weighing scale.

- (iii) Competence of scale mechanics who service and repair weighing scales is not sufficient to make their customers satisfied. Although scale mechanics are not WMA employees, their activities greatly affect the agency's public image.
- (iv) WMA employees have no sufficient customer care training a situation that causes some of the employees to mistreat customers during service delivery.

5.1.4 Challenges that WMA faces in satisfying its customers

The following are conclusions on the challenges that WMA in Kigoma region faces in its efforts to deliver effective services to its customers:

- (i) The agency has old, outdated, and insufficient technical equipment.
- (ii) The agency has no enough budgets on publicity. This causes lack of education to customers on proper use of weighing scales.
- (iii) Because the agency conducts verification of weighing scales at market centres, it is difficult to make service atmosphere attractive to customers as portrayed in a photograph in appendix III (b).
- (iv) The agency has poor working environment in terms office space as indicated in appendix III(c). This reduces the morale of employees and therefore affects internal customer satisfaction.
- (v) There is insufficient customer care training to WMA staff in Kigoma region. This is associated with lack of training policy.
- (vi) In Kigoma region, most of traders using weighing scales are owners of micro enterprise with small capitals. This contributes to customer complaints on high prices charged by the agency to its services.
- (vii) The agency does not use clients' service charter to set standards of services it provides to customers. This makes it difficult for the agency to monitor and measure its performance in terms of customer satisfaction.

5.1.5 Achievements of WMA due to change of status from WMB to WMA

- (i) By becoming a government agency, WMA is now able to make faster decisions than it was the case before its transformation. This is because of reduced bureaucracy.

- (ii) WMA has increased financial independence that has enabled the agency to execute its programs more effectively than before.
- (iii) After becoming an agency, WMA has adopted modern financial practices that have enabled it to monitor financial performance by using financial indicators derived from financial reports.
- (iv) After becoming the agency, WMA has improved its revenue collection.
- (v) WMA – Kigoma has improved teamwork spirit, this is because employees actively are involved in setting goals and performance evaluation through OPRAS.
- (vi) The agency has professionally qualified employees, with the required technical skills who deliver verification of weighing scales services although to the great extent they lack necessary skills such as good governance, human resource management, customer care, and leadership skills.

Generally, the services delivered by WMA to traders using weighing scales in Kigoma region are not enough effective to ensure provision of customer satisfaction. Many challenges observed in; the nature and types of the services the agency offers to traders using weighing scales, service processes used to deliver services in which traders are legally bound to bring their weighing scales for verification and pay for that service, service environment in terms of HR policies and tangibles, and customer complaints handling mechanisms justify this conclusion.

5.2 Recommendations

From the findings and conclusions, the researcher recommended the following:

- (i) To improve the effectiveness of the services for satisfying its customers, WMA should give the first priority to providing education to its customers. This will enable the customers to understand the law that governs the use of weighing scales in business. Being aware of what the law requires them to do regarding verification of their weighing scales, traders will be cooperative to agency's service providers and therefore reduce customer complaints.

- (ii) WMA should walk the talk. This means that the agency should implement and practice its core values as stipulated in its SP (2013 – 2018). To achieve this, the agency should make sure that its strategies, service delivery systems, and staffs all focus to customers. However, the agency should actively use client's service charter to set service provision standards that will improve employees' accountability and enable the agency to measure its service performance level. Moreover, the agency should put in place human resource policies, such as rewards and recognition policy, and training policy to improve professional excellence and motivation of employees to be results-oriented.
- (iii) WMA needs to train its employees in customer care and marketing skills. This will enable employees to know that their customer is a focal point of the agency and improve effectiveness of the services that will ensure customer satisfaction. However, the agency should put in place a well-documented customer complaints handling mechanism, which will enable the agency to manage customer complaints from both internal and external customers.
- (iv) WMA should device a control mechanism to the price charged by scale mechanics to make sure that the price they charge by servicing a weighing scale are equitable and reflect value for money. Moreover, the agency should provide licenses to suitably qualified scale mechanics to ensure that their services are reliable to customers.
- (v) WMA in Kigoma region should conduct its business in the office with enough space in order to improved morale of employees. Because tangibles such as the appearance of buildings, working facilities, and staffs are among the determinants of service quality, the agency should increase investment in technical equipment to ensure quality of services it provides to its customers and therefore improve the effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction.

5.3 Suggestion for further research

Weights and Measures Agency has more than one groups of customers and this study covered only one group of customers. Some areas, which are uncovered in this study, are interesting and need to explore. Moreover, the limitations and shortcomings of this study also provide implications for further research. However, the future research needs to find the linkage between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction in WMA from the customers' point of view by employing a more diversified random sample.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I (a)

INTERVIEWGUIDE

Demographic information

Gender

Age

Level of education

Profession

Job title

Working experience

QUESTIONS TO WMA- KIGOMA EMPLOYEES

Questions for research question 1

1. Who are target customers of WMA?
2. Could you describe in detail the nature and types of services your agency offer to business people using weighing scales?

Questions for research question 2

3. Could you please explain in detail what service delivery processes does WMA use to deliver services to its customers who use weighing scales?
4. Are there any guidelines you use in WMA to ensure quality of service delivery?
5. What personnel policies do you have to facilitate effective service delivery to you customers?
6. How does your agency measure and monitor its performance in terms of service level?
7. Employee training is one of the tools used to deliver services to customers to meet their expectations. What customer service training have you ever undergone?
8. Could you explain what rewarded do you get for delivering excellent services besides your monthly salary?

Questions for research questions 3

9. What service complaints does your office encounter from business people using weighing scales?
10. What do you think are the main causes of customer complaints in your agency?
11. What mechanisms have your office put in place to minimize customer complaints?
12. Could you please explain how does your office handle customer complaints?

Questions for research question 4

13. WMA changed from WMB to government agency in 2002, how has the change of status helped its overall performance?
14. In terms of service delivery, how has the change of status improved the Agency's effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction?
15. In terms of resources, what resources do you think WMA possess to ensure effectiveness of the services in provision of customer satisfaction?
16. What do you think could be the challenges that face WMA in Kigoma region in its efforts to satisfy its customers?
17. Do you have anything else to add?

Thank you for your time

APPENDIX I (b)

QUESTIONS TO BUSINESS PEOPLE USING WEIGHING SCALES

Demographic information

Gender

Age

Education

Occupation

Business experience

1. Could you please explain what type of business are you doing?
2. Do you understand what processes you have to follow to get your weighing scale verified?
3. Are you satisfied with the services provided to you by WMA in Kigoma region?
4. In which service aspects do you think the agency does not meet your expectations?
5. In your opinion, what Weights and Measures Agency should do to improve level of the services delivery to meet your expectations?
6. Do you have anything to say on WMA's services to traders who use weighing scales?

Thank you for your time

APPENDIX II

RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO TRADERS USING WEIGHING SCALES IN SWAHILI VERSION

Taarifa za jumla

Jinsi

Umri

Kiwango cha elimu

Uzoefu katika biashara

1. Tafadhali unaweza kueleza ni biashara gani unayoifanya?
2. Je, unafahamu ni hatua zipi unazotakiwa kuzifuata ili mzani wako uhakikiwe?
3. Je, unaridhika na huduma unazopewa na wakala wa vipimo mkoa wa Kigoma?
4. Unadhani ni maeneo gani ya huduma wakala haukidhi matarajio yako katika kutoa huduma?
5. Kwa maoni yako, Wakala wa vipimo unapaswa kufanya nini, ili kuboresha kiwango cha utoaji wa huduma ili kukithi matarajio yako?
6. Je, una jambo lolote la kusema kuhusu huduma za Wakala wa Vipimo kwa wafanya biashara wanaotumia mizani?

Nashukuru kwa muda wako.

APPENDIX III

FIELD PHOTOGRAPHS

Appendix III (a) A beam scale used by WMA- Kigoma to test traders' weights



An old beam scale that WMA-Kigoma use to test weights used by traders

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher (2014)

Appendix III(b):

Service provision atmosphere at a market centre



An employee of WMA-Kigoma delivering service to traders at one market centre

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher (2014)

Appendix III (c):

Inadequate office space at WMA – Kigoma office



A scale mechanic adjusting a trader's weight in WMA-Kigoma office

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher (2014)

APPENDIX IV

FACTS FROM DOCUMENTARY REVIEW IN WMA-KIGOMA OFFICE

Appendix IV (a)

Results of surprise inspection in Kigoma municipality

Year	Weighing scales seized during inspection	Type of offence		Total amount fines charged (Tshs)
		Failure to bring weighing scale for verification	Use of unjust weighing scale	
2007/2008	115	97	18	1,150,000
2008/2009	90	71	19	900,000
2009/2010	105	94	11	1,05,000
2010/2011	112	102	10	1,120,000
2011/2012	88	70	18	880,000

Source: WMA Kigoma surprise inspection annual reports (2007/2008 – 2011/2012)

Appendix IV (b)

Revenue collection trend from 2007/2008 to 2011/2012 WMA – Kigoma

Financial year	Estimated revenue(Tshs)	Actual revenue T(shs)	Percentage change
2007/2008	26,314,050	28,408,700	7.96
2008/2009	36,820,300	41,700,400	13.25
2009/2010	48,063,200	49,422,990	2.83
2010/2011	88,079,800	66,992,545	-23.94
2011/2012	93,084,000	91,108,000	-2.12

Source: WMA – Kigoma Monthly Revenue Collection Reports (2007/2008 – 2011/2012)