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EVALUATION OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ON BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE USERS OF ETHIO TELECOM

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ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction is an increasing challenge for telecommunication companies and it is a critical issue for the success of any business system. This study is aimed at investigating the overall customer satisfaction of the broadband internet users of Ethio Telecom(ET), Mekelle Branch. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. In addition, interviews were also conducted with managers of Ethio Telecom to gather supporting data. The total number of broadband user organizations of ET is 105 and census method was used. Moreover, the total number of respondents was 210 and finally 201 questionnaires were received back having a response rate of 96%. The data gathered were analysed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version16). The results obtained in this research shown, on one hand; with regard to the overall service quality majorities of the respondents are dissatisfied with broadband service and with regard to the service quality dimensions. On the other hand, customers are relatively satisfied on tangibility and assurance and highly dissatisfied on technical quality. Hence, ET should emphasize on attributes of technical quality, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, tangibility and assurance in their descending order.

KEYWORDS

Service quality, Customer satisfaction, Broad Band Services, and Ethio Teleco.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In this competitive environment telecommunication technology enables businesses and industry to grow at a faster speed in order to contribute to the economic development of a nation, and telecommunication infrastructure can be reliable indicator of economic development. It works as a factor that multiply economic growth by providing employment, improving business efficiency and contributing towards international investments. Growing customer's needs for cheap, accessible and efficient communication modes leads to phenomenal growth of cellular phone industry (Muhammad and Ernest, 2009).

The telecommunication industry is becoming one of the most important industries in the world and delivers voice communications, data, graphics, and video at ever increasing speeds. Telecommunication influences the world economy and the telecommunication industry's revenue. In order to obtain sustainable competitive advantage, telecom firms are forced to make innovation and do the best for customer satisfaction (Grönroos, 2004).

The telecommunication sector aids decision making, organizing, influencing, activating, instructing, providing feedback, promoting interpersonal and business relationships as well as exchange of information. All social, economic, political, cultural, trade and commercial activities are undertaken using telecommunication. The nature of a country's telecommunication industry affects its pace of commercial and domestic activities. Due to the poor performance of many of these telecommunication firms, particularly in the developing countries, governments have had to intervene through divestiture and privatization programmes (Frempong and Henten, 2004).

A study made by Helms and Mayo (2008) stated that, complaining customers are expressing their dissatisfaction which they may hope results in action being taken to put this right. This action can be in the form of compensation, a verbal apology, a written apology, an explanation etc. Alternatively, they may just be raising awareness of the problem without having any negative feelings towards the organization and service provider. Organizations cannot avoid customer complaint permanently but it is possible to minimize it.

The introduction of telecommunication services in Ethiopia dates back to 1884, seventeen years after the invention of telephone technology in the world. Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation (ETC) is the oldest public telecommunications operator (PTO) in Africa. It is a state owned enterprise and the sole telecom service provider in the country. The telecommunication services in Ethiopia have made rapid step both in quality and quantity. However, the users at large are found dissatisfied with quality and quantity of the services made available to them. The process of technological sophistication has gained the momentum but the users are yet to get the quality and quantity of service (Tele Negarit, 2007). These days, Internet has a great role for socio-economic and political developments of nations.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) 2011, describes that trends in telecommunication markets around the world are becoming more competitive in just about every aspect and confirms that broadband access is no longer a luxury, but a necessity that will be crucial to every country's economic, social and political growth. With broad band a powerful potential accelerator towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the report particularly, highlights the need for proactive national broadband planning by every government (ITU, 2011).

An effective national Broadband policy will examine the options for stimulating the deployment of broadband and for maximizing the positive economic impact of the technology. It will include strategic spectrum management that encompasses managing the transition from analogue to digital radio and television broadcasting, and the laying of a solid foundation for the rollout of Next Generation Networks (ITU) 2011.

Growth in Africa's Internet and Broadband sector has accelerated in recent years due to improvements in infrastructure, the arrival of wireless access technologies and lower tariffs. Broadband is rapidly replacing dial-up as the preferred access method. The number of internet users is increasing from time to time. In Africa within ten years, the number of internet users in 2000 was 4,514,400 and increased in 2011 to 118,609,620 with a growth rate of 2,527.4 % (ITU 2011). Ethiopia, one of the African countries, is ranked the least with 0.5 % Internet penetration rate among all African countries. But its rate of internet penetration increased from 10,000 numbers of users in 2000 to 445,400 in 2010 at a rate of 4.354 % (ITU, 2011).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Customer satisfaction is now becoming a corporate level strategy for organizations as stated by Rust and Zahorik (1993). Drucker (1973) explained that, customer satisfaction is the base for a business success. Study made by Henkel *et al.* (2006) confirms that, satisfied customers of telecom sector have high extent of usage and intentions to repurchase in future like in other sectors.

The finding of Iqbal *et al.* (2008) also showed that, the greater the level of satisfaction of customers the greater will be repurchase chances of customers. Besides, Kim *et al.* (2004) found that call quality, value added services and customer support play a significant role in building customer satisfaction for telecom service subscribers and they tend to keep using current service as the level of the customer satisfaction is high that leads to customer loyalty.

Ahmed *et al.*, (2010) suggests that, there is a positive relationship between service quality retention and future intention of customers to stay as customer. All the firms that want to create and maintain competitive advantage against rivals should offer superior services to their customers. The findings of Ishfaq, *et al.*, (2010) indicate that overall service quality has a significant relationship with the customer satisfaction and this particular finding confirms that the service quality has a positive and significant relationship with the customer satisfaction.

The research study of Muzammil, (2010) confirms that customer services play a very important role in making customers satisfied and customer satisfaction is very important as satisfied customers would add value to the brand and spread a positive word of mouth and help in making good reputation of brand. Satisfied customers would be able to make long term profitable relationship with the brand and concluded that, for a firm to be successful then it has to make its customers satisfied through charging fair prices and memorable customer services so that they can gain competitive advantages over the market. Customer satisfaction is very important in today's business world.

According to Deng *et al.*, (2009) the ability of a service provider to create high degree of satisfaction is crucial for product differentiation and developing strong relationship with customers. Increasing competition and sophistication of customer requirements leads organizations to strive to be the market leader. Organizations now strive to retain their customers rather than to create new ones, because retaining customers is less costly and at the same time present customers can create more customers with their word of mouth marketing.

According to Serenko and Turel (2006), customer satisfaction measurement addresses both users and public interests and such studies can assist in economic and social development. Therefore, there is a need to gain more understanding in the area of customer satisfaction. This information then assists managers in identifying cost effective ways of closing the service quality gaps to focus on a critical decision. Nowadays as the result of higher competition and sophistication of customer requirements result managers to demonstrate that, their services are customer focused and continuous improvement is being brought. It is essential for service organizations that, expectations are properly understood and measured from the customer's perspective in order to identify any gaps in service quality. In these days of globalization and borderless market, customer satisfaction is essential for the survival and growth of any organization. Customer satisfaction significantly affects company performance and survival. Thus customer orientation is the main focus for any business organization to be successful in the market place. In a competitive market environment, customers are the ultimate beneficiaries of the competition.

As the previous studies confirmed, internet has a great role for socio-economic and political developments of nations and broadband access is no longer a luxury, but a necessity that will be crucial to every country's economic, social and political growth. Therefore, assessing the customer satisfaction level specifically in broadband can be used to bring about improvements in the internet service delivery. According to the preliminary study made by the researcher regarding broadband internet satisfaction with selected users, it was found that, customers are not happy with the broadband internet service and studies regarding broadband customer satisfaction, specifically in Tigray and particularly in Mekelle wasn't conducted as far as the researcher's knowledge is concerned. Based on the above felt reasons, the researcher has tried to assess customer satisfaction of broadband users in the branch.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of this study is to assess customer satisfaction level of broadband internet users of Ethio Telecom, Mekelle branch.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the research are:

1. To assess the perception of customers on the overall quality of broadband internet.
2. To examine on which dimensions of service quality customers are satisfied or dissatisfied.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In general, this chapter outlines the methodology of the study; the main topics of this chapter include data type and source, sampling design, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques.

2.1 DATA TYPE AND DATA SOURCE

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the quantitative approach focused on obtaining numerical findings of the closed ended questions. The open ended questions and interviews on the other hand, were designed to deal with the qualitative aspects of the study. The qualitative data was obtained by interviewing both marketing and technical managers of ET to get supporting data and to contrast to the result obtained from customers. Quantitative data was obtained from survey, which includes closed ended questions. Regarding the sources of the data, the data were collected- from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained from both survey using questionnaires and interview. The secondary data was obtained from ET report and previous related studies. As the research is intended to assess the integration of service quality, price, and customer satisfaction from the customers' and ET managers perspective, the data were collected from primary sources via questionnaires and interviews. The primary data was collected using questionnaire from the customers' perspective and by interviewing heads of marketing and operation and maintenance department. The completion of the questionnaires was entirely on a voluntary basis. Cover letter was attached with the questionnaire explaining the objectives of the research in and that it is believed to encourage participant respondents to contribute towards the successful completion of the research paper.

2.2. SAMPLING DESIGN AND SAMPLE SIZE

The study focused on broadband internet users of Mekelle branch; the number of broadband internet users as of June 2011 is 105. ET classified the users of broadband internet into three categories: These are Governmental organizations, Business Centres and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOS). The number of subscribers from each type of organization is 50, 15 and 40 respectively.

Based on the preliminary study conducted by the researcher, the organizations have their own ICT centres or respective personnel who are responsible for managing the broadband internet service for each organization. Since the number of broadband user organizations are manageable and to be representative census method was applied and the necessary data was collected from each of the 105 organizations ICT centres or respective personnel. The questionnaires were distributed to all the 105 companies' ICT centres or respective personnel of each organization. The reason why the ICT personnel was selected is that, information regarding internet connection, disconnection, any internet interruption, complains related to internet is reported to ICT personnel. In addition to this, the ICT person him/herself is a user of broadband internet. To avoid under representation and over representation each organization was given equal quota i.e. two respondents were selected from each user organization based on the researcher's judgment. Accordingly, the total number of respondents was 210.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The study was conducted to measure the customer satisfaction regarding broadband service in ET Mekelle branch from the perspective of the user organizations. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section was to solicit data on demographic characteristics of the respondents; the second section was designed to address data regarding perception of customers' on the broadband service quality. The extent to which customers are satisfied with the services they receive from ET using modified SERVQUAL model. The third section was included to collect data so as to assess their overall satisfaction level, and their perceptions of the price of the service provided. All participants were asked to fill out a survey containing measures of the six attributes of service quality, and satisfaction with the price. The questionnaire used to collect primary data was containing six quality dimensions tangibles, reliability,

responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and technical quality Parasuraman et al. (1985) and evaluated the items/ variables on a 5 point likert scale ranged from 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = moderate, 4 = Agree and 5 = strongly agree.

The questionnaire consisted of 32 items split between 3 instruments that each measures service quality, overall customer satisfaction, overall price fairness and 4 demographic characteristics questions. Open-ended questions were also included in the questionnaire. In order to keep confidentiality of the data to be given by respondents, the respondents were not required to write their name and this assured that their responses will be kept confidential. In addition to this, the researcher tried to avoid misleading or deceptive statements to be incorporated in the study.

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 16 and data collected from interview were analyzed with the data obtained from survey. To analyze the pattern of respondent's background, descriptive analysis was applied. Frequencies and tables were used to show the results of the analysis tables, figures and percentages generated through the SPSS. The interview and open ended questions were analyzed using qualitative method of data analysis. Finally, after the necessary analysis and interpretations, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations forwarded.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research was conducted to measure the customer's satisfaction regarding broadband internet service in Mekelle branch. A total of 210 questionnaires were distributed and 201 questionnaires were received back having a response rate of 96%. The data collected was analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 16.0). Descriptive statistics was used to summarize, demographic profile, mean values of each service quality, overall service quality and overall customer satisfaction. In addition to the closed questions an open ended question was included and interviews were also conducted with the department heads of marketing and operation and maintenance to provide supporting data.

3.1 PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Data collected from the respondents was obtained in the areas of gender, age, type of employment, and number of years in using broadband internet. The purpose of this profile was to obtain a visualization of the ET customers responding to the questionnaire.

TABLE 3.1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Demographic characteristic	Description	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	152	75.6
	Female	49	24.4
	Total	201	100
Age	18 to 31	139	69.1
	32 to 45	60	29.9
	Above 45	2	1
	Total	201	100
Type of employment	Public	96	47.8
	NGOs	80	39.8
	Business Centres	25	12.4
	Total	201	100
Years in broadband usage	Less than one year	46	22.9
	1 to 5 years	123	61.2
	Above 5 years	32	15.9
	Total	100	100

As it is revealed in Table 4.1, the data provides profile of respondents by count and percent. The results reveal that out of the 201 respondents, 152 were males and 49 were females. This represents 75.6% males and 24.4% females respectively. This shows significant majority of the respondents are male users. With regard to age distribution, respondents in the 18 to 31 years represented 69% of all replies, followed by the 32 to 45 age grouping of respondents at 30%, the remaining 45 and above age category represented the smallest number of respondents which is 1% of all the respondents.

Therefore, as can be observed from the above data most of the respondents were in the age of 18-31 years. With regard to the occupation of the respondents, about half or 96(47.8%) of the respondents were from public organizations, respondents from nongovernmental organizations accounts 80(39.8%) and the remaining 25(12.4%) were employed in private businesses (business centres) and it shows most broadband internet users are governmental organizations. Finally, based on the number of years in using broadband internet service, respondents using broadband for less than one year accounts 46(22.9%), a great majority of the respondents 123(61.2%) have been using broadband from 1 to 5 years and the remaining 32(15.9%) for above five years.

Psychometric Properties and Dimensions of the service quality dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

In order to ensure the appropriateness of the testing instruments for factor analysis Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was employed. The values of The KMO values found in the following table indicated that the rules of factor analysis weren't violated. All factors in each unifactorial test are more than 70% of the variance of the respective variable sets. This suggests that only a small amount of the total variance for each group of variables is associated with causes other than the factor itself, and the Bartlett tests of sphericity was significant at $p < 0.05$, thus, indicating that the sample was appropriate for factor analysis (see table 3.2).

TABLE 3.2: KAISER-MEYER-OLKIN AND THE BARTLETT'S TEST OF SPHERICITY

Variables	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Values	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
		Approx.Chi-Square	df	Sig
Tangible	79	1,140.21	9	0.02
Empathy	94	642.145	9	0.04
Assurance	78	933.251	6	0.012
Responsiveness	74	1430.05	5	0.04
Customer satisfaction	92	821/019	5	0.02

Reliability test and factor analysis results of customers perceptions of service quality

Factor analysis was applied to 32 statements used in order to determine the data reliability of customer services, with responses on a 5-point Likert scale. Factor analysis and reliability analysis were used in order to determine the data reliability for the service quality, and customer satisfaction measures. The suitability of factor analysis was determined by correlation and alpha reliability. The criteria for the number of extracted factors were based on the characteristic value, variance percentage, factor importance and factor structure. Significant factors were considered to be those with characteristic value equalling or exceeding one. All factors with a value less than 1 will be considered insignificant and should be disregarded. The result amounting to at least 45 per cent of the total cumulative variance was considered a satisfactory solution. It is considered that a variable has practical importance and that it can be included in a factor when its correlation degree equals or exceeds 0.50 (Nunnally, 1967). However, 4 statements are deleted from the expectations scale because their factor loadings are less than 0.50. Most of the deleted statements are new statements included in SERVQUAL scale. The results of factor analysis and reliability analysis are presented in Table 3.3. The reliability values were all above 0.5. Thus it can be concluded that the measures used in this study are valid and reliable. The results of the factor analysis and reliability tests are presented in Tables (3.3).

TABLE 3.3

Factors and statements	Factor loading	Factor mean	Eigenvalue	Cronbach's Alpha	Cumulative variance explained
Tangibility		2.90	2.14	0.873	26.154
Ethio Telecom has up-to date equipments	0.59				
The physical facilities are visually appealing.	0.782				
Employees are well dressed and appear neat.	0.579				
The appearance of the physical facilities in line with the type of service provided.	0.718				
Ethio Telecom has up-to date equipments	0.521				
The physical facilities are visually appealing.	0.784				
Employees are well dressed and appear neat.	0.541				
II. Reliability		2.68	1.9	0.6857	19.710
When Ethio Telecom promises to do something by a certain time, it will do so.	0.653				
Ethio Telecom keeps its records accurately.	0.579				
Ethio Telecom performs services right the first time reported	0.891				
It is easy to get Internet connection right first trial	0.630				
III. Responsiveness		2.86			
Ethio Telecom tells customers exactly when services will be performed.	0.582		2.58	.651	20.144
Employees give prompt service to customers.	0.746				
Employees are always willing to help customers.	0.759				
The response to consumers' complaints are always taken quickly	0.665				
IV. Assurance		2.91			
Employees providing services are polite.	.652		1.86	0.56	18.217
Customers feel assured that service requests are duly followed up.	0.598				
Employees have the knowledge to answer customers' questions.	0.563				
Ethio Telecom gives individual attention to customers.	0.597				
V. Empathy		2.86			
Ethio Telecom has operating hours convenient to all its customers	0.745		2.65	.652	15.2
Ethio Telecom has its customers' best interest at heart	0.682				
Ethio Telecom has sufficient offices in different geographic areas	0.751				
Ethio Telecom has toll-free numbers, websites for customers for clarification of problems and to report complaints.	0.561				
It is easy to get Broad Band internet from Ethio Telecom.	0.783				
VI. Technical Quality		2.61			
The Broad Band has excellent quality in successfully completion of connection in uploading & downloading.	0.854		1.345	0.608	35.276
The Broad Band internet service Has excellent speed.	0.562				
Ethio Telecom provides adequate network coverage.	0.764				
Employees have Technical knowledge & skill in solving customer problems.	0.685				
Customer satisfaction		2.41			
I have full satisfaction with the way service is provided.	0.567		2.125	0.567	24.183
I have full satisfaction with the responsiveness speed to the complaints submitted.	0.653				
I have full satisfaction with the workers' skill in providing services	0.678				
I am fully satisfied with the way the workers treat me	0.577				
I am fully satisfied with the means of communication with the Ethio- Telecom	0.659				
I am fully satisfied with the speed of providing services	0.748				

Mean and SD scores of each dimension of the quality of Broadband internet service

It is apparent that broadband internet users (Table 3.4) view that perceived customer satisfaction is the lowest with mean of 2.41 followed by perceived technical quality and reliability as relatively low ($M = 2.61$ and 2.68 respectively) than other areas. So from this table we can infer that users view that perceived assurance and tangibility, were highest with mean (M) of 2.91 , 2.90 and 2.86 respectively, followed by a perceived empathy and responsibility with mean (M) of 2.86 . The detail analysis is presented next to the following table 3.4

TABLE 3.4: MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS

Factors	Mean	S.D
Tangibility	2.91	0.23
Responsibility	2.86	0.56
Reliability	2.68	0.24
Assurance	2.91	0.48
Empathy	2.86	0.023
Technical quality	2.61	0.40
Customer satisfaction	2.41	0.20

TANGIBILITY

TABLE 3.5: AVAILABILITY OF UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENTS

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	10	5.0
Disagree	41	20.4
Moderate	103	51.2
Agree	46	22.9
Strongly agree	1	0.5
Total	201	100.0

Table 3.5 shows that, 51(25.4%) of the respondents are disappointed with the availability of up-to-date equipments, above half of the respondents 103(51.2%) evaluated as being moderate and the remaining 47(23.4 %) of respondents agreed with the availability of up to date equipments. Even though majority of the respondents evaluated as being moderate, ET is expected to satisfy its customers by providing above moderate service. This implies, respondents are unhappy on the availability of latest technology equipments.

RELIABILITY

TABLE 3.6 PROVIDES SERVICES AT THE PROMISED TIME

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	38	18.9
Disagree	58	28.9
Moderate	61	30.3
Agree	39	19.4
Strongly agree	5	2.5
Total	201	100.0

Table 3.6 demonstrates, almost half 98(47.8 %) of the respondents perceived that services are not done as promised, while one third of the respondents 61 (30.3%) evaluate as being moderate and the remaining respondents, 44(21.9 %) agreed services are done as promised. Accordingly, majority of the respondents conveyed their disappointment on performing services as promised.

RESPONSIVENESS

TABLE 3.7: KEEPS CUSTOMER INFORMED WHEN SERVICES ARE PERFORMED

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	33	16.4
Disagree	51	25.4
Moderate	57	28.4
Agree	52	25.9
Strongly agree	8	4.0
Total	201	100.0

As table 3.7 shows, majority of the respondents 84(41.8 %) perceived ET failed to give information when services will be performed, while 57(28.4%) of the respondents perceived as being moderate, the remaining of the respondents 60(29.9 %) agreed with getting information when services performed. Accordingly, respondents are dissatisfied in getting information when services will be performed and this is a wakeup call for ET, to consider providing information when services will be performed.

TABLE 3.8: PROMPTNESS OF SERVICE PROVIDED TO CUSTOMERS

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	14	7.0
Disagree	38	18.9
Moderate	91	45.3
Agree	46	22.9
Strongly agree	12	6.0
Total	201	100.0

Table 3.8 indicates, one fourth of the respondents 52(25.9%) expressed their displeasure on getting prompt service, majority of the respondents 91(45.3%) evaluated as moderate and the remaining 58(28.9%) of the respondents are happy in getting prompt service. This implies ET has a weakness on providing prompt service to its customers.

ASSURANCE

TABLE 3.9: ASSURANCE LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDER

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	12	6.0
Disagree	22	10.9
Moderate	96	47.8
Agree	62	30.8
Strongly agree	9	4.5
Total	201	100.0

Table 3.9 indicates, nearly 34(17%) of the respondents evaluated the knowledge of employees to answer customers questions as inadequate, almost half of the respondents 96(47.8 %) evaluated it as moderate and the remaining respondents 71(35.3%) were happy with the employees knowledge to answer customer questions. Overall, this result shows majority of the respondents evaluated the knowledge of employees as inadequate.

EMPATHY

TABLE 3.10 CONVENIENT OPERATING HOURS TO CUSTOMERS

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	10	5.0
Disagree	44	21.9
Moderate	94	46.8
Agree	48	23.9
Strongly agree	5	2.5
Total	201	100.0

As can be seen from table 4.11, one fourth of the respondents 54 (26.9%) evaluated the operating hours are inconvenient, nearly half of the respondents 94(46.8%) perceived it as moderate and the remaining one fourth of the respondents 53 (26.4%) perceived ET has convenient operating hours. Overall, majority of the respondents do have moderate feedback with the convenience of operating hours.

TECHNICAL QUALITY

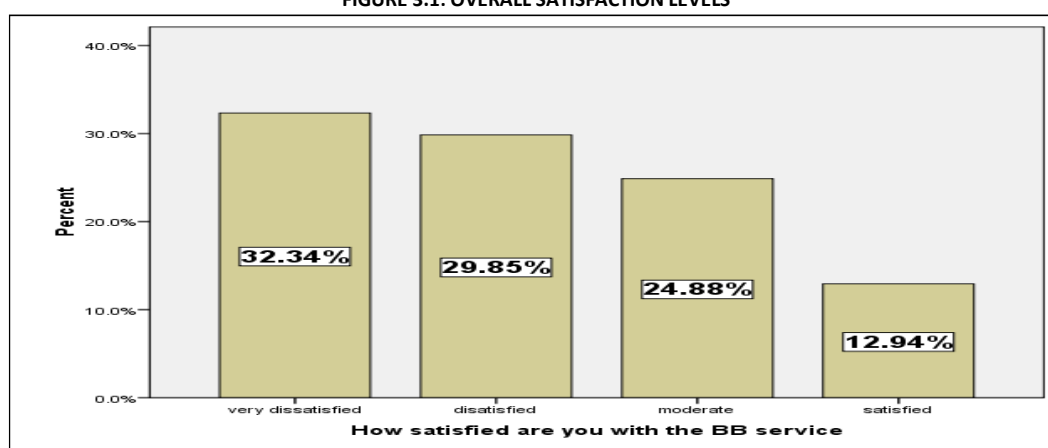
TABLE 3.11: BB HAS EXCELLENT QUALITY IN UPLOADING AND DOWNLOADING

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	40	19.9
Disagree	69	34.3
Moderate	56	27.9
Agree	36	17.9
Total	201	100.0

Source: own survey, 2011

Table 3.11 indicates, majority of the respondents 109(54.2%) evaluated the broadband has a poor quality in uploading and downloading, 56 (27.9 %) of the respondents perceived as moderate and the remaining of the respondents 36(18%) agreed with broadband excellent quality in uploading and downloading. Overall, majority of respondents revealed their unhappiness on the quality of broadband in uploading and downloading.

FIGURE 3.1: OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVELS



Source: own survey, 2011

Figure 3.1 shows, majority of the respondents 125(62.2%) are dissatisfied with the broadband internet service, 65(32.3%) rated as very dissatisfied and 60(29.9%) dissatisfied, about one fourth of the respondents 50(24.9%) evaluated their level of satisfaction with the broadband internet as being moderate and the remaining respondents 26(12.9%) are satisfied with the broadband internet provided. Overall, majority of the respondents are dissatisfied with the service provided. According to the interview conducted with ET managers, they confirmed that customers are not satisfied and recommended that; customer demand should be addressed, improve network infrastructure quality, implement adequate after sales service, decrease network break down, organizational culture has to be changed, employees should be motivated and trained, ET should create conducive working environment, training should be given regularly, and the required resources should be made available.

4. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the analysis conducted in chapter four, the following conclusions have been drawn. The major concern of the study was to empirically assess satisfaction level of broadband internet users in Ethio Telecom Mekelle Branch. To achieve the stipulated objectives, the study used data collected through self administered questionnaire from 201 respondents and interview with marketing and operation and maintenance managers.

- According to the result obtained from the analysis, majority of the respondents which accounts 63 per cent are dissatisfied with the overall quality of the broadband internet. Overall it can be concluded that, respondents do have a negative view towards the overall service quality broadband internet ET is providing and this is a wakeup call for ET.
- Respondent's satisfaction level differs from one service quality dimension to another. Thus, the mean scores indicate that, respondents were relatively satisfied with the quality dimensions tangibility and assurance and score more than other dimensions and the technical quality scored the lowest.
- With regard to customer satisfaction level, the results demonstrated that customers were dissatisfied with the performance of the ET. Thus, about 63 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the service delivery of ET which is statistically significant and conveyed their disappointment on the overall performance of ET. This means ET should focus on areas which led to dissatisfaction and introduce complete overhaul to correct the situation. The study identified some areas of dissatisfaction particularly: service quality which includes low speed, uploading and downloading problems, low technical skill of employees, recurring network break downs, high price, slow service delivery process, poor complaint handling procedure, inconvenience of operating hours and insufficient offices at different geographical places.
- The result also demonstrated that customer satisfaction level differs among the specific demographic groups. Thus, respondents from public organizations which account 57.2 percent were dissatisfied, respondents from Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) 71.3 percent were dissatisfied and respondents from Business centres 52.0 percent were dissatisfied. Thus, the high dissatisfaction among NGOs could be due to their international exposure and they expect high quality service. Finally with regard to the number of years usage in broadband internet and overall customer satisfaction the result demonstrates that, among respondents using broadband internet for less than one year about 61 percent were dissatisfied, respondents using broadband internet for 1 to 5 years 63 percent were dissatisfied and respondents using broadband internet above 5 years 60 percent were dissatisfied. Accordingly, the result demonstrates majority of respondents using broadband internet for many years and less than one year were dissatisfied so it can be concluded that there is no improvement in service quality form year to year.
- As the result demonstrated regarding the fairness of the price broadband internet service, majority of the respondents which accounts 57.2 percent evaluated the price of broadband internet as unfair in comparison to the service obtained and only 20.4 percent of the respondents evaluated the price as being fair. Accordingly, majority of respondents were disappointed with the price of broadband internet service.
- With regard to the link between service quality and customer satisfaction, the findings imply more than half of the respondents i.e., 63 percent rated the broadband internet quality below average. Similarly for the overall satisfaction measurement with a similar scale, result shows more than half or 62 percent of the respondents were dissatisfied. Hence, service quality and customer satisfaction are related and overall service quality has a significant relationship with the customer satisfaction.

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