A STUDY ON
THE EMPLOYEE – CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS
IN THE RADIO ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRIES
IN KENYA AND UGANDA.

BY
POOJA DATTA

A Project Submitted to the School of Business in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement of the Masters Degree in
International Business Administration.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
IN NAIROBI

SUMMER 2000
STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any college, institution or university other than United States International University in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed  
Pooja Datta  

Date 4-09-2000

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed  
Dr. Peter M. Lewa  

Date 27-09-2000

Signed  
Dean, School of Business  

Date 30.11.2000

Signed  
Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs  

Date 8 Dec. 2000
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABSTRACT</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Background</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Status in Kenya</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2 Status in Uganda</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Hypothesis</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Research Objectives</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Research Questions</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Limitations of Study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Significance of Study</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Definition of Key Terms</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Customer Care</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 The Radio Entertainment Industry</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Is the Customer always Right?</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Research Design</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedures</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Sampling Unit</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Data Collection Instruments</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Data Collection Procedures</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Organizational Objectives and Management Practices</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Customer Importance</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Customer Awareness Techniques</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Implementation of Customer Suggestions and Complaints</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Impact of Customer Views and Demands</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Specific References | 57
General References  | 58

### APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3</td>
<td>Example of Organizational Structure</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research paper "A study on the employee – customer relationships in the Radio entertainment industries in Kenya and Uganda." is a part requirement of my degree in M.I.B.A. with concentration in Strategic Management. It has been completed with the able guidance and counseling given by Dr. Peter M. Lewa, who has been my supervisor in this research. His knowledge and expertise has been instrumental in getting this paper into professional form. I am very grateful to him. I would also like to thank Dr. Wasunna Owino, my instructor during the initial stages of this research for his guidance at the time.

During this research work, I had the opportunity of interacting with several representatives of various FM Radio stations included in this research, both from Uganda and Kenya. This research paper would not have been possible without their contribution, assistance and co-operation. I am extremely thankful to all of them for their valuable time, patience and understanding.

I would like to thank Dr. Prabha Singhal, a lecturer in the Department of Economics at the Makerere University and Mr. Paul Patrick Buranji from the department of Commerce, Makerere University Business School, for their assistance in proofreading and guidance in the finishing touches for this research paper.

Finally, I thank Mr. Surrinder Paul Datta, my father, for his guidance in completing this research paper.
ABSTRACT

As evident in the title stated earlier, this research is a study on the employee – customer relationships with the focus on the Radio entertainment industries, part of the service industry, in Kenya and Uganda. The focus in these Radio entertainment industries is on the FM broadcasting Radio stations, which are the main entertainment stations in the above mentioned countries. The customers in this research are divided into two, namely the listeners and the advertiser of the Radio station. In this research an attempt is made, firstly, to establish the importance of the customer to the Radio stations and the extent to which these stations rely on the customer views, suggestions and complaints. The study will also demonstrate how the radio stations use various tools to monitor the customer suggestions and complaints and the processes that they follow to implement these suggestions or complaints into their programming and the organization.

Finally the study also moves towards the testing of the hypothesis of this research, "The customer is not always right but he or she remains 'King' in the Radio Entertainment Industry." In the literature review, it is established that organizations of today believe that the old marketing slogan 'the customer is always right' helps the organization to move towards a effective customer oriented management system. In an attempt to establish customer focus the above slogan is take too literally and needs to be better handled by the top management of these organizations. Also to appropriately handle the irrational customer demands and the employees who directly deal with these customer demands. To conclude this study, recommendations are suggested to overcome the problems identified in the research.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Entertainment is a luxury that individuals like to enjoy at their level of affordability. In earlier times the entertainment options were mostly the live shows or the stage performances of dramas, concerts or musical shows. Some of these methods are still being adopted in the areas where electronic media is not available.

With the advancement of technology came more sophisticated gadgets such as Radios, record players, cassette players, Compact Disc players, televisions, computer internet surfing and so on. From common knowledge it is known that the Radio and the television are the modern modes of entertainment that reach the most number of people. Whether rich or poor, it is possible for people from all walks of life to listen to the same program on the Radio. Since this paper is on the Radio entertainment, the concentration will be on the same.

In the words of K. M. Shrivastava, "Scientifically, the term Radio means the usage of radiation and detection of signals propagated through space as electromagnetic waves to communicate."

In 1887, Heinrich Hertz (a German) showed that the rapid variation in electric current could be projected into space in the form of Radio waves similar to light waves, thus founding the theory on which modern Radio broadcasting is based. Though there was a technical hurdle in this way of wireless voice broadcasting, it was eventually overcome by the discovery of high frequency alternating transmission.

Dr. Lee De Forest, an American scientist developed the refinements of the vacuum tube invented by John Ambrose Fleming, professor of Electrical Engineering at Imperial College, London.

1 K. M. Shrivastava (1989) Radio and TV Journalism, p. 4
2 Ibid. p.3
In 1904 Dr. De Forest through scientific advancement, played an important role in getting the Radio to what it is today. In 1908, he broadcast recorded music from the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, which was heard five hundred miles away. These were the milestones of the evolution of Radio entertainment we know today.

In 1909, Dr. Lee De Forest was reported to have said, "I look forward to the day when means of Radio, opera may be brought into every home. Someday, the news, and even advertising, will be sent out to the public on the wireless telephone." Indeed he was talking about the modern day Radio and how true it turned out to be.

With time the efficiency of the Radio broadcasting improved and was enhanced in different ways. From 1920 onwards Radio made phenomenal progress in America, Europe and Asia. By World War II Radio had emerged as a major mass medium and was used for war propaganda and mobilizing the support for war efforts. The invention of electron tube and later the transistor (in 1948) made possible remarkable developments in the Radio industry.

Frequency Modulation (FM) Radio did not come into public attention until the end of the Second World War in the forties, though it had been known to the Radio industry since its development during the previous decade by Major E. H. Armstrong at Columbia University. Using much higher band of frequencies than AM Radio (which uses from 80 to 108 megacycles), FM Radio has many advantages over the standard AM Radio. However, it has one limitation – its coverage is usually limited to the line of sight from the top of the transmitter. Despite this limitation of coverage the FM transmission has become popular in small communities and metropolitan centers, due to its advertising and programming styles. This limitation works as an advantage for FM stations, such that the geographical obstruction or long distances enable two different FM stations to use the same frequency.

---

3 K. M. Shrivastava (1989) Radio and TV Journalism, p. 3
4 Ibid. p. 4
Therefore many FM stations can be setup depending on the area and target listener group to be covered, so long as there is no interference with the line of sight. In cities such as Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, which is located on 7 hills, the number of Radio stations is more. As the geographical terrain of the city causes hindrance in the transmission of FM waves over long distances, this has enabled the existence of a greater number of Radio stations, as long as they are far from each other and the transmitting waves do not interfere with each other.

Radio is still the most effective mass medium in Africa, and in most African countries the FM Radio industry has been most utilized only recently.\(^5\) This could allegedly be a result of the liberalization of airwaves, which has happened only recently. Hence the FM Radio industry is still growing. For example both in Kenya and Uganda the FM Radio transmission can be best called an infant industry but at different stages of infancy (Refer to appendix 2).\(^6\)

Poverty and illiteracy make television and newspapers inaccessible to most Africans; hence Radio is the other alternative to them. The transistor being a more affordable source of Radio entertainment has become famous among those who can not afford other sources of entertainment.\(^7\) The languages used by Radio stations may also limit the audience. However, even when this factor is taken into account, there is no questioning of the power of Radio in Africa. This explains why, even in countries where independent broadcasting has become a reality – because of international pressure or for ideological reasons, the governments, so as to promote their policies through this media mostly retain state broadcasting.

---


\(^6\) Appendix 2 gives an example of the difference between the FM radio industry in Kenya and Uganda.

\(^7\) K. M. Shrivastava (1989) *Radio and TV Journalism*. 8
1.1.1 Status in Kenya

The situation of Radio entertainment in Kenya started changing recently. Initially the Radio broadcasting companies were government owned and managed. The government’s alleged fear of the possible challenge posed by the opposition in Kenya had prevented the emergence of private and independent broadcasting, despite the stated commitment of the ruling Kenya National African Union (KANU) to fundamental freedoms.

In December 1991, Kenya’s President Daniel Arap Moi was no longer able to resist the clamor for multi-party democracy, and therefore repealed the 1982 provision of the constitution – Section (2A). This resulted in the single party state to have its first multi-party elections exactly one year later. It was during this time that the possibility of the liberalization of the airwaves was seen and it was at this time that the various private owned FM Radio stations of today applied for broadcasting licenses. For most Kenyan FM Radio stations, the approval of the licenses was allegedly delayed. For example, the representatives of East FM one of the first Radio stations in Nairobi, Kenya, reported that they received their approval 6 years after applying for a license in 1991.

Nairobi and Mombasa are the only two cities in Kenya where FM broadcasting exists, with a limited range up to the outskirts of the cities, this could be due to the FM Radio industry being new in Kenya. In Kenya, it was not until the mid 1990’s that the FM Radio stations were set up, and by 1998, there were only 4 well-known FM Radio stations that actually had a substantial listenership. In Nairobi the major FM Radio stations that control the airwaves include Capital Radio 98.4 FM and Metro Radio 101.9 FM. These two play mostly English music with a few programs in local languages. The other two are Metro East 91.9 FM and Sound Asia 88 FM, who mainly play Asian music. Capital Radio and Metro Radio stations came into existence and became popular around mid nineties, while the latter two came into existence in 1998. Recently, stations such as Nation FM, Kameme FM and KISS FM have come into the market.

---

1.1.2 Status in Uganda

The scene in Uganda is different, as there are over 8 FM Radio stations within Kampala. The privately owned FM Radio stations in Uganda, whose main objective is to entertain the masses, have increased from a number of 14 to 37 FM from 1996 to 1999 respectively.9

It is commonly known that the famous and most listened to Radio stations in Kampala are; Capital Radio 91.3 FM, Radio One 90 FM, Radio West 87.9 FM, Radio Simba 97.3 FM, Top Radio 104.9 FM and Sanyu FM.

Sanyu FM is one of the oldest Radio stations in Kampala. Radio Simba is the only one that broadcasts in Luganda, the local language entirely. Top Radio only broadcasts contemporary Christian music. The major war today for appealing to majority of the public is between Radio one, Capital Radio and Sanyu FM. The airwave war between FM Radio stations, as reported by them, occurs as per their ability to provide needed services to the listeners, advertisers and their customers. This was the situation of the Radio entertainment industry in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda.

In this age, the customers are the foundation of organizations worldwide, especially in the service organization. As explained below, because of intense competition the customer is the King. This situation has emerged with change from seller’s market to buyer’s market due to more competition in all fields of business. The customers have become the most essential part of business organizations. Hence it has become extremely necessary for organizations to maintain customer focus and keep their customers happy and satisfied with their products and services.10 This satisfaction of the customers is a necessity; more so as the number of competitors in most fields of business today has rapidly increased and is ever growing.

---

As the number of providers of a certain service has increased, customers now have the freedom to choose from a larger variety of services. Therefore, it is much more important for the organizations to work harder to keep their clientele.

Radio stations have to do research in order to improve and to keep fulfilling the growing demands of their customers.

"The customer is always right" is an old marketing slogan that has stood the test of time and has helped organizations to keep their customers happy and satisfied at all times so as to stay ahead of their competitors. Therefore, the principle objective of the team operating the business is to satisfy the customer. However, in some circumstances the customer may not be right or may be irrational in terms of demands or complaints. If this situation occurs in an organization that follows the above slogan, the customer cannot be disappointed even though their demand may be irrational, as the organization’s belief is that the customer is always right. It is under this context that this research paper has been chosen for the FM Radio industry.

This research will make an attempt to show how difficult it is to maintain customer focus as advised by modern management practices. This research is based on the Radio entertainment industry, which is a service-oriented industry.

With this background on entertainment and the Radio, the next section of this chapter is on the problem statement of this research.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

In today’s ever-growing world, competition is rising at a reasonably fast rate. As a consequence of this phenomenon, it is more important everyday to keep the customers loyal to the organizations. Making the customers happy and satisfied with the organization’s products or services now and in the future makes it possible to gain customer loyalty. Like any other service industry the Radio entertainment industry also survives on these facts. It would therefore be appropriate to say that the customers are one of the necessities of any business organization, especially for the Radio entertainment industry. It is therefore important for top management groups in such organizations to follow the saying that “The customer is always right!”

Adhering to the “customer is always right” attitude is believed, by modern management to be an important aspect for the entire organization. This attitude helps the entire organization to keep the customers satisfied and happy and also to maintain a customer focus in the organization. With this attitude in mind the top management may find that pleasing their customers is easier. However the problem arises when the organization takes this statement, about the customer always being right, literally. This could mean that the top management might require the employees of the organization, who directly deal with customers, to keep the customers satisfied and happy under all circumstances. That is to say, that the customer is always right is to be believed literally, even though the customer may be irrational or wrong. This may create conflict within the organization, as these employees dealing directly with the customers get affected by the customer’s demands first and as a consequence the organization gets affected.

Organizations insist on employees to agree with the customers, to keep them happy and satisfied, but since the customers may not always be right there is an impact on the relationship between the employee and the customer. Unreasonable customer’s demands demoralize the employees and hence can create a certain hindrance in the employee’s performance. This research will attempt to assess the employee – customer relationship in the Radio entertainment industry with respect to this problem.

The next section presents the hypothesis of the research being carried out.
1.3 Hypothesis

Today the customer of any company is the most essential part of their business. One of the major factors in the top management practices is to keep the customer happy and satisfied. It is the customer on whose being the business exists or survives. To this consequence the business organizations of today have allegedly come up with the singular motto to keep a customer focus alive in their organizations and that is the most popular phrase today “The customer is always right!”

In the process of achieving this aspect of customer focus, companies have gone out of their way to establish that the customer is always right and that too in the literal sense.

But this is not at all so, as the customers sometimes may be wrong or may become difficult, but to satisfy them, even in these cases, companies have often overlooked the employee’s position, who directly deals with these difficult customers. This is where the main issue of this research arises, whereby the employee – customer relationship is being studied in context to the question, “Is the customer always right?” with the focus on the service providing Radio entertainment industry.

Thus, the hypothesis of this study may be stated as:

“The customer is not always right but he or she remains ‘King’ in the Radio Entertainment Industry.”

With the assistance of the above hypothesis and the problem statement, the objectives for the research are set out in the next section.
1.4 Research Objectives

With regard to the research problem stated earlier, the following objectives were formulated for a research on the assessment of the employee – customer relationship within the FM Radio entertainment industry. The specific objectives therefore are:

1. To identify the Radio station’s management practices and basic goals, in an attempt to point out the role of customers and their importance in the organization.

2. To identify the impact of customer views and demands on the employee – customer relationship.

3. To investigate how the Radio stations obtain the customers’ suggestions and complaints.

4. To find out how these suggestions and complaints, received from the customers, are implemented and their impact on the employees.

5. To determine how right the customers are and how easy or difficult it is to satisfy their demands and what attempts the organizations make to ensure smooth running of operations in the organization.

These objectives are now used to arrive at the broad research questions in the next section.
1.5  Research Questions

From the research objectives laid out, the following research questions were derived. These questions will assist in the assessment of the subject that this research paper is based on. The first two questions deal with the foundation of the research and the management practices of the Radio station, while the other questions that follow deal with the main research topic, the employee – customer relationship within the Radio station.

1. What are the Radio station’s main objectives, management practices and their management structure?

2. What is the level of employee awareness and empowerment? To what extent are the employees free to take decisions on behalf of the Radio station, in regard to customer care?

3. How and in what way is the customer important to the Radio station?

4. In what way are the customer’s views received?

5. What actions are taken with regard to these customer’s views?

6. To what extent do customer’s views affect the operations of the Radio stations?

The broad research questions listed above were used to construct a questionnaire (as seen in Appendix 1). This questionnaire assisted in the collection of data to enable testing of the hypothesis.

The next section outlines the limitations of this research.
1.6 Limitations of Study

A research paper is not complete without stating the limitations of the research. These limitations do not cause a drawback to the research. The outline of the research or rather its boundaries are much clearer once the limitations are stated and kept in mind.

One of the major limitations of this research is that the only field or area that is described as the actual Radio entertainment industry is the FM Radio stations. FM Radio stations are the major entertainment providers in this Radio entertainment industry as opposed to other Radio stations\textsuperscript{11}. The other stations, like those that are mostly government owned do not contribute to Radio entertainment as much as the privately owned FM stations. The rise of the FM Radio stations in Uganda and Kenya is in different stages of infancy. Although in some aspects, similarities between the FM stations in these two countries do exist, there are different trends and different customer behavior patterns that give the industry different levels of development. This will be explained later in the data analysis of this research.

The time period within which this research was carried out was the year 1999. The turn of the decade has seen the emergence of quite a number of new Radio stations in Nairobi.\textsuperscript{12} The major Radio stations that came into existence in Nairobi after this period were not included in the research.

As the issue under research belongs to the management field, the explanation and analysis of data collected is descriptive rather than experimental or statistical. The analysis of data is also through the reasoning of the trends and situations that occur in the Radio entertainment industry rather than through the trend analysis of figures and numerical data.

\textsuperscript{11} Other radio stations include those radio broadcasters who do not transmit radio waves on an FM Band (hence transmitting either on AM or SW Bands)

\textsuperscript{12} This was due to the liberalization of the airwaves in Kenya and the ease of attaining broadcasting licenses.
The field of management and the reasoning provided in management study usually involves the views of various personnel who make up that management and the organization. Therefore decisions and opinions are sometimes based on bias of persons or groups of people. As diverse as the human race is, the opinions and views of these individuals also differ, which leads to bias towards or against certain issues. Therefore, there is a possibility of having a personal bias in the views and opinions in the data collected from the interviews with Radio station management included in the research.

The data collection for this research is the data provided by the management groups and representatives of only those FM Radio stations covered in this research. In the two countries covered in the research, Kenya and Uganda, the Radio stations included in the research are those within their capital cities, Nairobi and Kampala respectively. This is because the major Radio stations and the necessary trends that needed to be analysed were seen mainly in the FM Radio stations within the capital cities.

A limitation that was seen during the research process is that, a few of the interviews were very brief and the top management preferred that the questionnaire be left behind for answering. Although the top management of most of the FM Radio stations were receptive and answered the questions sincerely, in some cases very brief answers to the questions were given. For example, some Radio stations did not bring out all the factors that affected the employee – customer relationships within their organization and this limited the accuracy of their responses to the questions asked in the questionnaire.
1.7 Significance of Study

As the years of the twentieth century have passed, management methods have changed in a great way. It is commonly known that the production methods have changed from mass production to customer tailored production.

The concept of customer satisfaction has emerged as a major necessity for organizations in an attempt to achieve success over their competitors. Both the customers and the employees are given good attention. ‘Customer care’ is the catch phrase of the 21st century. What was previously known as personnel management is now more appropriately known as Human Resource Management.

The personal worth of employees and the importance of customers have become prerequisites for organizations to be successful. Modern management is advised to manage the resources and skills that an employee has, and also to enable the employees to be most efficient in the work they do for the organization. The skill, motivation and efficiency of the employee have emerged as necessary factors in determining the employee’s performance.

The emergence of modern management practices have seen the emergence of customer focus (or orientation), employee motivation, organizational ethics and values and other psychological factors of the employees and the customers of an organization. Knowing what keeps the employees satisfied and enhancement of their efforts to work harder is considered important for the organizations of today. Also important for the organization, is to know what their customer’s needs, wants and desires are, what will keep the customers satisfied and also to treat the customer like a king.

Though, as is obvious with the diversity of human nature, there is a possibility of difference in opinion among the vast group of customers that an organization has. That is to say, there may be those customers who have rational complaints and those who are entirely irrational yet extremely important to the organization.
In the cases where the employees deal with irrational customers, it sometimes becomes difficult for the employees to control such customer complaints.

Therefore, there arises a need to encourage employee empowerment to deal with the situation so that the customer is not disappointed even when the customer is not always right. The focus in this research hence remains the customer.

The last section of this first chapter, defines the Key terms used in this research paper.
1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Radio
Equipment using electromagnetic waves for broadcasting and communication.

FM Radio Stations
FM is short for Frequency Modulation. These stations use high bands of frequency to transmit Radio waves.

Other Radio Stations
These include those Radio stations that transmit on AM (Analogue Modulation) or SW (Short Wave) bands. These are much lower bands of frequencies. AM Radio transmits on frequencies from 80 to 108 megacycles.

Megacycles
Radio waves or waves in general are measured in terms of frequency. Frequency can be defined as the number of cycles per second. The shortest waves have the highest frequency, or number of cycles per second; the longest waves have the lowest frequency, or fewest cycles per second. In honor of the German Radio pioneer, Heinrich Hertz, his name has been given to the cycle per second (hertz, Hz). For example, 1 kilohertz (kHz) or 1 kilocycle per second is 1000 cycles per second and 1 gigahertz (GHz) or 1 gigacycle per second is 1 billion cycles per sec. In the same way, 1 megahertz (MHz) or 1 Megacycle is 1 million cycles per sec, this means that the Radio wave travels one million cycles in one second.  

Broadcasting and Coverage
Broadcasting is the actual transmission of the Radio waves. The area where this broadcast can be heard is called the coverage of the broadcast.

13 "Radio," Microsoft® Encarta® 96 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1995 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. © Funk & Wagnalls Corporation. All rights reserved.
Radio Entertainment Industry
This is a part of the service industry and it includes those Radio stations that rely on their entertainment skills to attract and retain customers. Today the most common FM Radio stations are the main part of this industry.

Presenters
These are the employees of the FM Radio stations who present programs and entertain the listeners of the Radio channel.

Customers
The customers are the buyers of the service that the Radio station provides. The customers are divided into two categories for this industry, one the listeners and the other the advertisers. The advertisers provide revenue to the Radio stations and in turn want their products to be promoted, by attracting listeners to the station.

Customer Focus, Orientation and Care
These three terms are used throughout the paper in various contexts. The main theme behind them is to have an awareness of what the customer needs, wants and desires. After the general customer awareness is maintained, there is a need to satisfy the customers and keep them happy for as long as they are important to the Radio stations.

The next chapter is on literature review.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Customer Care

"Customers are the foundation of any service organization. They are the scorekeepers in the service game."\textsuperscript{14}

Today almost all organizations around the world need to rely on their customers because of a highly competitive scenario. The transactions across the world that used to take days or months to be complete can now be done in a matter of minutes or even seconds as a result of the emergence of the Internet and advanced communication services. In this way people can interact and communicate faster and more efficiently. Thus, majority of the countries are steadily moving towards a united world, a global village.

The advancement in business practices and communication methods has facilitated dealings both individually and at the organizational level. Big businesses to individual purchases can be transacted on the Internet (internationally) in competition to local availability.

Customers now have a wider choice of products and service providers, hence the strong competition. It is therefore important for business organizations to be customer sensitive and to create a customer focus within the organization. It is important for the organization to carry out their operations in such a way that the customers are satisfied with them and remain loyal to their organization.

"Good customer service is giving the customer what they expect and then some more."\textsuperscript{15}


Customer focused organizations should understand the needs, the wants and the desires of their targeted customers. This is important, so that whenever there is a change in their tastes, the organization is ready to cater to the changed requirements of the customer.

In this competitive scenario, it is important for the organizations to stay ahead of their competitors and to do so; they have to know their customers thoroughly. Satisfying the customer, therefore, has to be one of the most important activities of an organization in its endeavor to lead its competitors. Competition is rising in the market and if companies do not change towards more customer focus, competitors with better service and better customer understanding may take over all the customers that any organization has.

“A dissatisfied customer will tell between 5 to 10 people about the negative experience while a positive customer will tell between 1 and 5 people about his positive experience. This should prove that it is important to satisfy the customer and that nobody can afford to have dissatisfied customers.”

Organizations should realize that in addition to having more satisfied customers, they should not have any dissatisfied customers. Organizations cannot afford to be rude to their customers and if they do so they cannot sustain their business.

“There is an old saying in the business world that it costs 5 times as much to get a new customer as it would be to keep and maintain an old one.”

It is therefore important to keep the current customers satisfied, happy and loyal to the organization and also to avoid a situation of customer dissatisfaction. This enables maximum retention of the current customers and also clears out any hindrances that may prevent the attraction of new customers.

---

17 Ibid. p.19
A satisfied customer is more important to the service industry; since the services being provided have more of a human touch and can be tailored to a customer’s liking. As quoted in the beginning of this chapter, the customer being the foundation of the service industry, is the one who determines the leadership of the Service Game, that is competition.

The competitors are the participants in the service game and the customers are the judges. Competitors have to compete to satisfy the customer and the one who charms or fulfills the customer’s expectations the most, is the winner. The game does not stop there hence the service providers have to work hard to retain customers, as it is easier to loose a customer than to add a new one. The service game is not a one time game but is a continuous process, in which the players (the service providers) enter at various stages, win, loose or fall out and the game continues. In order to survive or to win, the players have to keep the judges (the customers) always satisfied.

"The whole organization should be one customer service department."\(^{18}\)

To satisfy the customer, the service organizations have to fully understand the customer behavior, their mood swings, their preferences and their requirements to be happy and content. It is not until these things are understood and considered by the organizations that they can boast of being customer – oriented.

Customer – orientation requires the complete understanding and thorough monitoring of the customer behavior. Most organizations make a great effort to set up a customer care department and they feel satisfied by creating a place where the customers feel their importance in the organization. Although this may be a positive move towards customer sensitization, it has to be properly handled to create the right effect.

\(^{18}\) Albericht, K. (1992). "The only thing that matters (Bringing the power of the customer into the center of your business)." Harper Collins publishers, New York, p. 25
Simply by setting up a customer care department that deals exclusively with customers, the organization tends to separate the rest of the organization from being customer oriented. However, what the organization needs is to create a culture of customer sensitivity throughout the organization. The customer care department should be a link between the customers and the entire organization.

"Customer/seller relationships in most countries across Africa leave a lot to be desired. For example, customer service, at most selling points in Uganda, is a disaster, to say the least."\(^\text{19}\)

The entire organization needs to be customer sensitive, whereas in majority of the organizations in East Africa, if there is a customer care department the rest of the organization lacks customer sensitivity. This practice has to be changed and the entire organization has to become sensitive to the customer behavior and their needs. So there is a need for the entire organization to emerge as one big customer oriented unit. (Ibid.)

Customers who approach any organization by their own choice want the return worth the value for the money they spend.

What most organizations overlook is that "the average customers want to be received with maximum courtesy, pampered from beginning to end like a king and treated in such a pleasant way that he looks forward to coming back even if it’s just to listen to the nice words heaped on him."\(^\text{20}\)

The easiest and most effective ways to attract a customer are to give a smile, make them feel wanted and they will always be willing to return. This feeling of satisfaction will be propagated to other people and generally good service and happy customers is the trick to increasing one’s clientele.

\(^\text{20}\) Ibid. p. 19
In the case of a product being sold, the customer first responds to the service being
provided in relation to the product, that is, how the person at the counter behaves towards
them and then they pay attention to the actual product itself.
The more friendly and professionally the customer is attended the more positive the
results the organizations receive.

"The easiest and cheapest tools that you can use are your lips. And I don’t mean that
you should kiss the customer! No, learn to wear a smile whenever a customer walks in.
You may not be a habitual smiling person, but surely you can learn. It costs nothing, and
besides, according to the psychologists, whenever a person smiles or laughs, it has a
positive effect on the mind and makes that person one degree better."  

One’s facial expressions and attitude towards a customer, who walks into an organization
for a business deal, makes a lot of difference. Customers should not be given the
impression that the seller has a “Don’t make my life difficult” attitude. The employees of
the organization have to change and be more adjusting.

The organizations have to work very hard to change the mindset and wrong attitude of
the employees, which they have been practicing all the time. The earlier practice was
mostly of product perfection and customer care was a much lower priority. To change
this attitude is not a very easy task.

Through modern management training and the learning of the great significance of
customers to an organization, the new stream of management graduates and business
entrants are aware of the need to be customer oriented. The problem arises with those
employees who have been working for decades, allegedly have fixed mindset and have
difficulty in changing towards the customer – oriented system.

Employees have to be trained to handle customers and have to be told the customer's importance to the organization and their importance for the existence of the organization and its employees. Organizations have to create that awareness among the employees in such a way that the employees do not get demoralized and they look forward to fulfilling this vital objective of the organization towards success and long term existence.

The above scenario applies to all industries that deal directly with their customer, whether they are related to goods or services. This is because the need to have satisfied customers arises for both types of businesses, whether they are selling goods or services. It is allegedly believed that the service industry requires a greater understanding of its customer's needs. This could be because of the services having greater tendency of being tailor made to individual customer specifications.

Having discussed about customer care the literature review will next focus on the Radio entertainment industry in Uganda and Kenya.
2.2 The Radio Entertainment Industry

In the Radio entertainment industry there are two categories of the customers, the advertisers and the listeners. The advertisers give the revenue to the Radio entertainment organizations by sponsorship of programs or advertising commercials, which enables them to promote their products or services for higher sales. The Radio entertainment organizations get this revenue for their expenses, existence and profits. In turn the advertisers want worth the value for their money in a way that the commercials or sponsorships are effective in promoting their product or service and increase their sales.

The second category of the customers of entertaining Radio stations is the listeners. They are equally important to the Radio station as they are to the advertiser. They have to always keep in mind that the Radio entertainment is for the listeners and if the listeners are not satisfied, and there is an alternative, they have a choice to switch channels and tune to another station that may be more likable as per their tastes. Thus, the Radio entertainment industry has to keep both these categories of customers very happy, since they are interconnected.²²

The New Vision newspaper, of Uganda, on the occasion of the World Telecommunication Day on the 17th of May 2000 published a report on the telecommunication scenario in Uganda. As per the information provided in this report, in Uganda the number of privately owned entertainment FM Radio stations, has increased from 14 in 1996, to 28 in 1998 and to 37 in 1999. This has happened due to the liberalization of the Radio broadcasting licenses. As the number of Radio stations has increased the amount of competition to gain more customers has also increased. Giving rise to new and improved FM Radio stations and better programs being broadcasted by them.

²²The Radio Entertainment Industry plays the part of getting across the message of the advertiser to the listeners, which means that this industry is a medium between the advertiser and the listeners.
Besides the liberalization of these licenses, this increase in the number of radio stations could be due to factors such as a result of affluence and the need for variety by the public. Also pressures from International donors coupled with a liberal government system could have lead to this rise.

Taking the example of Kampala (Uganda), the listeners have a wider choice of Radio stations to tune into, since there are many Radio stations. This is also due to the topography of Kampala City, which is located on seven hills, and certain Radio stations can only transmit to a limited area. Hence, the location of different Radio stations in different areas to cover different segments of people. Nevertheless the competition is still stiff. Capital Radio 91.3 FM, Radio One 90 FM, Radio West 87.9 FM, Radio Simba 97.3 FM, Top Radio 104.9 FM and Sanyu FM are some of the popular Radio stations in Kampala. Sanyu FM is one of the oldest Radio stations in Kampala and is among the leading Radio stations in Kampala.

Radio Simba is the only one out of the lot that broadcasts entirely in the local language of Luganda hence has an exclusive market as compared to the others. Top Radio only broadcasts contemporary Christian music; therefore it has an entirely different market segment to cover. The major competition is between Radio one, Capital Radio and Sanyu FM. The competition amongst these Radio stations is evident from the methods they adopt in advertising their own Radio stations and also in their promotional campaigns.

On the other hand the Situation in Kenya is different where the number of FM Radio stations started to increase only after mid 1998. As explained earlier this recent increase was due to the recent liberalization of the airwaves. The increase in the FM stations was mainly in Nairobi and to a limited extent in Mombasa. In comparison, the number of privately owned FM Radio stations within Kenya is limited to less than 10 Radio stations that are popular, the limited number of stations is as a result of the recent liberalization of broadcasting license in Kenya.
In Nairobi, there are only five fully operational Radio stations while two stations are still on test transmission. Due to limited number of recently introduced and existent Radio stations, the customer’s attitude to FM Radio station media is different in Nairobi.

Both the advertisers and the listeners have a limited choice of Radio stations, and the Radio stations have limited customer base.

For example, Capital FM transmitting on a frequency of 98.4 FM has its target market of English speaking listeners and the music is also mostly in English. Capital Radio 98.4 FM was the first Radio station to start FM broadcasting and has been very popular according to available evidence. This Radio station has a variety of programs such as gospel music, local music and Indian music with the presentation in English medium.

What made them very popular was that they were pioneers in the industry and they had no competition in the beginning. Consequently the customers did not have any choice. Then came Metro Radio 101.9 FM, playing English and African music who presented both in Kiswahili (the national language of Kenya) and in English and became popular, hence giving competition to Capital FM. Through observation it was seen that, Metro caters to all the age groups and is now giving more competition to Capital FM.

Another new station, Metro East FM that transmits on a frequency of 91.9 FM, entirely focuses on the Asian (majority Indians and Pakistanis) community of Nairobi and has limited African customers. The presentation is in English most of the time but the music and songs, that East FM plays, are mostly of Indian and Pakistani origin.

The above three Radio stations have competitors that are emerging, but they certainly have an advantage of being old players in this market, since the competitors are relatively new and have been on test transmissions for a longer period of time.

---

23 This status is as on September 1999.
A new entrant, Sound Asia 88 FM, has given competition to East FM for almost a year now. Sound Asia also mostly plays Asian music and some English music, hence capturing the same market segment as Metro East FM.

Regardless of the two situations, whereby the Radio broadcasting industry in Kampala is old and mature and that of Nairobi is new and developing, the customer's satisfaction remains the main objective in both scenarios.

From the research it was established that the main mission of most radio stations in Nairobi and Kampala, was to retain the current customer and attract more, that is increasing their number of listeners. Therefore the main objective of all Radio stations is to satisfy existing customers and attract new ones. This is difficult to achieve in the Radio industry due to the variety of listeners and their diverse views. It is not easy to satisfy all the listeners or the advertisers and there remain limitations for the Radio stations to satisfy unreasonable demands of the listeners and advertisers.

This concern is the subject of the next section that examines the issue of whether the customer is always right.
2.3 Is the Customer always Right?

Having discussed the issue of customer care what comes next is; “is the customer always right?” As mentioned earlier, because there are choices available to the customers, due to competition, the customers have become choosy. As the organizations give significance to the customer’s demands, these demands are ever increasing and sometimes become unreasonable for the service industry to provide. Despite the occurrence of these unreasonable demands, the service industry allegedly tries to convince the customer about their limitations to satisfy their demands and keep them happy.

"The customer is always right, there’s no need to get into any kind of argument with the customer, however ‘difficult’ he is.”

The above quote mentions that even if the customer is difficult there should not be arguments or controversy. However the human behavior of both the customers and the service providers can be contradictory. In the same way that a customer may feel offended by the employee’s behavior, the employee may also feel the same way from the customer’s “difficult” attitude. (Ibid.)

It is easy to say that in modern management practices, customer focus is one of the most important aspects contributing to the success of the organization, but a question that arises is “How easy is it?” Considering that the customer demands may sometimes be totally unreasonable, it is difficult to comply with these demands. It is alleged that Radio station as a service organization sets an objective to satisfy and keep the customers happy in all aspects, so that they don’t loose their advertisers or their listeners.

As pointed out earlier, though the customers have the right to demand, it is sometimes difficult for the employees working for the Radio station to fulfill their demands.

---

When working for any organization the employees have to comply with set rules and regulations of the organization. At the same time they have to work towards customer satisfaction being an objective of the organization. The employee is thus put in a dilemma in this circumstance as to how to satisfy an unreasonable customer demand.

"Perhaps one of the most vulnerable of moments is when someone criticizes you. If the person who criticizes you knows you well and if they make their comment in front of other people, they can cut deep. The scalpel of their comment can be surgically rapid and close to the bone, more damaging than the rubber hammer of a stranger's passing slight." 25 Yet again the organizations do have to keep in mind that "Feelings are contagious: The way your employees feel is ultimately the way your customer will feel." 26

Any service organization cannot afford to have demoralized employees who in turn will not be able to keep the customers happy.

Hence, there is a need to assess this relationship between the customers and the employees of a Radio station. There is a need to re-examine whether the customer is always right or not, and to what extent the employees can satisfy the customer's demands.

It suffices to emphasize that this research is carried out in an attempt to assess the employee – customer relationship in the Radio entertainment industry and the main source for the research is the Radio stations in Nairobi and Kampala. The research is based on the research problem, objectives and questions set out later in this paper and the questionnaire derived is used to assess the topic, "A study on the employee - customer relationships in the Radio entertainment industries in Kenya and Uganda."

Chapter three, that follows, discusses the methodology used for the research.

---

25 A modified quote from an Internet Article by Kare Anderson "Handling Criticism with Honesty and Grace." Website – www.speakers.com
26 Albrecht, K. (1992). "The only thing that matters (Bringing the power of the customer into the center of your business)." Harper Collins publishers, New York, p. 93
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter lays out the method of research used. This includes the setting of the design of the research (including the questionnaire designing), the collection of the data and the procedure, the sample and sampling procedure, and how the data collected has been analyzed. The methodology of this research paper is implemented to investigate the hypothesis of the research.

The bases of the investigation lie in the assessment of the relationship between the employees and the customers in the Radio entertainment industry. The methodology is organized as follows:

♦ The research design,
♦ The sample and sampling procedures,
♦ The sampling unit,
♦ The data collection instruments,
♦ The data collection procedures.
3.2 Research Design

This research is designed to get the information of employee – customer relationship for the entertainment Radio stations only. A questionnaire (Appendix 1) is designed keeping in view the objectives of the top management and its strategies as well as the employee's experiences in customer dealings.

The designed questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part relates to the management systems to prepare the foundation of the research whereas the second part focuses more on employees' experiences with the organization and with the customers and the influence of customers on the organization. The questionnaires were given to the top management of different Radio stations. Some of the top management filled the questionnaires as a part of the interview where the questions were answered on the spot. Whereas in other cases, questionnaires were left with the top management after a brief interview and collected later. The period within which the research was carried out was within the year 1999, and therefore the Radio stations that have since emerged, particularly in Nairobi, are not included in the research.

The designed questionnaire enabled the collection of appropriate data that assisted in meeting the research requirements and eventually in verifying the hypothesis of this research. As the topic of this research is exploratory, the open – ended questions are better answered than the multiple choice questions where the answers are restricted. Another aspect is that questionnaires were completed mostly a one – to – one interview. This helped in explaining the purpose of the research to the organization in a better way, so as to obtain appropriate responses to the questions asked.

Following hereafter is the section on sample and sampling procedure of the methodology chapter.
3.3 Sample and Sampling Procedures

The sample used in this research is the FM Radio stations, which are dealing exclusively with entertainment and part of the utility services. The sample covers only two major cities, Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya and Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. The procedure adopted for sampling was to find out which Radio station has a wider coverage of the community and is more popular.

The sample used in the assessment of the employee – customer relationship in these two cities, Nairobi and Kampala, was obtained from the service industry. As compared to a product oriented industry it is seen that in the service industry the interaction between the customers and the employees is greater. The FM Radio entertainment industry is one such part of the service industry of Kenya and Uganda, which is still in its infant stage as an industry.

3.4 Sampling Unit

In order to analyze the customer behavior, the best scenario is the service industry. Within the service industry, the Radio entertainment industry and more specifically the FM Radio stations were chosen as the sampling unit for this research.

The next section of this chapter presents the data collection instruments used in this research.
3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The main instrument used for data collection in this research as already mentioned is the questionnaire (Appendix 1). The first part of the questionnaire contained questions to find out the top management system within the organization, to set a foundation for the research. In this part of the questionnaire, the mission statement, objectives, business strategies, employee awareness and the empowerment have been included, to arrive at the status of the organization with respect to management styles. There are a total of six questions in this part of the Questionnaire.

The second part of the questionnaire contained a total of twelve questions, which formed the major part of the research topic. It is also mentioned in the questionnaire that the customer means both the listener and the advertiser.

The first three questions mostly dealt with organization’s dependence and reliance on the customer and how they find out the customer’s requirements.

The next set of five questions dealt with the reaction, the action taken and the implementation of the customer’s views and requirements.

The last set of questions dealt with the employee – customer relationship and suggestions for the research by the Radio stations.

Besides the questionnaires, one to one interviews were carried out and vital information such as the employee treatment and the mindset or the culture of the top management was observed.

The next section discusses the data collection procedures.
3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was carried out individually by means of interview that was meant to assist the targeted population to answer questions in the questionnaires. Since the number of FM Radio stations in Nairobi and Kampala are limited, this procedure of collection of data was found convenient.

The Radio stations were contacted by telephone, and the purpose of this research was explained and then the appointments were fixed. This procedure was needed to remove any doubts that this study was not being carried out for commercial use and also confidentiality was confirmed.

Few interviews were very brief and the top management preferred that the questionnaire be left behind for answering. Most of the FM Radio station's top management were receptive and answered the questions sincerely. In few interviews the questionnaire was answered quite briefly and without any explanation. As discussed earlier, this caused a limitation whereby not all the factors relating to the employee – customer relationships in these Radio stations were identified. Most of the interviewees seemed to be well qualified and had knowledge of modern management practices, which enabled them to understand the questions well and answer appropriately.

After having explained the methodology for this research, the next chapter is devoted to the research findings and data analysis.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The findings of the actual research procedures identified from the data obtained from the questionnaires have been instrumental in answering the research questions\textsuperscript{27}. The research objectives\textsuperscript{28} have then been used to analyze this data and arrive at a confirmation of the hypothesis\textsuperscript{29}.

The data statement and their analysis have been considered under the following subsections:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Organizational objectives and management practices,
  \item Customer importance,
  \item Customer awareness techniques,
  \item Implementation of customer suggestions and complaints,
  \item Impact of customer views and demands.
\end{itemize}

In particular, wherever any personal bias appeared in the answers to any questions, caution was taken to avoid making the bias a general opinion of the entire industry.

\textsuperscript{27} Refer to page 15.
\textsuperscript{28} Refer to page 14.
\textsuperscript{29} Refer to page 13.
4.2 Organizational Objectives and Management Practices

This section helps in getting replies for the following two research questions:
Number 1. *What are the Radio station's main objectives, management practices and their management structure?*

Number 2. *What is the level of employee awareness and empowerment? To what extent are the employees free to take decisions on behalf of the Radio station, in regard to customer care?*

The data findings obtained from these questions were analyzed with respect to the research objective number 1, *To identify the Radio station's management practices and basic goals, in an attempt to point out the role of customers and their importance in the organization.*

Majority of the Radio stations have set their goals to achieve one main objective and that is to gain the customers and retain the customers. As the views of all human beings are diverse, the mission statement that they have formulated to run their businesses have been stated in different ways, but they point to one objective and that is gaining and retaining the customers by keeping them satisfied and happy.

Most of the Radio stations used the term customer for listeners only in their organization objectives. In one case, a Radio station wished to have satisfied listeners worldwide and in another case the station wished to keep themselves ahead of the competition by providing listeners with the kind of programs, music and features they find most appealing. Hence existence of different wordings, but one main theme and that is, having satisfied customers and working towards attracting more customers.

The business strategies that the various FM Radio stations used were most commonly to improve their programs, the music they played, presentation styles and the transmission techniques. There was a common belief that the types of programs, the music played and the presentation styles were designed to suit the taste of their target market.
The technology also needed improvement so as to reach more listeners, keeping in mind that FM transmissions have limited coverage. Some stations have used relay stations to broadcast in other towns while one station has linked up with satellite Radio companies like World Space so as to be heard worldwide.30

The findings below apply to all the FM Radio stations included in this research. The employees of the Radio stations are all trained and made aware of the organization's objectives to keep the customers satisfied. As training is a continuous process the employees always keep learning about how they can achieve the organization’s objectives. This indeed enabled the employees to always be cautious when dealing with the customers and their requirements. Meetings both at departmental and organizational levels were held regularly so as to keep the learning and improvement process as regular and continuous as possible.

With regard to the organizational structure each employee had a supervisor to report to or even to consult for advice. This allowed the information within the organization to flow in a co-ordinated and consistent manner. The organizational structure also determines the chain of command and the empowerment of the employees, the deals that are made on behalf of the organization are discussed with supervisors so as to avoid any kind of complications. (A example of the organizational structure can be seen in Appendix 3.)

Through these findings it can be seen that the customer is an essential part of the successful business organization. There is evident awareness of the customer’s importance to the FM stations that are a part of the Radio entertainment industry. These FM stations have set strategies that will provide efficiency and effectiveness to the customer satisfaction process. This is achieved by improving their programs, music, presentation style and transmission technology as well as the continuous employees training.

30 The agreement between East FM and World Space (satellite) radio, enables the owners of this World Space radio to listen to the broadcast of East FM 24 hours.
4.3 Customer Importance

This section will get the reply for the research question number 3, *How and in what way is the customer important to the Radio station?* The findings obtained from this question are analyzed as per the research objective number 2, *To identify the impact of customer views and demands on the employee – customer relationship.*

As the objective of all FM Radio stations is to retain and attract more customers they understand and accept that the customers are very important to their organization. This customer importance concern was evident in the focus on the assurance of satisfied customers during most of the procedures and practices of the organization. The Radio stations regularly carry out reviews in respect to changing customer demands and views. Reviews and assessments of programming are carried out so as to find out whether they are keeping their customers happy and satisfied or whether they are loosing them to competition. For example, reviews are also carried out by asking the listeners, who call the Radio stations, some questions related to the current changes and programs aired by the station. These calls are first received by the researcher(s) and the caller is asked if they are willing to help out in the research and then the research process is carried out. This shows that the importance of the customer is utmost to all Radio stations. This also shows that these organizations see a need to regularly keep watch on the customer satisfaction scenario.

Other practices that show the importance of the customer are the existence of special programs designed to gain customer views and suggestions. Taking the example of East FM a Radio station in Nairobi, in such programs the presenter first reads out the complaints or suggestions to the Station Manager, who is a guest in the show, and then the Manager answers how the problem or suggestion will be tackled. These complaints or suggestions are received either through mail or phone calls, and such a program ensures the listeners or the advertisers that their concern is being looked into.
Similar programs such as Talk shows are aired by other stations, such as Top Radio and Radio one of Kampala, so that their customers can give their suggestions and concerns to improve the programming of these Radio stations. These efforts by the Radio stations to keep their customers satisfied reflect the great importance of the customer to the Radio stations.

Besides East FM, most of the Radio stations that were included in the research replied that the customer’s views, to a very large extent, influenced the Radio station’s choice of programs. This particular Radio station specifically gave a figure of 80%, representing the percentage of the station’s operations being influenced by the customer’s views. It just goes to show that the customer’s views are very crucial in the daily running of the organization. Most Radio stations carry out quarterly reviews, and when necessary immediate review of a situation is also carried out depending on the customer demands.
4.4 Customer Awareness Techniques

This section of the findings and data analysis chapter is meant to assist in getting a reply for the research question number 4, *In what way are the customer views received?* The findings obtained through this question are analyzed with respect to the research objective number 3, *To investigate how the Radio stations obtain the customers’ suggestions and complaints.*

The various Radio stations included in the research were given a range of customer’s suggestion collection techniques to choose from. These were as follows:

♦ Through questionnaires,
♦ Through surveys,
♦ Through a separate customer department,
♦ Through random callers on phone,
♦ Through word of mouth (rumors),
♦ Any other way, please specify.

As per the findings of the research carried out all the Radio stations used questionnaires and surveys as tools to find out the views and demands of their customers. Although some Radio stations extensively used different tools, all the stations used questionnaires and surveys to know their customers. Some Radio stations receive approximately 70% of their suggestions through a separately established customer department.

No one particular method or tool was new to any one Radio station, out of all the Radio stations included in the research. Some Radio stations have employees, who carry out research so as to monitor customer behavior. Although most Radio stations do have separate customer departments, they do not make appropriate use of these departments. Few stations relied on random callers on phone and rumors for customer views, but not extensively. Almost all stations were aware that it is important to have such tools to monitor and note customer views in this Radio entertainment industry.
The most commonly used tools were; the questionnaires, the surveys and the separate customer care department. As informed by the stations, the questionnaires and the surveys were used with the assistance of the customer care departments and these tools were easier to handle, more accurate and greater responses were obtained from their use. Questionnaires and surveys assist in gaining accurate and valid responses from the targeted listeners of Radio stations and the customer care departments establish a devoted task force to tackle the customers' needs. Little attention was given to suggestions or complaints received through rumors, because the validity of these rumors was considered questionable.

The following table gives the approximate percentages of the tools used by majority of the Radio stations included in this research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOOLS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE USE OF TOOLS (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Approximate figures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate customer departments.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random callers on phone and Word of mouth (Rumors)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 Implementation of Customer Suggestions and Complaints

This section assists in getting the reply for the research question number 5, *What actions are taken with regard to these customer views?* The findings obtained through this question are analyzed with respect to the research objective number 4, *To find out how these suggestions and complaints received from the customers are implemented and their impact on the employees.*

Once the complaints or suggestions are received, as discussed in the previous section, they are recorded and filed for further investigation and analysis. The various issues raised are either production, accounts or sales related. After the suggestions or complaints are filed, the top-level management reviews the issues.

Any suggestions received are viewed and noted, and if any one of the demands or the suggestions is voiced by a substantial number of customers and frequently repeated then the management looks into implementing the suggestion. If the suggestions are somehow clashing with programs or may not be able to fit into the current procedures of the organization, they are saved for later reference. As the suggestions are taken from customers, they are also assured that the appropriate action will be taken to accommodate them in due course. If the suggestion is received through a phone call, the customer is assured on the phone that the issue will be looked into. If the suggestions come in the form of letters then general announcements are made on the Radio so as to assure the listeners that their issues are being dealt with, as it becomes difficult to deal with each individual among the thousands of listeners and their suggestions.

In answering to the production related issues the stations divided the customer into listeners and advertisers. If the complaints are from the advertiser regarding the advertisements or the presentation style of sponsored programs, the necessary actions are taken to rectify the problems on the spot especially in cases where the commercials are already being aired.
As the direct revenue issue is involved with the advertiser and the programming in the FM stations is mostly live, there is a need in this case to take instant action. The respective problems related to the accounts, sales or production departments are discussed with the executives and the problems are solved.

Customer complaints or suggestions regarding the presenters are also dealt with thoroughly by the Radio stations management departments. The complaints against presenters are taken into account and an investigation is carried out to confirm that the complaint is valid. Then the presenter is confronted, and if required, disciplinary actions are taken against that presenter. The disciplinary actions could begin with warnings and if the mistakes are repeated the presenter could either be demoted or be terminated from his or her job. The implementation methods discussed in this section are similar among all the Radio stations.
4.6 Impact of Customer Views and Demands

This section is meant to assist in getting the reply for the research question number 6, *To what extent do customer views affect your operations?* The findings obtained through this question are analyzed with respect to the research objective number 5, *To determine how right the customers are and how easy or difficult it is to satisfy their demands and what attempts the organizations make to ensure smooth running of operations in the organization.*

Most FM Radio stations, especially those included in this research are entertainment based Radio stations. It is their main objective, as observed before, to have a large clientele of satisfied listeners and gain more. This objective also moulds their mission. More specifically, to have satisfied customers, and to achieve this they believe in treating the customer with extreme care, in meeting their demands and welcoming their views. Hence, all the FM Radio stations agreed that the employees that directly deal with the customers are highly influenced by what the customer’s views and demands are. The influence or impact is greater especially when the customers are rude and irrational in terms of their demands.

Irrationality in customer demands arises when demands, for example, are based on personal grudges against presenters. This irrationality also occurs when customers want programs to be changed for individual tastes and liking, in cases where the Radio stations have thousands of customers, catering to individual demands sometimes becomes impossible.

It is very important that the suggestions voiced by majority of the target market have to be used to amend the programs, music or even the presenters. As per the research findings, majority of the stations reported that in terms of ratio of suggestions to complaints, the complaints out numbered the suggestions.
In Uganda as the choice of Radio stations is wider, the number of complaints is not as high as those in Kenya. In Kenya the limited choice of Radio stations makes the customers more demanding.

Whichever the case, the stiff competition still exists and the organizations which are largely influenced by their customers have to keep satisfying them to stay ahead of their competitors.

The next chapter draws the conclusion to this research.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters have provided significant information on the Radio Entertainment Industry. This chapter summarizes and concludes this work. Important suggestions in form of recommendations are also provided towards the end of this chapter.

5.2 Summary

As is evident by now, in a service industry such as the Radio entertainment industry it is important to stay ahead of the competition so as to be successful. To stay ahead of the competition, the organizations in this industry have to keep their customers happy and satisfied, whether they are their listeners or the advertisers. This analysis of the employee – customer relationship within the Radio entertainment industry has been done with the help of data collected from various Radio stations in Kampala and Nairobi by-way of a questionnaire. The management of the FM Radio stations provided the information by way of responses to the questionnaire.

The data collected was then analyzed as per the research objectives set earlier in the paper. Firstly; it was confirmed that the general organizational objective in this industry is to keep the customers happy and increase the listenership. The management practices revolved around satisfying or fulfilling this objective. Most FM Radio stations improved their programs, music, presentation styles and technology to satisfy their customers.

The data analysis and findings revealed that the customers were of great importance to the FM Radio stations and that the FM Radio stations mostly used questionnaires and surveys among other methods to gather information about customer views and demands.
There was a general lack of the existence of a separate customer care department. The customer suggestions obtained were critically examined as per the customer demands and requirements. The complaints were further investigated, by proper procedures and dealt with, to eliminate any customer dissatisfaction.

Finally, it was also seen that the customer’s views and demands made great impact on the operations and on the employees of the Radio stations. Even though the demands were sometimes irrational, the impact was evident.
5.3 Conclusion

The customer is an important part of organizations moving towards success and profit maximization; this helps the organizations to stay ahead of their competitors. The customer, as already identified in the data analysis chapter, is an important component of the Radio stations and they attempt all possible means to satisfy and keep these customers happy and loyal to the station. With the help of an essential tool, which is the separate customer department, the Radio stations attempt to receive all the customers’ views, suggestions and complaints. These separate customer departments then use tools like questionnaire and surveys to gain the views of the public that they target. The top management then makes an attempt to solve these quarries made by the customer and try to keep them satisfied.

The customer is always right, has been a phrase used by modern management so that organizations can help their employees, to move from the old habit of exploiting the customer, to satisfying their needs and to listening to their demands. In the process the phrase that was supposed to be used to help the customer has been taken too literally and the customers to some extent have started exploiting the employees who are out to please them. Like any human being on this earth, the customer may not always be right.

It is here that the conflict arises. The customer demands are rising daily and the employees of various Radio stations have to keep their customers happy so as to stay in line with the competitors if not ahead of them. Though it is important to listen to the customer, it is not necessary to take what they say for a fact and should only try to achieve it up to a rational level. When the limits of rationality are crossed, it is important to keep in mind that the employees maybe psychologically affected by this irrationality, and that the customers need to be satisfied in any other possible ways.
This all comes into focus when the customer behavior is analysed. Organizations need to have a complete overview of how their customers behave and analyze their behavior, so as to know exactly what they might demand and try to fulfill their demands before they have a chance to complain about it.

Organizations, such as the Radio stations studied in this research, pay a great amount of attention to the complaints filed by listeners and as discussed earlier the review methods and the implementation of suggestions and complaints are carefully carried out processes. It may be very easy to say that the customer is always right but it is important for Radio stations that rely so heavily on their customers, to know that they can satisfy their customers only to a certain rational level. Beyond this there is a possibility that “the customer may not be right!” or maybe unreasonable for that matter.

The conclusion leads to some recommendations for overcoming the management problems discussed in this paper.
5.4 Recommendations

The customers, being the essential part of the organization today, need a special handling technique. Such that, when they complain or give their views, proper attention is given to their views. If necessary they need to be pampered, loved and taken care of, so that in the future they remain loyal to the Radio stations and the Radio stations make profit by having an increased number of listeners.

The most efficient and effective way of knowing customer’s views would be to ask them, and this can be best done through surveys and questionnaires, which are effectively used by all the Radio stations included in this research. Hence proving that they are using effective techniques to know their customers. Though the absence of separate customer departments does raise some doubt on how effectively the customer complaints and suggestions are handled.

It is important to remember that the customers may not care how much you know until they know how much you care. It is important to know about your product and services but ultimately it is more important to have a customer care attitude in the organization.

Most companies, the world over, are adopting the concept of the customer care and taking the customer care department as seriously as the importance attached to the management or the finance department in the company. It is therefore important for this phenomenon of customer care to be considered seriously in this service industry too, which is the Radio entertainment industry in Kenya and Uganda. To run customer care departments in the organizations of today, especially in the service industries like the Radio entertainment providers; there is need to have qualified personnel in the field of customer care, so that the right kind of service is given to the customers.
In an effort to tackle the problem of the employees' dilemma, the organizations need to keep in mind that the customer is not always right and that it is necessary to guide the employees so that hindrance is not caused in their work efforts. At a point of time when the customer is not right, the specialized customer care department comes in and it is up to them to explain to the customer that their complaint is irrational. This should be done in a nice way such as through newsletters to customers and advertisements.

Thus, this explanation has to be done in such a way that the customer does not get offended. It should be possible to show the customer how he or she can rather help the organization than to merely complain to them. **Most importantly, the organizations such as the Radio stations, have to know their customers thoroughly.** They have to regularly keep an account of the customer behavior and the possible changes that occur in their behavior.

In conclusion to this section, it suffices to say that there is definitely a need for further research in this field, the employee – customer relationship, and this research has to be done individually by organizations. As the relationships may vary with regard to different organizations, a general research may not be as helpful as an in-depth personalized research of each organization to improve the employee – customer relationship, which is critical in terms of the organization's success.

Following are the specific recommendations put forward:

- Organizations need to monitor the changes in customer behavior in order to keep the customers satisfied at all times.
- It is equally important to have a customer care attitude just as it is to know the product or service you are selling to the customer.
- It is most important to have an independent customer service department catering entirely to the needs of customers.
Such customer service departments must have qualified personnel who can handle the customers even when they are irrational. The staff should tell the customers, in a professional way, that they are irrational and at the same time not offend them or loose them as customers.

At the same time the top management of organizations must train their employees to tackle situations such as how to deal with irrational customer complaints.

Organizations should try and help those employees who may be psychologically affected by such complaints.

Top management may need to thoroughly investigate the employee – customer relationships within the organization; so as to know how to keep such relationships healthy at all times.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Specific References

6. The New Vision, Wednesday May 17, 2000, p. 34
7. "Radio," Microsoft® Encarta® 96 Encyclopedia. © 1993-1995 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. © Funk & Wagnalls Corporation. All rights reserved.
General References


APPENDICES

Appendix 1 — Questionnaire

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Pooja Datta; I am an MBA student at the United States International University – Africa, Nairobi campus. Having completed my degree requirements for an MBA with a concentration in Strategic Management, I now have to carry out research and compile a research paper on a topic from my course. My research topic is “A study on the employee – customer relationships in the Radio entertainment industries in Kenya and Uganda.”

It is in this regard that I am kindly requesting your assistance. As a Radio station your customers are what matters most to your business. This questionnaire and the rest of the research will enable me to assess this relationship and also see how it can be better handled.

The information provided by you in this questionnaire will only be viewed by my university supervisor and myself and hence I assure you that it will be kept confidential.

Thanking you for your kind assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Pooja Datta
The following questions are related to the management systems within your organization. They will help us to form a foundation for the research.

1. What is your mission statement? (Or what are your major organizational objectives?)

2. What business strategies do you use to fulfill these objectives or to achieve your mission statement?

3. How well are your employees conversant with the mission of the company?

4. In what way do you brief your employees of the changes in strategies or systems?

5. What is the chain of command within your organization? (Your management structure.)

6. To what extent are your employees free to take decisions regarding the deals made on behalf of the organization? (Up to what extent is the empowerment of the employee?)
The Following questions are related to the employee – customer relationship within your organization. These questions form the major part of the research topic. Do note that the term customer in the following questions refers to both the listeners and the advertisers.

1. To what extent does your Radio station rely on what the customer thinks?

2. How frequently do you review your programming depending on your customer demands?

3. How do you receive customer suggestions?
   - Through questionnaires,
   - Through surveys,
   - Through a separate customer department,
   - Through random callers on phone,
   - Through word of mouth (rumors),
   - Or any other ways, please specify.

   Please state the percentage or the ratio of the various ways, if suggestions are obtained through more than one way.

4. On receiving a complaint or a suggestion, what is the procedure followed next in resolving the complaints and the suggestions?
5. Do you train your employees on how to interact with the customer, under both normal circumstances and when receiving complaints.

6. To what extent are your employees influenced by the customer views?

7. Do you normally respond to the customer after their suggestions or complaints have been received?

8. What is the ratio of suggestions to complaints generally at your Radio station?

9. When introducing a new program, is the acceptance of the program by the listeners more positive or negative?

(a) If the acceptance is negative then how long does it take for the listener to get used to the new program schedule?
(b) If in any case the listeners do not adapt to the new program schedule, how frequently does this happen and what do you do to rectify the situation?

10. How often do you receive complaints from your customers regarding the employee behavior and how do you handle this complaint?

11. What is the chain of communication both upward and downward, when your employees can come to you and talk to you about the problems that they are having with the customers?

12. Please feel free to give any other suggestions that you think may help in compiling this research.

Once again I would like to thank you for your assistance in completing this questionnaire.
East Africa is going FM-radio crazy, so it might be worth noting that the region’s latest radio personality is none other than Major General Salim Saleh, the powerful, wealthy younger brother of Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni.

Saleh is now the presenter of the vernacular radio programme *Enzamba ya Hamuhuruma* (The Last Trumpet) on the Mbarara-based Greater Afrikan Radio (GAR).

Now, if only the highly-placed in neighbouring Kenya and Tanzania would give up their wheeling and dealing and follow suit...
Appendix 3  –  Example of Organizational Structure.

The following structure is a general representation of the structure that most Radio stations, included in this research, follow as an organization.

Managing Director

   General Manager
   (Or Station Manager)

   Head of Accounts Department
   Head of Production Department
   Head of Marketing Department
   Head of Technical Department

The various departments have respective employees that are specific among the various Radio stations. Through the research it was established that the customer care department generally occurs within the Production department. The technical department handles the maintenance of the various electronic gadgets and technologies that the Radio station uses to carry out its broadcasting.