



Assessment of customer service strategies on customer retention in local commercial banks: A case study of Investrust Bank PLC

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of customer service strategies on customer retention in a local commercial bank using Investrust Bank PLC. as a case- study being the only indigenous bank in Zambia. Primary data was collected from bank customers and employees using the sample size of 106 respondents. This study adopted a descriptive survey approach and data was analysed using Microsoft Excel and thematic survey. The findings revealed that 77% of the customers were generally satisfied with the bank's service quality. Further, a total of 63% affirmatively indicated their loyalty of being retained with their bank for the next decade. In establishing how service quality correlated with customer retention, five servqual dimensions were employed namely tangibility ($r=0.64$), reliability ($r=0.61$), empathy ($r=0.68$), responsiveness ($r=0.58$) and assurance ($r=0.52$). All the 5 dimensions of service quality recorded a positive correlation to customer retention ranging from 0.52 to 0.68. However, tangibility, reliability and empathy posted stronger association to customer retention than responsiveness and assurance in this study. Therefore the following recommendations emerged from the study findings: 1. Investrust Bank PLC. should ensure that their service quality is improved by obtaining customer feedback to identify the gap areas as well as to stay contemporary. 2. Investrust Bank PLC. Should periodically train and reward staff especially front liners at the bank. 3. Investrust Bank PLC. should urgently address the Tangibility dimension of service quality in terms of internet banking, faulty ATM systems, delays in issuance of banking instruments like cards, cheque books etc.

Keywords: service quality, SERVQUAL, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, customer retention, local bank

1. Introduction

The current economic recession in our country has tremendously impacted all the sectors of the economy and is a downturn of the rapid phenomenal economic growth of the first two decades post liberalization of the economy in 1991 which culminated in the proliferation of banks from eight (8) in 1990 to nineteen (19) banks by end of 1994 (1). However this number reduced to 16 as at 2009, due to deterioration of the financial situation of some banks from a variety of reasons; risky lending exposures, shortages of liquidity, limitations to raise capital and competition from other non-bank financial institutions, thereby resulting in the collapse of about 9 local banks between 1994 and 2000 (Mwenda, 2002) [23]. This resulted in lasting negative perceptions from customers who preferred the international banks. There seems to be a growing trend of foreign dominated banking sectors especially in the developing economies (Claessans, *et al*, 1998) [5], which poses threat for survival of domestic banks. According to World Bank report, aggressive competition with foreign banks threatens the survival of the domestic banks (World Bank, 2006) [36].

Therefore, customer retention is the key to the continued existence and profitability of a business, there are numerous benefits that accrue to a bank that manages to retain its customers. Rowley and Dawes (2000) [29] state that the financial implications of attracting new customers may be five times as costly as keeping existing customers. Thus in the banking industry wherein products are quite homogenous, it is

all about the strategies related to service quality that are adopted to bring out the competitive advantages that keep customer loyalty. Recent studies identify that the switching cost, the interpersonal relationship, the attractiveness of the alternatives and the recovery of the service are establishing the switching barrier and have a large effect on the customer retention (Gefen, 2010) [12]. Thus for a local bank, it is of utmost importance to ensure their customers remain content with their bank's service quality and delivery in order to remain contemporary and competitive in this presently foreign dominated sector that has stiff competition within it.

1.1 Profile of Investrust Bank PLC

Investrust Bank PLC. is a wholly owned Zambian bank. The bank incorporated under the Companies Act of 1994 in 1996 as Investrust Merchant Bank Ltd. From the humble start with only 3 branches, in 2002, Investrust Merchant Bank then changed its name to Investrust Commercial Bank Ltd so that it could conduct commercial and retail banking services. In 2004 it became Public Limited Liability Company officially known as Investrust Bank PLC. and since 2007; the bank has a full primary listing at the Lusaka Stock Exchange. The bank has been in existence for 19 years and has 23 branches around Zambia (www.zccm-ih.com.zm/investrust-bank) [37]. The purpose of this study is to investigate the customer service strategies that assist a local bank to maintain customer loyalty and retention in Zambia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been tremendous growth in the Zambian banking sector from 1991 when economy was liberalized and globalisation brought in foreign direct investments to almost all the sectors in the economy causing a proliferation of retail banks (8). From 16 banks in total, only two are local banks that is to say wholly owned Zambian Banks, competing for market share that has shrunk due to the recession currently underway. Financial services in general, particularly banks; compete in marketplace with generally undifferentiated services and products, thereby service quality becomes a key competitive weapon (Stafford, 1996) [3]. Therefore the survival, profitability and growth of a local bank depend on the ability of the latter to offer excellent service quality that will please its customers and keep them retained.

Globally the focus on customer loyalty and retention is becoming a dominant factor in retail banking these days because competition continues to stiffen in this industry, it becomes even more compelling to understand these drivers of customer loyalty in the retail banking sector in Zambia given the present dominance of foreign banks. Locally, research on the subject is quite scanty. Sichinsambwe *et al.*, (2017) [30] conducted study which compared service quality in the banking sector in Kitwe only and concluded that service quality was better in foreign banks than local, while Machayi and Ahmed (2016) [21] studied Customers' Perceptions of Service Quality in Finance Bank and found no association between gender and service quality perceptions. Thus a knowledge gap still exists because none of the studies focused on effect of customer service strategies on customer retention for a wholly owned domestic bank in Zambia. This research, therefore aimed to study Investrust Bank PLC, an indigenous bank that has been in existence since 1995. The recommendations will most likely help the bank to improve areas of the service strategies based on customer feedback and

help the bank in its customer retention, profitability and growth.

1.3 Research Objectives

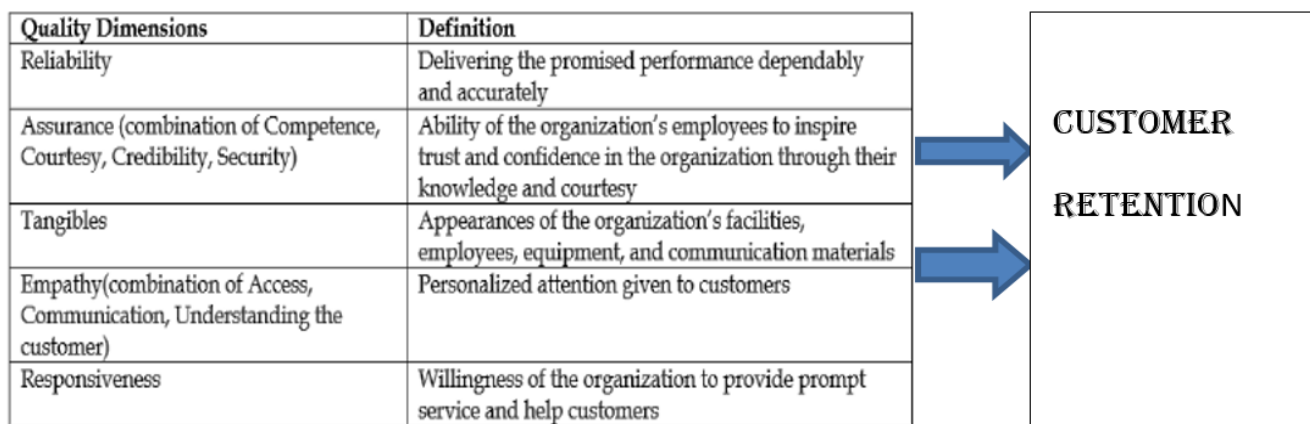
1. To identify the customer service strategies adopted by Investrust Bank PLC. To enhance Customer retention
2. To establish customer perception about the quality of customer service strategies used by Investrust Bank PLC.
3. To assess the association between customer service quality strategies and customer retention at Investrust Bank PLC.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the customer service strategies adopted by the Investrust Bank PLC.?
2. How do the customers perceive the quality of the customer service strategies that are adopted and used by the Investrust Bank PLC.?
3. Do these customer service quality strategies have an association on customer retention at the Investrust Bank PLC.?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

This study looks at the relationship between customer service strategies and customer retention for a local bank. Thus the service quality that the local bank adopts to remain in the industry is the very basis for selecting the theoretical foundations for the study. While the SERVQUAL has been slated as the best model to measure service quality in the banking industry (Angur, Nataraajan & Jahera, 1999) [2], and hence is the selected framework for discernment of service quality constructs that enhance loyalty, satisfaction and consequently retention. SERVQUAL is a proper assessment tool to measure service quality in the retail banking industry. The figure below provides the conceptual framework for the study.



Source: Lovelock and Wirtz (2007, p.420)

Fig 1: Conceptual Model

2. Literature Review

Relevant scholarly works on service quality and customer satisfaction have been reviewed in this study

2.1 Customer Satisfaction

It is stated that quality of service is paramount to re-purchase

decisions of customers as Gan *et al.* (2006) [11] further argue that most banks in the financial service sector choose not to engage in price but rather make use of service as an effective competitive tool. Seconded by, Varki and Colgate (2001) [34] argued that nothing can replace quality service. Quality service as perceived by the customer has an effect on the

perceived value of the service rendered (Gan, et al, 2006) ^[11]. A satisfied customer, who is content and happy with the service of a particular organization, has the inclination to stay on and may pull other potential customers. Today 'Word of Mouth' publicity is the best form of advertisement as it provides potential customers with genuine review of a product or service unlike the glossy campaigns that businesses pay marketing companies to do (Spreng, Mackenzie & Olskavsky, 1996) ^[32].

It is understood that that service organization employees form particularly close relationship with customers because employees and customers often work together in the creation of many services. This is so true of the banking sector because every service is borne from the interaction between the two parties. This is so where services are produced by employees and consumed by customers simultaneously (Lovelock, 1980) ^[19]. In addition, because of the intangibility of services, customers often rely on employee's behaviours in forming opinion about the service offering (Gronroos, 1984) ^[13]. Hence employees are an important part of the service in the customers' eyes and must be treated as internal customers of the banks where strategic decisions of training and motivation investments are necessary to yield the results of quality customer services. Several studies found that satisfaction affects customer loyalty, retention and organizational profitability (Angelova, 2011) ^[1].

2.2 SERVQUAL Model to Measure Service Quality and Customer Retention

The SERVQUAL model is seen as the most important and reliable measure of testing customer perceptions of service quality in industry where intangibles are more prominent than tangibility of a service. In developing SERVQUAL, Parasuraman *et al.*, (1985) ^[26] followed a general procedure of qualitative research (interviews and focus groups) to develop the initial scale and then performed quantitative surveys to refine and empirically test the scale. These interviews and surveys included retail consumers of appliance repair or maintenance, retail banking, long-distance telephone service, securities brokers, and credit card services. Additional research has expanded the use of SERVQUAL to include retail consumers of health care, residential utilities, job placement, pest control, dry cleaning, financial services, and fast-food services, and the resultant dimensions have ranged from one to eight (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985; Babakus & Bolter, 1992; Cronin & Taylor, 1992) ^[26, 3, 7].

In an industry where product differentiation is very minimal, there are no switching barriers thus banks must understand the importance of service quality and its impact on customer satisfaction because firms tend to rely on service quality for gaining sustainable competitive advantage. Banks have little margin to play with because of competition and statutory regulations. Therefore, they are highly dependent on service quality for retention of customers, developing brand loyalty and earning higher profits (Khan & Fasih, 2014) ^[16]. Although, satisfaction and services are highly correlated but they are different concepts, the former is a broader concept, whereas the latter mainly focuses on dimensions of service quality. Factors such as product and price influence

satisfaction but their effects are not as strong as service quality (Khan & Fasih, 2014) ^[16]. Thus the main antecedents of retention are found in the service quality dimensions which measure the customer's perception of services provided by the bank against the expected service quality. These five dimensions are explained by Parasuraman & Zeithaml (1985) ^[26].

- Tangibles: these are the physical aspects of service delivery; physical facilities, equipment, appearance of personnel and communication materials.
- Reliability: the service provider's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Responsiveness: provider's willingness to help customers and prompt service.
- Assurance: knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
- Empathy: caring individualized attention the firm provides its customers.

2.3 Customer Retention

Waterfield & Chuck (2006) ^[36] defines customer retention as keeping customers coming back and Nirmala (2009) ^[24] observes that a substantial time exceeding five years is regarded as a successful effort of customer retention. It indicates a stable and positive growth in the monetary financial institutions as well as the national economy of a country. Competitive advantage is gained over competitors through competitive strategies by offering customers greater value either through lower pricing or providing additional benefits and services that justify similar or possibly high prices (Cole, 2008) ^[6].

In today's competitive environment banks need to keep up with current and potential customers if they are to survive, grow and continue to prosper (Reichheld, 1996) ^[27]. Retaining an existing bank customer costs less than creating a new one. The cost of creating a new customer has been estimated to be 5 times more than that of retaining an existing one (Farquhar, 2004) ^[9]. Banks are seeking to achieve a zero defection rate of profitable customers to minimize the customer defection and subsequent loss of customers (Reichheld, 1990) ^[28]. In addition long term customers buy more and if satisfied may generate positive word of mouth promotion for the bank (Healy, 1999) ^[14] long term customers also take less of bank's time and are less sensitive to price (Kothari, 2004) ^[17] as a result retaining customers becomes a priority and banks must more carefully consider the factors that might increase customer retention rate

3. Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population included employees and retail customers in the Industrial Branch of Investrust Bank PLC in Lusaka. The study applied Yamane & Taro (1967) ^[38] formula to calculate a representative sample size for any given population. The formula used to calculate the sample size for this study is $n = N / (1 + (N * (0.01)))$. Thus considering total population of 14000 customers and 7 staff members, the total sample size was 106. The study used a simple random sampling to select the sample size from the population. Primary data was

collected using two sets of questionnaires exclusively designed for customers and staff respectively, each containing both open and closed ended questions and interview with the

Business Manager of the bank. Data were analysed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS to obtain frequencies, percentages, and correlation statistics summaries.

4. Presentation of Research Findings

4.1 Customer Service and Retention Strategies Employed by Investrust Bank

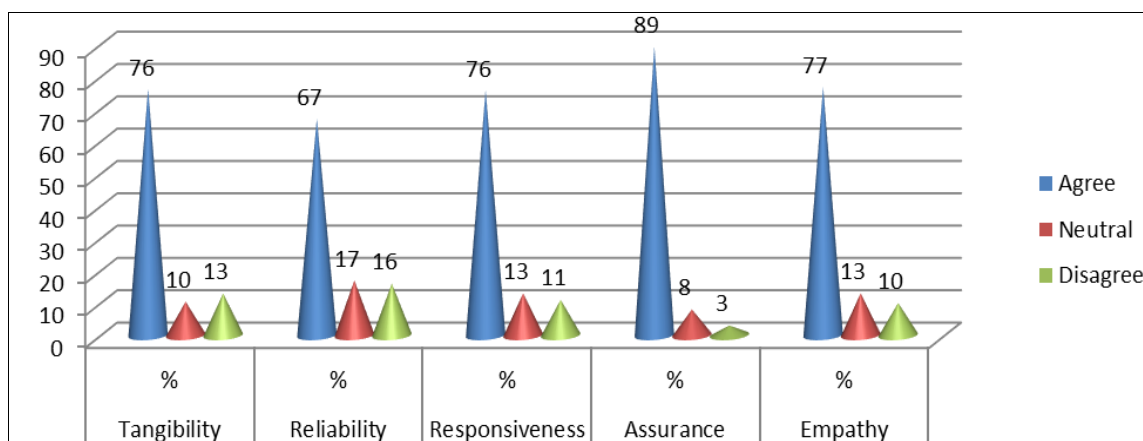
Table 1: List of Customer Service Strategies Adopted By the Bank

1	Improving customer experience by knowing what the customers want.
2	Introducing new products and services
3	Ensuring prompt service delivery
4	Efficient channels of addressing customer complaints,
5	Offering reliable online services to avoid queues at the banking hall as customers have ease of banking by using their digital devices.
6	Establishment of call centers that follow up on dormant accounts in a bid to revive them.
9	Personal visitation to account holders of inactive accounts to encourage revival.
8	Customer acknowledgement and treating all customers with quality.

The above table lists the strategies that have been established in the study as being adapted and currently implemented by Investrust Bank PLC. Beryl and Brodeur (2007) [4] point out that the interrelationships between service quality, customer

Satisfaction and customer loyalty provide creative ideas for improving services in order to gain a competitive advantage in the retail banking sector. Thus the strategies that are selected by the bank should provide services that are customer centric.

4.2 Consolidated Ratings of the Customer Perceptions of the 5 Dimensions Of Service Quality at Investrust Bank PLC.



Source: Field Research Data, 2018

Fig 2: Chart of Consolidated Ratings of the 5 Dimensions of Service Quality

Customers aggregate ratings on the 5 Dimensions of Servqual shows 67% to 77% are in agreement that the bank’s service quality is good and thus positively perceived by the customers while 3 % to 17% are dissatisfied and 3% to 17% remained

neutral. From the above figure it can be seen that all the service dimensions are perceived positively by the customers of the bank. The highest scoring dimension is Assurance at 89% while the Reliability has scored lowest at 67%.

Table 2: Showing The Average Percentage Results across the Five Dimensions Consolidated in terms of agreement, disagreement and neutral.

	Tangibility	Reliability	Responsiveness	Assurance	Empathy	Average
Agreement	76%	67%	76%	89%	77%	77%
Neutral	10%	17%	13%	8%	13%	12%
Disagreement	13%	16%	11%	3%	10%	11%

Source: Field Research data 2018

77% were in agreement of the banks service quality whilst 12% remained neutral. 11% were in disagreement because they were generally dissatisfied of its service quality.

4.3 Association between customer service quality strategies and customer retention at investrust bank PLC.

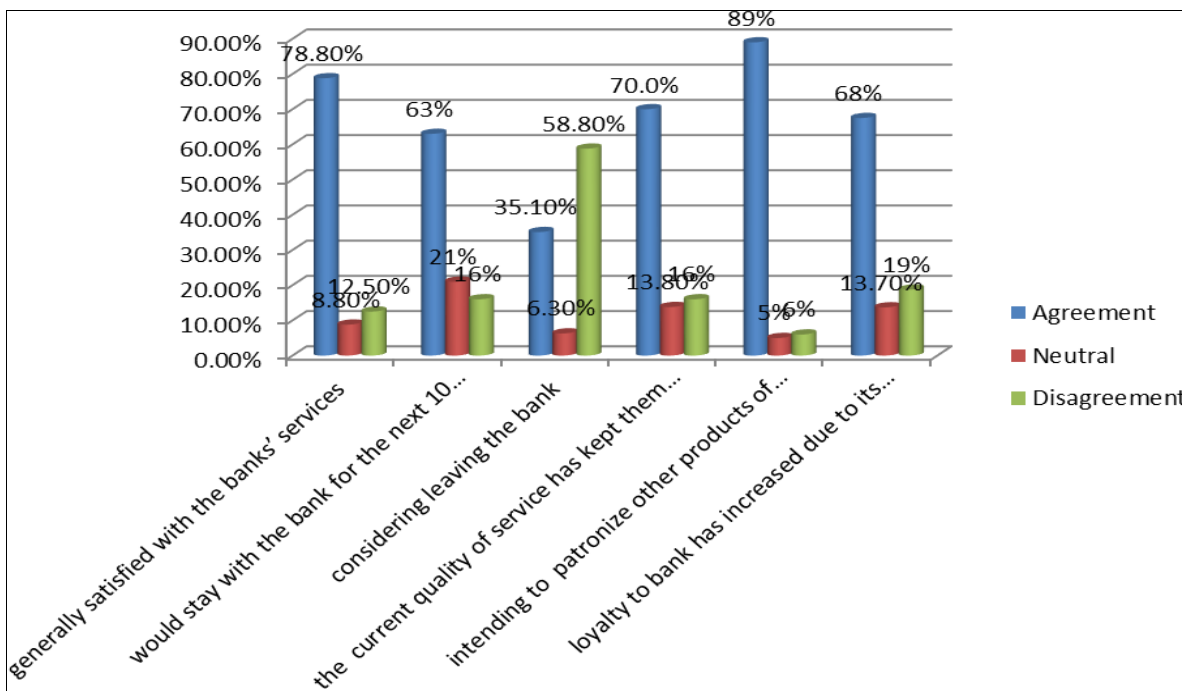
This objective was achieved by using a five point likert scale

on the statements as tabled below to which customers had to rate their level of agreement or disagreement.

Table 3: Customer Perceptions On Retention Related To Bank’s Services

	STATEMENT	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
(i)	generally satisfied with the banks’ services	63.80%	15.00%	8.80%	12.50%	0%
(ii)	would stay with the bank for the next 10 years	52%	11%	21%	15%	1%
(iii)	considering leaving the bank	16.30%	18.80%	6.30%	36.30%	22.50%
(iv)	the current quality of service has kept them with the bank	52.50%	17.50%	13.80%	15%	1%
(v)	intending to patronize other products of the bank	79%	10%	5%	4%	2%
(vi)	loyalty to bank has increased due to its service delivery.	55%	12.50%	13.70%	15%	3.75%

Source: Field research data 2018



Source: Field Research Data 2018

Fig 3: A consolidated chart of the above table shows the following results in terms of agreement, disagreement and neutral.

About 79% state they are satisfied with the bank’s services, while 12.5% have disagreed. 63% have agreed that they would stay with the bank for the next decade while 16% have disagreed leaving 21% who chose to remain neutral. 35% have considered leaving the bank, while the majority being 59% has disagreed; only 6% have remained neutral. This is an important result because it shows that there is need for improvement in the bank’s retention strategies. On whether the current quality of service has kept customers retained, 70% have agreed, 16% have disagreed and 14% have remained neutral, 89% stated their agreement in wanting to try other products, while only 6% disagreed and 5% remained neutral thus showing that the majority of customers of the bank are keen to use other banking facilities at their bank. The statement on whether loyalty to the bank has increased due to service delivery, 68% have agreed, while 19% disagreed and 14% remained neutral. This is a satisfactory result considering

a majority perceives the service quality as a positive link to their loyalty and retention.

4.4 Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Retention Correlation Test for Association

Table 4: association of Service Quality Dimensions and Customer Retention

Dimension	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Degree of Association
Tangibility	0.64	Moderate uphill positive
Reliability	0.61	Moderate uphill positive
Empathy	0.68	Strong uphill positive
Responsiveness	0.58	Moderate uphill positive
Assurance	0.52	Moderate uphill positive

Source: Field Research Data 2018

The above table shows the correlation of service quality dimensions with the bank’s customer retention results. All the 5 dimensions of service quality have recorded a positive correlation to customer retention and in the range between 0.52 to 0.68. However, tangibility, reliability and empathy have recorded stronger association to customer retention than responsiveness and assurance in this study.

4.5.1 Areas of Dissatisfaction as Perceived By Customers

Table 5: Feedback Obtained Through Open Ended Survey From Customers On Areas Of Dissatisfaction.

Respondents	Feedback about services	Service dimension
17	ATMS frequently down;	Tangibility
18	Systems are outdated, internet banking poor.	Tangibility
4	Issuance of bank instruments is very slow.	Tangibility
4	Loan services are inaccessible to many	Reliability
16	Long queues in the banking hall during peak times	Responsiveness
2	Service delivery is slow and inefficient in terms of communications of new products and services	Reliability
19	Did not provide additional comments	
80	Total Respondents	

Source: Field Research Data, 2018

This shows that tangibility records the highest number of complaints with a total of 48% of the respondents, followed

4.5 Employee Perceptions on Customer Retention for the Last 3 Years

The following responses were recorded: 4 or 80% stated that retention had improved; 20% or 1 stated it was decreasing. Thus showing that majority felt the retention trend had improved in the last 3 years.

by responsiveness which scored 20% and reliability scored 7.5%.

4.6 Employee Suggestions on Customer Retention Strategies

Table 6: Strategies Adopted to Enhance Customer Retention

Respondents	Feedback
1	Set up high quality internet systems and provide quick response to customer’s needs.
2	Motivate staff and train staff.
3	Improving customer experience by getting feedback from customers.
4	Improve feedback, flexibility.
5	ATM machines should be working throughout the day and systems should not be down during banking hours.

Source: Field Research Data, 2018

From the above table, improvements to systems, network, ATMs are prominent areas of remedial action while staff motivation and service delivery have also been mentioned as areas that can enhance customer satisfaction and retention.

5. Discussion of Findings

The first objective was to identify the customer service strategies adopted by Investrust Bank PLC. To enhance Customer retention. The data findings show that strategies are formulated by top management and are customer-centric. the bank strives to make its products and services contemporary by innovation of newer products, timely and efficient service delivery, effective management of complaints supported by Lovelock & Wirtz (2007) [18] who regard it as investments which help to retain customers and protect long-term stream of profit), price competitiveness and a technologically supported banking system to enhance speed, accuracy and convenience banking. Above all improving customer experience by understanding their requirements is consistent with the findings of Machayi and Ahmed (2016) [21] who state that to manage service quality successfully, there is need to know the level of service customers expect. In conclusion, it is

seen that Investrust Bank has embedded into its operational strategies the deliberate policies to entice and retain their customers, which is consistent with the findings of a study by Elizabeth Ogongo (2014) [8] which concluded that the provision of high quality of services and products to customers does assist the bank in customer retention.

The second objective was to establish customer perception about the quality of customer service strategies used by Investrust Bank PLC. using the 22 statements within the 5 dimensions of the servqual model. The findings reveal that 76% of customers were satisfied with the bank’s tangible services. This is an important dimension for the bank to remain competitive because the physical aspects of the bank like the branch location, decoration, banking floor facilities as well as the neat appearance of the staff have been perceived well by the customers and a catalyst for retention. The Reliability dimension has been given a positive affirmation by 67% of the respondents. This shows that there is a considerable gap between expectations and perceptions of the customers and hence the lower percentage of respondents that were in agreement. This is consistent with the findings that

Reliability is considered the essential core of service quality. Berry *et al.*, advises that the other dimensions will matter to customers only if a service is reliable, because those dimensions cannot compensate for unreliable service delivery (Oyeniyi & Abiodun, 2008) ^[25]. According to Jamal and Nasser (2002) ^[15], reliability, tangibility and empathy were positively related with customer satisfaction and consequently retention.

Assurance and Empathy are both mostly staff driven services whereby customers have to be interacted and served by the bank staff. 89% of the respondents felt that bank staff are very courteous, knowledgeable and provide a safe environment for the customers. While 77% of respondents agreed that the bank staff was empathetic towards its patrons in terms of individual attention to customers; provision of prompt information to customers; customer care services, cash disbursement service of the bank thereby applauding the bank's employees for their customer services. According to Wilson *et al.*, positive perception of empathy shows that customers feel valued and that their needs are cared by the organization, so they would like to stay along with this firm (Fogli, 2006) ^[10]. Finally, 76% of customers have rated bank's responsiveness dimension as positive in terms of their promptness of service, response to requests and information about delivery time. This shows that a majority of the customers feel that the staff attends to them efficiently and that is why they are loyal to the bank. This is consistent with the findings of another study in Hong Kong which established that Responsiveness is also a key success factor in the Hong Kong banking sector (Jamal & Naser, 2002) ^[15]. In summary it can be said that the customers' perceptions about the services at Investrust Bank are generally positive.

Being a mixed study, customers were further asked to state their opinions on the present quality of services at Investrust Bank that dissatisfied them. Most respondents complained about systems, network and ATM failures as there were also complaints about the delays of three to four months in delays to issue bank instruments like cheque books and debit cards. These are consistent with the tangibility perception in the findings. There were also some who mentioned that loans were very hard to access at the bank despite being a long-time customer with the bank. While others complained that service delivery is slow, there were long queues at the banking hall during peak times like month-end. These reflect that the bank is not efficiently providing the services that it is in business for.

The last objective was to assess the association between service quality strategies and customer retention which was achieved in two ways. Firstly through customer responses on the survey on customer satisfaction and retention, it was found that 75% of the respondents affirmed their satisfaction with the bank's services. About 67% stated that they would continue to bank with Investrust Bank for the next 10 years. While 23% rejected this idea. However there was an overwhelming agreement to the notion that the current quality of services has kept these customers with the bank. 90% stated that they are willing to try new products and services introduced by their bank. Oyeniyi and Abiodun (38). In

assessing the effect of service quality on customer retention in the banking industry in Ghana, found that Service quality had a strong relationship with customer retention in the banking industry. Further, the information solicited from bank staff have provided that although there has been customer migration in the last one year but the customer retention rates have in fact improved in the last three years which is consistent with the bank's innovative services like ATMs, Mobile and internet banking thereby making them competitive within the banking sector. There is also competitiveness in terms of reasonable prices and tailor made products in accordance with market segmentation that makes their services affordable and accessible by all the sectors as information provided by the interviewee.

The study used statistical method of correlation to determine the degree of association between the service quality dimensions and the customer retention at Investrust Bank PLC. The results showed that there is a moderate positive correlation coefficient ranging between 0.52 to 0.68 wherein tangibility, reliability and empathy have recorded a stronger association than responsiveness and assurance. Siddiqui & Sharma (2010) ^[31] examined the applicability of service quality of retail banking industry in Bangladesh and found that service quality is positively correlated with customer satisfaction; empathy had the highest positive correlation with customer satisfaction, followed by assurance and tangibility. This is consistent with the study because Empathy has the highest correlation rate of 0.68 to customer retention. Since empathy has more to do with the staff's interaction with the customers thus staff attitudes directly influence customer experience, and happy employees can help to improve customer satisfaction (Nirmala, 2009) ^[24].

In conclusion, the correlation between service quality and customer retention is that the quality of service is a good predictor of customer retention. Therefore Investrust Bank PLC. must go flat out into improving the areas where there are flaws to obtain optimum results by churning out customer-centric strategies. Fogli (2006) ^[39] states that companies have adopted customer focus as a strategy to link themselves more closely with their changing environment in recent years. Banks must identify potential customers, determine their needs, and then develop and deliver products and services to meet their needs effectively.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it has been established that that effective customer retention strategies can create impact on customer retention. From the data collected the customers of Investrust Bank PLC. the result and the analyses shows the bank has created a safe and secure banking perception from the customers and also satisfies its customer by the service quality it provides. The study therefore finds a positive association of service quality strategies over the customer retention through the analysis. Majority of customers at Investrust Bank PLC. find it hard to switch from their bank because of the comfort that they experience at this bank given the physical location, relationship with the staff and the customer service strategies. Therefore Investrust Bank PLC.

needs to periodically conduct customer satisfaction surveys and improve on all the dimensions especially and very urgently the tangibility and reliability dimensions in order to remain competitive and enhance customer retention. Following below are the recommendations: 1. Investrust Bank PLC. should urgently address the Tangibility dimension of service quality in terms of internet banking, faulty ATM systems, and delays in issuance of banking instruments like cards, cheque books etc. 2. Investrust Bank PLC. should urgently review its loan processing time and criteria, financial inclusion is a catalyst to national growth and also the profitability of the banks since that is their core business activity. 3. Investrust Bank PLC. should further improve its overall service operations to match up with customer expectation by getting feedback from their customers and implement these in service quality. 4. Investrust Bank PLC. Should also periodically train and reward staff especially Front liners at the bank, regular guidance like workshops, training and appreciation of commitment leads to motivation and retention of employees which can improve their competency on customer service and effective handling of complaints.

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