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**WOLKITE UNIVERSITY**  
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**DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENET**

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**ASSESSMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY DETERMINANTS (IN CASE OF  
WOLKITE TOWN PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER)**



**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO DEPARTEMENT OF  
MARKETING MANAGEMENT IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE  
REQUIREMENTS OF BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE IN MARKETING  
MANAGEMENT**

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## APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that the research thesis prepared by Ermias Kifetew entitled “**Assessment of service quality determinants in case of Wolkite town public health center**” compiles with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Approved by the Board of Examiners

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Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## ***ABSTRACT***

*The research conducted was assessment on service quality determinants in Wolkite town public health center. The researcher used descriptive type of research design. This research focused on identifying and clarifying service quality determinants of the health center. The researcher used primary and secondary source of data by questioners. The study adapted convenience sampling to collect available respondents. The researcher used descriptive analysis method with the help of table and percentage to analyze the data collected and to provide possible conclusion and recommendations. Both quantitative and qualitative method of data obtained through questionnaire was analyzed.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

The health sector occupies an enormously important position in ensuring sustainable overall socio-economic advancement in developing countries (Lorin et al., 2013; Cengiz & Yildirim, 2014; and Azmi et al., 2014). Thus, for the triumph of health sectors, the role of service quality is widely recognized as being a critical determinant for the success and survival of any organization in today's competitive environment (Lorin et al., 2013); along with, most of triumphant organizations adopt a customer centered approach as their strategic pillar of planning. However, the concept of quality originated in manufacturing industries to improve productivity (Powell, 1995), it is evenly important for service providing institutions. Hence, it is now well recognized that the provision of quality services is closely associated with customer satisfaction, consumer maintenance, consumer allegiance, budgets and productivity, facility assurance, and economic presentation (Hafiz, 2008).

Measuring patient satisfaction has become an integral part of health institutions management strategies across the globe (Fekadu et al., 2011); which is the gap between the expected service and the experience of the service from the patients' point of view or as to the design and management of health care system (Andaleeb, 2001).

Service quality is attitude by long-term evaluation, over all evaluation of firm's performance. (Hoffman, Douglas, E.G Bateson). In today world where there is high competition across firms, especially in service rendering firm, service quality used as a key benefit to achieve organizational objective. As competition increase among service delivering firms, the level of expectation that customer hold to own becomes maximum, this means desired service because of wide availability of similar service rendering firms. In order to satisfy customer needs better than competitors', quality service delivery can be essential tool.

Parasuraman et al. (1985) provided a list of ten determinants of service quality because of their focus group studies with service providers and customers: access, communication, competence, courtesy, credibility, reliability, responsiveness, security, understanding and tangibles.

This study assessed the service quality dimension in case of Wolkite town public health center by using SERVQUAL measurement to evaluate all the dimension of service quality. According to Zeithaml, there are five major determinants, which determine service quality; which are assurance, empathy, responsiveness, tangibility and courtesy.

The reason behind for the study of this research is that to verify past researchers findings about how the service quality delivered, in case of Wolkite town public health center. By looking at the overall perspectives, this study was conducted to measure the quality of health service in Wolkite public health center and provide recommendations where improvements can be made. Accordingly, this study focuses on public health center in particular aiming not to find relationships or causal factors among variables, but to interpret and describe the practice.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Improving service quality is the process of delivering quality service or customers in a way that can satisfies customers need. Even if the intangibility characteristics of service makes difficult to manage service quality, it requires a continuous follow up to the internal and external environment to satisfy customers by delivering quality service. However determining the optimal level of service quality is difficult, it plays a great in achieving organizations objective due to service quality matches with the level of quality the customer expect (Andaleeb, 2001)

Some of the research findings indicated that there is health service quality gap, which leads to customers' dissatisfactions in developing countries; for instance, WHO (2015) stated that there is health service quality gap in the developing country due to lack of knowledge; ideas methods and low level of training this would results the dissatisfaction of patients. According to Mohammed Nor et al. (2010), public sector organizations agree that customer service is one of the most important vital factors that contribute to the establishment of reputation and credibility among the public. They argue that the public complaint of long queues, poor service delivery and insufficient physical facilities may affect the image and level of service quality in the public sector.

The service quality in public health institutions has a tremendous influence on public perceptions of the quality of the public service. Likewise, in Ethiopia several studies have been conducted those mainly focus on the health services delivery in public hospitals. According to the researchers' knowledge, the literature on clients' perception about the quality of health services was still limited

— especially, in the public health centers. Therefore, this research tried to fill this gap by assessing of public health center service quality in Wolkite town from the point of view of clients.

### **1.3 Research questions**

1. What is the level of quality of service provided by Wolkite town public health center?
2. What is the level of satisfaction customers derive from the services in Wolkite town public health center?
3. What are the expectations and perceptions of customers on service delivered by the case organization?
4. What are the factors that affect quality of service delivery in Wolkite town health center?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.4.1 The General Objective**

The main objective of this study was to assess the service quality determinants in Wolkite town public health center.

#### **1.4.2 The Specific Objective**

- ✓ Identify service quality level of the case organization using SERVQUAL.
- ✓ Explain customer satisfaction level of the services provided by Wolkite town public health center.
- ✓ Ascertain customer expectations of services to ensure customer satisfaction.
- ✓ To identify the factors affecting service quality in Wolkite town public health center.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study was used as fulfillment for the Bachelor of Arts degree in marketing management and researcher got skill and experience when conducting this study. For organization; to make necessary improvement based on the recommendation of study. It would also have significance in indicating level of service quality and customer satisfaction in public health centers. In addition to this, it also provides constructive feedback for the health professionals and health centers managers about the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing service quality in public health center in

Wolkite town. For other researcher; it would be used as reference or literature review for other researchers who want to study in the area.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study assessed only the service quality dimensions in Wolkite town public health center. Therefore, geographically this study was limited only to assess the quality of service delivery in Wolkite town public health center. Methodologically the study used descriptive type of research design and both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

### **1.7 Limitation of the study**

This paper was on hold due to the corona virus pandemic. Many information that were necessary for the research were not available. In addition, the researcher tried to fill the gap by the available information. There was also unwillingness of respondents to fill questionnaire with some of them giving biased responses. The researcher also had some financial problem in conducting this study.

### **1.8 Organization of the Paper**

The study consisted of five chapters; the first chapter introduction that contained back ground of the study statement of the problem, research objective, scope of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study & organization of the paper. The second chapter included related review literature. The third chapter included research methodology, which deals with research design, sources of data, and methods of data collection, target population and sampling techniques. The fourth chapter deals with data analysis and interpretation whereas summary of finding conclusion and recommendation was included in chapter five.

# CHAPTER TWO

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1 Meaning of service

There are many definitions of what constitute service. Modern definition of service focus on the fact that services by itself produce no tangible output, although it may facilitate the production of tangible good. Adrian (2008).Adrian defined service as production of an essentially intangible benefit either in its own right or as a significant element of tangible product, which through some form of exchange, satisfied an identified need.

#### 2.1.1 Characteristic of service

According to Clow, Kenneth E. (2003), because inherent characteristics of service, the approach to the marketing of service is different from that of marketing good. Adrian, Palmer (2008) also stated that service have a number of distinctive characteristics that differentiate them with from good and have an implication for the manner in which they are marketed.

Service possesses four characteristics not found in good: intangibility, perish ability, inseparability, and variability. To attract new customer and to keep the current customer coming back, service firm must find ways to meet these challenge. Clow, Kenneth E. (2003).

#### ✓ Intangibility

Clow, Kenneth E.(2003) define tangibility as the lack of tangible asset that can be seen, touched, smelled, heard or tested prior to purchase. Service vary in the degree to which they are intangible, however, for most service there are tangible item that are used to perform the service. According to Adrian (2008) the inability to own service have implication for the design of distribution channel, so a whole seller, retailer can't take title.

Some service offer tangible product with that service but the service is intangible the consumer are purchasing the service not the good.

Strategies to reduce intangibility

To reduce intangibility, service has several options. Such as:

- Stressing tangible cue when marketing the service
- Using personal source of information
- Stimulating word of mouth communication- since word of mouth communication have strong impact on purchase intension, using personal source such as current traveler in the company promotion will help to reduce intangibility. Clow, Kenneth E.

✓ **Perish ability**

According to Clow, Kenneth E. (2003) it is the inability of the service to be inventoried. If goods are not sold today they can be store and be sold latter time. This feature allows to mass produce goods and store them in warehouse until customer are ready to purchase however for service it is impossible.

Perish ability can cause reverse to occur. Demand can be greater than supply and the available resource, which is not consumed by current consumer, will cause to loser revenue.

To reduce the negative impact of perish ability; service must develop strategies to cope with fluctuating demand. This goal can be accomplished by simultaneously adjustment in demand, capacity and supply. The goal of this strategy is to achieve parity and balance among them. Clow, Kenneth E. (2003).

✓ **Inseparability**

Clow, Kenneth E. (2003) stated that it is a simultaneous production and consumption of service. Goods can be produced and can then sold at latter time, service cannot. Because the service must be performed or consumed at the same time the quality of the service is highly dependent on the ability of the service provider and the quality of interaction between service provider and customers. Inseparability characteristic of service reflect interconnection among the service providers and other customers sharing services. Bateson John E.G, K. Douglas Hoffman (2002).

Strategies to reduce the negative impact of inseparability: it is important to the service firm to hire competent employees and then train them to perform the service. The service firm needed to

process for managing customers, so customers will have positive feeling about the interaction between the employees and them self. Clow, Kenneth E. (2003)

### ✓ **Variability**

It is unwanted or random level of service quality customer receives when they patronize a service firm. Variability is primarily caused by the human element, machine malfunctions causing variation in the service. Clow, Kenneth E. (2003)

Variability is caused by variance in the output. Because of the variability, characteristics of the service, standardization, or the service that follow standard set and procedure for all customer and quality control are more difficult. To the varying level of service provided to customer industrialization; the use of machine and standardized procedure to increase the productivity and efficiency of business useful. Clow, Kenneth E. (2003).

### **2.1.2 Customer service expectation**

Customer expectation is pretrial belief a customer have about the performance of service that are used as standard or reference point against which the service performance is judged. Clow, Kenneth E. (2003). Because customer compare their perception performance with their reference point when evaluating service quality, through knowledge about customer expectation is critical to service marketers. Zeithaml et al (2006).

#### **Level of service expectation**

There are two types of service expectation. These are: desired service; the level of service the customer hops to receive- the “wished-for” level of performance. Desired service is a blend of what customers believe “can be” and “should be”. The other is adequate service; the level of service the customer will accept. Adequate service represents ‘the minimum tolerable expectation’, the bottom level of performance acceptable to the customer. The standard of adequate service is much lower than desired service. Zeithaml et al (2006).

### **2.1.3 The zone of tolerance**

According to Zeithaml et al (2006), zone of tolerance is the extent to which customers recognize and are willing to accept the variation of service due to heterogeneity characteristics of service. If service drop below adequate service- the minimum level considered acceptable- customer will be frustrated and their satisfaction with the company will be undermined. On the other hand the service performance is higher than the zone of tolerance at the top end- where performance exceed desired service- customer will be very pleased and probably quite surprised as well.

A range of level bounded by desired and adequate service, rather than a single level characterizes customer service expectations. This tolerance zone representing the difference between the desired service and the level of service considered adequate.

#### **Source of desired service expectation**

As Zeithaml, et al (2006) stated, the two largest influences on desired service level are personal need and philosophies about the service. Zeithaml defines personal need as stable or condition essential to the physical or psychological well-being of the customers, are pivotal factor that shape what customer desire in service.

Lasting intensifier are individuals, stable factor that lead the customer to heightened sensitivity to service. One of the most important of this factor can be called derived service expectation, which occur when customer expectation are derived by another person or group of people. Zeithaml et al (2006).

Another lasting intensifier is personal service philosophy- customers' underlying generic attitude about the meaning of service and the proper conduct of service provider. To the extent that customer have personal philosophy about service provision, their expectation of service provider will be intensified. Personal service philosophy and derived service expectation elevate the level of desired service. Zeithaml et al (2006).

#### **Source of adequate service expectation**

Different set of determinants affect adequate service, the level of service the customer find acceptable. In general, these influences are short term and tend to fluctuate more than the factor that influence desired service. These influences of adequate services are:

- ✓ **Temporary service intensifier**- it consists of the short-term individual factor that makes customer more aware of customer for the service. Personal emergencies is in which service is urgently needed raises the level of adequate service expectation. Zeithaml et al (2006).
- ✓ **Perceived service alternative**-as Zeithaml, et al (2006) said are other providers from whom the customer can obtain service. If customer have multiple service provider to choose from, or if they can provide the service for them self, their level of adequate service are higher than those of customer who believe it is not possible to get better service elsewhere. So, it is impossible that service marketer fully understand the complete set of option that customers view as perceived alternative,
- ✓ **Customer self -perceived service role**- it is a customer's perception of the degree to which customer exert an influence on the level of service they receive and customers expectation are shaped by how well they believe they are performing their own role in the service delivery. One role of customer is to specify the level of service expected, customers active participation in the service also affect this factor. Final way the customer defines his/her role in assuming the responsibility for complaining when service is poor. . Zeithaml et al (2006).
- ✓ **Situational factor**- according to Zeithaml, et al (2006). Service performance conditions that customer view as beyond the control of the service provider. Customer who recognize that situational are not the fault of the service company may accept lower level of adequate service given the context. In general, situational factor item lower the level of adequate service, widening zone of tolerance.
- ✓ **Predicted service**- it is the level of service that customer believe they are likely to get. This type of service expectation can be viewed as prediction made by customer about what is likely to happen during an impending transaction or exchange. If customer predict good service, the level of adequate service is likely to be higher than they are predicting poor service. Zeithaml et al (2006).

### **2.1.4 Customer perception of service quality**

Customer perception is all about how customer perceives and how they assess whether they have experienced quality service, and whether they are satisfied due to the service meets with their reference point. Zeithaml et al (2003)

- **Satisfaction vs. Service quality**

Zeithaml, et al (2006) stated that many practitioner and writer in the popular press tend to use the term satisfaction and quality interchangeably, but researcher are attempted to be more precise about the meaning and measurement of the two concepts, resulting in considerable debate. Consensus is that the two concepts are fundamentally different in terms of their underlying cause and outcome. Although they have certain thing in common, satisfaction is generally viewed as broader concept, whereas service quality focuses specifically on dimension of service.

Service quality focus on evaluation that reflect the customer perception of reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangible, whereas satisfaction is more inclusive: it influenced by perception of service quality, product quality, and price and as well as situational factor and situational factors.

## **2.2 Service Quality**

Quality is an extremely difficult concept to define in a few word.). According to mudie, Adrian (2008) service quality is the extent to which a service is what it claims to be and does what it claim to do. According to Hoffman, k Douglas, John E.G. Bateson, service qualities are an attitude by long term over all evaluation of firm's performance. Bateson John E.G, K. Douglas Hoffman (2002). Quality and productivity is twin path to create value for both customer and company. The writer also stated that quality focus on the benefit created for the customers side of the equation, and productivity is the financial cost incurred by the firm, which may subsequently be passed on to customers, primarily in the form of price. Levoleck, Christoper (2005).

### **2.2.1 Determinants of Service Quality**

Although there is no general agreement in defining the concept of "service quality", the general conclusion that can be drawn from the specialist literature is based on the following remarks:

(1) Certain authors suggest that: service quality is associated with providing a certain material or immaterial “something” in a way to create pleasure to the consumer and that leads either to the fulfillment of a need and/or to the creation a certain value. (Bryslan, 2001),

(2) Other authors suggest that: the definition and the description of the service quality should be done by means of the notion of attitude – long-term general assessment that drafts the general appreciation of the service. (Sureshchandar et al, 2002)

Service quality, from the clients’ or the customers’ point of view, appears as a multidimensional concept (Parasuraman et. al, 2004 Cronin and; McDougall and Levesque, 2000; Sureshchandar et al 2002; Kang and James, 2004; Hakis ET Al 2000; Bigne et.al, 2003). Even though there is no general agreement, regarding the number and the nature of the dimensions that the service quality concept implies.

If certain service quality models have been conceived around two major elements, the basis for the conceptualization of the service quality:

(1) The content or the resulting (contractual) aspects of the service – “what” is actually delivered by the service (the technical aspect) and

(2) The relational or process aspects (customer – employee relationship) of the service – “how “and “in what way” is the service delivered (the functional aspect)? Most models try to define the dimensions of quality from the perspective of those aspects/factors of assessment that form, from the customers’ point of view, the general and essential appreciation of the service (Parasuraman et.al. 2001 and Sureshchandar et al, 2002).

As far as the public organizations are concerned, referring to the organizations in the sphere of public services, the problem of clearly and comprehensively defining the dimensions of service quality, as well as the causality of the factors, which it depends on, is made difficult. Even more than the issues described above, by the appearance of two major elements that the organizations needs to take into account:

1) The feature of social responsibility both vis-à-vis the customers themselves and the population or the socio-professional strata.

2) The “multi-service” feature, characteristic for a large number of public organizations, the “multi-service” features implying the simultaneous delivery of a large number of diverse main and auxiliary services, with a high level of complexity.

Among all models of conceptualizing the service quality, applied by public bodies, the model based on the instrument of measuring quality “SERVQUAL” developed by Parasuraman A, Zeithaml V. and Berry L.L. (1991, 1994) can be considered the most usual and most frequently used by the researchers, being under certain aspects the fundamental and the starting point for several other studies in the field.

Although in time, SERVQUAL has been the object of controversies and criticism (Asubonteng (2000) Cronin and Taylor, Haksik et al., 2000), this tool measures the perceived quality of the service from the perspective of the five dimensions of service quality: trust, safety, physical aspects, empathy, promptness Adrian (2008). Dimensions of service quality, which are generally accepted in the academic world (however, there are studies that refute the existence of the dimensions as defined by the authors of the SERVQUAL instrument).

Another model referring to the dimensions of service quality, which can be applied to public bodies is the model of “multiple service organizations” suggested by Bigne (Bigne et al., 2003) who introduces two service concepts for the organizations that provide multiple or complex services (as for example, the services offered by town halls, universities and hospitals):

- 1) The main service offered by the organization – the service, which is the main aim.
- 2) Peripheral or related services offered by the organization – the services that are offered related with the main service and that help providing the main service under good conditions.

The above-mentioned model suggests the following fact: the general quality of a multi-service relies on both the perception of the main provided service and on the peripheral or related services, and the quality of peripheral services can be considered a major factor in the general assessment and appreciation of the service.

Another reference model that tries to conceptualize the dimensions of service quality from the customers’ perspective is the model suggested by G.S. Sureshchandar (2002) who considers that

the defining dimensions of the service quality from the customers' perspective are those presented in the following table:

No.	Dimensions (Factors) of the service quality	Dimension (factor) description of the service quality
1	The content of the service or the product of the offered service	– It refers to the content of effective elements provided by the service and is made up of the features of all the things a service offers
2	The human element in providing the service	– It refers to all aspects related to the human factor
3	Systematization of providing the service	– It refers to the aspects made up of procedures, proceedings, standards and systems that systematize the process of service delivery.
4	Tangible aspects of the service	– It refers to the tangible aspects of service delivery aspects that are not related to the human factor and which are made up of; what the surrounding in which the service delivery takes place, looks like, ease and accessibility in the building, accessibility to the utilities in the building, the existence and/or the way in which the materials necessary for the service delivery are presented – proper forms and petitions, information and descriptive material.
5	Social responsibility	It refers to those aspects that contribute to the ethical and moral feature of the organization vis-à-vis its clients as well as towards the members of the community in general. The aspects that contribute to the formation and maintenance of the image and of the opinion about the organization have a significant influence on the assessment of the general service quality.

Table 2.1: Source: G.S. Sureshchandar, C. Rajendran, R.N. Anantharaman, (2002), the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction – a factor specific approach, Journal of Service Marketing, vol.16 nr.4, pp.365

### **2.2.2 Dimension of service quality**

According to zeithaml, there are five dimensions, which help to measure service quality by using of SERVQUAL instruments. These dimensions are:

- ✓ Reliability
- ✓ Responsiveness
- ✓ Assurance
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Tangible

**Reliability-** Delivering on promise. Of the five dimensions, reliability has been consistently shown the most important determinant of perception of service quality. Reliability defines the ability to perform the promised service and accurately. Zeithaml, bitner(2003).

**Responsiveness-** Being willing to help. Responsiveness is the willingness to help customer and to provide prompt service. Zeithaml bitner(2003). According to Zeithaml, bitner(2003), this dimension emphasizes attentiveness and promptness in deals with customers request, question, complaint, and problem. The writer also said that responsiveness is communicated to customer by the length of time they have to wait to assistance, answer to question or attention to problem.

**Assurance-** It is employees' knowledge, courtesy, the ability of the firm, and its ability to inspire thrust and confidence. This dimension is likely to be particularly important for service that the customer perceive as involving high risk or about which they feel uncertain about these ability to evaluate outcome. Zeithaml, bitner(2003).

**Empathy-** Treating customers as individual. Zeithaml defined empathy as the carrying individualized attention the firm provides to its customer. The essence of empathy is conveying, through personalized or customized service, that customers are unique and special. Zeithaml, bitner (2003)

**Tangible-** representing the service physically. Tangible are defined as the appearance of physical facilities, equipments, personnel and communication materials. All of these provide physical representation or image of the service that customer particularly new customer will use to evaluate quality. Although tangible are also used by service company their image, and signal quality to customer, most company combine tangible with another dimension to create service quality strategy for the firm. Zeithaml, bitner (2003)

### **2.2.3 Service quality model**

As the researcher stated earlier, service quality are difficult to define in a single and common definition, there is no consensus so as to what the actual definition is. According to parasurman (2001), service quality in a discrepancy by which customer expectation of service and customers perception of service of the service offering.

Parasurman et al developed (2005) developed conceptual quality of service quality where they identified five gap that could affect the customers evaluation of service quality. These gaps are:

**GAP 1:** Gap between consumer expectation and management perception: This gap arises when the management or service provider does not correctly perceive what the customer wants or needs. For instance – hotel administrators may think guests want better food or in-house restaurant facilities, but guests may be more concerned with the responsiveness of the staff or the cleanliness of their rooms.

**GAP 2:** Gap between management perception and service quality specification: This is when the management or service provider might correctly perceive what the customer wants, but may not set a performance standard. An example here would be that hospital administrators may tell the nurse to respond to a request 'fast', but may not specify 'how fast'.

**GAP 3:** Gap between service quality specification and service delivery: This gap may arise in situations pertaining to the service personnel. It could happen due to poor training, incapability or unwillingness to meet the set service standard. An example would be when a doctor's office has very specific standards of hygiene communicated but the hired staff may have been poorly trained on the need to follow these strict protocols.

**GAP 4:** Gap between service delivery and external communication: Consumer expectations are highly influenced by statements made by company representatives and advertisements. The gap arises when these assumed expectations are not fulfilled at the time of delivery of the service. For example – a hospital printed on its brochure may have clean and furnished rooms but in reality, it may be poorly maintained – in this case, the patient's expectations are not met.

**GAP 5:** Gap between expected service and experienced service: This gap arises when the consumer misinterprets the service quality. The physician may keep visiting the patient to show and ensure care, but the patient may interpret this as an indication that something is wrong.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research design**

To conduct the study the researcher used a descriptive type of research design. Because it was suitable to describe the characteristics of the relevant group, to determine the perception and expectation of service and also which comprises a mixed approach that contains a questionnaire and observation of the real situation.

### **3.2 Source of data**

Different types of data collected for this study with various way of data collection for the achievement of the objective of the study from different source. This study used both primary and secondary data sources. To collect primary data the researcher used a questionnaire. For Secondary sources; Books, journals and related to the subject.

### **3.3 Target population**

The target population of this study were Wolkite town residents especially, patients that get health service from Wolkite town public health centre.

### **3.4 Sample size and sampling technique**

In this study, the researcher would use convenience sampling which is non-probability sampling technique to select Wolkite town patient residents. The total number of the population was unknown. Therefore convenience sampling technique was appropriate for this study. And the researcher took a total respondent of 60 patients of Wolkite town public health center.

### **3.5 Data collection method**

In order to collect valuable data regarding to the topic the researcher used questionnaire, which consist of five SERVQUAL dimension questionnaire. SERVQUAL is a multidimensional research instrument, designed to measure service quality by capturing respondents' expectation perceptions along the five dimensions of service quality. The questionnaire consists of matched pairs of items; organized into five dimensions which are believed to align with the consumer mental map of service quality dimension.

### **3.6. Data analysis and interpretation**

The researcher used descriptive statistics to describe the basic features of the data in a study. It provides simple summaries about the sample and the measures was analysed and discussed by using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages. After the relevant data collected from primary data and secondary data, the researcher would analyse, summarize and interpret the data by using tabulation and percentage.

### **3.7. Ethical consideration**

The study was under taken after ensuring all ethical consideration. The purpose of the study was explained to each study participants and verbal consent would be obtained from all study subjects before distributing the questionnaire. For this purpose the introduction part of the questionnaire stated the purpose and importance of the study, confidentiality. Respondent were informed their full right to fill the questions or to withdraw from the study at any time without any unfavorable consequences, and they would not be harmed as a result of their participation or non-participation. Moreover, no information was modified or changed, therefore information was presented as collected and all the literatures collected for the purpose of this study was appreciated.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This part of research presents, analyze and interpreted data obtained based on questionnaire. The researcher administered 60 questionnaires to the sample customer or health center. From the total number of 60 questionnaire administered, 55 questionnaire valid for inter pretention, the remaining 5 questionnaire were invalid and inaccessible.

#### 4.1 Demographic information of respondents

The following table shows demographic information collected from customers of Wolkite town public health center.

Table 4. 1 **demographic information of respondents**

No	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	25	45.5
	Female	30	54.5
	Total	55	100
2	Age	Frequency	Percentage
	18-22	29	52.7
	23-27	22	40
	28-32	4	7.3
	More than 32	0	0
	Total	55	100%

Source: own survey2012

The table shows that from the total number of sampled respondent 25(45.5%) were male and the remaining 30(54.5%) were female which shows that majority of respondents were females.

From the above table number 2 shows that 29(52.7%) were aged between 18-22 years. 22(40%) were aged between 23-27 years. 4(7.3%) were aged between 28-32 years. And no respondents were available whose age ranged above 32 years old. This shows that the majority of respondents were aged between 18-22 years old.

## 4.2 Service quality dimensions of the health center

The service quality was conducted on the customers' expectation of service quality and customer perception of service quality. The result was compared and interpreted.

- **Reliability dimension-** is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.

**Table 4. 2Reliability expectation**

No	Reliability expectation		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	When the health center promises to do something by a certain time, it does.	F	5	11	18	12	9	55
		%	9.09	20	32.73	21.81	16.37	100
2	When a customer has problem, the health center will show a sincere interest in solving it	F	9	8	11	13	14	55
		%	16.37	14.55	20	23.63	25.45	100
3	The health center performs the service right the first time.	F	11	13	9	11	11	55
		%	20	23.63	16.37	20	20	100
4	The health center provides the service at the time it promises to do so.	F	17	15	9	8	6	55
		%	30.9	27.27	16.37	14.55	10.9	100
5	The health center insists on error free record.	F	21	12	11	7	4	55
		%	38.19	21.81	20	12.72	7.28	100

**Table 4.3 Reliability perception**

No	Reliability Perception		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	When the health center promises to do something by a certain time, it does so.	F	15	13	14	7	6	55
		%	27.27	23.63	25.46	12.73	10.9	100
2	When you have problem, the health center show sincere interest in solving it.	F	15	16	14	5	5	55
		%	27.27	29.09	25.46	9.09	9.09	100
3	The health center performs the service right the first time.	F	9	16	12	9	9	55
		%	16.37	29.09	21.8	16.37	16.37	100
4	The health center provides its service at the time it promises to do so.	F	13	13	12	9	8	55
		%	23.63	23.63	21.81	16.37	14.56	100
5	The health center insists on error free record.	F	9	10	20	10	6	55
		%	16.37	18.18	36.37	18.18	10.9	100

**Table 4. 4 Reliability dimension expectation vs. perception**

No	Reliability expectation	Mean	Reliability perception	Mean	Gap
1	When the health center promises to do something by a certain time, it does it.	3.16	When the health center promises to do something by a certain time, it does so.	2.56	0.6
2	When customer has problem, the health center will show sincere interest in solving it.	3.27	When customer has problem, the health center show sincere interest in solving it.	2.43	0.84
3	The health center performs the service right the first time.	2.96	The health center performs the service right the first time.	2.87	0.09
4	The health center provides the service at the time it promises to do so.	2.47	The health center provides the service at the time it promises to do so.	2.74	-0.27
5	The health center insists on error free record.	2.29	The health center insists on error free record.	2.89	-0.6
	Average	2.83	Average	2.69	0.48

Source: own survey 2012

The above table shows that from the five items from reliability dimension, item ‘The health center will provide the service at the time it promises to do so’ and ‘the health center insists on error free record’ gave the high mean score of 2.74 and 2.89, respectively that exceed its expectation. In general, the level of service quality that customer expect were mean of 2.83, but the health center provides the service quality level of mean 2.69. There is short fall of 0.48 customer service quality gap.

- **Responsiveness dimension-** willingness to help customer and to provide prompt service.

**Table 4. 5 Responsiveness expectation**

No	Feature		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	Employees of the health center tell customer exactly when service is performed	F	7	8	13	15	12	55
		%	12.73	14.55	23.63	27.27	21.82	100
2	Employees of the health center gives prompt service to customer.	F	10	11	13	14	7	55
		%	18.18	20	23.63	25.46	12.73	100
3	Employees of the health center always are willing to help customers.	F	8	9	13	13	12	55
		%	14.55	16.37	23.63	23.63	21.82	100
4	Employees of the health center never are too busy to respond to customers' request.	F	6	7	17	15	10	55
		%	10.9	12.73	30.9	27.27	18.18	100

**Table 4. 6 Responsiveness perception**

No	Feature		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	Employees in the health center tell you exactly when the service will be performed	F	20	16	10	6	3	55
		%	36.36	29.10	18.18	10.9	5.46	100
2	Employees in the health center give you prompt service.	F	15	13	12	8	7	55
		%	27.27	23.63	21.82	14.55	12.73	100
3	Employees in the health center are always willing to help you.	F	11	13	14	8	9	55
		%	20	23.63	25.45	14.55	16.37	100
4	Employees in the health center never too busy to respond your request.	F	16	14	11	8	6	55
		%	29.10	25.45	20	14.55	10.9	100

**Table 4. 7 Responsiveness dimension**

No	Responsiveness expectation	Mean	Responsiveness perception	Mean	Gap
1	Employees of the health center tell you exactly when service will be performed.	3.3	Employees of the health center tell you exactly when service will be performed.	2.2	1.1
2	Employees of the health center give prompt service to customers.	2.94	Employees of the health center give prompt service to customers.	2.61	0.33
3	Employees of the health center always are willing to help customers.	3.21	Employees of the health center are always willing to help customers.	2.83	0.38
4	Employees of the health center never are too busy to respond customers' question.	3.29	Employees of the health center never are too busy to respond customers' question.	2.52	0.77
	Average	3.185	Average	2.54	0.645

Source: own survey, 2012

From above table, out of the four items under responsiveness dimension, the item 'employees of the health center tells you exactly when service will be performed' gave the lowest mean score of 2.2 for its perception and the item 'employees of the health center always are willing to help customers' gave the highest mean score which score 2.83 for its perception. In this table, the level of expectation scored 3.185, however the level of perception was 2.54 mean score. This implies that the service quality responsiveness fails to meet the customer expectation and this refers to the unsatisfactory level of service delivery in the health center.

- **Assurance dimension-** is employees' knowledge, courtesy, the ability of the firm, and its ability to inspire trust and confidence.

**Table 4. 8 Assurance expectation**

No	Feature		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The behavior of employees in the health center instill confidence in customer	F	14	10	13	10	8	55
		%	25.46	18.18	23.63	18.18	14.55	100
2	Customer of the health center feels safe in transaction.	F	7	11	19	12	6	55
		%	12.73	20	34.56	21.81	10.9	100
3	Employees of the health center are consistently courteous with customer.	F	13	9	15	9	9	55
		%	23.64	16.36	27.28	16.36	16.36	100
4	Employees of the health center have the knowledge to answer customer's question.	F	10	11	16	9	9	55
		%	18.19	20	29.09	16.36	16.36	100

**Table 4. 9 Assurance perception**

No	Feature		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The behavior of employees in the health center instills confidence in you.	F	15	12	13	8	7	55
		%	27.28	21.82	23.63	14.55	12.72	100
2	You feel safe in your transaction with the health center.	F	14	11	13	8	9	55
		%	25.46	20	23.63	14.55	16.36	100
3	Employees in the health center are consistently courteous with you.	F	12	12	18	7	6	55
		%	21.83	21.83	32.72	12.72	10.9	100
4	Employees in the health center have the knowledge to answer your question.	F	15	20	13	4	3	55
		%	27.28	36.36	23.63	7.27	5.46	100

**Table 4. 10 assurance dimension**

No	Assurance expectation	Mean	Assurance perception	Mean	Gap
1	The behavior of employees in the health center instills confidence in you.	2.78	The behavior of employees in the health center instills confidence in you.	2.63	0.15
2	Customers will feel safe in your transaction with health center.	2.98	You feel safe in your transaction with health center.	2.76	0.22
3	Employees of the health center are consistently courteous with you.	2.85	Employees in the health center are consistently courteous with you.	2.69	0.16
4	Employees in the health center have the knowledge to answer your question.	2.92	Employees in the health center have the knowledge to answer your question.	2.27	0.65
	Average	2.88	Average	2.58	0.295

Source: own survey 2012

The above table shows that from assurance dimension questionnaire an item ‘customers will feel safe in your transaction with health center’ yielded the highest mean score for perception relative to the others; 2.76 and the item ‘employees in the health center have the knowledge to answer your question’ gave the lowest mean score of 2.27 for its perception. Generally based on the table, the level of service expectation in assurance dimension were 2.88 mean score, and the health center provided the service quality level of mean score 2.58, which shows that customer expectation are higher than perceived with 0.295 gap.

- **Empathy dimension-** carrying individualized attention the firm provides to its customer.

**Table 4. 11 Empathy expectation**

No	Feature		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The health center give customer individual attention.	F	9	13	7	15	11	55
		%	16.36	23.64	12.72	27.28	20	100
2	The health have operating hour convenient to all their customer	F	8	9	10	15	13	55
		%	14.54	16.36	18.19	27.28	23.63	100
3	The health center have employees who give customer personal service.	F	12	13	10	16	4	55
		%	21.82	23.64	18.18	29.09	7.27	100
4	The health center has their customers' best interest at heart.	F	13	11	20	8	3	55
		%	23.63	20	36.37	14.55	5.45	100
5	The employee of the health center understands the specific need of their customer.	F	10	12	18	9	6	55
		%	18.18	21.82	32.73	16.37	10.9	100

**Table 4. 12 Empathy perception**

No	Feature		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The health center give you individual attention	F	14	13	11	9	8	55
		%	25.45	23.64	20	16.37	14.54	100
2	The health center has operating hours convenient to all its customers	F	11	12	10	11	11	55
		%	20	21.82	18.18	20	20	100
3	The health center has employees who give you personal attention	F	16	15	12	7	5	55
		%	29.09	27.28	21.82	12.72	9.09	100
4	The health center has your best interest at heart	F	20	14	11	5	5	55
		%	36.37	25.45	20	9.09	9.09	100
5	Employees of the health center understand your specific need	F	21	17	10	6	1	55
		%	38.19	30.9	18.19	10.9	1.82	100

**Table 4. 13 Empathy dimension**

No	Empathy expectation	Mean	Empathy perception	Mean	Gap
1	The health center give customer individual attention.	3.1	The health center give customer individual attention.	2.7	0.4
2	The health center have operating hour convenient to their customer	3.29	The health center have operating hour convenient to their customer	2.98	0.31
3	The health center has employees who give personal service.	2.76	The health center has employees who give personal service.	2.45	0.31
4	The health center have their customers' best interest at heart	2.58	The health center have their customers' best interest at heart	2.29	0.29
5	The employees of the health center understand the specific need of their customers.	2.8	The employees of the health center understand the specific need of their customers.	2.07	0.73
	Average	2.9	Average	2.498	0.408

Source: own survey 2012

The table shows that from the five item of empathy dimension questionnaire, the item ‘the health center operating hour convenient to their customer’ scores mean of 2.98 for its perception and followed by the item ‘the health center give customer individual attention’ which score mean of 2.7 for its perception. The expectation of customer was 2.9 mean score. However they got the service with service quality level of 2.498 mean. This shows that the empathy dimension that the health center provides doesn’t exceed customers’ expectation.

- **Tangibility dimension-** focus on the appearance of physical facilities, equipment’s appearance of personnel and communication material.

**Table 4. 14 Tangibility expectation**

No	Tangibility expectation		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The health center has modern looking equipment	F	13	12	8	12	10	55
		%	23.64	21.82	14.54	21.82	18.18	100
2	The physical facility in the health center is visually appealing	F	14	12	13	9	7	55
		%	25.45	21.82	23.64	16.36	12.72	100
3	Employees at the health center is neat in their performance	F	15	14	12	10	4	55
		%	27.28	25.45	21.82	18.18	7.27	100
4	Materials associated with the service (pamphlet or statement) is visually appealing	F	15	17	11	7	5	55
		%	27.28	30.9	20	12.72	9.09	100

**Table 4. 15 Tangibility perception**

No	Tangibility perception		SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	The health center has modern looking equipment	F	14	11	12	10	8	55
		%	25.45	20	21.82	18.18	14.54	100
2	The health centers' physical feature are visually appealing	F	13	15	12	8	7	55
		%	23.64	27.28	21.82	14.54	12.72	100
3	The health center service providers are neat appealing	F	11	12	10	11	11	55
		%	20	21.82	18.18	20	20	100
4	Material associated with service( pamphlet or statement) are visually appealing in the health center	F	9	10	12	13	11	55
		%	16.36	18.18	21.82	23.64	20	100

**Table 4. 16 Tangibility dimension expectation vs. perception**

No	Tangibility expectation	Mean	Tangibility perception	Mean	Gap
1	The health center has modern looking equipment	2.89	The health center has modern looking equipment.	2.76	0.13
2	The physical facility in the health center is visually appealing.	2.69	The health center's physical features are visually appealing.	2.65	0.04
3	Employees at the health center are neat in their performance.	2.52	Employees at the health center are neat in their performance.	2.98	-0.46
4	Material associated with the service is visually appealing.	2.45	Materials associated with the service are visually appealing.	3.12	-0.67
	<b>Average</b>	2.63	<b>Average</b>	2.87	0.17

Source: own survey 2012

The above table shows that from the four item in tangibility dimension, the item ‘material associated with the service is visually appealing’ scored the highest mean score of 3.12 for its perception. On the other side the item ‘the physical facility in the health center is visually appealing’ scores the lowest mean score of 2.65 for its perception. Generally, the level of service quality that customer expect were mean of 2.63. The service quality those customers received were mean score of 2.87, which show that the service received exceeded the expected by 0.17 gap

### **4.3 Comparison of overall service quality dimensions**

In order to get one of the objectives from the study, it was the needed to find the service delivery gap of the both expectation and perception of customers’ service quality.

E= expectation P= perception

**Table 4. 17 Comparison of overall service quality dimensions**

SQD	Reliability		Responsiveness		Assurance		Empathy		Tangibility	
E/P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E	P
Mean	2.83	2.69	3.185	2.54	2.88	2.58	2.9	2.498	2.63	2.87
Gap	0.48		0.645		0.295		0.408		0.17	

Source: own survey 2012

In the above table, reliability perception of service quality was 2.69 and the expectation was 2.83. The responsiveness perception of service quality was a mean of 2.54 and 3.185 in expectation. In the assurance dimension, customers' perception of service quality is 2.58 and assurance expectation was a mean of 2.88. The empathy perception of service quality was 2.498 and expected service quality was 2.9. Tangibility perception of service quality is 2.87 and 2.63 mean score for tangibility expectation.

In general, four SERVQUAL dimensions in the health center lack ability to satisfy customers' expectation, except for Tangibility. Especially in Responsiveness dimension there is a wide gap between expectation and perception. In the other three dimensions (Reliability, Assurance and Empathy) there isn't much gap between the expected and the perceived service quality, but they do fall shorter than expected service quality. According to the findings, Tangibility is the only SERVQUAL dimension that is good and exceeds the expectation of customers in Wolkite town public health center.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

### 5.1 Conclusion

From the findings, the researcher concludes that almost all of service quality dimension experienced by Wolkite town public health center had low level of scale by the customers' perception. Except for tangibility the other dimensions do not match or exceed in expectation versus perception scenario. This implies that the service delivered by the health center does not match the expectation of service quality that customers hold.

Health center is a place of relief for people who are ill. But the quality of service, cannot meet with expected satisfaction that customers needed to get from the health center. This is the result of performances deficiency present in the center. From the five dimension of service quality determinant, except for responsiveness, reliability, assurance and empathy had low level of gap between expectation and perception, even if they are unsatisfactory.

The health center needs to establish a new work policy in order to match the service quality expectation with perception of customers. This also needs commitment of top management and care toward customers to solve this problem. Since health center is established for patients, it needs to treat patients more like family.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the finding the researcher wanted to recommend the following suggestions that help for the health center to improve the quality of service delivery in Wolkite town public health center and it would result into balance/maximization of customers' expectation with their perception in all dimension of the SERVQUAL measurement dimensions.

- ✓ Improving Service quality dimension. As the finding shows the centers major problem is to meet the expectation of service quality that customer hold toward the service quality available in the health center. So as to minimize this problem the company should continuously follow up each dimension by analyzing the item each dimension holds.
- ✓ Much attention should be given to dimensions whose service quality gap is widened. As the finding shows, responsiveness dimension needs much attention so as to minimize the

service quality gap obtained from the difference of customer expectation of service and their perception.

- ✓ Emphasis should be given to customers. The reason why huge amount of investment spent and invested is to serve the customers. This means the health center is established only to serve customers, and customers are the very reason this organization was established in the first place. Much emphasis should be given to customers.
- ✓ All employees of the health center need to be caring, polite, and generous towards the customers of the health center.
- ✓ Everyone should work together for the betterment of the service delivered by the organization without discrimination, hate or racism and fighting wrong doings of individuals inside the health center and also outside.

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**APPENDIX**  
**WOLKITE UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

Dear respondents; the researcher studies the research entitled “assessing service quality determinants in Wolkite town public health center” for partial fulfillment of BA degree in marketing management. The purpose of this questioner is to gather valuable data regarding the topic which plays a great role in achieving the overall objective of the study.

The researcher wants to ensure that no problem face on providing of valuable information and all response you provide solely used for only academic purpose. So, you should provide your opinion freely and confidently. To suggest the response for the question, you should rank as follows:

1=strongly disagree            3=neutral            5=strongly agree  
2=disagree                      4=agree

N.B: No need of writing your name

Tick “X” on the space provided to respond your opinion.

Thank you for your help!

**Personal information**

1. Sex

Male                       female

2. Age

18-22                       23-27   
28-32                       more than 32

## Questions related to customer expectation of service quality

This section of the study deals with your opinion about Wolkite town public health center. Please show the extent to which you think the health center should possess the following feature. Therefore, as to choice the best features that show your expectation, you should rank each statement as followed by ticking X on the space provided.

**SD** - Strongly disagree    **D** - Disagree    **N** - Neutral    **A** - Agree    **SA** - Strongly Agree

### Reliability dimension questionnaire

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	When the health center promises to do something by a certain time, it do.					
2	When a customer has problem, the health center will show a sincere interest in solving it					
3	The health center will performs the service right the first time.					
4	The health center will provide the service at the time it promises to do so.					
5	The health center will insist on error free record.					

### Responsiveness dimension questionnaire

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Employees of the health center will tell customer exactly when service will be performed					
2	Employees of the health center will give prompt service to customer.					
3	Employees of the health center will always be willing to help customers.					
4	Employees of the health center will never be too busy to respond to customers' request.					

### Assurance dimension questionnaire

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The behavior of employees in the health center will instill confidence in customer					
2	Customer of the health center will feel safe in transaction.					
3	Employees of the health center will be consistently courteous with customer.					
4	Employees of the health center will have the knowledge to answer customer's question.					

### Empathy dimension questionnaire

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The health center will give customer individual attention.					
2	The health will have operating hour convenient to all their customer					
3	The health center will have employees who give customer personal service.					
4	The health center will have their customers' best interest at heart.					
5	The employee of the health center will understand the specific need of their customer.					

**Tangibility dimension questionnaire**

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The health center have modern looking equipment					
2	The physical facility in the health center is visually appealing					
3	Employees at the health center are neat in their performance					
4	Materials associated with the service (pamphlet or statement) will be visually appealing					

**Questionnaire related to customer perception of service quality**

The following statement relates to you're feeling about the health center. Please, show the extent to which you believe this health center has the feature described in the statement. So as to choice the feature that best describe your perception regarding the service quality determinants of Wolkite town public health center, please tick X on the space provided.

**Reliability dimension questionnaires**

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	When the health center promises to do something by a certain time, it does so.					
2	When you have problem, the health center show sincere interest in solving it.					
3	The health center perform the service right the first time.					
4	The health center provide its service at the time it promises to do so.					
5	The health center insists on error free record.					

### Responsiveness dimension questionnaires

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Employees in the health center tell you exactly when the service will be performed					
2	Employees in the health center give your prompt service.					
3	Employees in the health center are always willing to help you.					
4	Employees in the health center never too busy to respond your request.					

### Assurance dimension questionnaires

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The behavior of employees in the health center instills confidence in you.					
2	You feel safe in your transaction with the health center.					
3	Employees in the health center are consistently courteous with you.					
4	Employees in the health center have the knowledge to answer your question.					

### Empathy dimension questionnaires

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The health center give you individual attention.					
2	The health center has operating hours convenient to all its customers.					
3	The health center has employees who give your personal attention.					
4	The health center has your best interest at heart.					
5	Employees of the health center understand your specific need.					

### Tangibility dimension questionnaire

No	Feature	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The health center has modern looking equipment					
2	The health centers' physical feature are visually appealing					
3	The health center service providers are neat appealing					
4	Material associated with service( pamphlet or statement) are visually appealing in the health center					