

# Interactive Quality in Ethiopian Telecom's Service Encounters: A Dyadic Perspective

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This research primarily assesses interactive quality in the service encounters of Ethiopian Telecom from the customer and contact personnel perspectives.

**Research design, data, and methodology** – After reviewing the literature on service encounters and interactive quality, two separate questionnaires and structured personal interviews were conducted to collect the opinions of 400 customers and 100 employees of Ethiopian Telecom. The researchers used convenience sampling; the responses, measured on a five-point Likert-type scale, were analyzed through chi-square tests conducted on SPSS 17.0.

**Results** – Regarding the outcome expected by customers, encounter effectiveness is very low. Regarding accessibility and materiality, the corporation's personnel are freely accessible, relatively well-dressed, and have access to sophisticated office equipment and physical facilities. Finally, with regard to agent satisfaction, the telecom's contact employees are shown to gain little professional satisfaction from service encounters.

**Conclusion** – The study clearly presents the areas in which interactive quality strongly affects both telecom customers and employees; this will help the corporation take corrective action. This is of utmost contemporary importance for both practitioners and researchers.

**Keywords:** Service Quality, Service Encounter, Interactive Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Ethiopia.

**JEL Classifications:** L84, L96, L98, M31.

## 1. Introduction

In an increasingly interdependent world, most of the countries have clearly recognized the impact and contributions from the service sector to their economic development. Keeping in view of the present day's whimsical business proclivity, marketers seldom ignore even a slightest chance to draw the attention of the market. The business people always attempt to win the hearts of target market consumers with the support of some pre and post sale activities in addition to the profound concentration on activities during sales both in the manufacturing and service sectors. When compared to the manufacturing sector, the errand of attracting, keeping, and satisfying customers is a herculean task service businesses. In 1930s, Converse (1930) stressed the importance of services in the field of marketing. Other early research efforts in services date back to the 1960s (Gustafson and Ricard, 1964; Rathmell, 1966; Donabedian, 1966; Hutchinson and Stolle, 1968; Stephenson and Willet, 1969). Since then, there has been an increasing interest in the field of services research. Services marketing did not emerge as a distinct research discipline until the late 1970s (Fisk et al., 1993; Berry and Parasuraman, 1993) and marketing research before this era had largely relied on single-item measures (Bruner and Hensel, 1993a, b; Churchill, 1979; Peter, 1979; Jacoby, 1978). As services marketing became recognized as a research discipline in its own right, multi-item measures were increasingly developed and used in research (Bruner and Hensel, 1993a, b; Bearden et al., 1993; Bearden and Netemeyer, 1999). Imperatively, service marketers have to concentrate on both internal marketing and interactive marketing besides external marketing to deliver the quality service to customers. The nature of services particularly intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability entails careful and fanatical production, distribution or delivery of services which essentially requires the attention of frontline employees with comprehensive knowledge on their services, competitor services along with most crucially noetic skills on interactive marketing. The interactive skills and qualities shown by the service providers with the service receivers greatly influenced the production, distribution and consumption of services. Simply, services performance completely depends on how effectively and efficiently the interaction unfolds in a service encounter between customers and contact personnel. Encounters between service customers and employees are a

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critical component of service quality. This is especially true for services characterized by a high degree of person-to-person interaction and by the absence of exchange of physical manifestation. The client comes out from the service interaction with feelings of satisfaction or frustration. For contact personnel, encounters maybe a gratifying experience or a painful event (Chandon et al., 1997). Almost all service firms attempts to generate pleasant and fruitful service encounters with an intention to get a competitive edge through which there will be a possibility to obtain repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth advocacy. With an intention to enhance the quality of service interactions in Ethiopian telecom, the researchers have taken up this study to explore the components of quality interactions by analyzing empirical data collected through questionnaires from the perspectives of both the Ethiopian Telecom customers and their front-line employees. Following Brown and Swart (1989), the researchers have considered the views of both parties involved in the interactive interface to sell Ethiopian telecom services.

## 2. Theoretical framework

In today's market place, where competition is extremely intense, almost all the service companies extensively focusing on service quality which is possible through proactive service encounters. The basic and credible nature of services consist of intangibility, variability, perishability; its production, distribution, and consumption are simultaneous processes; it is an activity ora process; it is a core value created in buyer-seller interactions; customers participate in its production; and there is no transfer of ownership when it is sold (Grönroos, 2000). These features of service stress that there should be a meaningful and constructive interaction between the service provider and receiver in service encounters where services production, distribution and consumption process in an interactive interface. Delivering consistent level of service quality is a pivotal mission of service providers, but it is difficult to maintain consistency because of the peculiar nature of the service. Grönroos (1984) clearly defined the concept of service quality as a perceived judgment, resulting from an evaluation process where customers compare their expectations with the service they perceive to have received. In the same way, Parasuraman et al. (1988) distinctively defined service quality as "the degree of discrepancy between customers'normative expectations for the service and their perceptions of the service performance". Service quality in a service encounter is recognized as being dependent upon the interactive process between the service provider (the seller) and the service receiver (the buyer) (Czepiel, 1990; Heskett et al., 1990; Norman, 1992; Brown et al., 1994; Larsson-Mossberg, 1994; Gummesson, 1995; Echeverri, 1999; Grönroos, 2000; Svensson, 2001a, 2002). The importance and relevance to explore and dedicate research efforts to the common grounds of the interactive features of service quality in a service encounter are multiple. First, the service performance in a service encounter is dependent upon an interactive process

between the service provider and the recipient of service. Second, the ultimate outcome of a service in a service encounter is derived from this interactive process. Third, the interactive process affects the actual performance of the service provider, as well as the service receiver's interpretation of the service performance. Fourth, the interactive process continuously influences the service provider's and service receiver's expectations and perceptions of the service at hand in a service encounter. Whatever the plans, policies, programs, procedures and strategies service companies has introduced with a competing quality is only meant for achieving total customer satisfaction. Service companies can achieve and maintain large number of satisfied customers through fruitful and constructive encounters with the company employees along with the physical surroundings of the service which are the major components of service quality. Oliver (1993) rightly said that, for the consumer, service quality means a comparison to excellence which does not require experience of the service. On the other hand, consumer satisfaction implies the consumption of theservice and is related to experience.

### 2.1. Service Encounter and Interactive Nature of Service Encounters

The planning, implementation, and control of an organization's service offers to its customers should acknowledge by the service provider (e.g. sales representative or other contact personnel) with an appropriate and constructive interaction. The service provider is optimistic and his/her performance enhanced if there is an incessant response of approval or satisfaction from the service receiver. The researchers concentrated on the definitions given by Shostack (1985) and Bitner (1990) on service encounter as "a period of time during which a consumer interacts with a service". A service encounter is defined as an interactive interface of service quality in dyadic contexts. A dyadic context is defined as the interactive interface between service provider(s), service receiver(s) and/or enabling service equipment(s). A service provider and a service receiver refer to the individuals being part of the interactive interface taking place in service encounters (Svensson, 2006). The construct of the service encounter is based upon an interactive process, i.e. an interactive interface, between service provider(s) and receiver(s) (Grönroos, 2001). Though, most research in the field of services marketing ignores the service provider's perspective, and there have been too few studies that have attempted to explore the concept of the service encounter beyond the service receiver's perspective (Dedeke, 2003; Svensson, 2002; Chow-Chua and Komaran, 2002; Tam and Wong, 2001; Athanassopoulos, 1997).

Surprenant et al. (1983) viewed that service encounters are human interactions. Czepiel (1990) stressed that research into service encounters should take into account the perspectives of both parties involved in this human interaction. If considered from both the parties perspectives, there will be an opportunity to reveal the difficulties involved in these human interactions in

a realistic and sensible way which facilitates the implementation of corrective measures to enhance the efficacy and effectiveness of the interactive interface. Wilkinson and Young (1999) stated that relationship development and performance should be seen as a dynamic process. The various dimensions of a relationship interact and self-organize into a mutually consistent pattern of performance, perceptions, and attitudes. Accordingly, the nature of interaction between the service provider and receiver significantly influences the ultimate outcome of the service encounters. Conventionally, research into service encounters has been based on the perspective of the service receiver (Parasuraman et al. 1988; Dabholkar et al., 1996; Bienstock et al., 1997). Furthermore, majority of the researches have produced a number of classifications of services, all of which stress only the service receiver's perspective of the service offer in service encounters (Judd, 1964; Rathmell, 1974; Shostack, 1977; Hill, 1977; Sasser et al., 1978; Thomas, 1978; Chase, 1978; Gronroos, 1979; Kotler, 1980; Lovelock, 1980; 1983; Schmenner, 1986; Vandermerwe and Chadwick, 1989).

## 2.2. Dimensions of Interactive Quality

A number of methods have been proposed by researchers from different parts of the world to assess the interaction quality in service encounters. Interactive service quality is not a simple phenomenon for measurement. It entails the following a number of elements to be implemented properly: a) it should be based on a multi-item measure of the construct of service quality; b) it has to consider the service provider's and service receiver's perspectives in service encounters; c) it requires a selection of service encounters to be explored; and d) it needs tests of differences and association between perspectives to describe the interactive qualities of service quality in service encounters (Svensson, 2004). Klaus (1985) supports a holistic approach using video recordings. Services marketing experts break up the encounter into typical sequences of behavior. Using the critical incident method, Bitner et. al., (1990) collected incidents from various services in order to identify which events and contact employees' behaviors cause satisfactory or unsatisfactory encounters. Goffman (1974, 1983) revealed the importance of ceremonials and rites that shape the encounter's dynamic. The author also insisted on the ephemeral ties created during the interaction process. Based on which, the researchers decided to include the dimensions of interactivity and rituality which has further sub-divided into several sub-dimensions based on the inspirational works of Gumperz (1989); Siehl et al., (1990); Surprenant and Solomon (1987). The other dimensions used in this research are more conventional which were chosen from the pioneering studies of Parasuraman et al. (1988) and Schneider (1973, 1980, 1994). The researchers applied here a six-dimensional approach along with 15 sub-dimensions viz., effectiveness, materiality (service employee appearance; equipment; and physical facilities), accessibility, interactivity (responsiveness; listening; ability to explain; understanding; personalization; and psychological proximity), rituality (courtesy; confidence; security; attitudes; waiting time; and per-

ceived competence of the contact people) and agent satisfaction. With a view to assess the interactive quality in service encounters of Ethiopian telecom, the researchers finally selected the aforementioned dimensions in the study. Hitherto, there is no proper services marketing research study in general and interactive quality in service encounters especially from a bi-directional perspective in a developing country like Ethiopia. The researchers have chosen this contemporary topic which proffers productive solutions to problems faced by the telecom corporation in Ethiopia.

## 3. Methodology

The objective of this study is to assess the multiple dimensions of interactive quality in service encounters of Ethiopian telecom from a dyadic perspective of customers and contact personnel. A total of 400 customers and 100 contact employees' opinions were collected by applying both random sampling and convenience sampling methods from the Addis Ababa's six zonal offices of Ethiopian Telecom in the first half of the year last year. With an intention to study the quality of interaction and satisfaction levels, the researchers developed a five point Likert scale and introduced two separate questionnaires for telecom customers and front-line employees. The first questionnaire meant for customers consists of five dimensions with fifteen sub-dimensions and the very concise uni-dimensional second questionnaire consists of only three sub-dimensions for contact employees. The researchers also used qualitative research approach in order to understand social or human problems in the service encounters, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of both the parties for designing the constructive interactive process arranged in a natural setting. The concept of interactive quality in service encounters of telecom service is a new phenomenon as far as Ethiopia is concerned as a major reason for adopting this qualitative approach. The necessary data for the study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through self-administered structured two separate questionnaires which were initially developed in English and then translated into the local vernacular language Amharic. While collecting the data through questionnaires, the researchers have given short briefings to the respondents about the objective of the research as well as to the contact employees to avoid any ambiguity that may arise. Focusing only on the interaction period, respondents were asked to state their overall assessment of the quality of their interaction. In addition, the researchers also garnered the opinion of contact employees by using a separate questionnaire. The researchers asked participants at the end of the interaction, when elements of the encounter are still present in memory and attributions are minimal. In addition to the primary data, secondary sources of data such as books, journals, web searches, company reports were used to comprehensively complete this study. The researchers provide necessary instructions to distribute questionnaires based on

the respondents' allocation of time and collected the filled-in questionnaires then and there itself. The researchers had taken unrivaled care in collecting the opinions of both Ethiopian telecom customers and contact employees and collect all the filled-in questionnaires. The researchers applied SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) to analyze responses in the rating scale with the application of chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). In order to keep the confidentiality of the data given by respondents, the researchers reframed from asking their personal details through questionnaires and maintained strict confidentiality on the responses given by both the customers and employees of Ethiopian telecom. This research was confined to the service encounters occurred in the six zonal offices of Ethiopian telecom. This analysis is focused on face-to-face encounters and did not consider the issues related to the organizational structure of the company.

The researchers enlisted the following four hypotheses to elaborately discuss about the interactive quality dimensions influence on satisfaction levels of customers and contact employees.

- 1) There is no relationship between Ethiopian telecom customers and employees' satisfaction levels on interactive quality.
- 2) Interactivity is the most crucial service-encounter dimension.
- 3) The materiality dimension won't severely affect the interactive quality in service encounter.
- 4) Contact employees' professional satisfaction has influence on the quality of interaction in service encounters.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The demographic profile of 400 customers and 100 contact personnel along with the comprehensive analysis and discussion on the opinions of respondents has clearly stated in this part. The results of the demographic profile are reported in tables 1 and 2.

<Table 1> Demographic Profile of Ethiopian Telecom Customers

SL. No.	Demographic Profile	Description	Percentage	Responses
1.	Age	18-24 years	32.0	128
		25-31 years	27.7	111
		32-38 years	21.4	86
		39-45 years	11.1	44
		Above 45	7.8	31
2.	Gender	Male	58.6	234
		Female	41.4	166
3.	Level of Education	Masters and above	8.4	34
		Bachelors Degree	24.1	96
		12th Grade	43.4	173
		10th Grade	20.9	84
		Un-educated	3.2	13
4.	Occupation	Students	20.0	80
		Running own business	11.4	46
		Government employees	30.3	121

5.	Monthly Income	Private employees	34.9	139
		NGOs	3.4	14
		Under 1000 Birr (Below \$50)	35.1	140
		1001-1500 (Below \$75)	18.9	76
		1501-2000 (Below \$100)	15.4	62
		2001-2500 (Below \$125)	16.0	64
		2501-3000 (Below \$150)	5.5	22
		Above 3000 (Below \$175)	9.1	36

<Table 2> Demographic Profile of Ethiopian Telecom Contact Personnel

S. No.	Demographic Profile	Description	Percentage	Responses
1.	Age	18-24 years	8.0	08
		25-31 years	50.0	50
		32-38 years	38.0	38
		39-45 years	4.0	04
2.	Gender	Male	58.0	58
		Female	42.0	42
3.	Level of Education	Masters and above	20.0	20
		Bachelors Degree	76.0	76
		12th Grade +	4.0	04
4.	Monthly Income	Under 1000 Birr	4.0	04
		1001-1500	28.0	28
		1501-2000	30.0	30
		2001-2500	22.0	22
		2501-3000	16.0	16

As mentioned in the Table 3, the researchers conducted a survey with two separate questionnaires meant for Ethiopian Telecom customers and the contact personnel. The first questionnaire with five dimensions like effectiveness, materiality, accessibility, interactivity, rituality and another separate very concise questionnaire with three sub-dimensions used to know the opinions of both the Ethiopian telecom customers and contact employees respectively about the quality of interaction while they were in service encounters. Related to *effectiveness* dimension, out of 400 Ethiopian telecom customers, 18.1 percent reacted strongly and positively as against 25.2 percent just agreed. And, 37.8 percent of customers disagreed on the effectiveness of interaction with the contact employees as against just 11.6 percent strongly disagreed. The crucial reasons for this discontentment over the effectiveness of interactions as expressed by customers due to technical and functional inefficiency, lack of understanding between line and staff, improper time allocation for the encounter, poor interactive skills, casual and negligent behavioral disposition of employees. Associated with the second interactive quality dimension *materiality*, customers received questions related to appearance of

contact personnel, equipment and physical facilities. Startlingly, 61.5 percent of customers were expressed their satisfaction with the employee etiquette, equipment and physical ambience of the interactive landscape as against 24.5 percent customers who are not at all happy with the materiality. The notable reasons for this alluring percentage of positive response from the customers are the recent up-gradation of front-line offices, introduction of dress code to the contact personnel, computerization of customers'data, and introduction of both internal and interactive marketing in an exciting way in the corporation.

Related to the *accessibility* dimension, 59.5 percent customers said that the corporation front-line employees'are accessible for both enquiries and purchase of service. And the remaining 26.7 percent customers expressed their dissatisfaction as against just 13.8 percent were in neutral. The respondents' community stated various reasons for the accessibility like close supervision of immediate superiors, confident introduction of internal marketing measures, highly attractive employee reward schemes, and other monetary and non-monetary benefits and moreover dedicated and passionate commitment of employees towards in satisfying customer needs and aspirations. Even with the initiation of mentioned measures, considerable percentage of customers dissatisfied with the negligible and casual nature of contact personnel, frequent and unproductive discussions with other employees, and occasional late coming to their seats

in front-line offices. Regarding the fourth quality dimension *interactivity*, the researchers raised sub-dimensions like responsiveness, listening, ability to explain, understanding, personalization and psychological proximity. On account of this, 21.9 percent of customers pleased as against 30.3 expressed their discontentment over the interactive abilities of contact personnel of the telecom corporation. In this context, the satisfied customers'highlighted reasons like quick response and active listening whereas the reasons for discontentment mainly are poor understanding of the problems raised, inability to explain in a cohesive manner, failure to establish personalization with customers and most crucially contact personnel were utterly failed in understanding the psychological convictions and dispositions of the customers. Associated to the fifth dimension *rituality*, customers reacted to the sub-dimensions like courtesy shown by the employees, confidence, security, waiting conditions, perceived competence and attitudes of receptionists. Among the selected respondents, 47.5 percent stated their satisfaction on the ceremonial and contextual aspects which shape the climate of encounter as against 34.4 percent were not pleased with the courtesy and confidence shown by the contact personnel, too much waiting conditions, poor perceived competence levels of employees, inattentive and relaxed behavior of receptionists which failed to create a conducive climate for fruitful encounter.

<Table 3> Ethiopian Telecom Customers'and Contact Employees' Responses on Interactive Quality (In Percentages)

S. No.	Interactive Quality Dimension	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Effectiveness:	18.1	25.2	7.3	37.8	11.6
2.	Materiality:					
	a) Service Employee Appearance	29.1	48.6	10.9	7.4	4.0
	b) Equipment	27.3	39.1	14.1	10.9	8.6
	c) Physical Facilities	15.4	25.0	17.0	32.2	10.5
	Average of Materiality	23.9	37.6	14.0	16.8	7.7
3.	Accessibility:	23.9	35.6	13.8	14.1	12.6
4.	Interactivity:					
	a) Responsiveness	13.4	19.2	17.0	32.2	18.2
	b) Listening	15.8	21.5	14.7	32.5	15.5
	c) Ability to Explain	14.6	25.4	16.8	31.6	11.6
	d) Understanding	21.0	20.3	19.2	28.4	11.1
	e) Personalization	17.0	22.4	19.2	29.0	12.4
	f) Psychological Proximity	14.4	22.5	19.1	28.0	16.0
	Average of Interactivity	16.0	21.9	17.7	30.3	14.1
5.	Rituality:					
	a) Courtesy	14.8	26.4	16.1	32.2	10.5
	b) Confidence	15.2	18.9	32.6	21.2	12.1
	c) Security	18.6	34.7	20.2	16.7	9.8
	d) Waiting Conditions	30.0	33.5	11.8	13.5	11.2
	e) Perceived Competence	14.3	20.2	15.8	33.0	16.7
	f) Attitudes of Receptionists	34.0	24.0	12.0	24.0	6.0
	Average of Rituality	21.2	26.3	18.1	23.4	11.0
I.	Contact Employees' Satisfaction:					
	a) Personalization	34.0	24.0	12.0	24.0	6.0
	b) Courtesy	21.0	46.0	17.0	10.5	5.5
	c) Psychological Proximity	28.0	28.0	18.0	26.0	0
	ETC's Contact Employees' Satisfaction	24.0	11.0	14.0	22.0	29.0

**<Table 4>** Two-Way Classified Table with Interactive Quality Dimensions

S. No.	Interactive Quality Dimension	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Effectiveness	18.1	25.2	7.3	37.8	11.6
2.	Materiality					
3.	Accessibility	23.9	35.6	13.8	14.1	12.6
4.	Interactivity					
5.	Rituality					
Average Levels of ETC's Customers Satisfaction		20.6	29.3	14.2	24.5	11.4
ETC's Contact Employees' Satisfaction		24.0	11.0	14.0	22.0	29.0

**<Table 5>** Testing of Hypotheses

S. No.	Hypotheses	Chi-square Calculated Value	Chi-square Tabulated Value At 5% LOS with 4 DOF	Results
1.	There is a relationship between Ethiopian Telecom customers & contact personnel satisfaction levels on interactive quality.	16.372	9.488	Accepted
2.	Interactivity is the most crucial service-encounter dimension.	4.609	9.488	Rejected
3.	The materiality dimension affects the interactive quality in service encounter.	11.886	9.488	Accepted
4.	Contact personnel professional satisfaction has influence on the quality of interaction in service encounter.	12.111	9.488	Accepted

Along with the above, the researchers came up with another questionnaire to know the *satisfaction levels of contact employees' of Ethiopian telecom corporation* with issues like personalization, courtesy and psychological proximity on service encounters. Based on which, 29 and 22 percent of contact employees were strongly disagreed and disagreed on the quality of interaction at the time of encounters respectively. And another 24 and 11 percent were strongly agreed and agreed on the way the interaction is going on with the customers in a productive manner and notably 14 percent of employees who are working as front-line employees stayed neutral with their opinion.

#### 4.1. Testing of Hypotheses:

To prove the selected hypotheses for the study, the researchers applied the following procedure: a) First, the researchers formed a two-way or contingency table with two selected attributes and a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree; b) Then take the null-hypotheses that there is no association between the selected attributes; c) The chi-square statistical value follows chi-square distribute with four Degrees of Freedom (DOF) at a specified level of 5% significance (LOS).

As per the values mentioned in the Table 5, the selected hypothesis 1 is accepted because of calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square. So, null-hypothesis is rejected and hence, there is a clear relationship between the satisfaction levels of both Ethiopian Telecom customers and their contact personnel. Related to Hypothesis 2, the calculated

value of  $\chi^2$  is less than the tabulated value of chi-square, null-hypothesis is accepted and thus, interactivity is not only the most crucial service encounter dimension. Connected with the Hypothesis 3, the materiality dimension affects the interactivity quality in service encounters is accepted which proved with the greater calculated value of  $\chi^2$  than tabulated. The Hypothesis 4 is also accepted since the calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is greater than the tabulated value.

## 5. Managerial implication

Numerous management implications for service providers in general and telecom companies in particular can be deduced from this research. Goodwin (1988) sets an appropriate agenda for managers of service relationships, which can be applied to group settings. She states that there are four important factors that have to be considered: a) learning skills; b) developing a new self-image; c) developing new relationships with providers, and often fellow consumers; and d) acquiring new values (Goodwin, 1988). Accordingly, this research proffers precious and first-hand information to the think-tank of the Ethiopian telecom about the customer satisfaction levels on diverse quality horizons of service encounters. Based on which, Ethiopian Telecom Corporation could allocate resources more efficiently by providing accurate customer services in general and, more specifically, in training the employees to effectively respond to their customer needs and priorities. Corporation's contact personnel have an opportunity to receive constructive training with most

suitable curricula which delivers expected level of service and also to rectify any inevitable service problems that arise in future. In the case of service failures, contact personnel should be trained to be receptive, compassionate, and supportive in dealing with customer problems. In addition, employees of the corporation should also be trained in both technical and functional skills, to listen to customers' problems, to smooth out customer anger, and to offer personalized responses. A confident and erudite team of employees are more competent enough to perform their jobs are likely to stay longer duration in the company to build and maintain enduring relationships and also saves induction costs. After careful observation of the existing process of telecom service encounters, there will be a chance to identify the loopholes as well as the way frontline employees participate in encounters with different customers. Based on which, the telecom corporation has an opportunity to design a well-structured interactive process and introduce necessary modifications to the existing process for offering a productive and fruitful response to customers in an effective manner. This research also presents authentic and valuable information to the marketing department of the Ethiopian Telecom for analyzing their customers' level of knowledge on their services which will facilitate to initiate customer educational programs through marketing communication elements. The research definitely provides a formidable base for the prospective researchers who have plans to investigate the quality aspects of services in general and telecom service in particular with indispensable changes to the parameters.

## 6. Conclusion

This research paper exclusively concentrates on the interactive quality in service encounters of Ethiopian telecom in a dyadic perspective of both customers and contact personnel. It is evident that Ethiopian telecom customers are not at all pleased with the interactive abilities of contact employees. Based on which, the company has a sober thoughts on the existing plans, policies and strategies in action and introduce necessary modifications to upgrade the employees' dexterities in general and contact employees in particular. From the employees' viewpoint, the encounter is interesting but leaves them in great dissatisfaction because of perceptual differences with customers. To fill the gap, the company and its employees' should reach to the perceptual level of customers with their offerings by introducing affable and constructive interactive encounters with great intensity of patience. This research was limited to a small sample of just 400 in the Ethiopian telecom sector and used six dimensions to measure the quality of interaction. Even though, the selected sample reduced the generality of the findings, the purpose was to examine the existing shortcomings in the interactive process from the perspectives of both the parties. The theoretical and practical implications presented in this research might be useful for both companies and for facilitating replication studies. The inferences came through

this research might be applicable in an intra-organizational context, such as internal marketing. If Ethiopian Telecom has to confidently introduce all the necessary modifications to the existing system particularly related to internal and interactive marketing, there will be an enormous opportunity to transform the pessimistic opinion of the market which in turn offers a delectable prospect to win the hearts of telecom customers of the country.

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