

**THE EFFECT OF INEFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE
PUBLIC SECTOR, A CASE STUDY OF CENTRE FOR LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION
SERVICES (CLCS), MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

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RS22M12/010

**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER
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DECLARATION

I, Ainembabazi Allen, hereby declare that I am the sole author of this research report and it is my original work and that to the best of my knowledge, it has not been presented to any institution (s) either partially or in total for any academic award (s), publication (s), or other use (s). Where the works of others are quoted, appropriate references have been given.”

“I, therefore, present it to Uganda Christian University for consideration.”

Signature.....*Allen*.....

Date.....*20/06/2024*.....

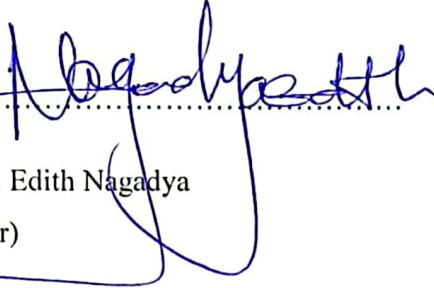
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APPROVAL

“This research report titled: “The Effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in The Public Sector, a Case Study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University”, has been completed under my supervision and is now ready for submission to the School of Social Sciences at Uganda Christian University.

Signature.....



Date.....

20th / 6 / 2024

Name: Ms. Edith Nagadya
(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my Academic Supervisor, Ms. Edith Nagadya, special thanks to my guardian, Mr. Joram Musingusizi, my grandmother, Ms. Elivayida Kamabate, my aunt, Ms. Christine Ayebazibwe and lastly to all my family members and friends who have prayed, advised, supported and mentored me throughout my education up to this level. Above all, I thank the Almighty God for guidance and provision towards completion of this report and the entire course.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University. It specifically focused on; investigating the relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS, establishing the relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS and examining the relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS

The study was carried out using a descriptive research design where both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were also used. The data was collected using questionnaires and interviews during the data collection, both purposive and simple random sampling methods were used. A sample size of 92 customers of CLCS and 10 staff of CLCS was also used in the study.

The study findings revealed the critical role of effective communication and technological infrastructure in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty at CLCS. Miscommunication, delayed communication, and technological barriers were identified as significant challenges that negatively impact customer loyalty. Addressing these issues is imperative for CLCS to maintain and enhance customer loyalty by fostering clarity, responsiveness, and efficiency in communication processes and technological systems. By prioritizing improvements in communication effectiveness and technological advancements, CLCS can cultivate positive customer experiences, bolster trust, and strengthen long-term loyalty among its clientele.

Based on the study findings, it is recommended that the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS) at Makerere University implement comprehensive communication training for staff to enhance clarity and responsiveness, modernize technological infrastructure to eliminate barriers, establish clear communication protocols for timely interactions, and conduct regular assessments to continuously improve communication effectiveness and meet customer needs.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction to the study

This chapter presents the introduction of the study on the effect of ineffective communication on customer loyalty in the public sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University. It focuses on background; historical, theoretical, conceptual, contextual to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Historical perspective

In the 21st Century, the public sector environment is characterized by cut-throat competition, high global consumerism, rapidly changing innovation and customer expectations that have made customer loyalty a management struggle. The sector is not an exception in striving to cope that with these hurdles; the public sector situation is worsened by radical changes in consumers' tastes and preferences, health-consciousness and fitness awareness (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2021). Therefore, the public sector is faced with the challenge of identifying a profitable path in this seriously altered competitive landscape and customer loyalty (Ward & Ostrom, 2019).

Globally, the impact of ineffective communication on consumer loyalty, as a result of a corporate scandal, became clearly visible during the well-known Libor scandal. In June 2012 it was revealed that the public sector including public education departments, banks such as Bank of England among others were involved in a large scale fraud and never considered effective communication (Woodruff, 2017). For instance, Bank of England was falsely inflating or deflating their interest rates and did not accept customer feedback. In this way the bank could profit more from trades. As a result, the bank gave the impression to be more creditworthy than they actually are. This led to enormous wave of negative publicity towards the banking sector and especially towards the global banking sector (Xie & Peng, 2019). A few months later Bank

of England revealed that that the banks had made billions of profit and shared hundreds of millions of bonuses among an elite pool of traders and directors. This again led to a wave of negative media attention targeted at Bank of England without effective communication. This resulted in customer protests and loss of loyalty where Bank of England customers cut up their bank cards in front of the bank (Muchai, 2019).

In late 2003, the goal of organizational communication studies was to focus on the radical rethinking of the role of organizational life (Mumby, 2018). Between 2001 and 2003 organizational communication research explored communication in relation to a variety of alternative organizational forms including team-based organizing, knowledge-based organizing, 16 self-organizing, democratic and cooperative organizing, feminist organizing, community organizing, multinational collaborations such as international joint ventures, and even interrelationships among non-governmental organizations as a route to nation building in second and third world countries (Ladany, Mori, & Mehr, 2017).

In Africa, a study by Nabie & Ome (2016) among growing companies such a Zambezi, Mandela Millers, Azam Tanzania argued that ineffective communication among companies affect customers' loyalty and can negatively affects objectives and outcomes of the company by 76%. Munchia et al., (2019) revealed that in order to ensure customer loyalty, managers in organizations should first understand what factors motivate organizational staff to speak efficiently, and to increase the drive to work towards organizational goals rather than emphasizing individual performances. The quality of communication in an organization is a critical factor to motivate employees towards higher performance (Walumbwa et al., 2018). In today's hyper-competitive marketplace, understanding what fosters and forwards employees' job performance and motivation is critical, however one of the key factors is effective communication and customer loyalty (Pauley & Pauley, 2019). Customer disloyalty has been attached to a critical component of ineffective communication in the organisation have been identified as by poor downward and upward communication, the inaccessibility of management to employees and customers, and the reliability of information circulated within the organization (Waldvogel, 2018).

1.1.2 Conceptual perspective

Effective communication in management is a means of bringing about successful workplace growth and increased performance of all parties involved in the communication process (through improving how individuals in the organization talk, interpret, and make sense of situations. Effective communication among managers is essential for accomplishing tasks in organizations (Turaga, 2016). For example, according to Chidiebere, Ngozi, & Ifeoma (2019), effective communication does not just involve words to influence people, but a set of combined skills including non-verbal communication, engaged listening, the ability to communicate assertively, and the capacity to recognize and understand our own emotions and those of the person is communicating with.

Customer loyalty can be said to be the behaviour of repeat customers, as well as those that offer good ratings, reviews, or testimonials (Kumar & Shah, 2019). It is not only about customers doing a particular company a great service by offering favourable word of mouth publicity regarding a product/service, telling friends and family, but also, it is a process, a program, or a group of programs geared toward keeping a guest happy so he or she will provide more business. The ultimate goal is to develop happy customers who will return to purchase again and persuade others to use that company's products or services. This equates to great cost savings and profitability to the company through the keeping of current customers against attracting new ones as well as making stakeholders happy (Kotler & Gertner, 2018).

The public sector, also called the state sector, is the part of the economy composed of both public services and public enterprises. Public sectors include the public goods and governmental services such as the military, law enforcement, infrastructure, public transit, public education, along with health care and those working for the government itself, such as elected officials (Lloyd, 2017). The public sector might provide services that a non-payer cannot be excluded from (such as street lighting), services which benefit all of society rather than just the individual who uses the service. Public enterprises, or state-owned enterprises, are self-financing commercial enterprises that are under public ownership which provide various private goods and services for sale and usually operate on a commercial basis (Carnevale, 2018).

Building customer loyalty leads to positive outcomes such as augmented sales, a reduction in costs, more foreseeable profit flows and increased competitive advantage and is critical to a firm's survival and growth (Nabie & Ome, 2016). This is consistent with customer relationship management (CRM) theory which argues that a firm's overriding strategy should be the attraction and retention of profitable customers, because loyal customers will, in the long-term, buy more and pay a premium for doing business with those they trust and like (Peppers & Rogers, 2017).

1.1.3 Theoretical perspective

The study employed a theory of "motivated reasoning". The theory of motivated reasoning argues that that people are driven by two different kind of goals when processing information and forming judgments (Kunda, 2020). The first goal is to arrive at an accurate conclusion and de second goals is to arrive at a desired conclusion (Chaiken, Giner-Sorolla & Chen, 2021). Consumers with a strong company-consumer identification are suggested to be motivated to protect their self-defining believe. Therefore, a defensive way of information processing is evoked, which results in a bias in the direction of the desired conclusion. Consumers with weak consumer-firm identification will aim at evaluating the information as accurate as possible. In doing so, the consumer will enhance the weight of the negative publicity and this will likely result in a decline of their positive attitude (Ahluwalia, 2018). Again, when the negative publicity is of an extreme level, even the consumer with strong consumer-firm identification will result in a decline in of their positive attitude towards the company. In conclusion, Einwiller *et al.* (2019) report that strong consumer-firm identification reduces the effect of moderately negative publicity, however, does not weaken the effect of extreme negative publicity.

1.1.4 Contextual Perspective

In context of communication and customer loyalty, Kangu et al., (2017) noted that regardless of the type and sector of the organizations, effective communication among managers and employees' job performance and motivation, and customer loyalty are related. The goal of effective communication should be a purpose that drives the organization. For decades, research has focused on the study of employees' communication in relation to job satisfaction and

workplace motivation. However, great strides have been made in this area of research including relevant definitions and research methods (Zhang & Wang, 2018). Some existing trends in the study of organizational communication and customer loyalty include areas such as communication in relation links to ethics, job burn-out, and corporate social responsibility; or communication in relation to working relationships between employees and employers (Rooney, McKenna & Barker, 2019).

Based on Kakawa et al., (2023), the lack of adequate communication among public entities in Uganda poses a number of constraints to strategic and effective communication leading to low customer satisfaction and underdevelopment. One of the causes is the inadequacy of communication staff as the public sector has only few trained staff to man communication in the sector. Orisa (2022) also noted that the public sector in Uganda also lack official communication mechanisms such as telephone lines and E-mail address to receive communication and feedback from customers and other stakeholders within and outside Uganda. Different websites among Ugandan public sector are inactive and are commonly never updated for years. Shockingly they rarely bare provision to accept customer feedback in case of dissatisfaction (Sserukera et al., 2022). Orisa (2022) further revealed that the main medium of communication is commonly through writing of letters because most public sector departments have a single Radio Station and yet 88% of the people there are illiterate. The study found that effects of ineffective communication lead to delay in service delivery, mistrust amongst public staff, corruption, suspicions and confusion.

In order to close that gaps above, this study will be conducted at Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University to assess the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector. There are several of services provided at the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS) include Translation, Language teaching, Transcription and editing which all require serious customer motivation and loyalty. Centre for Language and Communication Services at the School of Languages, Literature and Communication, Makerere University, Upper Block, Offices UB12, 13, 14. CLCS was initially the Department of Languages created by the University Council in July 1974.

1.2 Problem Statement

It is essential for an organisation to keep their customers loyal. Negative publicity has the potency to jeopardize consumer loyalty. However, how negative publicity influence consumer loyalty is not known. There are studies that investigate the effect of negative communication on consumer attitude, such as one by McQuail, 2016 at The McKinsey Global Institute who shed light on the how poor communication among social technologies among private sectors can decrease the productivity of knowledge workers by 20% to 25%. Another study by Norsyamihah Abdul Wahab (2019) on assessing effective communication in the organizations for success, performance and motivation, it was found out that ineffective communication leads to low productivity and indirectly increases workplace stressors that might be caused by language confusion, lack of communication skills among leaders and unaware miscommunication. In another study, it was discovered that ineffective communication affects corporate identification, whereby employees who would identify with their organizations tend to be less-informed and do not understand corporate goals and philosophies of organisation customers (Chidiebere, Ngozi, & Ifeoma, 2019). However, research on how Ineffective Communication Affects Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector in particular has not been over emphasized. This creates a knowledge gap. Yet, it is important for an institution to acquire loyal customers and maintain their loyalty. Deteriorating customer loyalty can result into unsustainable competitive advantage because of ineffective communication (Woodruff, 2017). Therefore, this study assessed the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University in order to help in closing the existing knowledge gaps and provide necessary recommendations.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To examine the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University.

1.4 Specific Objectives

Thus, this study addressed the following specific objectives:

- i. To investigate the relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in the Public Sector, CLCS.
- ii. To establish the relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in the Public Sector, CLCS.
- iii. To examine the relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in the Public Sector, CLCS.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H₁: There is a significant negative relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in the Public Sector, CLCS.

H₂: There is a significant negative relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in the Public Sector, CLCS.

H₃: There is a significant negative relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in the Public Sector, CLCS.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of the study covered three dimensions that were; content, geographical and time and these are discussed in detail below.

1.6.1 Content scope

The study examined the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University. It specifically established the causes of ineffective communication in the in the Public Sector, the effect of ineffective communication on customer loyalty in the in the Public Sector, and the strategies to improve communication and customer loyalty at Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University.

1.6.2 Geographical scope

The study was carried out at Centre for Language and Communication Services at the School of Languages, Literature and Communication, Makerere University, Upper Block, Offices UB12, 13, 14. CLCS was initially the Department of Languages created by the University Council in July 1974. The Department was created as a way of providing an official academic venue for teaching and promoting both European and African Languages and Linguistics. The department was elevated to the level of an Institute in November 1995 (Institute of Languages). Since then, the Institute has been operating as a semi-autonomous unit within the Faculty of Arts. The CLCS is now in the School of Languages, Literature and Communication, under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS).

1.6.3 Time scope

The study examined literature from 2015 to 2023 because it provided updated information on the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector such as a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services, Makerere University.

1.7 Rationale/ Justification of the Study

A lot of studies such as those of Muchai, Mutukaa and Jemaiyo (2021), Sayon (2023) have been conducted on the effect of ineffective communication and Customer Loyalty in the private and public sector in developed countries such as USA, Europe. However, the above studies ignored the effects of ineffective communication and Customer Loyalty in the public sector among developing countries such as Uganda, hence a contextual gap. This prompted the researcher to pursue a study on the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services, Makerere University in order to address the gap identified above.

1.8 Significance of the Study

To different public administrators and other stakeholders, the study will uncover the importance of improving effective communication for improved customer loyalty in the Public Sector.

To researcher and scholars, the study will specifically provide insights on the causes of ineffective communication in the in the Public Sector, the effects of ineffective communication in the in the Public Sector, and the strategies to improve communication and customer loyalty at Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University.

The study is also a requirement for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of a Master's Degree in Public Administration of Uganda Christian University (UCU).

1.9 Theoretical Framework

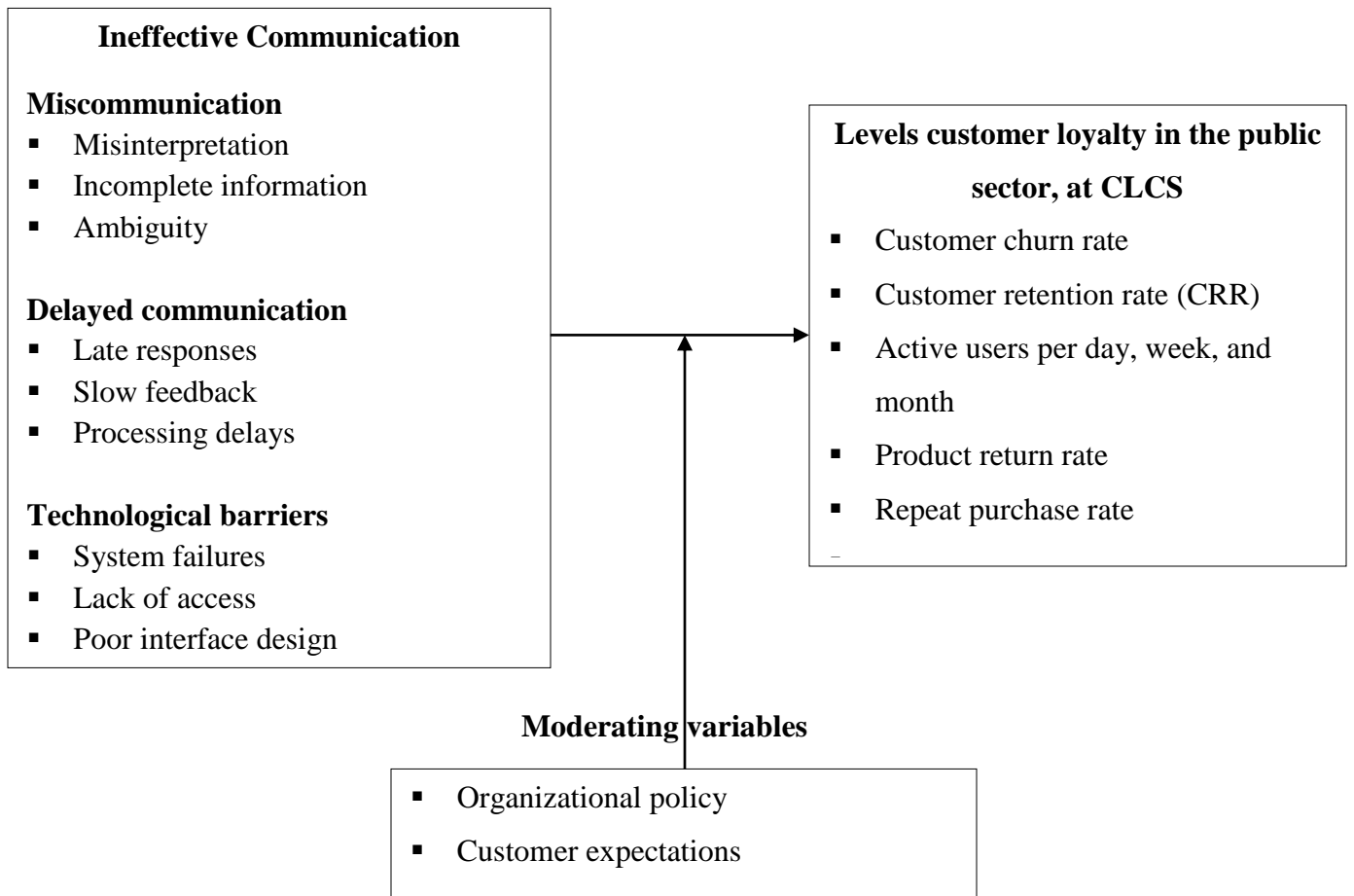
The study employed a theory of “motivated reasoning”. The theory of motivated reasoning argues that that people are driven by two different kind of goals when processing information and forming judgments (Kunda, 2020). The first goal is to arrive at an accurate conclusion and de second goals is to arrive at a desired conclusion (Chaiken, Giner-Sorolla & Chen, 2021). Consumers with a strong company-consumer identification are suggested to be motivated to protect their self-defining believe. Therefore, a defensive way of information processing is evoked, which results in a bias in the direction of the desired conclusion. Consumers with weak consumer-firm identification will aim at evaluating the information as accurate as possible. In doing so, the consumer will enhance the weight of the negative publicity and this will likely result in a decline of their positive attitude (Ahluwalia, 2018). Again, when the negative publicity is of an extreme level, even the consumer with strong consumer-firm identification will result in a decline in of their positive attitude towards the company. In conclusion, Einwiller et al. (2019) report that strong consumer-firm identification reduces the effect of moderately negative publicity, however, does not weaken the effect of extreme negative publicity.

1.10 Conceptual framework

Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University.

Independent variable

Dependent variable



Source: Adopted from, Ledgerwood (2019) and modified by the researcher (2024)

The conceptual framework for this study examines the impact of ineffective communication on customer loyalty at the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University. Ineffective communication is defined through three dimensions: miscommunication (misinterpretation, incomplete information, ambiguity), delayed communication (late responses,

slow feedback, processing delays), and technological barriers (system failures, lack of access, poor interface design). The dependent variable, customer loyalty in the public sector, is measured by customer churn rate, customer retention rate (CRR), active users per day, week, and month, product return rate, and repeat purchase rate. Organizational policy and customer expectations are identified as moderating variables that influence the relationship between ineffective communication and customer loyalty.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provided a review of existing literature on the effect of ineffective communication on customer loyalty in the public sector. The chapter begun by defining key terms and concepts related to the topic, followed by the theoretical Review and the studies conducted before in this area. This chapter then showed the research objectives and information about the scope of the study, before concluding with a summary of the key points.

2.1 Concepts of the key variables

The study will assess the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services.

Conceptually, Muchai (2019) defined ineffective communication as speech, written language, body language, or other forms of communication that fail to accomplish the intended purpose. Effective communication techniques will ensure that the recipient understands the point that the speaker or writer intends to convey. It is the exchange of information so that both the sender and recipient understand that information in the same way (Einwiller, Fedorikhin, and Kamins, 2019).

Ineffective communication means that this message is lost at some point in the process and that the parties cannot understand the information conveyed in the same way. This can occur in the way the sender conveys the message or in the way the recipient interprets the message (Muchai, 2019). Effective communication is one of the most significant factors when it comes to the workplace environment, productivity and longevity at a job, the ability for people to stay in a relationship, and happiness across many areas in life. The more effective communication in the workplace, the better employee, partner, and person can be. However, communication is multifaceted and requires at least two, if not many more, parties (Ahluwalia, 2018).

Customer loyalty describes an ongoing emotional relationship between you and your customer, manifesting itself by how willing a customer is to engage with and repeatedly purchase from you versus the competitors (Chaiken, Giner-Sorolla, and Chen, 2021). Customer loyalty is the act of choosing one company's products and services consistently over its competitors. When a customer is loyal to one company, they are not easily swayed by price or availability. They would rather pay more and ensure the same quality service and product they know and love (Ahluwalia, 2018).

It is essential for an organisation to keep their customers loyal and negative publicity has the potency to jeopardize consumer loyalty. However, how negative publicity influence consumer loyalty is not known. There are studies that investigate the effect of negative publicity on consumers' attitude, however research on how negative publicity influences consumer loyalty in particular has not been done yet (Ahluwalia, 2018). For a company it is important to acquire loyal customers and to maintain their loyalty. This is because having loyal customers has several advantages, for example it is more cost efficient to maintain a sustainable consumer base. In other words, consumer loyalty is an important determinant in acquiring a sustainable competitive advantage (Einwiller et al., 2019).

These are; commitment, brand reputation perceived fairness/justice and switching costs. Pan et al. (2012) proposes trust as the most important antecedent of loyalty, but there is no empirical evidence that negative publicity affects trust, even though this is very likely. Therefore, trust is not included in the model yet. Consumer loyalty can be perceived from a behavioural and from an attitudinal perspective (Kangu et al., 2017). Both are essential constructs for true consumer loyalty to exist. That is, a consumer must have a positive attitude towards a brand and will put its loyalty in practice by repurchasing a certain brand or product (Muchai, 2019).

2.2 Relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in public sector

The relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in the public sector has been extensively studied in recent years. Miscommunication, characterized by misinterpretation, incomplete information, and ambiguity, significantly impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. According to a study by Hani (2021), miscommunication in public sector organizations leads to

misunderstandings and frustration among customers, which directly affects their trust and loyalty towards the service provider. The study highlights that even minor communication errors can accumulate, resulting in a significant decline in customer confidence and repeated usage of the services.

Einwiller et al. (2019) explored the effects of misinterpretation within the health sector and found that incorrect or misleading information led to unmet expectations and subsequent dissatisfaction. Their survey revealed that misinterpretation of medical instructions not only decreased patient satisfaction but also eroded trust in public health services, causing a notable drop in patient loyalty. This finding underscores the critical need for healthcare providers to ensure clarity and accuracy in all forms of communication to maintain and enhance customer loyalty.

Chaiken et al. (2021) examined the issue of incomplete information in the public sector and its impact on customer trust and loyalty. Their study found that when government agencies provided partial information, it resulted in significant confusion and reduced trust among citizens. This lack of complete information made it difficult for customers to make informed decisions, thereby decreasing their likelihood of returning to use these services. The researchers emphasized the importance of providing comprehensive and accurate information to foster customer loyalty.

Ingenbleek (2019) investigated the role of ambiguity in communication within public transportation services and its effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty. His research showed that ambiguous messages regarding schedules and routes led to varied interpretations among customers, causing uncertainty and mistrust. This ambiguity resulted in lower customer satisfaction and a decline in service usage. The study concluded that clear and precise communication is essential for retaining customer loyalty in the public sector, as it helps build trust and reliability.

Kangu et al. (2017) conducted a case study on public universities and found that miscommunication regarding course requirements and administrative procedures had a significant negative impact on student retention. Students who experienced such miscommunication were more likely to transfer to other institutions. This study demonstrates

how crucial clear communication is in retaining customers in the education sector, as miscommunication can lead to a loss of trust and drive customers away.

The Public Administration Review (2020) reported on the broader implications of miscommunication in various public services, such as social security and tax offices. The report found that frequent miscommunication led to a significant drop in customer confidence and loyalty, as it created a perception of incompetence and unreliability. The authors recommended that public sector organizations implement improved communication strategies to enhance customer retention and rebuild trust.

Nabie & Ome (2016) highlighted the importance of effective communication in maintaining customer loyalty in sectors with frequent and critical customer interactions, such as public utilities. Their study found that utilities that adopted clear and transparent communication policies experienced higher customer satisfaction and loyalty. They suggested that addressing miscommunication through employee training and better communication tools could significantly improve customer relationships and loyalty.

Muchai et al. (2019) discussed the role of technological advancements in reducing miscommunication in the public sector. They focused on the integration of customer relationship management (CRM) systems in public libraries and found that these systems helped ensure consistent and accurate communication. The study showed that the use of CRM systems significantly reduced instances of miscommunication, leading to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty. This highlights the potential of technology to enhance communication and customer loyalty in the public sector.

Ahluwalia (2018) emphasized the importance of training and development programs for public sector employees in mitigating miscommunication. His study in public healthcare services found that communication training for staff led to fewer instances of miscommunication and higher patient loyalty. By equipping employees with effective communication skills, organizations can ensure that information is conveyed accurately and clearly, thereby improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.3 Relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in public sector

According to Pullig et al. (2019), delayed communication in public sector services significantly impacts customer satisfaction and loyalty. Their study found that slow response times in public utilities resulted in increased customer frustration and a decline in trust towards the service providers. The delay in communication was often attributed to bureaucratic inefficiencies, which led to customer dissatisfaction and a reduced likelihood of continued patronage.

Xie & Peng (2019) explored the effects of delayed communication in public healthcare services and discovered a strong negative correlation with patient loyalty. Patients who experienced delays in receiving critical health information or responses to their inquiries reported higher levels of dissatisfaction and a lower propensity to return for future services. The study emphasized the importance of timely communication in maintaining patient trust and loyalty in the public health sector.

Zhang & Wang (2018) investigated the impact of delayed feedback in public education institutions. Their research showed that students who faced delays in receiving academic feedback were more likely to express dissatisfaction and consider transferring to other institutions. The study highlighted that prompt communication from academic staff is crucial for student retention and loyalty to the institution, as it directly affects their academic experience and satisfaction.

Sen & Bhattacharya (2021) examined the role of processing delays in public sector financial services and their impact on customer loyalty. They found that customers who experienced delays in financial transactions, such as loan approvals or account services, exhibited lower levels of satisfaction and loyalty. The study suggested that streamlining communication processes and reducing delays could significantly enhance customer satisfaction and retention in public financial services.

According to a study by Lloyd (2017), delayed communication in social services had a profound effect on customer loyalty. The study indicated that delays in response times for social security benefits or public assistance programs led to heightened frustration and mistrust among

beneficiaries. The authors recommended that public sector organizations prioritize timely communication to improve service delivery and customer loyalty.

Muchai et al. (2019) conducted a study on the effects of delayed responses in public transportation services. Their research showed that customers who experienced delays in communication regarding service changes or disruptions were more likely to switch to alternative transportation options. The study underscored the importance of real-time communication and timely updates to maintain customer loyalty in public transportation services.

Ward & Ostrom (2019) explored the impact of slow feedback mechanisms in public sector customer service departments. Their study revealed that customers who received delayed responses to their complaints or inquiries exhibited lower levels of satisfaction and loyalty. The researchers concluded that improving the speed of feedback and response mechanisms is essential for maintaining customer trust and loyalty in public sector services.

A study by Consoli (2018) focused on the role of technological interventions in mitigating the negative effects of delayed communication in public libraries. He found that implementing automated response systems and improving digital communication infrastructure significantly reduced delays and improved customer satisfaction and loyalty. This highlights the potential of technology to address communication delays and enhance customer experiences in the public sector.

Woodruff (2017) examined the consequences of delayed communication in public utility services. His research indicated that customers who faced delays in receiving information about service outages or billing issues were more likely to express dissatisfaction and switch to private service providers. The study emphasized the need for timely and proactive communication to retain customer loyalty in the competitive utility sector.

In a comprehensive review, Kunda (2020) analyzed various public sector services and the impact of delayed communication on customer loyalty. He found consistent evidence that delays in communication lead to increased customer dissatisfaction and reduced loyalty across different sectors, including healthcare, education, and utilities. The review recommended that public

sector organizations adopt best practices for timely communication, including leveraging technology and improving internal communication processes to enhance customer loyalty.

2.4 Relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in public sector

According to Chaiken et al. (2021), technological barriers significantly impact customer loyalty in the public sector. Their study highlighted that system failures and technical glitches in public service platforms led to increased frustration among users, which directly affected their trust and loyalty. The researchers emphasized that reliable technology is crucial for maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty, as frequent technical issues can drive customers away from public services.

Rooney et al. (2019) investigated the effects of lack of access to digital services in public healthcare. They found that patients who struggled to access online health services due to technological barriers reported lower satisfaction levels and a reduced likelihood of using these services again. The study suggested that improving digital access, especially for vulnerable populations, is essential for retaining customer loyalty in the public healthcare sector.

Kumar & Shah (2019) explored the impact of poor interface design on customer loyalty in public education services. Their research revealed that students and parents who found online educational platforms difficult to navigate were more likely to experience dissatisfaction and consider alternative private education options. The study highlighted the importance of user-friendly interface design in enhancing customer loyalty in the public education sector.

Pauley & Pauley (2019) examined technological barriers in public transportation services and their effect on customer loyalty. They found that customers who faced issues with mobile apps for ticketing or real-time updates were more likely to switch to private transportation options. The study emphasized the need for reliable and user-friendly technological solutions to retain customer loyalty in public transportation services.

Waldvogel (2018) focused on system failures in public utility services and their impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. His study revealed that frequent outages and technical issues with online billing and service platforms led to decreased customer trust and loyalty. The

researchers concluded that enhancing the reliability of technological systems is critical for maintaining customer loyalty in the public utilities sector.

Sayon (2023) investigated the relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in public financial services. He found that customers who experienced difficulties with online banking platforms, such as transaction failures or security issues, exhibited lower satisfaction and loyalty. The study recommended improving the robustness and security of digital financial services to enhance customer loyalty.

Kotler (2018) explored the role of technological advancements in mitigating the negative effects of technological barriers in public libraries. His research showed that the implementation of advanced digital systems and automated services significantly reduced customer dissatisfaction and improved loyalty. The study highlighted the potential of modern technology to overcome barriers and enhance customer experiences in the public sector.

Norsyamihah (2018) examined the impact of poor digital infrastructure on customer loyalty in public social services. His study indicated that beneficiaries who faced issues with accessing online services or experiencing system failures were more likely to express dissatisfaction and distrust. The researchers emphasized the importance of investing in robust digital infrastructure to maintain and improve customer loyalty in public social services.

Kalyani (2016) analyzed the effects of technological barriers on customer loyalty in public administrative services. He found that customers who encountered difficulties with e-government platforms, such as slow response times or user-unfriendly interfaces, reported lower satisfaction and were less likely to use these services again. The study suggested that enhancing the usability and responsiveness of digital platforms is crucial for retaining customer loyalty in public administrative services.

In a comprehensive review, Mumby (2018) assessed various public sector services and the impact of technological barriers on customer loyalty. He consistently found that technological barriers, such as system failures, lack of access, and poor interface design, led to increased customer dissatisfaction and reduced loyalty. The review recommended that public sector

organizations prioritize technological improvements and user-friendly designs to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.5 Summary and Literature Gap

The reviewed literature underscores the significant impact of technological barriers, such as system failures, lack of access, and poor interface design, on customer loyalty in various public sector services, including healthcare, education, transportation, utilities, financial services, libraries, and social services. Studies consistently highlight that these barriers lead to customer dissatisfaction, reduced trust, and decreased likelihood of continued patronage. Recommendations across the studies emphasize the need for improving digital infrastructure, ensuring reliable and user-friendly technological solutions, and leveraging modern technology to mitigate these issues. However, despite the extensive research on the individual effects of specific technological barriers, there remains a research gap in understanding the cumulative impact of these barriers across different public sector services and the potential interdependencies among them. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive, cross-sectoral analysis to develop holistic strategies for enhancing customer loyalty through technological improvements in the public sector.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes how the study was conducted. It focuses on the research design and approaches that were adopted, description of the population, sampling strategies, data collection methods, and data analysis. It is helpful to divide the discussion into subsections as follows:

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The descriptive research design is based around collecting data which describes events, and thereafter process it in tabulations and other methods of analysis to provide meaningful information (Creswell, 2009). More specifically, it helped to answer the what, when, where, and how questions regarding the research problem rather than the why. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach was used because the study was based on variables that are measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures. Qualitative approach was used as the study used interviews to explore in-depth the understanding, views and attitudes of study respondents.

3.2 Description of the population

Maree (2015) defined a research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common binding characteristic or trait. The researcher collected data from 10 staff and 120 clients at Centre for Languages and Communication Services, Makerere University. The target respondents were selected because they had the necessary information needed for the study.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents for quantitative data (questionnaires)

Category of respondents	Study population	Sample size	Methods of sampling	Methods of data collection
Clients at CLCS	120	92	Simple random technique	Questionnaire
Grand Total	120	92		

Source: Primary data, 2024

Table 2: Distribution of respondents for qualitative data (interviews)

Category of respondents	Study population	Sample size	Methods of sampling	Methods of data collection
Staff at CLCS	10	10	Purposive technique	Interview
Grand Total	10	10		

From a population of 120, a sample of 92 participants who are customers of CLCS and 10 staff at CLCS were obtained using the Morgan and Krejcie as illustrated in table1 below:-

Table 3: Sample Size Determination

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354

95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970) in Amin (2005); N = Population and S = Sample

3.3 Sampling strategies

Sampling is a means of selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population (Maree, 2018). A sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample (Borg & Gall, 2019). Sampling strategies are techniques that investigator can use to obtain a representative sample from a population of interest (Kumar, 2018). The study used purposive and simple random sampling techniques as described below;-

3.3.1 Purposive Sampling

A purposive sampling, also known as a judgmental sampling, is one that is chosen based on the community's knowledge and the purpose of the study, according to Amitav and Suprakash (2016). The researcher employed purposive sampling in order to collect a sample of 10 staff who were selected at Centre for Languages and Communication Services, Makerere University. A particular category of staff was picked by deliberate sampling according to the type of office. This strategy worked well because it enabled the selection of knowledgeable people who had pertinent information that was in-depth enough to enable the acquisition of a deeper grasp of the problem. The researcher needed to sample with a purpose in mind and look for certain, pre-defined groups of people in order to do this.

3.3.2 Simple Random Sampling

The study population's respondents were randomly chosen using a simple random sampling procedure. Maree (2017) defines simple random sampling as a technique where participants are chosen at random and only once to prevent bias that could impair the validity of the experiment's findings. This method was employed because it allows for the impartial selection of responders, giving each participant an equal chance of being represented in the sample. The method was utilized to choose 92 customers at Centre for Languages and Communication Services, Makerere University.

3.4 Sources of data

Data collection methods are ways used to collect data from the samples (Ofoyungu, 2017). The study used qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and these included interviews and questionnaire methods of data collection. The methods were described in the table below:-

Table 4: Methods of data collection

Method of data collection	Reason for use	Target respondents
Interview	The study used the interviews in collecting data because it provides the potential to get the participants' perspective of their experience. In addition, it helped the researcher to probe deeper into participants' views on the study topic.	The researcher engaged in face to face discussions with 10 staff at (CLCS), Makerere University
Questionnaire	The study used the questionnaire because they can reach large respondents, free from bias of the researcher and gives the respondents adequate time to give well thought answers.	Questionnaires with open-ended and closed-ended questions were administered to 92 customers at Centre for Languages and Communication Services to collect their views.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data Analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to describe, illustrate, condense, recap, and evaluate data (Minhye, 2019). Two types of analyses were conducted and these included quantitative and qualitative analyses. The following subsections explain the analyses in detail.

3.5.1 Quantitative Analysis

The analysis mainly consisted of descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Spearman correlation, coefficient of determination and regressions). The means and standard deviations were used to determine the respondents' views on the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University. Pearson's correlation, coefficient of determination and regression were used to test the hypotheses. The correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the variables. The coefficient of determination and regression was used to determine the magnitude of variance in the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University. Frequency counts of the responses were then obtained, to generate descriptive information about the respondents that participated in the study and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under investigation. This involved the use of percentages, tables and charts because, according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), it helps to summarize large quantities of data whilst making the report reader friendly.

3.5.2 Qualitative Analysis

Responses from field interviews were analyzed using narrative and content analysis for qualitative data. Content analysis was used to edit qualitative data and reorganize it into meaningful shorter sentences. During qualitative analysis only the pieces of text relevant to the research questions were coded. The codes were then examined and thereafter fitted into a theme which themes were reviewed and modified. This was then presented as quotations to supplement the quantitative data in order to enhance interpretation of the results.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration is an important aspect in research since it is difficult to carry out any research without running into ethical issues like confidentiality, informed consent and right to privacy of the respondents (Moule & Goodman, 2015). It was concerned with the protection of respondents' autonomy, maximizing good outcomes while minimizing unnecessary risk to research assistants. In conducting the study, therefore, explanations about its aims were made to the respondents, so as to obtain their informed consent. As such, the respondents participated in the study voluntarily and mention of their names was avoided. Anonymity of the respondents was assured and the data provide was treated with utmost confidentiality.

3.7 Methodological Constraints

Limitations are the shortcomings, conditions or influences that cannot be controlled by the researcher that place restrictions on the research methodology and conclusions (Israel & Hay, 2016). This study acknowledged certain limitations she faced.

Limited time: The study was faced with a challenge of limited time to beat the deadlines as stipulated in the time frame. This was solved by making a timetable for herself especially concerning when she was supposed to do the research.

Reluctance of the participants: Some of the participants were reluctant to respond. Uneasy and suspicious of the information was gathered and thought that the data was used for other motives against them. However, this was solved by making a follow up onto the participants who were interviewed.

Lack of cooperation from participants: The study also faced a challenge of lack of cooperation from participants, especially those who considered the information confidential and thought that the study would be for purposes of the study. The researcher therefore assured the participants of confidentiality of their information and that it was solely for academic purposes.

Fear of giving information: This limited the respondents from giving important information about the study problem. Other respondents were hesitant because they feared that engaging in the study could cause compromise job ethics. The basis was fear of lack confidentiality in the

research process. This was solved when the researcher drew rapport and assured the respondents of confidentiality and that the study was for academic reasons.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the results of analysis that has been done to look at the specific objectives of the study and in relation to the reviewed literature. The study was carried out using questionnaires with 92 clients of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS) and interviews with 10 staff of CLCS. The findings are presented with the help of tables for purposes of clarity and interpretation.

4.1 Findings on demographic characteristics of respondents

This section presents the general background information about the respondents in relation to their gender, age bracket, level of education and employment status as shown in the table below;

Table 5: Background Information about the respondents

Item	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	51	55.4
	Female	41	44.6
	Total	92	100.0
Age bracket	20-29 years	39	42.4
	30-39 years	28	30.4
	40-49 years	16	17.4
	50 + years	9	9.8
	Total	92	100.0
Level of education	Diploma	22	23.9
	Bachelors	40	43.5
	Masters	18	19.6
	Others	12	13.0
	Total	92	100.0

Employment status	Student	35	38.0
	Business person	16	17.4
	Employed	31	33.7
	Unemployed	10	10.9
	Total	92	100.0

Source: *Primary data*

From table 5 above, the gender distribution of the respondents shows that a majority are male, comprising 55.4%, while females make up 44.6%. This indicates a slightly higher male representation among the respondents. This implies that the experiences and perspectives provided in the study may slightly skew towards those of male respondents, which is important to consider when generalizing the results to the entire population.

Furthermore, the results from table 5 above concerning age distribution show that the largest group fell within the 20-29 years bracket, accounting for 42.4%. This was followed by the 30-39 years age group at 30.4%, the 40-49 years group at 17.4%, and the 50+ years at 9.8%. This indicates that a significant portion of the respondents are young adults. This further implies that the findings may be more reflective of younger individuals' perspectives and experiences, potentially influencing the relevance and application of the results for older age groups.

Regarding educational attainment, the findings revealed that 43.5% hold a Bachelor's degree, making it the most common level of education among respondents. This was followed by those with a Diploma at 23.9%, a Master's degree at 19.6%, and other educational qualifications like post graduate diplomas at 13.0%. The implication is that the respondents are generally well-educated, which could influence their understanding and engagement with the topics addressed in the study. Higher education levels may also affect their expectations and satisfaction levels with public services.

Finally, the employment status of the respondents shows that students formed the largest group at 38.0%. This was followed by employed individuals at 33.7%, business persons at 17.4%, and the unemployed at 10.9%. The high proportion of students is due to the fact that most of the

respondents were students could be due to the fact that CLCS is usually used by students of Makerere University.

4.2 Relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS

Table 6 summarizes respondents' responses on miscommunication in CLCS by using means and standard deviations.

Table 6: Miscommunication in CLCS

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
The information provided by CLCS is often unclear and confusing	3.64	1.154
I frequently receive conflicting information from different departments at CLCS	4.02	0.996
CLCS staff members often misunderstand my requests or questions	3.91	1.085
Miscommunication at CLCS has led to dissatisfaction with their services	4.15	0.589
I often have to seek clarification for the information provided by CLCS	4.28	0.510
The communication channels at CLCS are ineffective in addressing my concerns	3.88	1.033

Source: *Primary data*

Table 6 above shows analysis concerning miscommunication in CLCS using means and standard deviations which was gotten from use of a Likert scale which was represented as: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Not sure (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5). The scores of Strongly Disagree and Disagree have been taken to present a variable which mattered to a Small Extent (equivalent to mean score of 0 to 2.4 on the continuous Likert scale). The score of Not sure has been taken to represent a variable that mattered to a moderate extent (equivalent to a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous Likert scale). The score of Strongly agree and Agree

have been taken to represent a variable that mattered to a Large Extent (equivalent to a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 and on a continuous Likert scale). A standard deviation of >1.5 implies a significant difference concerning miscommunication in CLCS.

The findings presented in Table 6 reveal that the mean score of 3.64 indicates that, on average, respondents agree that the information provided by CLCS is often unclear and confusing. This suggests that a significant number of respondents perceive the communication from CLCS as not being straightforward or easily understandable. The standard deviation of 1.154, being greater than 1.0, implies that there is some variability in the responses, indicating that while many agree, there are varied opinions on this statement (Mean = 3.64; STD = 1.154).

On average, the respondents also strongly agree that they frequently receive conflicting information from different departments at CLCS with a mean score of 4.02. This high level of agreement highlights a major issue in internal communication within CLCS, leading to confusion among the customers. The standard deviation of 0.996 indicates relatively low variability, meaning most respondents consistently perceive this issue (Mean = 4.02; STD = 0.996).

Furthermore, the mean score of 3.91 shows that respondents generally agree that CLCS staff members often misunderstand their requests or questions. This indicates a significant communication barrier between staff and customers, potentially affecting service quality and customer satisfaction. The standard deviation of 1.085 suggests some variation in responses, but the overall agreement is clear (Mean = 3.91; STD = 1.085).

More so, a mean score of 4.15 indicates that respondents strongly agree that miscommunication at CLCS has led to dissatisfaction with their services. This high agreement underscores the negative impact of miscommunication on customer satisfaction. The lower standard deviation of 0.589 implies that there is strong consensus among respondents about this issue (Mean = 4.15; STD = 0.589).

In addition, the mean score of 4.28 shows that respondents strongly agree that they often have to seek clarification for the information provided by CLCS. This indicates a significant and pervasive issue where the initial communication is frequently insufficient, necessitating follow-

up inquiries from customers. The low standard deviation of 0.510 indicates strong agreement among respondents on this point (Mean = 4.28; STD = 0.510).

Lastly, on average, the respondents agree that the communication channels at CLCS are ineffective in addressing their concerns with a mean score of 3.88. This suggests that the mechanisms in place for customer communication are not meeting the needs of the respondents, potentially leading to unresolved issues and dissatisfaction. The standard deviation of 1.033 shows some variability in responses, but overall, the agreement is strong (Mean = 3.88; STD = 1.033).

The analysis of the statements reveals a consistent pattern of agreement among respondents that miscommunication is a significant issue at CLCS. High mean scores (above 3.5) across all statements indicate widespread recognition of problems related to unclear information, conflicting messages, misunderstandings, and ineffective communication channels. Standard deviations indicate some variability in individual experiences, but the general consensus is clear. This underscores the need for CLCS to address communication issues to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. The findings of the study concerning the relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS were further determined using Pearson’s correlation that was conducted as shown below;

Table 7: Pearson’s correlation on miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS

		Correlations	
		Miscommunication	Customer loyalty
Miscommunication	Pearson Correlation	1	-.733**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	92	92
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	-.733**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	92	92

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: *Primary data*

The findings indicated in table above shows that there is a significant negative relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS. This relationship is affirmed by r-

values of -0.733^{**} with significant p-values of 0.010 at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed) ($r = -0.733^{**}$, $p < .05$). It should further be noted that the p-value is below the significance level of 0.05 which means that we accept the null hypothesis. This means that there is a significant negative relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS. Therefore, the data indicates that higher levels of miscommunication are associated with lower levels of customer loyalty in CLCS, highlighting the critical impact of effective communication on maintaining customer loyalty.

4.2.1 How miscommunication affects customer loyalty in CLCS

From the interviews conducted with the staff of CLCS, they were asked to give their views on how miscommunication affects customer loyalty in CLCS. The responses of these respondents are discussed below as follows;

From interviews with key informants who are who are staff members of the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), several insights emerged on how miscommunication affects customer loyalty. Staff members collectively highlighted that unclear and confusing information frequently provided to customers leads to significant frustration and dissatisfaction. This lack of clarity often results in customers feeling misunderstood and undervalued, which diminishes their trust in CLCS. They emphasized that when customers receive conflicting information from different departments, it exacerbates confusion and creates an impression of disorganization and inefficiency within CLCS. Such inconsistencies undermine the organization's credibility and make customers doubt its competence and reliability, ultimately impacting their loyalty.

Furthermore, staff members noted that customers often need to seek clarification due to ambiguous communication, which strains their patience and loyalty. The repeated necessity to clarify information causes customers to perceive CLCS as unprofessional and unreliable. This negative perception is detrimental to customer loyalty, as dissatisfied customers are less likely to return or recommend CLCS services to others. Overall, the staff's insights suggest that improving the clarity, consistency, and accuracy of communication is vital for maintaining and enhancing customer loyalty at CLCS. Addressing these communication issues is essential for fostering a

positive customer experience and ensuring long-term customer retention. One of the staff members of CLCS had this to say;

“.....what I can say is that unclear communication often leaves our customers feeling undervalued and hesitant to engage with our services.....” **Staff member of CLCS 1**

4.3 Relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS

Table 8 summarizes respondents’ responses on delayed communication in CLCS by using means and standard deviations.

Table 8: Delayed communication in CLCS

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
Responses from CLCS are often delayed	3.99	0.967
I often have to follow up multiple times to get a response from CLCS	3.78	1.050
Delayed communication from CLCS has caused inconvenience for me	3.68	1.187
The delay in communication affects my perception of CLCS's reliability	3.74	1.006
Timely communication is not a priority for CLCS	3.61	1.208
Delays in communication have negatively impacted my overall experience with CLCS	4.12	0.406

Source: *Primary data*

Table 8 above shows analysis concerning delayed communication in CLCS using means and standard deviations which was gotten from use of a Likert scale which was represented as: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Not sure (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5). The scores of Strongly Disagree and Disagree have been taken to present a variable which mattered to a Small Extent (equivalent to mean score of 0 to 2.4 on the continuous Likert scale). The score of Not sure has been taken to represent a variable that mattered to a moderate extent (equivalent to a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous Likert scale). The score of Strongly agree and Agree

have been taken to represent a variable that mattered to a Large Extent (equivalent to a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 and on a continuous Likert scale). A standard deviation of >1.5 implies a significant difference concerning delayed communication in CLCS.

The findings presented in table 8 show that the mean score of 3.99 indicates that respondents generally agree that responses from CLCS are often delayed. This suggests that there is a perception among customers that CLCS does not prioritize timely communication. While the mean score is below 4.0, indicating a moderate level of agreement, the relatively low standard deviation of 0.967 suggests that there is consistency in this perception among respondents (Mean = 3.99; STD = 0.967).

On average, respondents generally agree that they often have to follow up multiple times to get a response from CLCS with a mean score of 3.78. This indicates that delays in communication are a recurring issue for customers, leading to frustration and inconvenience. The standard deviation of 1.050 suggests some variability in responses, but the overall agreement is clear (Mean = 3.78; STD = 1.050).

Furthermore, the mean score of 3.68 suggests that respondents generally agree that delayed communication from CLCS has caused inconvenience for them. This indicates that delays in communication negatively impact the customer experience, potentially leading to dissatisfaction and reduced loyalty. The higher standard deviation of 1.187 suggests greater variability in responses, but the overall agreement is still evident (Mean = 3.68; STD = 1.187).

More so, on average, respondents generally agree that the delay in communication affects their perception of CLCS's reliability with a mean score of 3.74. This indicates that delayed responses contribute to doubts about CLCS's dependability and trustworthiness. The standard deviation of 1.006 suggests consistency in this perception among respondents (Mean = 3.74; STD = 1.006).

In addition, the mean score of 3.61 suggests that respondents generally agree that timely communication is not a priority for CLCS. This implies that customers perceive a lack of emphasis on prompt responses from CLCS, which may lead to frustration and reduced satisfaction. The higher standard deviation of 1.208 indicates some variability in responses, but the overall agreement remains significant (Mean = 3.61; STD = 1.208).

Lastly, on average, respondents strongly agree that delays in communication have negatively impacted their overall experience with CLCS with a mean score of 4.12. This high level of agreement underscores the significant impact of delayed communication on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The low standard deviation of 0.406 indicates strong consensus among respondents on this point (Mean = 4.12; STD = 0.406).

The analysis of the statements reveals a consistent pattern of agreement among respondents that delayed communication is a significant issue at CLCS. High mean scores (above 3.5) across most statements indicate widespread recognition of problems related to delayed responses, inconvenience, and perceptions of reliability. While there is some variability in responses, the overall agreement highlights the importance of addressing delays in communication to improve the customer experience and enhance loyalty at CLCS. The findings of the study concerning the relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS were further determined using Pearson’s correlation that was conducted as shown below;

Table 9: Pearson’s correlation on delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS

		Correlations	
		Delayed communication	Customer loyalty
Delayed communication	Pearson Correlation	1	-.695**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
	N	92	92
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	-.695**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
	N	92	92

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: *Primary data*

The findings indicated in table above shows that there is a significant negative relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS. This relationship is affirmed by r-values of -0.695** with significant p-values of 0.007 at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed) ($r = -.695^{**}$, $p < .05$). It should further be noted that the p-value is below the significance level of 0.05 which means that we accept the null hypothesis. This means that there is a significant negative relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS. Therefore, the data indicates that higher levels of delayed communication are associated with lower levels of

customer loyalty in CLCS, highlighting the critical importance of timely and efficient communication in fostering customer satisfaction and loyalty.

4.3.1 How delayed communication affects customer loyalty in CLCS

From the interviews conducted with the staff of CLCS, they were asked to give their views on how delayed communication affects customer loyalty in CLCS. The responses of these respondents are discussed below as follows;

From the interviews with the key informants who are staff members of the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), a unanimous sentiment emerged regarding the detrimental impact of delayed communication on customer loyalty. Staff members collectively emphasized that delayed responses often lead to customer frustration and dissatisfaction. They highlighted that when customers experience delays in receiving communication or responses from CLCS, it undermines their trust in the organization and diminishes their perception of its reliability. This perception of unreliability erodes the foundation of customer loyalty, as customers seek efficient and timely service interactions.

Furthermore, staff members pointed out that delayed communication often leads to missed opportunities to address customer concerns promptly. They highlighted that when customers have to follow up multiple times to receive a response, it creates a perception of neglect and indifference on the part of CLCS. This negative experience can significantly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty, as customers may seek alternative service providers who can offer more responsive communication. Overall, the staff's responses underscored the critical importance of addressing delays in communication to maintain customer loyalty and satisfaction at CLCS. One of the staff members of CLCS had this to say;

“.....well, in all honesty, delayed communication sends the message that we are not responsive to our customers' needs, which erodes their loyalty over time.....” **Staff member of CLCS 2**

4.4 Relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS

Table 10 summarizes respondents' responses on technological barriers in CLCS by using means and standard deviations.

Table 10: Technological barriers in CLCS

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
The online platforms used by CLCS are difficult to navigate	4.63	0.552
I often experience technical issues when trying to communicate with CLCS	4.31	0.505
The technology used by CLCS is outdated and inefficient	4.20	0.401
Technological barriers at CLCS hinder effective communication	4.58	0.495
I find it challenging to access necessary information through CLCS's technological systems	4.41	0.596
Technological problems at CLCS have led to delays in receiving services	4.60	0.491

Source: *Primary data*

Table 10 above shows analysis concerning the technological barriers in CLCS using means and standard deviations which was gotten from use of a Likert scale which was represented as: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Not sure (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5). The scores of Strongly Disagree and Disagree have been taken to present a variable which mattered to a Small Extent (equivalent to mean score of 0 to 2.4 on the continuous Likert scale). The score of Not sure has been taken to represent a variable that mattered to a moderate extent (equivalent to a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous Likert scale). The score of Strongly agree and Agree have been taken to represent a variable that mattered to a Large Extent (equivalent to a mean score of 3.5 to 5.0 and on a continuous Likert scale). A standard deviation of >1.5 implies a significant difference concerning the technological barriers in CLCS.

The findings presented in table 10 revealed that the mean score of 4.63 indicates that respondents strongly agree that the online platforms used by CLCS are difficult to navigate. This suggests that there is a widespread perception among customers that CLCS's online systems are not user-friendly, leading to frustration and inefficiency. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.552 indicates consistency in this perception among respondents (Mean = 4.63; STD = 0.552).

On average, respondents also strongly agree that they often experience technical issues when trying to communicate with CLCS with a mean score of 4.31. This indicates that technological problems frequently impede communication with CLCS, leading to disruptions and delays in service delivery. The low standard deviation of 0.505 suggests strong agreement among respondents on this point (Mean = 4.31; STD = 0.505).

Furthermore, the mean score of 4.20 suggests that respondents strongly agree that the technology used by CLCS is outdated and inefficient. This perception indicates that customers view CLCS's technological infrastructure as inadequate and lacking in modernization, which negatively affects their experience. The low standard deviation of 0.401 indicates consistency in this perception among respondents (Mean = 4.20; STD = 0.401).

More so, on average, respondents strongly agree that technological barriers at CLCS hinder effective communication with a mean score of 4.58. This indicates that technological issues create obstacles to smooth communication processes, leading to inefficiencies and frustrations for customers. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.495 suggests strong consensus among respondents on this issue (Mean = 4.58; STD = 0.495).

In addition, the mean score of 4.41 indicates that respondents strongly agree that they find it challenging to access necessary information through CLCS's technological systems. This suggests that customers encounter difficulties in retrieving essential information, which hampers their ability to engage effectively with CLCS. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.596 indicates consistency in this perception among respondents (Mean = 4.41; STD = 0.596).

Lastly, on average, the respondents strongly agree that technological problems at CLCS have led to delays in receiving services with a mean score of 4.60. This indicates that technological barriers contribute to service delays, impacting customers' overall experience and satisfaction.

The low standard deviation of 0.491 suggests strong agreement among respondents on this issue (Mean = 4.60; STD = 0.491).

The analysis of the statements reveals a consistent pattern of agreement among respondents that technological barriers are a significant issue at CLCS. High mean scores (above 3.5) across all statements indicate widespread recognition of problems related to online platform navigation, technical issues, outdated technology, hindered communication, challenging information access, and service delays. The relatively low standard deviations suggest strong consensus among respondents on these issues, highlighting the critical need for CLCS to address technological shortcomings to improve customer experience and loyalty. The findings of the study concerning the relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS were further determined using Pearson’s correlation that was conducted as shown below;

Table 11: Pearson’s correlation on technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS

		Correlations	
		Technological barriers	Customer loyalty
Technological barriers	Pearson Correlation	1	-.544**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.012
	N	92	92
Customer loyalty	Pearson Correlation	-.544**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	
	N	92	92

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: *Primary data*

The findings indicated in table above shows that there is a significant negative relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS. This relationship is affirmed by r-values of -0.695** with significant p-values of 0.007 at the level of 0.05 (2-tailed) ($r = -.695^{**}$, $p < .05$). It should further be noted that the p-value is below the significance level of 0.05 which means that we accept the null hypothesis. This means that there is a significant negative relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS. Therefore, the data indicates that customers perceive technological barriers as hindrances to their experience with CLCS, impacting their loyalty to the organization. This underscores the importance of addressing technological shortcomings to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty in CLCS.

4.4.1 How technological barriers affect customer loyalty in CLCS

From the interviews conducted with the staff of CLCS, they were asked to give their views on how technological barriers affect customer loyalty in CLCS. The responses of these respondents are discussed below as follows;

From the interviews with the key informants who are staff members of the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), a consensus emerged regarding the adverse impact of technological barriers on customer loyalty. Staff members collectively highlighted that technological barriers create significant hurdles for customers, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction. They emphasized that difficulties in navigating online platforms, experiencing technical glitches, and encountering outdated technology contribute to a negative perception of CLCS's services among customers. This perception erodes trust and confidence in the organization, ultimately diminishing customer loyalty.

Furthermore, staff members pointed out that technological barriers hinder effective communication and access to necessary information, leading to delays in service delivery and overall dissatisfaction. They noted that customers expect seamless and efficient interactions with CLCS, and when technological barriers impede these interactions, it negatively affects their loyalty to the organization. Staff members emphasized the importance of addressing these technological shortcomings to improve the customer experience and foster loyalty. Overall, the staff's responses underscored the critical role of technological infrastructure in shaping customer perceptions and loyalty at CLCS. One of the staff members of CLCS had this to say;

“.....technological barriers create significant hurdles for our customers, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction, ultimately eroding their loyalty to CLCS.....” **Staff member of CLCS 3**

4.5 Regression analysis on ineffective communication on customer loyalty in CLCS

The overall model made a significant contribution, accounting for 62.2% of the variability in business performance (Total $\Delta R^2 = .622$, $p = .000$). Table 12 below importantly shows the R-Square (R²) and R-Square Change (ΔR^2) for each model, showing its contribution to the overall

model. These values are interpreted alongside the ANOVA Table 13 providing the F values for each model together with the levels of significance.

Table 12: Model Summary results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	.795 ^a	.631	.622	.20945
a. Predictors: (Constant), Miscommunication, Delayed communication, Technological barriers				
b. Dependent Variable: Customer loyalty in CLCS				

Source: *Primary data*

According to the results in the table 12, it is revealed that the combined effect of the predictor variables of ineffective communication (miscommunication, delayed communication, technological barriers) explains 63.1% of the variations in customer loyalty in CLCS. This implies that the model is satisfactory as much of the variation is accounted for by the dependent variables identified in the model.

Table 13: Goodness of Fit of Regression (ANOVA^a)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.947	3	2.987	68.081	.000 ^b
Residual	6.975	88	.044		
Total	18.922	91			
a. Dependent Variable: Customer loyalty in CLCS					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Miscommunication, Delayed communication, Technological barriers					

Source: *Primary data*

As shown in table 13 above, it is revealed that the model fit tested in the table 12 (model summary) is significant at 99% confidence level ($p \leq 0.05$). This implies that all the three predictor variables of ineffective communication (miscommunication, delayed communication, technological barriers) were statistically significant in explaining changes in customer loyalty in CLCS as demonstrated by a p value of 0.000 which is less than the acceptance critical value of 0.05. This is further proved by the regression coefficients table 14 below;

Table 14: Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig. (p-value)
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.544	.269		2.025	.045
Miscommunication	-.307	.035	-.512	8.869	.000
Delayed communication	-.488	.059	-.422	8.264	.000
Technological barriers	-.120	.047	-.225	2.423	.000

Source: *Primary data*

Table 14 above displays the regression coefficients of the independent variables. The results show that ineffective communication (miscommunication, delayed communication, technological barriers) affect customer loyalty in CLCS negatively and significantly. Regression results indicate that miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS had a negative and significant relationship (beta= -.512, $p < 0.05$). The findings imply that as miscommunication increases, customer loyalty to CLCS decreases. Specifically, for every unit increase in miscommunication, there is a corresponding decrease in customer loyalty by 0.512 units.

In addition, results indicate that delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS had a negative and significant relationship (beta= -.422, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that as instances of delayed communication increase, customer loyalty to CLCS decreases. Specifically, for every unit increase in delayed communication, there is a corresponding decrease in customer loyalty by 0.422 units.

Finally, results indicate that technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS had a negative and significant relationship (beta= -.225, $p < 0.05$). This implies that an increase in perceived technological barriers within CLCS is linked to a decrease in customer loyalty. Specifically, for every unit increase in perceived technological barriers, there is a corresponding decrease in customer loyalty by 0.225 units.

From the above results, the researcher therefore extracts the regression equation (line of best fit) Y on X as shown below;

The researcher adopted the following regression equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 - \beta_1 x_1 - \beta_2 x_2 - \beta_3 x_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where; **Y** = Customer loyalty in CLCS,

β = Beta

β_0 = Constant

x_1 = Miscommunication

x_2 = Delayed communication

x_3 = Technological barriers

ε = The standard error

$$Y = \beta_0 - \beta_1 x_1 - \beta_2 x_2 - \beta_3 x_3 + \varepsilon$$

By substituting from the above equation

$$Y = .544 - .512x_1 - .422x_2 - .225x_3 + .261$$

These results imply that if 0.544 is held constant, a unit consideration for miscommunication will result in a 0.512 decrease in customer loyalty in CLCS, furthermore it was established by the study that a unit consideration of delayed communication will decrease customer loyalty in CLCS by 0.422, and finally a unit consideration of technological barriers will decrease customer loyalty in CLCS by 0.225.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of findings according to the study objectives. The section considered possible explanations for the results with various views from other scholars. Furthermore, this research was carried out centering on three key objectives. Findings in relation to these objectives were attained. In this section therefore, these findings are further discussed to check their relevance to the overall knowledge generation and testing. These discussions are organized in line with the objectives of the study and paying special courtesy to the key findings attained from the process of data analysis as follows;

5.1 Relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS

The study findings revealed a significant negative relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS, aligning with existing literature on the subject. Specifically, respondents reported frequent encounters with unclear and confusing information provided by CLCS, leading to dissatisfaction and frustration. This echoes previous research highlighting the adverse effects of unclear communication on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Einwiller et al., 2019). The inability to convey information clearly can undermine customers' trust in the organization and diminish their loyalty over time. Such findings underline the importance of clear and concise communication in fostering positive customer relationships, as emphasized in prior studies on effective communication strategies in service organizations (Chaiken et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the study identified a pattern of customers frequently receiving conflicting information from different departments within CLCS, further exacerbating confusion and eroding trust. This finding resonates with previous research emphasizing the detrimental impact of inconsistent communication on customer perceptions and loyalty (Kumar & Shah, 2019). Inconsistent messaging can create doubts about the organization's reliability and competence, driving customers away and hindering long-term loyalty. This underscores the significance of

internal communication coherence and alignment within organizations to ensure consistent and reliable information delivery (Kangu et al., 2017).

Additionally, the study revealed that customers often need to seek clarification due to ambiguous communication, which strains their patience and loyalty. This finding is consistent with literature emphasizing the negative consequences of ambiguity on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Nabie & Ome, 2016). Ambiguous communication can lead to misunderstandings and frustrations, ultimately diminishing customers' willingness to engage with the organization. Addressing ambiguity in communication is crucial for enhancing customer experiences and fostering loyalty, as highlighted in previous studies advocating for clarity and transparency in communication processes (Muchai et al., 2019).

Lastly, the study identified ineffective communication channels at CLCS, hindering the organization's ability to address customer concerns adequately. This finding corresponds with prior research emphasizing the importance of efficient communication channels in meeting customer needs and fostering loyalty (Ahluwalia, 2018). Ineffective communication channels can lead to unresolved issues and dissatisfaction among customers, negatively impacting their loyalty to the organization. Hence, investing in robust communication infrastructures and strategies is essential for enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty in service organizations like CLCS.

5.2 Relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS

The study findings revealed a significant negative relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS, corroborating existing literature on the subject. The respondents consistently reported experiencing delays in receiving responses from CLCS, leading to frustration and inconvenience. This aligns with prior research indicating that delayed communication can impair customer satisfaction and loyalty by creating negative experiences and perceptions (Xie & Peng, 2019). Customers expect timely and efficient communication from service providers, and delays can signal a lack of responsiveness and attentiveness, eroding trust and loyalty over time.

Furthermore, the study identified a pattern of customers having to follow up multiple times to receive a response from CLCS, further exacerbating dissatisfaction and diminishing loyalty. This

finding resonates with literature highlighting the adverse effects of repeated delays and follow-ups on customer perceptions and relationships (Pullig et al., 2019). Such experiences can lead customers to question the organization's commitment to meeting their needs and expectations, ultimately driving them to seek alternatives that offer more reliable communication processes. This underscores the importance of addressing delays in communication to mitigate the risk of customer attrition and foster long-term loyalty.

Additionally, the study revealed that delayed communication negatively affects customers' perceptions of CLCS's reliability, contributing to doubts about the organization's dependability and trustworthiness. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the significance of reliability in shaping customer perceptions and loyalty (Zhang & Wang, 2018). Delays in communication can erode the perceived reliability of CLCS, undermining the foundation of trust upon which customer loyalty is built. Addressing delays and improving communication efficiency are critical for reinforcing perceptions of reliability and enhancing customer loyalty in service organizations.

Lastly, the study found that delayed communication had a significant negative impact on the overall customer experience with CLCS. This underscores the holistic nature of customer satisfaction and loyalty, where every touch point and interaction contributes to the overall perception of the service provider (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2021). Delays in communication can taint the customer experience, overshadowing other positive aspects of the service and leading to dissatisfaction. By addressing delays and prioritizing timely communication, CLCS can enhance the overall customer experience, thereby fostering stronger loyalty and advocacy among its customer base.

5.3 Relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS

The study findings revealed a significant negative relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS, aligning with existing literature on the subject. Customers consistently reported facing challenges such as difficulty navigating online platforms, experiencing technical glitches, and encountering outdated technology when interacting with CLCS. This resonates with prior research highlighting the detrimental impact of technological

barriers on customer satisfaction and loyalty (Muchai et al., 2019). As technology increasingly becomes integral to service delivery, customers expect seamless digital experiences, and any barriers or inefficiencies in technological infrastructure can erode their loyalty to the organization.

Furthermore, the study identified a strong consensus among respondents that technological barriers hinder effective communication and access to necessary information, leading to delays in service delivery and overall dissatisfaction. This finding is consistent with literature emphasizing the importance of efficient communication channels and information accessibility in fostering customer loyalty (Ward & Ostrom, 2019). Technological barriers not only impede the delivery of services but also create barriers to customer engagement, diminishing their loyalty to CLCS. Addressing these barriers is crucial for improving the customer experience and enhancing loyalty in today's digital age.

In addition, staff members highlighted the adverse effects of technological barriers on customer perception and trust in CLCS's services. Difficulties in navigating online platforms and experiencing technical issues can lead customers to question the organization's competence and reliability. This finding aligns with prior research suggesting that perceived reliability and trustworthiness are significant determinants of customer loyalty (Rooney et al., 2019). Technological barriers that impede smooth interactions with CLCS can undermine the foundation of trust upon which customer loyalty is built, highlighting the importance of investing in modern and user-friendly technological solutions.

Lastly, the study found that perceived technological barriers had a negative and significant relationship with customer loyalty, indicating that as customers perceive more barriers, their loyalty to CLCS decreases. This finding underscores the critical role of technological infrastructure in shaping customer perceptions and behaviors (Pauley & Pauley, 2019). In today's competitive landscape, organizations must prioritize technological innovation and digital transformation to meet evolving customer expectations and maintain their loyalty. By addressing technological barriers and investing in advanced technological solutions, CLCS can enhance the overall customer experience, foster loyalty, and remain competitive in the market.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes all findings reported in chapter four according to questions of the study, draws conclusions, suggests recommendations and also proposes some areas for further study.

6.1 Summary of findings

The study findings revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty in CLCS, with higher levels of miscommunication associated with lower levels of customer loyalty. Respondents reported experiencing issues such as unclear and confusing information, conflicting messages from different departments, misunderstandings, and ineffective communication channels, all of which contributed to dissatisfaction with CLCS services. Staff interviews further emphasized the detrimental impact of miscommunication on customer loyalty, highlighting how unclear communication leaves customers feeling undervalued and hesitant to engage with CLCS services. Regression analysis confirmed the negative relationship between miscommunication and customer loyalty, underscoring the importance of addressing communication issues to maintain and enhance customer loyalty at CLCS.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that there is a significant negative relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty in CLCS, with higher levels of delayed communication associated with lower levels of customer loyalty. Respondents reported experiencing delays in receiving responses from CLCS, having to follow up multiple times, and feeling inconvenience due to delayed communication. Staff interviews highlighted how delayed communication leads to customer frustration, undermines trust in CLCS's reliability, and creates perceptions of neglect. Regression analysis further confirmed the negative relationship between delayed communication and customer loyalty, emphasizing the critical importance of addressing delays to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty at CLCS.

Finally, the findings revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between technological barriers and customer loyalty in CLCS, indicating that higher perceived technological barriers correlate with decreased customer loyalty. Respondents reported challenges with online platform navigation, technical issues, outdated technology, hindered communication, difficulty accessing necessary information, and service delays. Staff interviews corroborated these findings, emphasizing how technological barriers lead to customer frustration, dissatisfaction, and reduced loyalty by eroding trust in CLCS's services. Regression analysis further supported this relationship, highlighting the importance of addressing technological shortcomings to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty at CLCS.

6.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, the study underscores the critical role of effective communication and technological infrastructure in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty at CLCS. Miscommunication, delayed communication, and technological barriers were identified as significant challenges that negatively impact customer loyalty. Addressing these issues is imperative for CLCS to maintain and enhance customer loyalty by fostering clarity, responsiveness, and efficiency in communication processes and technological systems. By prioritizing improvements in communication effectiveness and technological advancements, CLCS can cultivate positive customer experiences, bolster trust, and strengthen long-term loyalty among its clientele.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been found necessary concerning the effect of ineffective communication on customer loyalty in the public sector, a case of Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), Makerere University.

The study recommends the need for implementing comprehensive communication training programs for staff at the Centre for Languages and Communication Services (CLCS), focusing on enhancing clarity, consistency, and responsiveness in customer interactions. This training should emphasize active listening, clear messaging, and conflict resolution techniques to minimize misunderstandings and improve overall communication effectiveness.

The study also recommends that CLCS should invest in modernizing its technological infrastructure to streamline communication processes and eliminate technological barriers. This includes updating online platforms, addressing technical issues promptly, and ensuring user-friendly interfaces to enhance accessibility and convenience for customers.

Furthermore, the study recommends that CLCS should establish clear communication protocols and channels to facilitate timely and transparent communication with customers, ensuring that inquiries and concerns are addressed promptly and efficiently.

Lastly, the study recommends the need for implementing regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to monitor communication effectiveness and identify areas for continuous improvement. This proactive approach will enable CLCS to address communication challenges promptly and adapt its strategies to meet evolving customer needs and expectations.

6.4 Areas for further research

For further research, it is recommended to conduct a detailed investigation into the specific communication strategies and interventions that could effectively enhance customer loyalty in public sector organizations like CLCS. Exploring the implementation of tailored communication training programs, technological advancements, and customer feedback mechanisms in similar public sector entities would provide valuable insights into best practices for mitigating the effects of ineffective communication on customer loyalty. Additionally, studying the impact of organizational culture, leadership styles, and resource allocation on communication effectiveness and customer loyalty within public sector institutions could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying factors influencing communication dynamics and customer relationships.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Proposed budget for the research

S/NO	ITEM	COST(UG SHS)
1	General transport (travelling in data collection)	200.000
2	Resources to use	200.000
3	Stationery	100,000
4	Data for internet	150,000
5.	Binding and Printing final copies	150,000
	TOTAL	800,000

Appendix 2: Time schedule for the Research

S/NO	Research Activity	Time
1	Research proposal	August 2023
2	Collecting data	November 2023
3	Analysing the data and writing the Report	December 2023
4	Submission of final copy of the Research Report	January 2024

Appendix 3: Questionnaire

For customers at CLCS

Introduction

Dear respondent, I am AINEMBABAZI ALLEN, a student of Masters in Public Administration and Management of Uganda Christian University.

I am conducting a research on; *the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services*. It is part of the requirements for the award of the Masters in Public Administration and Management of Uganda Christian University, and I am seeking for your views. Your individual answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be combined anonymously with all the other respondents to form a report.

(Tick or circle the most applicable response)

Section A: Demographic characteristics.

1. Gender

a) Male

b) Female

2. Age bracket in years

a) 20-29

b) 30-39

c) 40-49

d) 50+

3. Level of education

a) Diploma

b) Bachelors

c) Masters

d) Others specify.....

4. Employment status

a) Student

b) Business person

- c) Employed
- d) Unemployed

Section B: Indicators of Customer Loyalty

In this section please tick in the box that corresponds to your opinion/view according to a scale of 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Not Sure, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Section B: Ineffective Communication

s. no	Statements	Responses				
		5	4	3	2	1
	Miscommunication	5	4	3	2	1
1	The information provided by CLCS is often unclear and confusing					
2	I frequently receive conflicting information from different departments at CLCS					
3	CLCS staff members often misunderstand my requests or questions					
4	Miscommunication at CLCS has led to dissatisfaction with their services					
5	I often have to seek clarification for the information provided by CLCS					
6	The communication channels at CLCS are ineffective in addressing my concerns					
	Delayed communication	5	4	3	2	1
1	Responses from CLCS are often delayed					
2	I often have to follow up multiple times to get a response from CLCS					
3	Delayed communication from CLCS has caused inconvenience for me					
4	The delay in communication affects my perception of CLCS's reliability					
5	Timely communication is not a priority for CLCS					
6	Delays in communication have negatively impacted my overall experience with CLCS					
	Technical barriers	5	4	3	2	1
1	The online platforms used by CLCS are difficult to navigate					

2	I often experience technical issues when trying to communicate with CLCS					
3	The technology used by CLCS is outdated and inefficient					
4	Technological barriers at CLCS hinder effective communication					
5	I find it challenging to access necessary information through CLCS's technological systems					
6	Technological problems at CLCS have led to delays in receiving services					

Section C: Customer loyalty in the public sector

	Statements	Responses				
s. no	Customer loyalty in the public sector	5	4	3	2	1
1	I am satisfied with the overall service quality provided by CLCS					
2	I am likely to continue using the services of CLCS in the future					
3	I would recommend CLCS to others based on my experience					
4	My experience with CLCS has built a strong sense of loyalty to their services					
5	Despite issues, I feel a strong connection to the services provided by CLCS					
6	CLCS values my feedback and acts on it to improve services					

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Appendix 4: Interview Guide

With staff at CLCS

Introduction

Dear respondent, I am A1NEMBABAZI ALLEN, a student of Masters in Public Administration and Management of Uganda Christian University. I am conducting a research

I am conducting a research on; *the effect of Ineffective Communication on Customer Loyalty in the Public Sector, a case study of Centre for Languages and Communication Services*. It is part of the requirements for the award of the Masters in Public Administration and Management of Uganda Christian University, and I am seeking for your views. Your individual answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be combined anonymously with all the other respondents to form a report.

(Tick or circle the most applicable response)

Section A: Demographic characteristics.

1. Age bracket in years

- e) 20-29
- f) 30-39
- g) 40-49
- h) 50+

2. Title/ Position held

- e) Librarian
- f) Chief Librarian
- g) Other (please specify)

3. Sex

- c) a). Male
- d) b). Female

6. Level of education

- e) Masters degree
- f) Degree
-

- g) Diploma
- h) Others (please specify.....)

4. Work experience

- a) 0-5 years
- b) 6-10 years
- c) 11-15 years
- d) 16 years and above

Thematic Questions:

1. What is your understanding of the term ineffective communication?
2. In your opinion, what is customer loyalty?
3. How can you define the public sector?
4. How often do you encounter issues of miscommunication with customers?
5. What measures are in place to address and resolve instances of miscommunication?
6. What are the main causes of delays in communication with customers?
7. How do you think communication delays affect customer satisfaction and loyalty?
8. What technological challenges do you face when communicating with customers?
9. How does the current technology impact your ability to provide timely and effective services to customers?

Thank you for the cooperation.