

**FRONT DESK MANAGEMENT, IMPRESSION AND CORPORATE REPUTATION IN
REGULATORY AGENCIES IN UGANDA (A CASE OF UGANDA NATIONAL BUREAU OF
STANDARDS)**

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DECLARATION

I Saul Waigolo, declare that this work entitled “Front desk management, Impression and reputation management in regulatory agencies in Uganda”. Is my own original work; and it has never been submitted to this or any other Institution for any award. I have also cited all data used in this work.

SAUL WAIGOLO

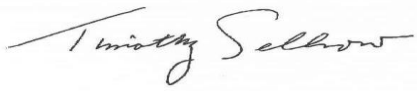
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APPROVAL

This study titled “Front desk management, Impression and reputation management in regulatory agencies in Uganda” has been carried out by Saul Waigolo under my supervision. All the necessary steps were followed and ethical guidance were duly observed. It is ready for submission to the Faculty of Journalism, Media and Communication for the Partial fulfillment of the award of a Degree of Master of Arts in Strategic Communication of Uganda Christian University.

Professor Timothy Sellnow

Signature:



Date: May 4, 2024

DEDICATION

I dedicate this Research Report to my beloved wife Mrs. Lisa K. M. Waigolo and all my children for your spiritual, emotional and social support. May God abundantly bless you.

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The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” **Lamentations 3:22-23** (ESV). I have no doubt that the success of this study did not come as a result of my own but God’s grace which guided whoever contributed to this work. All Glory, Honor, Praise and exaltation be back to God who has done great things.

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ACRYOMNS

FDM	Front Desk Management
MASC	Masters of Arts in Strategic Communication
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
RM	Reputation Management
UCU	Uganda Christian University
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards

Abstract

The study established how the first impression at the front desk affects the reputation of an organization. It assessed how front desk management affects impression, the relationship between front desk, first impression and reputation and the strategies to improve front desk management.

The study adopted the Impression Management Theory of Erving Goffman (1959), which explains how social interactions can influence one's perception about a person, group, organization, object or event.

This study used a mixed research approach (qualitative and quantitative), a sample size of 131 respondents was selected from a population of 160 using of Krejcie & Morgan's table and a response rate of 90.8% was obtained after distribution of the research instruments and interview. A survey that included general demographic characteristics, factor analysis and linear regression were conducted for the analysis. The results show that when clients get first impression at the front desk, they develop positive perceptions about the organization and there is a positive relation between front desk staff and the client through verbal or nonverbal communication which builds the reputation of an organisation.

The researcher recommended that organisations should employ the right and qualified people at the front desk, provide information about the organization to the front desk, develop a feedback mechanism to frequently hear from the clients, also have strategies of motivating the existing front desk staff in order to have a positive attitude of the front desk staff and retain the experienced staff, frequently train them on the practices and policies of the organisation.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The ability of an agency to build its reputation depends on the impression that agency develops in the stakeholder on the first interaction at the front desk. In communication, it is important for an organisation to be cautious of all areas that might diminish its reputation. This study will therefore focus on the Communication sector and look at front desk management, impression and corporate reputation in regulatory agencies in Uganda. This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, purpose statement, aims and objectives, research questions, scope of the study, justification of the study, significance of the study, and theoretical framework.

1.1 Background

Front desk is the face of every organization and it is one of the most important departments in an organization in terms of managing the organization's clients or stakeholders. In the modern world of business, clients or customer's needs are given priority. Front desk workers in both organization public and private organizations are the starting point of the client's interaction with that organization. The naming of this position differs from one organization to another; other than being called front desk, the position may be referred to as reception or inquiries.

Front desk office emerged in the 20th Century in the law enforcement field. The information was posted on or near the door (Steadmon and Kasavana, 1998, pp.110), By the 1930s, it had evolved to all the first desk or offices in an organization. Since 2015, the front desk has been changing from human resource to use of robots and this is mainly in the hospitality industry starting in Henn-na hotel, Nagasaki, Japan, but were later abandoned and went back to human personnel, (Bhimasta and Kuo, 2019).

Front desk management encompasses the competences of the personnel at the front desk, their knowledge about the organization, and the skills front desk workers exhibit when interacting with clients. The degree to which front desk employees interact in a competent, friendly, and positive attitude as they communicate determines the perceptions the clients form about the organization.

Front desk management focuses on the competence of the persons at the front desk, their professionalism, their knowledge, their skills, and attitude towards the visitors. Being the first place of interaction with the organization front desk workers create the first impression clients have about the corporate identity, appearance, social interaction, and the corporate brand. Furthermore, the documents provided at the reception by front line workers can shape or determine the reputation have of that organization. If the front desk is poorly managed, it negatively affects the reputation of that organization.

The Front desk employees ably anticipate the clients' needs, and display knowledge about the organization. Thus, the front desk is the area that the organization's competences, friendliness, knowledge and attitudes are tested by the clients as they form impressions of customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction that ultimately influence the reputation of the organization (Shao,2017, pp.7) and its credibility (Mohammed, Khalid, Razali and Ramli., 2010, pp.18).

The concept of impression has been associated with the private sector where it was linked to issues of profitability and providing a competitive advantage over rivals and effective service delivery but has not featured much in the public sector (Stanton, Stanton, & Pires, 2004). It is a crucial issue which has been missing in organisational communication research in both private and public sectors.

Impression refers to that apart of human-to-human interaction (Bergmann, Eyssel, and Kopp, 2012, pp.127) which occurs when people first encounter each other and form a mental image of each other (Lindgaard, Fernandes, Dudek, and Brown, 2006, pp.115-126). This first interaction with the organization at the front desk creates an impression about the organization. According to DePaulo (1992, pp.204), mental images are influenced by self-presentation and nonverbal behaviors. Front desk management highlights space, color, light, décor, human resource and appearance, all of which creates a great impression, solidifies reputation, and, when done properly, can improve relationships among an organization and the clients.

This analysis focused on the front desk personnel in Ugandan regulatory agencies. Regulatory agencies are public institutions established by an Act of Parliament to set standards in a specific field of activity or operation. They operate where there are both public and private players in the market or the field. For example, the Uganda Communications Commission, the National Environment Management Authority, the National Council for Higher Education, Engineers Registration Board, Uganda Medical and Dental Practitioners Council among others.

The study particularly focused on the influence of front desk workers on the corporate reputation of regulatory agencies. Corporate reputation is the perception of quality associated with corporate name (Aaker and Keller,1990, p.219) based on subjective knowledge, or attitude such as ideology and corporate name. Fombrun (1996, p.72) defines corporate reputation: as a perceptual representation of a firm's past actions and prospects before its stakeholders, while Black and Carnes (2000, pp.32) say it is the public's collective judgments of firms over time. Corporate reputation therefore refers to the process of creating influencer strategies that deepen understanding, build trust and mitigate risk in

complex, ever-changing environments, method of building and sustaining of an organization's good name, and generating positive feedback from stakeholders and its publics, (Kartalia, 1999, pp.6).

The study was carried out in the Uganda National Bureau of Standards, one of the regulatory agencies in Uganda responsible with standards established by the UNBS Act Cap 327. This agency became operational in 1989 with the mandate of formulating and promoting the use of standards, enforcing standards in protection of public health and safety and the environment against dangerous and substandard products, and ensuring fairness in the trade and precision in industry through reliable measurement systems. The Uganda National Bureau of Standards is also tasked with strengthening the economy of Uganda by assuring the quality of locally manufactured products to enhance the competitiveness of exports in regional and international markets. The agency also has eight (8) offices seven of which are located in different parts of the country (www.unbs.or.ug), this means that it interacts with the stakeholders at its different offices.

1.2 Problem Statement

Statutory agencies in Uganda are agencies either for profit or not for profit established by an Act of parliament to offer services to the public. The stakeholders expect these agencies to serve them to satisfaction and the stakeholders' satisfaction is identified by delivery of services, timeliness, information provision, professionalism and staff attitude although these can vary from one agency to another depending on its mandate.

However, these organisations continue to struggle with negative image (Van De Walle 2007) related to reputation and are perceived to be unreliable, not sufficiently transparent and inefficient (du Gay 2000; Goodsell 2004), obsolete, (Hughes 1998, 34)

and frustrating (Osborne and Plastrik 1997, 18). This has brought about decline in the levels of public trust in these agencies (Kennedy 2009; Nye, Zelikow, and King 1998).

In order to improve on the general public impression of public agencies and restore trust (van de Walle 2011), the government of Uganda issued a circular Statutory Instrument No.2 of (2006), directing all government MDAs to have a Clients Charter, this aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery including the reception areas. In 2011, Ministry of Public Service issued to all government agencies guidelines of making a client's charter in order to ensure service satisfaction. It emphasized training staff in customer care, administrative courses, and having a front desk department in all its agencies. Unfortunately, the services in these public agencies is still poor, this is because regulatory agencies are not for profit and have no competitor in their service (Disend,1991), therefore less attention is paid to client's impression for satisfaction. As a result, their service performance is not up to the satisfaction level of the public (Emnet and Habtamu, 2011, pp.87). Overall, the reputations of regulatory agencies suffer due to poor integration and sequential approach attributed to non-professionals who man their front desk.

The study therefore intended to find out why, despite considerable efforts by the Ugandan government, the front desk in government regulatory agencies has failed to impress the clients and has contributed to a poor corporate reputation

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this study was to establish how the impression of the stakeholder attained at the front desk affects the reputation of regulatory agencies in Uganda.

1.4 Specific Objectives

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess the effects of Front Desk management on impression of clients in the Regulatory agencies in Uganda.
2. To examine the relationship between Front Desk Management, client impression and reputation in the regulatory agencies in Uganda.
3. To explore the strategies to improve Front Desk Management to have a positive reputation of the regulatory agencies in Uganda.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How does Front Desk management affect the impression of clients and corporate reputation of the regulatory agencies in Uganda?
2. What is the relationship among front desk management, client impression and reputation in the regulatory agencies in Uganda?
3. What are the various strategies to improve front desk management in order to improve reputation in regulatory agencies in Uganda?

1.6 Scope of the study

The study focused on the extent to which front desk management determines the impression of the clients and affects the reputation of an organization. The study was also to identify the strategies to be undertaken by these regulatory agencies to effectively and efficiently manage their front desks in order to impress the clients and to improve the reputation of the Uganda National Bureau of Standards as a case of study. The study was confined to two offices of the agency; the headquarters in Bweyogerere and the Kampala regional offices in Nakawa. This Agency was selected because of the bigger mandate it has. The fact that it has offices across the country will give a bigger picture of the situation. The exercise ran from May 2021 to July 2021 because this was the time when

companies were finalizing their financial reports and frequent the offices to get clearance on quality for the next financial year.

1.7 Justification of the Study

This study will benefit the field of communication research in Uganda as it will provide insight into an area which has almost been completely ignored. Studies that focus particularly on front desk management and its contributions to impression and reputation are rare. This study will benefit these organizations by providing the idea on not only its effects on reputation in an agency but also recommendations on how to address it.

1.8 Significance

It is hoped that the findings will be useful to a number of government agencies in the following ways:

1. The study will benefit scholars and researchers interested in better understanding front desk management and impression management by suggesting strategies for building reputation in government agencies which can be adopted for other study and research purposes.
2. The study will enrich front desk managers by identifying inefficiencies in the performance of front desk employees that bring about negative impression and reputation in government regulatory agencies in Uganda.
3. The study is hoped to help government design strategies for good front desk management that will help it build good impressions and reputations before their stakeholders.
4. What about training institutions of front desk officers?

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the Impression Management Theory by Erving Goffman (1959), in his research entitled “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life”, he explains how social interactions can influence

one's perception about a person, group, organization, object or event (Leary and Kowalski 1990, pp.35). The theory highlights how a person presents himself/herself in her or his day-to-day work both verbally and nonverbally (Goffman, 1967, p.19) with the aim of meeting the satisfaction of the client. In his dramaturgical approach, Goffman looks at interaction as key factor leading to impression and performance which defines the identity of the organization, thereby determining its credibility (Goffman 1963, pp.42).

It was supported by the Goal Setting Theory of Edwin Locke (1968), which states that for an employee to be committed, there must be a clear goals set and feedback process and the complexity of the assignment given to an employee meaning that employee should be assigned tasks that match their expertise and skills to gain confidence, this motivates the employee and improves on their performance.

However, this theory has been criticized by a number of scholars who identified a several weaknesses. The positivists have criticized the interpretive approach of impression in that it is not measurable and difficult to operationalize (Prus, 1996 pp.9). Goffman urges that human behaviors are built on human experiences and interactions. Therefore, Goffman's theory did not provide a methodological basis for studying impression management. Rather, it is limited and may not produce generalizable findings (Brisset and Edgley, 1990 pp.23). The theory also does not address the issues of fighting social inequality but maintains them at interaction (Reynolds, 1987 p.148). Also, Paconowksy and Donnell, (1983 pp.130) argue that the theory has potential for deception as it views human interaction from the perspective of dramaturgy theory where people pretend and, as a result, could be deceiving one another. But despite the various criticisms, this is seen as the most suitable for this study especially its dramautical approach which manifests the dramatic way front desk officers receive and treat clients. The approach of social interactions whether on first sight or after a long time as a factor which contributes to impression of the person as a result of the interaction which defines the reputation which results from the interaction

whether at the front desk or any other meeting. I therefore chose these two theories after realizing that it is befitting my topic of research and can explain the underlying issues within this research.

1.10 Conceptual framework

As defined by Kotler (2000), a conceptual framework is a structure of abstract blocks which represent the variables in the phenomenon under study. These variables include the independent variables, the intervening and dependent variables. The interconnection of these blocks presents the framework for the expected outcomes. In this study, front desk management is the independent variables which is reflected under competence, knowledge, friendliness and service attitude. Impression is the intervening variable which defines the dependent variable as a result of the independent variable. Impression is manifested through satisfaction, perception, identity and corporate brand while reputation management is the dependent variable which is defined by the intervening variable as a result of the independent variable. This is seen through consistence, credibility, reliability and acceptability.

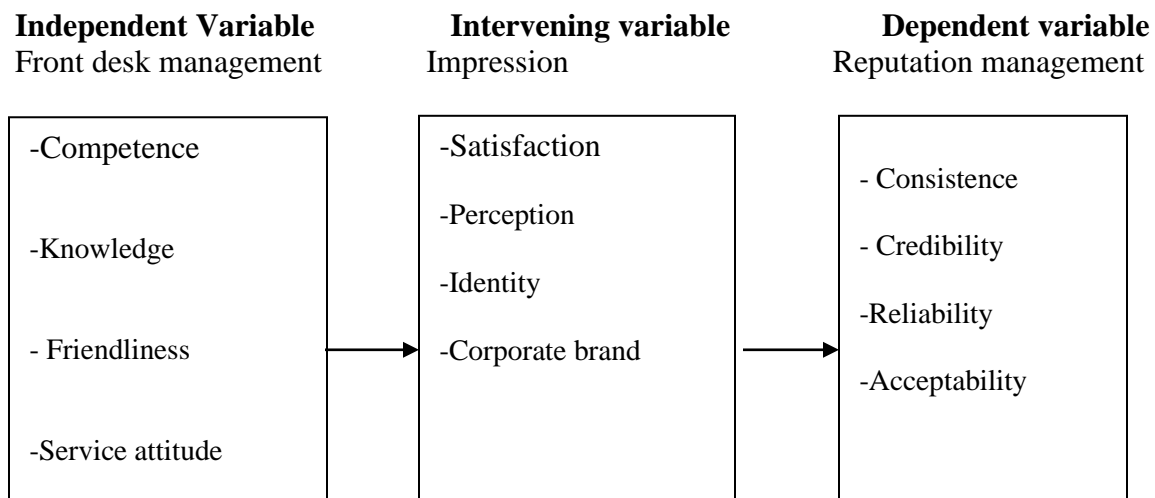


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework illustrating the relationship between Front desk management, Impression and Reputation management

Idea was developed from modifying the SERVQUAL management framework designed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, (1988). This relates the quality of services offered to the public

perceptions and expectations. It emphasizes responsiveness, assurance, tangibility, empathy and reliability of the organization.

When two strangers meet for the first time, they form initial feelings about each other (Bergmann et al, 2012, pp.127). These impressions are based on what they see, including facial expression, dress, and actual appearance. These nonverbal signs tell a lot about people's impressions and satisfaction. The front desk is strategic because it determines the first impression of the client (Girard, 2013, pp.3). Because front desk is the first encounter with the clients, it is supposed to ensure client's satisfaction.

Here, competence refers to the skills and abilities of employees that enables them to deliver performance. Friendliness refers to quality of being suited to particular needs, concerns and users who, in this case, are clients. Knowledge refers to a collection of experiences and appropriate information that an employee holds about the organization, (Haradhan,2016, pp.24). Service attitude refers to the staff's courtesy, and humanity (Kuo, 2007,pp.16). It is at the front desk that clients are able to see those characteristics and determine whether or not they meet their expectations especially satisfaction, communication and perception (Kuo, 2007, pp.16).

1.11 Summary of the chapter

The chapter started with an introduction which outlined the key areas covered, it also contained the background to the study which discussed the historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual backgrounds of the study. The Chapter also covered the problem statement sk management, impression and reputation management. The chapter also contained the purpose of the study which assessed how the impression stakeholder attain at the front desk affect the reputation of regulatory agencies in Uganda. Objectives of the study were determined as well as research questions which were basically derived from the research objectives. The scope of the study was determined as content, geographical, and time. The

chapter tackled justification and significance of the research. Lastly the chapter handled operational definition of key terms.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed the existing and other available literature based on the objectives of the study; (i) assessing the effects of Front Desk management on impression of clients in the Regulatory agencies in Uganda; (ii) examining the relationship among Front Desk Management, client impression and reputation in the regulatory agencies in Uganda and; (iii) exploring the strategies to improve Front desk Management to have a positive reputation of the regulatory agencies in Uganda on front desk management and its indicators (i.e., competence, knowledge, friendliness and service attitude). It also reviews how the impression clients have of the organization is formed on the first encounter at the front desk and how this impression determines the reputation of the organization. The chapter will also provide background on how front desk management can be improved in order to create a better reputation.

This chapter is divided into the following two sections:

2.1 How Front Desk Management affects client's impression and corporate reputation

According to Jokinen, Heinamaa & Heikkonen, (2000, pp.15), a customer's encounter with the organization has three stages; arrival, service at interface, and departure. These stages work towards impressing the client which determines their clients' perceptions about organization. As the saying goes; "you never get a second chance to make first impression," this first impression at the front desk is very important as it is the client's first experience with the organization. The first and last impression are the foundation for perception. If they are positive, then the perception is likely positive, but if they are negative, the perception is also negative (Evenson, 2007, pp.67), and it becomes difficult for the organization to recover the lost impression on the first encounter.

Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, pp. 99) defined reputation as the impressions others have and think of you as an individual or organization, and how you conduct yourself. Impression represents the

perceptions based on past actions and communication from individuals, and other channels of communication. Impression is built by processes such as mannerism, appearance and body language which are identified at the front desk and aim at persuading and influencing the client to gain public acceptance.

Impression in an organization which is first formed at the front desk and can bolster or threaten an organisation's desired image (Bolino, Kacmar, Turnely & Gilstrap, 2008: pp.1094). Impression is determined by three pillars which include; an organization having the right employee in all its departments including the front desk, solid practices which refers to the practices and behaviors of the staff including those at the front desk, and training of the staff. Impression is also determined by the surroundings of the workplace (Evenson, 2007, pp.68), such as direction and name of the organization, availability of human resource at the front desk, information and communication materials among others have a lot to communicate the corporate identity and brand of the organization which shapes the credibility and acceptance of the organization.

Impressing the client in an organization requires employees who courteous, have a positive attitude, are truthful, and are ethical. Employees should also have pleasant appearance through such actions as grooming, cleanliness, tone of voice and mannerism which (Ismail, 2002, pp.47).

Front desk is seen as a customer care tool which aims at impressing the client with the purpose of acquiring new clients, establishing client satisfaction, and building client loyalty. Important behaviors to achieve this purpose include attractiveness, speed in service delivery, client's attention and sensitivity to their needs, and good attitude towards clients. According to Ismail (2002, pp.36), knowledge about the organization by the front desk employees is key in promoting satisfaction and identity. Clients expect the front desk employee to be knowledgeable and ready to explain to them all the details concerning the services and products that organization offers or has for them (Jokinen et al, 2000, pp.8) and this is where the client's impression starts

and build the perception about the organization, (Dix and Baird, 1998, pp.6). An employee's knowledge about the organization is also manifested in how the employee at the front desk responds to incoming calls and mails and this builds the client's confidence, trust and credibility.

Friendliness as a tool at the front desk ensure impression through communication with the client, this can be verbal communication in order to get to know the kind service the client wants and this brings about relaxation, (Ismail, 2002, pp.84), listening to the client, visual communication such as smile and body language builds a client's perception (Ismail 2002, pp.38).

Trust which is one of the indicators of reputation of an organization is built from attitudes displayed by the employee when a client enters an environment, (Goffman, 2009 pp.15). This interaction and perceptions of trust influence the image of that organization as perceived by clients (Leary & Kowalsky, 1990 pp.34).

According to Ward (2008, pp.3), in order for an organization to have a good reputation, the impression of the client is developed at the front desk and it is retained for a long time. This impression at the front desk involves consistently making the clients happy by answering correspondences, keeping the clients promises, attentively listening to the clients, dealing with the problems and having a knowledgeable and courteous staff.

Clients' impressions develop from communication, competence in form of skills and knowledge, courtesy which manifests the friendliness and credibility, reliability and responsiveness which builds trust and credibility in the organization. It is also about recognizing your client's need and responding to it accurately, courteously and enthusiastically with a smile, which brings about reliability of the organisation's services.

Hansemark and Albinsson (2004, pp.23) believe that satisfaction is directly linked to the overall client attitude towards a service from an organization. It is an emotional reaction to the difference between what

clients anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some need, goal or desire. The client expects efficient services from competent and professional people. Courtesies that meet this expectation are being listened to, providing knowledgeable help, friendliness, offering feedback, honesty, and respectfulness through dedicated attention. (Parasuraman et al. 1991, pp.343). The employees at the front desk must be friendly, courteous, knowledgeable, helpful and respond with accuracy, (Hokanson,1995, pp.16).

2.2 The relationship between Front Desk Management, impression and corporate reputation

Front desk defines the attitude or judgement by the client expectations and wants, (Musaba, Musaba and Hoabeb, 2014: pp.535), which brings about the client's perception. This gives an organization an idea of the reputation the public holds of the organization.as the going says that the book is judged by its cover, even the reputation of an organization is judged at the front desk, (Goetz, Kiesler and Powers, 2003: pp1).

The impression built at the front desk is helps the organization to establish a feedback mechanism suitable for the client. Clients evaluate the organisations basing on perceptions, (Little and Little,2009).

The role played by employees in providing feedback to the clients is key in meeting the needs of the clients and it makes them impressed and define the reputation of that organisation, (Peters and Pikkemaat, 2005), the conduct of employees while serving clients from the front desk or any other point of engagement leads to impression and reputation of that organization, (Mubiri:2016:pp7).

Chan and Mackenzie (2013: pp16) talks about communication as a two way communication between the client and the service provider which is the organization represented by the front desk practitioner through word of mouth and this aims at building a relationship with that client and develops a brand reputation. Gronroos (2004) believes that reputation of an organization is as a result of the relationship between that

organization and its clients and this relationship is built at the front desk after being impressed by the services at the front desk. The overall perception when improved through employee behaviors and attitudes, their responsiveness and ability to adapt to client's demands.

According to Brink and Bendt (2005 pp.60), the appearance of the employees, the physical facilities and equipments at the front desk reflect positively on the organization and defines the client's perception after visiting the organization. The same writers also emphasise the ability to serve dependably and accurately enables the public to rely on the organisation. Reliability is therefore built from the perceived impression at the front desk.

Ali, Alvin & Ali, (2012) suggest that an organisations reputation determines the loyalty and attitudes to the organization which can be positive or negative, (Walsh andBeatty, 2007: pp.128). Beatson, Lings and Gudergan, (2008) says that organisations adopt strategies and practices which aim at strengthening the attitudes of the front desk staff and gives them direction on how to treat the clients with the aim of creating a positive reputation and these policies when induced among the front desk staff to have a shared perception. Front desk is seen as the link between an organization and its clients, information from and to the organization is obtained at this point and it is disseminated to the respective recipients, (Chung and Schneider, 2002);

2.3 Strategies to improve Front Desk Management

In serving their clients, organizations desire to be perceived in a way that will improve and maintain the reputation that organization has before the general public. This reputation has to start from the front desk. Therefore, in order achieve a favorable reputation, organizations ought to ensure strategies that will make it be perceived as competent and conducting their business professionally. To do so there is need to build

personal characteristics such as knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences in the front desk employee (Roberts, 2005, p.688). Paswan, Pelton and True (2005) believes that perception of work environment in based on internal communications in that the front desk staff should access all the public information meant for public consumption, involvement in the organisations processes and communication with feedback from management to the front desk office.

Organisations should also ensure that they put in place strategies aimed at improving impression management before the clients (Exemplification), self-promotions, which involve drawing the clients attention and organizational promotions which entails the identity of the organization which helps the organisation to gain credibility (Harvey, 2001 pp.259). These strategies and practices will defined a shared perception of the front desk staff (Lam & Lau 2008), and strengthen their attitudes and behaviours towards the clients, (Beatson et al. 2008). These policies and strategies such as rewards to motivate them (Mechinda and Patterson, 2011) to retain highly effective, skilled and devoted staff (Kattara, Weheba and El-Said, 2008).

Organisations also need to work on the arrangement arena and setting of the front desk in order to impress the clients. The front desk appearances such as visual materials and existence of personnel create impressions and perceptions at the front desk (Berg and Kreiner, 1992, pp.48).

Timm (2008, p.96), highlighted individual behaviours as one of the challenges to impression in organisations. Emphasis must be put to have those behaviours by individuals at the front desk addressed in order to impress clients on first sight. These include; greeting clients, calling clients by name, establishing and maintaining eye contact, frequent correspondences and responses, listening skillfully, good telephone techniques among others.

Ludvik and Micik(2015, pp.67) advised that if agencies want to improve clients impression in order to have a good reputation, there is need for the organisation employees to have knowledge on the services and works of the organisations they work for, be able to articulate issues and answer the clients questions on interaction, listen to verbal and nonverbal communications from the clients, not to be emotional, be able to collect all the information from the clients and seek for feedback from management and organisations should also train their employees on customer care. The front desk staff need to be equipped with the appropriate training, tools and technology (Mechinda and Patterson, 2011), the training should focus on the front desk staff behavior, (Lloyd and Luk 2011) to bridge the knowledge gap among these staff. Training staff will help them understand the organisations systems (Beatson, et al.2008). These trainings at the end will result into client satisfaction and a good reputation. Organisations should also adopt mystery shopping in order to effectively evaluate and assess the employee friendliness and the extent at which they help the clients. It also evaluates the cleanliness of the facility, waiting time, signage and adherence to the organisation standards, Ludvik and Micik (2015, pp.67), it will also measure the quality of services and feedback from the clients, (Schmidt, and Hollensen ,2006,pp.54).

2.4 Summary of the existing Literature

From the Literature review, work by several researchers seemed to agree that there was a relationship between front desk management, first impression and corporate reputation. These conclusions were however confirmed or dismissed after first hand evidence was obtained from the research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher explains the research design, description of population studied, sample size, sample selection, data collection methods, processing and analysis procedures and the challenges met.

3.1 Research Design

The study applied the case study research design where UNBS was identified as the case study. This was so because the research intended to explore the phenomenon in depth (Yin, 2009 pp. 18) and the knowledge generated was generalized to reflect the behaviors of other regulatory agencies in the Country. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied to establish the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable to understand the meanings and interactions of individuals (Creswell, 2014, pp.41). this was to practically and critically integrate qualitative research and quantitative data to facilitate translation and fully explore the research question. The use of both methods was enable me compare and contrast the findings and it enabled me use a diversity of methods

3.2 Study Population

As defined by Saunders (2007), a population is the set of cases from which a sample is taken. For the purpose of this study, a total population of 160 respondents was considered comprising staff of UNBS, clients of UNBS from the headquarters and Nakawa offices, and the media reporters covering business stories. This population was selected because of their convenience especially the UNBS clients and in this category. The target was the newly certified maize milling companies since they were interfacing with

UNBS for the first time and their first encounter was very key in this research, the media reporters from the six print media that cover business news, board members of the Grain Millers Council, and the UNBS staff from the department relevant to the topic of study. The purposive sampling technique was applied to identify those staff and members of the media with experience and knowledge on the subject under research.

3.3 Sample Size and Sample Selection

A sample is a smaller group or sub group which can be assessed from the population (Mugemda and Mugenda, 1999). The sample size was determined using Solvin's formula which is described below; and this formula was selected because it gives the degree of accuracy I desired to achieve by giving me an idea on how large the sample size needs to be.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(p)^2}$$

Where;

n = the required sample size

N = the targeted population

p = critical value (that is to say significant value) with a 95% level of confidence hence $p = 0.05$

Hence the sample size will be as follows;

$$N = 160$$

$$n = \frac{160}{1 + 160(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{160}{1 + 0.22}$$

$$n = \frac{160}{1.22}$$

$$n = 131$$

3.4 Sampling Procedures

The study used a variety of sampling methods as discussed below

Simple random sampling. Here a group of a sample was selected for study from a larger population of the UNBS staff, it was adopted because of its simplicity and not biased, although it is time consuming but it was the appropriate method for such a study. The staff was but it was purposively determined where only staff in the Corporate and management department were selected because of their knowledge in front desk management. Random sampling was also used for the UNBS clients in the newly certified maize mills and the Certified maize mills category was identified purposively because being new, they were having first encounter with UNBS and that category had a lot to share as experience in interfacing with the front desk of UNBS.

Purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used in collecting qualitative data. Specifically, the researcher identified staff of UNBS and clients with information relevant to the topic under research within the headquarters and Nakawa offices of UNBS for consideration (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 summary of study population and sampling procedures

Research Method	Category of the respondents	Population (N)	Target sample size	Data collection method	Sampling technique
Qualitative Research	UNBS staff in corporate and management department	70	56	Questionnaire	Simple random sampling
	UNBS Clients in the newly certified maize mills	69	56	Questionnaire	Simple random sampling

Quantitative Research	Board members of the Grain Millers Council	9	9	Interview	purposive
	Media reporter	12	10	Interview	purposive
	Total	160	131		

Adopted from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for computing sample size

3.5 Data collection methods

This study used both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires that were filled by the selected staff of UNBS and these were mainly from the corporate and management department and selected members of the UNBS clients from the newly certified maize mills. While qualitative data was obtained from key informant interviews with selected board members of the grain millers council and media personnel involved in covering business stories.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

These were methods used by the researcher to gather information and they were both primary sources which included questionnaires and Interviews and secondary sources of data.

3.7 Primary Sources of Data

3.7.1 Questionnaire

This data collection instrument is applied to gather data over a large sample or number of respondents (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). It contained both open and closed ended structured questions related to the study objectives. This was distributed to the selected respondents in order to get genuine primary information. This method was selected to enable me get a lot of information in the short time provided, less costing, easily administered to a large number of respondents and ensures confidentiality. 56 UNBS staff and 56 UNBS clients from the newly certified maize mills were

selected randomly to answer the questionnaires. The data was systematically analysed and respondents answered questions in their own mood without being affected by a researcher's presence.

3.7.2 Interviews

According to Saunders (2007), interview is a discussion with a purpose between two or more people. The researcher first prepared an interview guide the researcher to get the relevant information. It was applied to the selected members of the board of the grain milling Council and the media personalities in the business field. This method helped to get additional information that could have been left out in the questionnaire. The main purpose is to get in-depth information so who exactly did you interview.

3.8 Secondary data

Secondary data was obtained from the available literature review in textbooks, journals, reports, and research magazines obtained from relevant institutions and internet.

3.9 Research Reliability and Validity Tests.

According to Amin (2005), Validity is the appropriateness of the instrument in collecting the data that is supposed to be collected. The research instrument was validated in terms of content and face validity. The instruments were examined by at least three students in the same class and the supervisor of the study to tell the items on their suitability of content, and to determine all the possible areas that needed modification so as to achieve the objectives of the study. After the scrutiny of the instruments, necessary adjustments were made on the instruments to ensure that the questions were valid before data collection was done.

3.9.1 Reliability

Amin (2005) defines reliability as the degree to which the said instrument consistently measures whatever it is measuring. The researcher measured the reliability of the questionnaire to determine its consistency in testing what they were intended to measure. The test re-test technique was used to estimate the reliability

of the instruments. This involved administering the same test twice to the same group of respondents who had been identified for

this purpose

3.10 Ethical Considerations

To ensure confidentiality of the information provided by the respondents and to ascertain the practice of ethics in this study, the following activities were undertaken by the researcher:

A letter seeking for permission and the purpose of the research specifying the kind of cooperation requested from participants (respondents) was obtained from the university and given to respondents and organizations where data was collected. The researcher endeavored to acknowledge the authors quoted in his study and the author of the standardized instrument through citations and referencing. In addition, leading questions were avoided and respected respondents' privacy by promoting confidentiality and destroying questionnaires as per the University's specified time after analysis.

3.11 Data Gathering Procedures

3.11.1 Before administering questionnaires

An introduction letter was obtained from the Faculty of Journalism and Communications at the Uganda Christian University for the researcher to solicit approval to conduct the study from UNBS. When approved, the researcher secured a list of the qualified respondents from the UNBS authorities in charge and selected through systematic random sampling from this list to arrive at the minimum sample size. An explanation to the respondents about the study was made and requested for their permission. The research reproduced more than enough questionnaires for distribution. The researcher selected research assistants who assisted in the data collection; were briefed and oriented in order to be consistent in administering the questionnaires.

3.11.2 During the administration of the questionnaires

The respondents were requested to answer completely the questionnaire and not to leave any part of the questionnaires unanswered. The researcher and assistants retrieved the questionnaires within ten days from the date of distribution. On retrieval, all returned questionnaires were checked if all are answered.

3.11.3 After the administration of the questionnaires

The data gathered was collected, encoded into the computer and statistically treated using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.12 Data Analysis Methods

The data was analyzed after collecting all the findings and categorizing it under the sub sections based on the four objectives; the researcher prepared data which was involved in editing, coding and data entry and modeling. These activities ensured the accuracy of the data and their conversion from raw form to classified forms that were more appropriate for analysis. This data was then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS).

3.13 Limitations to the study

- i) The effects of Covid 19 pandemic affected the research, first the lock down without any movement delayed the work until the lockdown was lifted and the decisions by organization to halt visitations, made the research to delay, however, phone calls were used and questionnaires sent online.
- ii) Some respondents were not cooperative in filling the questionnaires in time; but the researcher took it to do several reminders to get them fill them.
- iii) Rejection of the respondents; some respondents may not accept to fill the questionnaires or be interviewed as their sector policy. The Researcher intends to proactively supply questionnaires to other respondents on reserve to obtain full sample size.

iv) Some of the respondents could not manage filling the whole questionnaire for unknown reasons but researcher used data cleaning to solve this.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected from the field using the questionnaire and interviews, the analysis and interpretation of the findings alongside the three research objectives. Thereafter, the correlation results on the relationship between the key variables of interest are presented.

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 112 questionnaires were administered and 104 were returned fully filled representing 93%, five were not returned while three were not fully filled and they were not used and for the interviews, 19 people were targeted but only 15 were reached which represented 79%. Those interviewed included members of the governing council of the grain miller's board and media reporters. Of the 131 respondents targeted, 119 were reached and had their responses were considered and this represents 90.8%.

Table 4.1 Response rate

Instrument	Target	Actual	percentage
Questionnaire	112	104	93%

Interview	19	15	79%
Total	131	119	90.8%

4.2 Demographic characteristics

This section presents the frequency and percentages description of the sample characteristics such as gender, age bracket, designation, education level and marital status and the results are given in the subsequent sections.

4.2.1 Gender of respondents

The study established the gender of the respondents and this distribution is presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.2 Gender of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	64	53.8	53.8	53.8
Female	55	46.2	46.2	100.0

Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From table 4.2 above, it is observed that the majority of the participants in the study were male (53.8%), while females constituted 46.2%. This implies that both genders were represented in the study although there are more men involved in the maize milling sector compared to women.

4.2.2 Age group of respondents

The age distribution of the respondents who participated in this study is shown in table 4.2 below.

Table 1.3 Age group respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20 years	1	.8	.8	.8
	20-29 years	75	63.0	63.0	63.9
	30-39 years	8	6.7	6.7	70.6
	40-49 years	33	27.7	27.7	98.3
	50-59 years	1	.8	.8	99.2
	Above 60 years	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From table 4.3 above, it was observed that the majority of the respondents were in the age group of 20-29 years (63%), followed by those who were in the age group of 40-49 years (27.7%), then those who were in the age group of 30-39 (6.7%) and those in the age groups of 50-59 years, above 60 years and below 20 years all constituted 0.8%. This implies that majority of the respondents were of a productive age group and are mainly working as front desk officers, media practitioners and liaison officers between the maize mills and the front desk of UNBS.

4.2.3 Designation of respondents

From the questionnaires, the study sought for responses to the designation of the respondents and the views are presented in table 4.3 below

Table 4.4 Designation of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	UNBS	54	45.4	45.4	45.4
	Staff				
	Clients	65	54.6	54.6	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From table 4.4 above, it is observed that majority of the participants were clients (54.6%), followed by UNBS Staff (45.4%). This implies that majority of the respondents were clients who gave a clear picture of the front desk practitioners at the organization since they are the people who interacts with the front desk of the organization and seek to be impressed.

4.2.4 Level of education of respondents

The study sought to establish the level of education of respondents and the views are presented in table 4.5 below

Table 4.5 Educational background of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Never at school				
Primary				
Secondary	1	.8	.8	.8
Graduate	98	82.4	82.4	83.2
Others	20	16.8	16.8	100.0
Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

According to the statistical distribution in table 4.5 above, it was observed that the majority of the participants in the study were graduates (82.4%), followed by those who had other qualifications (16.8%) and lastly those who had studied up to secondary level constituted 0.8%. This implies that the respondents were knowledgeable enough to interpret the questionnaire.

4.2.5 Marital status of respondents

The responses to marital status of respondents are presented in table 4.5 below

Table 4.6 Marital status of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	50	42.0	42.0	42.0
	Married	67	56.3	56.3	98.3
	Separated	1	.8	.8	99.2
	Divorced	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	119	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From table 4.6 above, it is observed that majority of the participants in the study were married (56.3%), followed by those who were single (42%), while those who single or separated and divorced constituted 0.8% each.

4.3 Descriptive findings Objective one: Effects of front desk management on impression of clients

The study sought to investigate the respondents' perception on the effects of front desk management on impression of clients in the regulatory agencies. The table below presents the results. The results are based on a five-point scale with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree.

4.3.1 Respondents' responses on effects of front desk management on impression and corporate reputation

Table 4.7 Effects of front desk management

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression	4.72	.780
Front desk employees provide solutions to the clients' problems	4.10	.848
Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services	4.18	1.097
Front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers.	3.48	1.119
Front Desk employees with knowledge solve the client's problem	4.18	.840
Front desk employees are knowledgeable about their organizations	3.86	1.130
Front desk employees give timely response to the client	4.62	.713
Front desk employees' friendliness has a positive effect on customer's first impression.	4.26	.707
Front Desk employee characters impress the clients	4.28	.769
Competent employees bring about trust for the organization	4.08	.497
Good front desk employee creates a comfortable environment for the guest	4.04	.706
Front desk employees are friendly to the clients	4.73	.620
Front desk employees' attitude has a positive effect on the first impression of customers	4.09	.596
Front desk employees' behaviors are impressive to the clients	4.86	.586
Front desk employees are polite and kind to the clients	3.84	1.097
Front desk employees are accommodative to all the clients	4.34	.923

N=119

Source: Primary Data

From the descriptive results presented in table 4.7, it is observed that respondents said that front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression registering a mean score value of 4.72. However, there was an observable variation on the way respondents perceived each item. For instance, whether front desk employees provide solutions to the clients' problems registered a mean score value 4.10. Respondents showed that front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services with a mean score value of 4.18. Respondents also perceived that front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers with a somewhat lower mean score value of 3.48. Respondents opined that front desk employees with knowledge solve the clients' problems with a mean score of 4.18. Respondents were, however, uncertain whether front desk employees are knowledgeable about their organizations with a mean score of 3.86. Respondents were in agreement with the statement that front desk employees give timely response to the clients with a mean score of 4.62. Respondents further agreed that front desk employees' friendliness has a positive effect on customer's first impression with a mean score value of 4.26. Respondents also agreed that front desk employee characters impress the clients with a mean score value of 4.28. It was further agreed that competent employees bring about trust for the organization with a mean score value of 4.08. Respondents also revealed that good front desk employees create a comfortable environment for the guest with a mean score value of 4.04. Respondents were also in agreement with the statement that front desk employees are friendly to clients with a mean score of 4.73. Respondents also stated that front desk employees are friendly to clients with a mean score of 4.73. Respondents were of the view that front desk employees' attitude has a positive effect on the first impression of customers with a mean score of 4.09. Respondents also agreed that front desk employees' behaviors are impressive to the clients with a mean score of 4.86. Respondents

were less convinced that front desk employees are polite and kind to the clients with a mean score of 3.84. Lastly, respondents agreed that front desk employees is accommodative to all the clients with a mean score of 4.34.

These findings were also supported by the interview responses from key informants, one of the key informants said,

“The front desk employees are very important in every organization because they are the eye of the organization. Everyone who comes to the organization first sees the front desk. It is from this point the client determines whether his/her issue will be handled or not. It is therefore the first centre for interaction between the organization and the client.”

However, a senior official at the organization did not wholly side with the clients and also said,

“The main challenge comes from our clients, they come when they are already frustrated and expect to get feedback now and then while others do not want to follow the organization processes and end up shouting at our front desk staff”

4.3.2 Respondents responses on client impression in the regulatory agencies

Respondents were required to indicate the degree to which they perceived the client impression in regulatory agencies like UNBS by agreeing or disagreeing to the items and the results are presented in table 4.8 below. The results are based on a five-point scale with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree.

Table 4.8 Client's impression in regulatory agencies

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Impressions of customers have a positive effect on customer satisfaction	4.19	1.361
Front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients	4.55	.685
Front desk employees have the skills to impress the clients	4.55	.756

Front desk plays a pivotal role in an organization	4.57	.720
The situation at the front desk determines the perception of the client	2.16	.701
Clients opinion about the organization is created at the front desk	4.42	.776
Clients notice things at the front desk which determine their perceptions	3.97	.961
The organization front desk creates Client's belief in the organization	4.13	1.049
Corporate identity can be a powerful means of integrating the many disciplines and activities essential to an organization's success	4.63	.790
Corporate identity is often seen as a collection of visual elements, which are used in various applications to promote the image of an organization	3.71	.715
A clearly defined and positive corporate identity is of vital importance for success and growth	3.82	.685
Identity differs from traditional brand marketing since it is concerned with all of an organization's stakeholders and the multi-faceted way in which an organization communicates	4.24	1.031
The front desk environment spells out the brand of the organization	3.78	1.194
The presentation of the front desk employees determines the brand of the organization	4.34	.914
The elements of brand at the front desk speaks the identity of the organization to the clients	4.60	.876
The clients management system at the front desk determines the brand of the organization	3.69	.756

N=119

Source: Primary Data

The descriptive results in table 4.8 above show that the impressions of customers have a positive effect on customer satisfaction with a mean score of 4.19. Respondents showed that front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients with a mean score of 4.55. Furthermore, respondents agreed that front desk employees have skills to impress clients. Respondents agreed that front desk plays a pivotal role in an organization with a mean score of 4.57. Respondents did not agree with the statement that the situation at the front desk determines the perception of the client with a mean score of 2.16. The respondents also agreed that clients' opinion about the organization is created at the front desk with a mean score of 4.42. Respondents agreed somewhat that clients notice things at the front desk which determines their perception with a mean value of 3.97. They also agreed that the organization front desk creates client's belief in the organization with a mean score of 4.13. Respondents represented by a mean score of 4.63 strongly agreed that corporate identity can be a powerful means of integrating many disciplines and activities essential to an organization's success. Respondents were not sure whether corporate identity is often seen as a collection of visual elements, which are used in various applications to promote the image of an organization with a mean score of 3.71. Respondents agreed somewhat that a clearly defined and positive corporate identity is of vital importance for success and growth with a mean score value of 3.82. Respondents agreed that identity differs from traditional brand marketing since it is concerned with all of an organization's stakeholders and the multi-faceted way in which an organization communicates with a mean score of 4.24. Respondents were less certain that the front desk environment spells out the brand of the organization with a mean score of 3.78. Respondents also agreed with the statement that the presentation of the front desk employees determines the brand of the organization with a mean score of 4.34. Respondents also agreed that the elements of brand at the front desk speaks the

identity of the organization to the clients with a mean score of 4.60. Lastly, respondents agreed somewhat that the client management system at the front desk determines the brand of the organization with a mean score of 3.69.

This finding also receives support from the interview with head of operations who had this to say;

“The front desk is where the brand of the organization starts, so if it is bad, the perception of the client will be negative especially if the client is not satisfied with our services and for organizations that share premises, it is at the front desk where a person will be able to tell the organization he/she has gone to. It therefore plays a big role in impressing the client since it can serve the client without meeting any member of management.”

4.3.3 Respondents responses on Reputation management

Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which reputation management at the organization is done and the results are presented in table 4.9 below. The results are based on a five-point scale with 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree.

Table 4.9 Reputation management

Items	Mean	Std. deviation
Organizations have a customer experience mission statement at the front desk	3.90	.643
Organizations know the clients expectations at the front desk	4.29	.995
Organizations have standardized customer service processes	3.89	1.170
Front desk employees know the organizational clients.	4.39	.931
Clients can depend on front desk employees for service	4.45	1.071
Front desk employees have the capacity to serve the clients	3.83	.475
Front desk employees are accountable to their actions within the	3.97	.495

organization		
Front desk employees respect their work	4.08	.953
Clients get the expected services at the front desk	3.86	1.216
Front desk employees mind their mistakes	4.29	.729
Clients trust front desk employees	4.30	1.218
Timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk	3.98	.610
The organization receive requests from clients for services	4.07	1.118
The number of clients seeking for services from the organization is	4.55	.756
increasing		
An organization is accepted because it is the only one offering those	4.09	1.073
services		
Front desk employees contribute a lot to the acceptance of the organization	4.40	.774
services by clients		

N=119

Source: Primary Data

From table 4.9 above, it was observed that respondents were in agreement with the statement that organizations have a customer experience mission statement at the front desk with a mean score of 3.90. Respondents further agreed that organizations know the client's expectations at the front desk with a mean score of 4.29. Respondents agree somewhat that organizations have standardized customer service processes with a mean score of 3.89. However, there was a notable variation as respondents mentioned that front desk employees know the organizational clients represented by a mean score of 4.39. Respondents further agreed that clients can depend on front desk employees for service and this was represented by a mean score of 4.45. Respondents agreed with the statement that front desk employees have the capacity to serve the clients as represented with a mean score of 3.83. With a mean score of 3.97, respondents

reluctantly agreed that front desk employees are accountable to their actions within the organization. Respondents further agreed that front desk employees respect their work with a mean score of 4.08. Respondents agreed that clients get the expected services at the front desk and this was represented with a mean score of 3.86. Respondents agreed that front desk employees mind their mistakes with a mean score of 4.29. Respondents further mentioned that Clients trust front desk employees and this was represented with a mean of 4.30. Respondents agreed somewhat that timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk (mean=3.98). The respondents consistently agreed that the organization receives requests from clients for services (mean=4.07), the number of clients seeking for services from the organization is increasing (mean=4.55) and that an organization is accepted because it is the only one offering those services (mean =4.09). Lastly, respondents also agreed that front desk employees contribute a lot to the acceptance of the organization services by clients with a mean score of 4.40.

In relation to the strategies to improve front desk management, the interviewed person said,

“There is need for continued refresher training especially in customer care and public relations since the clientele is changing every day.”

Another respondent said,

“There is need to recruit trained, skilled and experienced personnel with the front desk knowledge.”

Another respondent said,

“The arrangement of the front desk should be appealing, informative and educative with a lot of information.”

4.4 Descriptive findings Objective two: Relationship between Front desk management, Impression reputation management

4.4.1 Relationship between front desk employees and customer's first impression

Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression *

Competent employees bring about trust for the organization.

Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression

Table 4.10 Relationship between front desk employees and client's first impression

Competent employees bring about trust for the organization	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Strongly disagree	1.00	1	.
Disagree	2.00	1	.
Not sure	3.00	1	.
Agree	4.85	100	.592
Strongly agree	4.44	16	.814
Total	4.72	119	.780

Table 4.12 ANOVA relationship between front desk employees and impression

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first	27.161	4	6.790	17.322	.000
Between Groups	6.506	1	6.506	16.596	.000
Linearity	20.656	3	6.885	17.565	.000
Deviation from Linearity					
Within Groups	44.688	114	.392		

impression * Total					
Competent employees bring about trust for the organization	71.849	118			

According to the ANOVA table there is a strong positive relationship between Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression and competent employees bring about trust for the organization with mean square of 6.790. This implies that both variables are interdependent.

4.4.2 Relationship between employee competency and customer's first impression

Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression * Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services.

Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression

Table 4.12 Relationship between employee competence and clients first impression

Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services.	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Strongly disagree	3.00	8	.926
Disagree	2.00	1	.
Not sure	4.45	11	.688
Agree	4.98	40	.158

Strongly agree	4.88	59	.646
Total	4.72	119	.780

Table 3 ANOVA relationship between employee competence and client's first impression

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression *	35.977	4	8.994	28.584	.000
Between Groups	24.610	1	24.610	78.209	.000
Linearity	11.367	3	3.789	12.042	.000
Deviation from Linearity					
Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services.	35.872	114	.315		
Within Groups					
Total	71.849	118			

According to the ANOVA table there is a strong positive relationship between front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression and front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services with mean square of 8.994. This implies that both variables are interdependent.

4.4.3 Relationship between front desk employee knowledge and customer first impression

Front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on customer's first impression * Front

desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers.

Front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on customer's first impression

Table 4.14 Report on employee's knowledge and first impression

Front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers.	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Strongly disagree	4.22	18	1.060
Disagree	2.75	4	.500
Not sure	3.00	1	.
Agree	4.92	95	.519
Strongly agree	5.00	1	.
Total	4.72	119	.780

Table 4.15 ANOVA report on employee's knowledge and first impression

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Front desk employees' knowledge	Between Groups	26.661	4	6.665	16.815	.000
	Linearity	13.593	1	13.593	34.293	.000

competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression * Front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers.	Deviation from Linearity	13.068	3	4.356	10.990	.000
	Within Groups	45.187	114	.396		
	Total	71.849	118			

According to the ANOVA table there is a strong positive relationship between front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression and front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers with mean square of 6.665. This implies that both variables are interdependent.

4.4.4 Relationship between impression on client's satisfaction

Impression of clients has a positive effect on customer satisfaction * Front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients.

Impression of clients have a positive effect on client satisfaction

Table 4.16 Report on relationship between impression of clients on their satisfaction

Front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
--	------	---	----------------

Strongly disagree	1.00	1	.
Disagree	2.00	1	.
Not sure	1.50	4	1.000
Agree	3.13	38	1.379
Strongly agree	4.95	75	.462
Total	4.19	119	1.361

Table 4.17 ANOVA report on relationship between clients impression and satisfaction

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Impression of Between (Combined)	129.426	4	32.356	41.385	.000
customers have a Groups Linearity	119.154	1	119.154	152.404	.000
positive effect on Deviation from	10.272	3	3.424	4.379	.006
customer Linearity					
satisfaction * Within Groups	89.129	114	.782		
Front desk Total					
employees have	218.555	118			
the ability to					
satisfy the clients					

According to the ANOVA table there is a strong positive relationship between impression of customers has a positive effect on customer satisfaction and front desk employees have the

ability to satisfy the clients with mean square of 32.356. This implies that both variables are interdependent.

4.5 Reputation management

4.5.1 Relationship between timely feedback and reputation management.

The organization receives requests from clients for services * Timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk.

The organization receive requests from clients for services.

Table 4.18 Relationship between timely feedback and reputation management

Timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Strongly disagree	2.00	1	.
Disagree	2.00	1	.
Not sure	2.07	14	.267
Agree	4.48	86	.864
Strongly agree	3.88	17	.485
Total	4.07	119	1.118

Table 4.19 ANOVA report on relationship between timely feedback and reputation management

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

The organization receive requests from clients for services * The number of clients seeking for services from the organization is increasing	Between Groups	(Combined)	59.715	4	14.929	19.395	.000
		Linearity	49.207	1	49.207	63.929	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	10.509	3	3.503	4.551	.005
	Within Groups		87.747	114	.770		
	Total		147.462	118			

According to the ANOVA table there is a strong positive relationship between how the organizations receives requests from clients for services and timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk with mean square of 14.929. This implies that both variables are interdependent.

4.6 Correlations

To determine whether a relationship exists between the Front desk management and client's impression.

The Pearson coefficient, r , expresses the strength of the linear relationship between the variables and ranges from -1 to 1. There is no relationship between the two variables if $r=0$; a weak relationship exists if r is between ± 0.1 and ± 0.4 ; a moderate relationship exists if r is between ± 0.4 and ± 0.6 ; and a strong relationship exists if r is between ± 0.6 and ± 0.9 .

4.6.1 Front desk management

Table 4.4 Correlation of front desk management

	Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression	Competent employees bring about trust for the organization	Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services.	Front Desk employees with knowledge solve the clients problem	Front desk employees give timely response to the clients	Front desk employees' friendliness has a positive effect on customer's first impression.
Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression	1	.301** .001	.585** .000	.618** .000	.678** .000	.532** .000
Competent employees	.301**	1	-.075	.025	.138	.227*

bring about Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.415	.787	.134	.013	
trust for the organization N	119	119	119	119	119	119	
Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.585** .000 119	-.075 .415 119	1 119	.535** .000 119	.838** .000 119	.823** .000 119
Front Desk employees with knowledge solve the clients problem	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.618** .000 119	.025 .787 119	.535** .000 119	1 119	.636** .000 119	.293** .001 119
Front desk employees give timely response to	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.678** .000	.138 .134	.838** .000	.636** .000	1 119	.769** .000

the clients	N	119	119	119	119	119	119
Front desk employees' friendliness has a positive effect on customer's first impression.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.532**	.227*	.823**	.293**	.769**	1
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

According to the findings above there is a positive correlation between front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on client's first impression and competent employees bring about trust for the organization with Pearson correlation .301. Furthermore, front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services and this is directly affected by how front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services with Pearson correlation .585. This implies that front Desk employees with knowledge solve the client's problem thereby affecting the performance of the organization.

4.6.2 Client's Impression

Table 4.21 Correlations of client's impression

	Impression of clients have a positive effect on customer satisfaction	Front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients	Front desk employees have the skills to impress the clients	Front desk plays a pivotal role in an organization	The situation at the front desk determines the perception of the client
Impression of customers have a positive effect on customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N 119	.738** .000 119	.818** .000 119	.777** .000 119	-.415** .000 119
Front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N 119	.738** .000 119	1 .000 119	.907** .000 119	.933** .000 119
Front desk employees have	Pearson Correlation N 119	.818** .000 119	.907** .000 119	1 .000 119	.970** .000 119

the skills to impress clients	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	119	119	119	119	119
Front desk plays a pivotal role in an organization	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.777**	.933**	.970**	1	-.300**
	N	119	119	119	119	119
The situation at the front desk determines the perception of the client	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	-.415**	-.204*	-.377**	-.300**	1
	N	119	119	119	119	119

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

According to the findings above there is a positive correlation between impressions of customers have a positive effect on customer satisfaction and front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients with Pearson correlation of .738. Furthermore, front desk employees have the skills to impress the clients and inspire customer satisfaction with Pearson correlation .818.

This implies the impression that a client gets at the front desk has an impact on the potential for an organization to be perceived positively.

4.6.3 Reputation management

Table 4.22 Correlations of reputation management

	An organization is accepted because it is the only one offering those services	Front desk employees contribute a lot to the acceptance of the organization services by clients	The number of clients seeking for services from the organization is increasing	Clients trust front desk employees	Timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk	Front desk employees mind their mistakes
An organization is accepted because it is the only one offering those services Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1	.098	.699**	.471**	.080	-.100
		.291	.000	.000	.387	.279
	119	119	119	119	119	119
Front desk employees Pearson Correlation	.098	1	.504**	.616**	.732**	.825**

contribute a Sig. (2-tailed)	.291		.000	.000	.000	.000
lot to the acceptance of the organization services by clients	119	119	119	119	119	119
The number of clients seeking services from the organization is increasing	.699**	.504**	1	.583**	.406**	.382**
Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
N	119	119	119	119	119	119
Clients trust front desk employees	.471**	.616**	.583**	1	.520**	.452**
Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
N	119	119	119	119	119	119
Timely feedback is	.080	.732**	.406**	.520**	1	.697**
Pearson Correlation						

given to the Sig. (2- clients at tailed)	.387	.000	.000	.000		.000
the front N desk	119	119	119	119	119	119
Front desk Pearson employees Correlation	-.100	.825**	.382**	.452**	.697**	1
mind their Sig. (2- mistakes tailed)	.279	.000	.000	.000	.000	
N	119	119	119	119	119	119

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the findings above there is a positive correlation an organization which is accepted because it is the only one offering those services and front desk employees contributing a lot to the acceptance of the organization services by clients with Pearson correlation of .098. Furthermore, the number of clients seeking services from the organization is increasing and an organization is accepted because it is the only one offering those services with Pearson correlation of .699. This implies that there is interdependence between the variables since an organization is not accepted because of the services it offers but there are other factors that affect its operations.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.0 Introduction

This research set out to evaluate front desk management, impression and corporate reputation in regulatory agencies in Uganda considering the Uganda National Bureau of Standards as the case study for investigation. This chapter therefore presents the discussion of findings that were presented in chapter four.

5.1 Discussion of findings

The findings of the study are discussed basing on the objectives of the study.

5.1.1 The effects of Front Desk management on impression of clients in the Regulatory agencies in Uganda.

The study established that there is a strong positive relationship between Front desk employees' competency and customer's first impression. It was further revealed that competent employees bring about trust for the organization.

The finding provides supporting evidence to the goal setting theory that urges that for firms to register an increase in employee performance, they should set clear, customer-centered goals for employees. The theory points out that employees whose performance is planned are able to understand what they are expected to do and will have a clear focus, hence working harder to raise the satisfaction of their clients and suggest higher goals. The findings of this study also provide evidence to the general perception of management of organizations who believe that

resources ought to be put aside for planning what employees need to achieve at a specific period, particularly in the area of meeting customer needs.

The positive result implies that when the client is impressed, the perception of the organization is also positive but if the client is unimpressed, the organizational perception is also negative. This is emphasized by Evenson, (2007, p.67).

The study also sees a positive relationship between the front desk person and the client through communication either verbal or nonverbal communication which builds impression and reputation. This friendliness is emphasis by Ismail, (2002, p.38 and p.84).

Furthermore, the study findings receive support from an empirical study of Ismail (2002), Jokinen, Heinamaa & Heikkonen, (2000) and Dix & Baird, (1998) who assert that knowledge about the organization by the front desk employees is key in promoting satisfaction and identity. The scholars further state that Clients expect the front desk employee to be knowledgeable and ready to explain to them all the details concerning the services and products that organization offers or has for them and this is where the client's impression starts and build the perception about the organization. An employee's knowledge about the organization is also manifested in how the employee at the front desk responds to incoming calls and mails and in that they gain client confidence, trust and credibility.

5.1.2 The relationship among Front Desk Management, client impression and reputation in the regulatory agencies in Uganda.

According to the findings, there is a strong positive relationship between impression of customers on customer satisfaction. It was further noted that front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients with mean square of 32.356. This implies that both variables are interdependent.

Findings further stated that there is a positive correlation between impressions of customers and customer satisfaction and that front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients with Pearson correlation of .738, this is in agreement with the works of Everson (2007:p.67) who believes that when a client is impressed at any point of the organization, and is satisfied, then the image will be developed. Furthermore, front desk employees have the skills to impress the clients and customer satisfaction with Pearson correlation .818. This implies the impression that a client gets at the front desk will have a big impact on the organization as a satisfied client tells many more hence the positive relationship. This is in line with the works of Ismael (2002 p. 36) and Roberts (2005 p.688).

The findings provide supporting evidence to the public claim that front desk employees are the mirror of the entire organization because whatever the front desk employees do is attributed to the entire organization. The findings also provide supporting evidence to the goal setting theory that suggests that organizations should set clear goals for employees which should provide basis for how front desk employees should carry on their activities with clearly set goals. These goals should be in form of policies as proposed by Mechinda and Patterson (2011) who believe that these strategies will strengthen the attitudes of the front desk staff.

The finding also receives support from studies conducted by Hansemark and Albinsson (2004) and Parasuraman, et al. (1991) who believe that satisfaction is directly linked to the overall client attitude towards a service from an organization. It is an emotional reaction to the difference between what clients anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some need, goal or desire. The client expects efficient services from competent and professional

people. Courtesies that meet this expectation are being listened to, providing knowledgeable help, friendliness, offering feedback, honesty, and respectfulness through dedicated attention. They further state that the employees at the front desk must be friendly, courteous, knowledgeable, helpful and respond with accuracy.

5.1.3 Strategies to improve Front Desk Management to have a positive reputation of the regulatory agencies in Uganda.

The respondents suggested that there is need for continued professional development whereby the front desk employees go for refresher courses that avail them with knowledge to continuously serve clients with due diligence.

The findings are in line with the views of Ludvik & Micik (2015) who advised that if agencies want to improve clients impression in order to have a good reputation, there is need for the organisation employees to have knowledge on the services and works of the organizations they work for, be able to articulate issues and answer the clients questions on interaction, listen to verbal and nonverbal communications from the clients, not to be emotional, be able to collect all the information from the clients and seek for feedback from management and organizations should also train their employees on customer care.

The findings also assert that the organisation's arrangement of the front desk affects the impression of the client. The findings confirm that when the front desk is arranged properly in a way that communicates to its clients say the vision, mission, core values and other identification features of the organization, the client is impressed and the reputation is built. This is in support of the research work of Berg and Kreiner, (1992, p.48), who said that front desk appearances

such as visual materials and existence of personnel create impressions and perceptions at the front desk.

The findings also look at attitude as very key in determining the impression of the clients, client's attitudes in terms of services offered which must be timely, the attitude of the front desk officer serving the client must also be positive to have a positive impression and that clients are interested in feedback and quality services and it is what agencies should adopt as a strategy. This is in support of the research by Schmidt, & Hollensen ,(2006,p.54).

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the conclusion and recommendations.

6.1 Conclusion

The study established that there is a strong positive relationship between Front desk employees' competency and customer's first impression. It was further revealed that competent employees bring about trust for the organization. According to the findings, there is a strong positive relationship between impressions of customers on customer satisfaction. It was further noted that front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients. Findings further revealed there is need for continued professional development whereby the front desk employees go for refresher courses that avail them with knowledge to continuously serve clients with due diligence.

6.2 Recommendations

Basing on the above findings and conclusion, the study came up with the following recommendations.

Organisations should ensure that they have the right employees at the front desk. This calls for qualified people in front desk management, customer care or related qualifications if not so have trainings for these staff and equip them with skills of handling clients.

The front desk should be well organized with clear information about the organization, be well equipped, reading materials and publications of the organization.

Organisations should also use the front desk to develop feedback mechanisms to the clients, the organization should frequently provide information meant for public consumption to the front desk, have a clear communication of the organization practices and engage them in all activities which policies meant for the public.

There is need for organisations have strategies of motivating the front desk staff as a strategy of retaining the skilled and experienced staff in the organization.

There is need for continued professional development among front desk employees. Professional Development covers the various types of learning opportunities that result in the personal and professional growth of an employee. It focuses on the process by which employees may engage in targeted training, conferences, seminars, on the job training, and formal coaching to enhance their performance and better prepare themselves for future responsibilities, (Schnoes, Caliendo, Morand, Dillinger, Naffziger-Hirsch, & O'Brien, 2018, Chatterjee, Ford, Rojewski, & Watts, 2019). It is through this that front desk employees will be equipped with all the necessary knowledge to carry on their duties with professionalism hence leading to customer satisfaction that will improve their reputation.

There is need for the organization to motivate their front desk employees through timely payments or salary increments. It is such incentives that encourage these employees to work tirelessly for the betterment of the entire organization since they are motivated.

The organization should recruit trained and competent employees to work as front desk officials who can perform their duties with professionalism.

6.3 Further Research

The study used UNBS as the case study to represent the many regulatory agencies and even at UNBS, data was collected from only two offices in Bweyogerere and Nakawa out of the 8

offices located in various parts of the country and it was also limited to maize millers yet there are so many companies which UNBS certifies. All these were not considered in the study because of limited time and resources. However, the findings on front desk management in other regulatory agencies or UNBS offices across the country could be different in some ways compared with other agencies. Thus a similar study should be undertaken in other regulatory agencies to get a better understanding of this phenomenon using other different designs. The researcher therefore suggests that a wider research on the topic be done in the near future. With the development of technology where communication is becoming electronic, there is need to consider such emerging issues within the management of impression and reputation in regulatory agencies.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

I am a student pursuing Master's degree in strategic Communication at Uganda Christian University and I am conducting a research study on Front desk Management, Impression and reputation in regulatory agencies in Uganda. The information sought is needed for this academic research and will be treated with confidentiality and will be solely for the purpose of this research.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENT

Please do provide the following information. Tick the appropriate category

1. Gender

Female

Male

2. Age Group: (Tick)

Below 20 years	20-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	Above 60 years

3. Status/Position/ Designation (Tick):

UNBS Staff	Front desk Practitioner	UNBS Client

4. Highest level of education

Never at school	Primary	Secondary	Graduate	Others

5 Marital status

Single

Married

Separated

Divorced

SECTION TWO:

Please use the following five-point Likert Scale to indicate your agreement with the statements given in the questionnaire.

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>

Use (X) or Tick () in the questionnaire boxes to indicate your preference/choice .

	1	2	3	4	5
UNBS Front desk officer are knowledgeable					x

PART I: Front desk Management

CODE	Competence	1	2	3	4	5
CON1	Front desk employees' competency has a positive effect on customer's first impression.					
CON2	Competent employees bring about trust for the organization					
CON3	Front desk employees provide solutions to the clients' problems					
CON4	Front desk employees understand the questions their clients have about their services.					
	Knowledge					
KN1	Front desk employees' knowledge has a positive effect on the first impression of customers.					
KN2	Front Desk employees with knowledge solve the clients problem					
KN3	Front desk employees are knowledgeable about their organisations.					
KN4	Front desk employees give timely response to the clients					
	Friendliness					
FR1	Front desk employees' friendliness has a positive effect on customers' first impression.					
FR2	Front Desk employee characters impresses the clients					
FR3	Good front desk employee creates a comfortable environment for the guest,					
FR4	Front desk employees are friendly to the clients					
	Service Attitude					

SA1	Front desk employees' attitude has a positive effect on the first impression of customers.					
SA2	Front desk employees' behaviors are impressive to the clients					
SA3	Front desk employees are polite and kind to the clients					
SA4	Front desk employees are accommodative to all the clients					

PART II: Impression

CODE	Satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
ST1	Impression of customers have a positive effect on customer satisfaction					
ST2	Front desk employees have the ability to satisfy the clients					
ST3	Front desk employees have the skills to impress the clients					
ST4	Front desk plays a pivotal role in an organisation					
	Perception					
PE1	The situation at the front desk determines the perception of the client					
PE2	Clients opinion about the organization is created at the front desk					
PE3	Clients notice things at the front desk which determine their perceptions					
PE4	The organization front desk creates Client's belief in the organisation					
	Identity					
ID1	Corporate identity can be a powerful means of integrating the many disciplines and activities essential to an organization's success					
ID2	Corporate identity is often seen as a collection of visual elements, which are used in various applications to promote the image of an organization					

ID3	A clearly defined and positive corporate identity is of vital importance for success and growth					
ID4	Identity differs from traditional brand marketing since it is concerned with all of an organization’s stakeholders and the multi-faceted way in which an organization communicates					
	Corporate Brand					
CB1	The front desk environment spells out the brand of the organisation					
CB2	The presentation of the front desk employees determines the brand of the organisation					
CB3	The elements of brand at the front desk speaks the identity of the organization to the clients					
CB4	The clients management system at the front desk determines the brand of the organisation					

CODE	Consistence	1	2	3	4	5
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PART III: Reputation Management

CO1	Organisations have a customer experience mission statement at the front desk					
CO2	Organisations know the clients expectations at the front desk					
CO3	Organisations have standardized customer service processes					
CO4	Front desk employees know the organizational clients.					
	Credibility					
CR1	Clients can depend on front desk employees for service					
CR2	Front desk employees have the capacity to serve the clients					
CR3	Front desk employees are accountable to their actions within the organisation					
CR4	Front desk employees respect their work					
	Reliability					
RE1	Clients get the expected services at the front desk					
RE2	Front desk employees mind their mistakes					
RE3	Clients trust front desk employees					
RE4	Timely feedback is given to the clients at the front desk					
	Acceptability					
AC1	The organisation receive requests from clients for services					
AC2	The number of clients seeking for services from the organisation is increasing					
AC3	An organisation is accepted because it is the only one offering those services					

AC4	Front desk employees contribute a lot to the acceptance of the organisation services by clients					
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APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR QUALITATIVE DATA FROM KEY INFORMANTS

You have been selected as one of the respondents in this research. The purpose of this exercise is to collect data on Front desk management, impression and reputation in regulatory agencies in Uganda. Please kindly spare part of your precious time to answer these questions as accurately and honestly as possible. The information you will give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and only used for this research.

- i. Do you have a front desk office in this organization?
- ii. Is the front desk office relevant to your organization?
- iii. What is the relationship between the front desk office and the clients?
- iv. What challenges do you find with the front desk of this organisation?
- v. What role does the front desk play on the impression of clients?
- vi. What do you think needs to be done with the front desk of this organization?

APPENDIX D- BUDGET

Activity	Item	Qty	C.P.U	Amount
Stationery	Paper	8 Reams	12,000	96,000
	Writing Pads	1 Packet	8,000	8,000
	Ball Point Pens	1 packet	15,000	15,000
	Flash Disk	1 Stick	60,000	60,000
Data Collection	<i>Field Costs</i>			
	Research Assistant	2Persons	300,000	600,000
	Transport costs	14 Days	25,000	350,000
	Meals	14 Days	20,000	280,000
	Professional Guidance			
Data Processing	Data Analysis	7 Days	100,000	700,000
	Secretarial Services	1 Person	50,000	50,000
	Printing			150,000
	Photocopying	1	100,000	100,000
	Binding Charges	2	50,000	100,000
GRAND TOTAL				2,509,000

APPENDIX E- TIME PLAN

Item	Jan.- 2021	Feb.2021	March- 2021	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021	July 2021
Research Proposal development							
Submitting and defence of Research Proposal							
Data Collection							
Data Analysis							
Research Report Writing							
Submitting Research Report							



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DISSERTATION CORRECTION COMPLIANCE REPORT BY THE CANDIDATE (POST VIVA FORM)

Date: 13th May 2024

Name of Candidate: SAUL WAIGOLO.Reg. No: RS 19M54/017

Title of Dissertation: **FRONT DESK MANAGEMENT, IMPRESSION AND CORPORATE REPUTATION IN REGULATORY AGENCIES IN UGANDA (A CASE OF UGANDA NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS)**

SN	COMMENTS BY EXTERNAL EXAMINER	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	This study is about first impressions. In what ways do first impressions from front desk officers affect organizational reputation. It is an interesting and important study because it empirically provokes and proves the importance of clients' first impressions to an organization. Its methodological depth is outstanding. Like all	The study on impression is not very common and so it has limited theories from the African setting and even those available are not relevant to the study. Scholarly theories relevant to this study have not been easily identified. I therefore maintained the same theory and supported it with Goal Setting Theory	Page 18

	<p>other dissertations its theoretical framework is informed by Impression Management Theory, a Western concepts. I wonder if students like Saul have access to Afrocentric theoretical ideas on these issues. They should be encouraged to use African scholarship because it is in tandem with the research settings they study. This otherwise impressive study would certainly benefit from engaging African strategic comms scholars.</p>	<p>of Edwin Locke (1968).</p>	
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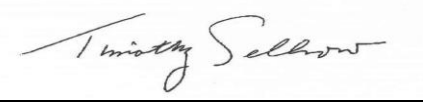
SN	COMMENTS BY INTERNAL EXAMINER	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	NO COMMENT	No action taken	N/A

SN	COMMENTS BY VIVA VOCE PANNEL	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	Focus on one regulatory agency for consistency.	The study chose to focus on one regulatory that is Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS)	Page 14
2	Clarify connection between chosen methods.	The clarification was given because the researcher wanted to get more acquainted with the study	Page 29
3	Improve clarity in problem statement and methodology.	Clarification and more explanation was provided on the problem statement by bringing in the background of the problem, what the situation is and what it is meant to be	Pages 14-15
4	Explain sampling techniques thoroughly.	This was changed to simple random sampling because of its simplicity and not being bias. And also applied purposive sampling. The explanation is clearly given	Pages 30-31

5	Clarify use of correlation.	Correlations were applied to explain the relationship between valuables and these are from 4.6	Pages 57-65
6	Ensure coherence in data collection from subjective opinions	This was ensured basing on the methodology that defined the tool to use	Page 32

Waigolo Saul

Professor Timothy Sellnow



Candidate's Name

Signature

Supervisor's Name

Signature