

Effect Of Employee Personality Traits On Service Delivery By National Water And Sewerage Corporation

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Abstract

Service quality is a prerequisite for enhancing customer satisfaction, retention and attraction which are critical for ensuring a thriving business. Nonetheless, service quality remains a major challenges. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between employees' personality traits on service quality in NWSC Tororo branch. This study was a case study research design with a quantitative research approach. The study used a sample of 378 customers of NWSC Tororo Branch which was obtained from a total of 23,780. The study used a structured questionnaire to obtain data from NWSC customers. SPSS v. 25 was used to analyze data and obtain frequency tables, correlation and regression analyses to interpret results. The study found out that extraversion is significantly and positively associated with service quality. It was found out that conscientiousness trait is significantly and positively associated with service quality. The study also found that openness trait is significantly and positively associated with service quality. The study concludes that personal traits exhibited by employees have a strong inclination to the level of service quality an institution can be able to deliver to its customers. The research recommends NWSC to; ensure it recruits and selects the right employees; and provide training and development programs to enhance service quality.

Keywords: Employee, Personality Traits, Service Delivery and National Water And Sewerage Corporation

Background to the Study

Service quality is one of the strategic goals of any service company(Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). It is important because is regarded as the backbone of customer satisfaction, customer retention and attraction which are critical for ensuring a thriving business (Huston, Gaskin, Moriarty & Watsisi, 2021). Service quality has also been associated with improved profitability, survival, and sustainability of service companies (Jawneh & Manneh, 2020; Pina, Torres & Bachiller, 2014). Moreover, it is widely accepted that ensuring service delivery increases institutional reputation and competitiveness (Pakurár, Haddad, Nagy, Popp & Oláh, 2019).

Despite its relevance, service quality remains a major threat world over. Water utility companies continue to render services which fall short of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles and empathy. Notably, WaterAid Report (2020) indicates over 30% of water consumers are concerned about the reliability of water companies. Much as they are connected, they reveal that water companies have failed to resolve the issue of low pressure, water quality and inconsistent water supply(A. I. Kazaara & Audrey, 2024). On the other hand, over 15% indicate that much as they report tendencies of water leakages, inconsistent water supply and inaccurate billing, their concerns are not responded to in time as expected. On the African perspective, World Bank (2020) indicates that more than 67% of people do not have access to clean and safe water despite filling the necessary forms, while 456,810 customers are either faced with

inconsistent water supply or continue to be supplied with dirty water(Nelson, Christopher, Teddy, et al., 2022). On the other hand, 2 in every 25-water service customer are skeptical employees in utility companies can address their concerns professionally and diligently.

In Uganda, customers of National Water in Sewerage Corporation have continued to express low satisfaction over the way the agency offers services. Customers have logged complaints indicating that some of the staff are asking them to pay some money before to connect them to water supply and reduce water bills(Alex & Moses, 2024). In addition, 14% of customers consider NWSC services unreliable, indicating water supplied to them has bad smell (5%) and color (9%), while 63% are dissatisfied with the tariff charged (Ministry of Water and Environment, (MWE, 2020). In particular, the rate of service delivery at NWSC Tororo branch is among the worst. NWSC Customer Satisfaction Survey Report (2020) indicates 54% of customers are not satisfied with quality of service by Tororo branch due to consistent supply interruptions and inadequate quality especially in terms of color. Over 57% indicate Tororo branch is not efficient in executing tasks and responsibilities(Christopher & Shamirah, 2025). The branch takes averagely 6 months to connect a customer who submits an application much as the company policy indicates maximum of 2 months. Water leakages are predominant much as customers are keen to report these cases. It takes employees averagely 2 weeks before the leakage is dealt with(Moses, 2023). Likewise, 27% of customers do not have the assurance that employees of NWSC Tororo have the necessary skills to address their issues.

Empirical evidence suggests personality traits can influence service delivery (Chien-Wen, Hsiu-Li, Jo-Ping, Mei-Shiue & Chen-Hui, 2013; Johari & Ong, 2013; Sarkey, Turkson & Ansah, 2013). They demonstrate that there are five traits including; openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism, each of which influences service quality differently. For the purpose of this study, concentration is directed towards openness, conscientiousness and extraversion traits. Openness makes employees broadminded and creative, so they more concerned about how they offer services to customers (Mei-Shiue & Chen-Hui, 2013). Conscientiousness compels employees to comply with rules, procedures and policies as they execute tasks and responsibilities. Therefore, they are less likely to involve in unethical practices which compromise service quality(Christopher, Moses, et al., 2022). Extraversion makes employees more social, affectionate and friendly. These attributes are likely to encourage employees to often interact and solicit feedback from clients to improve service delivery (Johari & Ong, 2013).

Nonetheless, most empirical studies which explain the relationship between employees' personality traits and service quality were conducted in other countries, mainly those in Asia (Chien-Wen et al., 2013; Johari & Ong, 2013; Sarkey et al., 2013). However, Africa and Asia face different dynamics, which implies that the antecedents of service quality equally probably differ. As a consequence, there is a lack of knowledge to explain the relationship between employees'

personality traits and service delivery in African context, specifically in Uganda (A. G. Kazaara & Kazaara, 2025). Furthermore, the current study finds that empirical research to show the relationship between employees' personality traits and service quality is generally old. In this case, it is possible that the degree of influence has probably changed, although available research is unable to reflect this (Julius & Audrey, 2025). It is against this background that the researcher finds it necessary to conduct research examining the relationship between employees' personality traits and service quality in Uganda's context.

Statement of the Problem

Service quality is a major priority because it enhances customer satisfaction, retention and attraction (Huston et al., 2021). However, the quality of service in NWSC, especially Tororo branch is on the decline. This is mainly manifested in the decline in service delivery parameters of reliability, empathy, assurance, responsiveness and tangibles (MWE, 2020). Customers are dissatisfied with inconsistent water supply, prolonged connection, and failure of the branch to deal with water leakages. Customers also noticed that the water supplied to them has a bad smell, color and in some areas, water is salty and not good enough for domestic consumption (NWSC Customer Satisfaction Survey, 2020). NWSC has lately engaged in training programs for staff and increased on the number of toll-free lines where customers can report quality issues, although no significant improvement in service quality has been reported at Tororo branch (Christopher, Komunda, et al., 2022). If this is not checked, many customers may resort to other water sources, hence affecting the customer base and profitability of the branch (Irumba et al., 2024). It is anticipated that inadequate service quality at NWSC Tororo branch may be attributed to employees' personality traits.

Purpose of the study

To examine the relationship between employees' personality traits on service quality in NWSC Tororo branch.

Objectives of the study

- i. To assess the relationship between extraversion trait and service quality in NWSC Tororo branch.
- ii. To explore the relationship between conscientiousness trait and service quality in NWSC, Tororo branch.
- iii. To assess the relationship between openness trait and service quality in NWSC, Tororo branch

Research questions

- i. What is the relationship between extraversion trait and service quality in NWSC Tororo branch?
- ii. What is the relationship between conscientiousness trait and service quality in NWSC, Tororo branch?
- iii. What is the relationship between openness trait and employee performance in NWSC, Tororo branch?

Scope of the study

The scope of the study is explained in terms of Geographical scope, Subject scope and Time scope.

Geographical scope

The study was conducted at National Water and Sewerage Cooperation, Tororo branch. National Water and Sewerage Cooperation Tororo area is located in Tororo Municipality, Uhuru Drive P.O. Box 889. This branch is

mandated to serve customers in 19 areas. These include Nagongera, Kwapa, Mella, Merikit, Molo, Mukuju, Osukuru, Eastern Division, Western Division, Iyolwa, Kirewa, Kisoko, Magola, Malaba Town Council, Nabuyoga, Paya, Petta, Rubongi, and Sop Sop. This branch was selected because of the intensifying tendencies of service quality concerns raised by customers.

Content scope

This study focused on two concepts, employee's personality traits and service quality. The concept of personality traits was studied as the independent variable while service quality was studied as the dependent variable. It is widely accepted that personality traits are characterized into five, namely; Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism (Chien-Wen et al., 2013; Gridwichai, Kulwanich, Piromkam & Kwanmuangvanich, 2020; Johari & Ong, 2013; Nurasniar, 2022; Sarkey et al., 2013). However, this study delimited to three traits of extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness. This is because studying all the 5-traits in single research is associated with numerous methodological limitations such as concept ambiguity and multicollinearity in some dimensions such as agreeability and extraversion (Chien-Wen et al., 2013; East burn & Sharland, 2017). Service quality was studied using the SERVQUAL Model terms of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance (Jawneh & Manneh, 2020; Milner & Furnham, 2017; Raza, Umer, Qureshi & Dahri, 2020). However, the dimension of assurance was excluded from the study because it's ascribed to employee's traits which happened to be the independent variable. Therefore, this was eliminated from the study to address multicollinearity issues. This study was relational in nature, and its concentration was on examining how each construct of employee personality traits relates with the dependent variable.

Time scope

This study was conducted within a period of 2018-2024. This is the period in which most complaints from customers were reported.

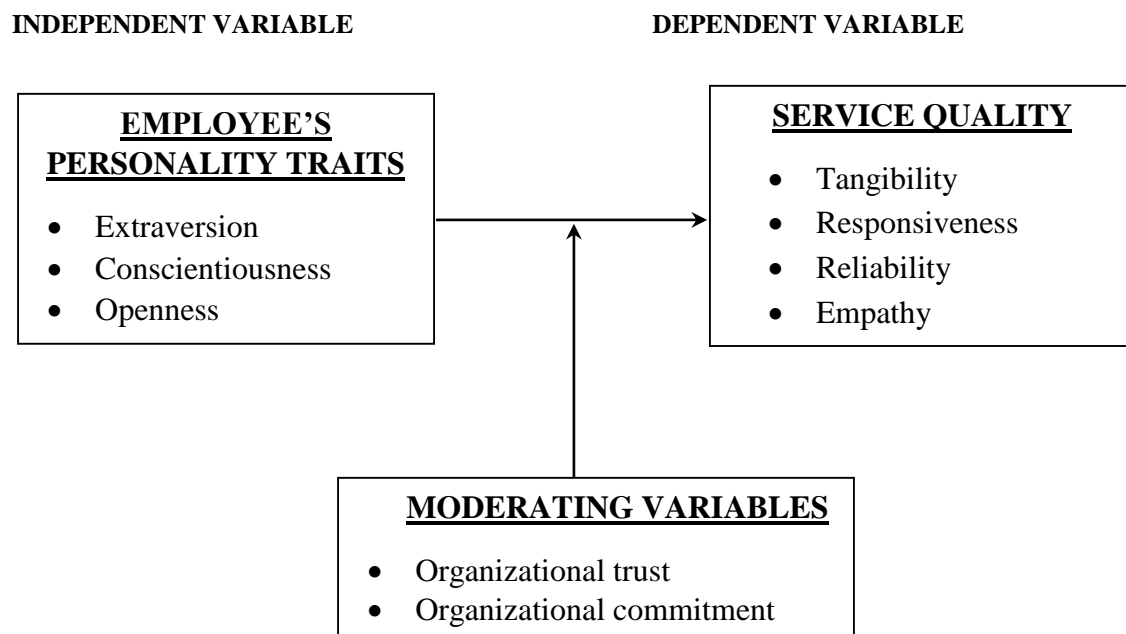
Significance of the study

The study provided empirical evidence indicating the extent to which employee's personality traits affect service quality. These findings may be important to management of NWSC in formulating strategic decisions, especially those aimed at boosting service quality.

The findings presented herein was important to policy makers for instance the Uganda service commission in formulating policies, rules and guidelines which must be followed by NWSC, so as to enhance service quality.

Conceptual framework

Figure 1: Conceptual/theoretical framework



Source: Adopted and modified from literature review (Chien-Wen et al., 2013; Gridwichai et al., 2020; Jawneh & Manneh, 2020; Johari & Ong, 2013; McCrae & Costa, 1997; Nurasniar, 2022; Pakurá et al., 2019; Pina, Torres & Bachiller, 2014; Sarkey et al., 2013)

The conceptual framework (Figure I) provides the diagrammatical impression of the overall comprehension of the study. This framework indicates that service quality (dependent variable) can be determined by employee’s personality traits. The personality traits emphasized in the framework are extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness. Furthermore, the model indicates that variables such as organizational trust and organizational commitment could also moderate in this relationship.

Definition of key Conceptual Terms

Personality traits: “the sum of ways in which an individual reacts to and interacts with others” (Robbins & Judge, 2016, p.175).

Extraversion: degree of “warmth, sociability, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, and positive emotions” (McCrae & Costa, 1997, p. 513).

Conscientiousness: “competence, order, dutifulness, striving for achievement, self-discipline, deliberation (McCrae & Costa, 1997, p. 513).

Openness: extent of complexity to a person’s mental and experimental life. Individuals with this attribute show high degree of “fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, values, and novel experiences (McCrae & Costa, 1997, p. 513).

Service quality: comparative analysis between what a customer expects and the actual service rendered (Huston et al., 2021; Jawneh & Manneh, 2020).

Tangibility: the extent to which customers are satisfied with the physical facilities, appearance of employees and management who render services (Pina et al., 2014).

Responsiveness: the passion of the employee to help customers and provide prompt service (Raza et al., 2020).

Empathy: the extent to which an employee is perceived as thy is the caring, and having individualized attention towards concerns of customers (Jawneh & Manneh, 2020).

Reliability: extent to which services are rendered to customers with ultimate dependability and accuracy (Milner & Furnham, 2017).

Organizational trust

The positive expectations of employees and the employer about the competence, reliability and benevolence (Fard & Karimi, 2015)

Organizational commitment: An employees' strength of identification with and involvement within the organization (Obedgiu, Bagire & Mafabi, 2017)

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

This study was informed by the theory of planned behavior. This theory was initiated by Ajzen (1985). According to this theory, attitude and behavior is dependent upon intention, which is a function of three drives. First and foremost, the social pressure encountered by an individual towards a specific behavior, commonly referred to as subjective norms (SN), secondly; the attitude expressed towards a specific behavior or behavioral control, and lastly; the beliefs about an individual's ability to perform a specific behavior which is widely referred to as the perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). In other words, an individual will decide to express a specific action and behaviour based on positive or negative evaluation of the possible outcomes of a behavior, how the portrayed behaviour and action will be perceived, and the extent to which one is in control of an action. Central to the theory of planned behavior is the aspect of salient information or beliefs which are considered relevant for the behavior (Ajzen & Madden, 1986). This theory demonstrates that much as individuals have different beliefs, they only exercise few at a given moment which correspond with a given behaviour they want to portray. As such, it is emphasized that individuals have behavioral beliefs, normative and control beliefs which influence behavior (Ajzen, 2005).

Like any other theory, theory of planned behavior hinges on specific assumptions. Importantly, it presumes that the higher the intention to perform a specific behavior is the higher one engages in the behavior (Ajzen, 1985; 1991). The other assumption of the theory of planned behavior is that intention to perform a behavior is purely volitional. In other words, an individual can deliberately decide whether or not to perform a specific behavior. Even though this is the

case, the theory goes ahead to hypothesize that intention to perform a specific behavior could depend on some resources in terms of money, time and cooperation of others, which depicts people's actual control of a specific behavior (Ajzen & Madden, 1986).

Nonetheless, theory of planned behaviour has mainly been criticized for distinguishing between beliefs and attitude. It has been reasoned that all beliefs associate expressed behaviour irrespective of subjective, perceived behavioral control or attitude towards a behaviour (Conner & Armitage, 1998; Miller, 2017). Even then, the theory of planned behaviour is recognized as one of the realistic theories which explain attitude and behavior of individuals. In this study's context, the theory is recognized as one that provides a clear explanation of the connection that prevails between employee's personality traits and service quality.

It is a theory which strongly emphasizes factor of attitude as crucial in shaping individual actions and behaviour. Since personality traits describe the intrinsic status of an individual, it can then be argued that they have the capacity to influence attitude and behaviour of employees, which can be expressed in one's willingness or unwillingness to offer quality service. Empirical studies embrace that personality traits differ, so as it is with the behaviour, which is consistent with the theory of planned behaviour (Chandrasekara, 2019; Lappalainen et al., 2019; Udin & Yuniawan, 2020). This assertion further affirms that each trait of openness, conscientiousness and extraversion is bound to affect service quality disproportionately. This gives a theoretical justification as to why it is realistic to evaluate the influence of personality traits on service quality, trait by trait.

Conceptual Review

Employee's Personality Traits

Employee's personality traits have attracted a lot of attention across different disciplines. Generally speaking, a critical analysis of available definitions suggests personality traits describe relate to expressed attitude and behavior by an individual (Winny et al., 2023). For instance, (Supratman, Entang and Tukiran 2021) define personality traits as a set of feelings and behaviors exhibited by an individual upon encountering a situation. On the other hand (Esmaelnezhad and Afraze, 2018) express personality traits as an aggregation of ways an individual not only reacts, but also interacts with others. Others have demonstrated personality traits as a set of basic characteristics which depict attitude and behavior (Bojanowska & Urbańska, 2021; Lakmali & Kajendra, 2021).

Borrowing hints from Esmaelnezhad and Afraze (2018) and Supratman et al.'s (2021) definitions, the current study derives the definition of personality traits as behavioral tendencies an individual portrays when reacting or interacting with others. Indeed, (Marchalina, Ahmad and Mahmood Gelaidan, 2018) demonstrate that explains individual's pattern of feeling, thoughts and behavior. Empirical literature strongly acknowledges that personality traits are

explained using a five-dimensional construct of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism (Chandrasekara, 2019; Lappalainen et al., 2019; Udin & Yuniawan, 2020). However, the study confined to only three traits namely extraversion, conscientiousness and openness.

Service Quality

Generally, service quality is a concept which aims to compare between what the client expects and what is actually delivered (Christopher, Muhindo, et al., 2022). One of the definitions is that of Ramya, Kowsalya and Dharanipriya (2019) who indicate that service quality is a comprehensive evaluation of a particular service in relation to the extent to which it fulfills expectations and satisfaction to the customer. This concept has also been defined as the difference between customer's expectation and perception of service (Ali, Saleh, Akoi, Abdulrahman, Muhamed, Noori & Anwar, 2021; Pakurár et al., 2019). Meanwhile according to Tran (2020), service quality is the extent to which the services rendered are in congruence with customer expectations. In other words, it is a concept seeks to establish the value of the company towards its clientele. This concept is important because customers are the ones that provide market for all services offered by any company (Allan et al., 2023). On the other side of the coin, service companies can only be relevant if they provide services which are in line with expectations of the customers. The implication is that a customer will always compare and contrast fulfillment with their anticipation, hence service delivery.

Different researchers have developed models to measure service quality (Mei, Dean, and White, 1999; Knutson, Singh, Yen, and Bryant, 1990). However, the SERVQUAL is the most predominantly used model (Jawneh & Manneh, 2020; Milner & Furnham, 2017; Raza et al., 2020). Developed by Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1988), SERVQUAL constitutes five dimensions, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance.

Methodology

Research Design

This study was a case study research design with a quantitative research approach. A case study research design is a research design which involves an in depth and multifaceted examination of a research phenomenon within a particular case or area (Creswell, 2014). This design was selected because it allows a thorough scrutiny of the research phenomenon using a manageable scope. Quantitative research approach is one where results obtained are elaborated and reported using statistical models (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). The approach is considered important because numeric content is clear and easy to understand. More so, this approach is appropriate since the study seeks to indicate the cause-and-effect relationship that exists between studied variables. This can easily and clearly be reflected statistically.

Study Population

The study population comprises customers of NWSC Tororo branch. By end of 2021, the branch had a total of 23,780 customers (NWSC Branch Customer Monitoring Report, 2022). These customers were considered as both the unit of inquiry and unit of analysis.

Sample Size

Kothari (2017) defines a sample as a representative portion of the population that is used to provide the required data to the study. The sample size of was selected determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970). This formula is as follows;

$$n = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where;

X^2 = table value of chi-square @ d.f=1 with 3.841

N = Population size (In this case=23,780)

P = Population Proportion (assumed to be .50)

d = Degree of accuracy (expressed as a proportion estimated at .05)

Computation

$$\begin{aligned} &= \frac{3.841[(23,780*.5)*(1-.50)]}{0.05^2 (23,780-1) + 3.841[(.50)*(1-.50)]} \\ &= \frac{22834.745}{59.4475+0.96025} \\ &= \frac{22834.745}{60.40775} \\ &= \underline{378.01} \end{aligned}$$

From the above computation, a sample size of 378 is appropriate to represent a study population of 23780 customers. Accordingly, this study targeted obtaining data from a total of 378 customer. Nonetheless, the study achieved a response rate of 72.2% having collected data from 273 customers. The response rate obtained was above the minimum threshold of 70%. This implied that the data obtained in this study was fit to be generalized to the entire population, and sufficient to be based on for drawing conclusions and recommendations.

Sampling Techniques

Sampling means concentrating on a proportion of the population while conducting research as opposed to the whole (Taherdoost, 2016). The study applied stratified random sampling technique to select the targeted sample. Stratified random sampling is a sampling technique which involves stratification or segregation, followed by random selection of subjects from each stratum (Taherdoost, 2016). This method starts with identifying a mutually exclusive

characteristic upon which the population can be divided or stratified. The researcher categorized customers in accordance to where they were located within the district. In Tororo, the district was geographically categorized into 19 areas. These include Nagongera, Kwapa, Mella, Merikit, Molo, Mukuju, Osukuru, Eastern Division, Western Division, Iyolwa, Kirewa, Kisoko, Magola, Malaba Town Council, Nabuyoga, Paya, Petta, Rubongi, and Sop Sop. This technique was used because it guarantees that the sample used in the study is obtained across the entire area of analysis.

The researcher applied disproportionate sampling to determine the number of customers that should be selected from each location to constitute the sample. Disproportionate sampling is a sampling technique where a section of a sample from a given stratum is derived in a proportion of the population (Sileyew, 2019).

Simple random sampling was used to select customers from each stratum. The researcher wrote each customer name in every stratum on a separate piece of paper before pulling them together to form the sampling frame. The researcher started the process of picking one customer after another from each stratum without replacing until the targeted number is obtained.

Table 3.1: Sample size selection

Section	Number of customers	Sample size
Nagongera	1,560	25
Kwapa	1,751	28
Mella	978	16
Merikit	1,570	25
Molo	1,095	17
Mukuju	987	16
Osukuru	1,336	21
Eastern Division	1,086	17
Western Division	1,190	19
Iyolwa	1,034	16
Kirewa	1,225	19
Kisoko	1,337	21
Magola	1,006	16

Malaba Town Council	2,310	37
Nabuyoga	1,230	20
Paya	1,249	20
Petta	1,770	28
Rubongi	696	11
Sop Sop	370	6
Totals	23780	378

Source: NWSC Branch Customer Monitoring Report, 2022

Data Collection Method and Instrument

Primary data was selected using a questionnaire method. This method involved providing respondents with a written questionnaire. The respondents were then provided with a specific timeframe within which they were expected to return the questionnaire to facilitate analysis. The questionnaire method was used because it provides potential respondent with time to fill the instrument at the time of their convenience (Rahman, 2020). The researcher applied a questionnaire instrument to collect data. This tool was structured, containing closed ended questions which were anchored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The questionnaire instrument was selected because it is effective in collecting quantitative data (Creswell, 2018). The questionnaire had two sections, Section A containing demographic characteristics and section B which contained questions in relation to study variables.

Data Quality Control

The study ensured quality of data is controlled through ensuring the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

Validity of Instrument

Validity assesses whether each question within the data collection instrument measures the construct in question and captures the issues to be measured (Creswell, 2014). Face validity was determined through expert judgment, where the researcher presented instrument to the supervisors to seek for their expert view on the Items. The researcher adjusted the questionnaire following the advice received. Content validity was determined by computing the content validity index (CVI). The researcher shared a draft questionnaire with different people who are perceived knowledgeable about the subject matter under investigation for them to comment on the appropriateness. CVI was computed using the formular $CVI = \frac{\text{Total number of items indicated as valid}}{\text{Total number of Items under a construct or variable}} * 100$. As a general rule, a questionnaire qualifies for CVI if the computed values under each construct and variable is at least 0.7 (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). The results of CVI obtained in relation to the instrument used in this study are presented in table 3.2.

Reliability of Instrument

Reliability is a measure of internal consistency and stability of results (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020). Precisely, reliability indicates the magnitude to which research is free from bias and consistence of results over several trials (Moafian, Ostovar, Griffiths & Hashemi, 2019; Moses & Yamat, 2021). The study used Cronbach Alpha coefficient to determine reliability. In statistical sense and practice, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of items under a construct or variable should be at least 0.7 to be considered as reliable (Cronbach, 1951; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient which were obtained in relation to results obtained are presented in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Validity and Reliability

Variables	CVI	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Extraversion	0.71	0.81	7
Conscientiousness	0.83	0.82	6
Openness	0.83	0.84	6
Service Quality	0.81	0.89	16

Source: Primary Data

Table 3.2 indicates that the CVI obtained under extraversion, conscientiousness, openness and service quality were above the threshold of 0.7. This meant that the instrument used in data collection contained good measures, hence fit for the purpose. The Cronbach Alpha on the other hand for each of the studied variables was above the cut-off of 0.7. This meant consistence among responses obtained from the field. Hence, the results were fit to be used for making conclusions and recommendations.

Methods of Data Analysis

After data was obtained from the field, it was sorted, cleaned and checked for accuracy before it is processed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS. v 25)(Nelson, Christopher, & Milton, 2022). The results were presented using a frequency table, correlation and regression analysis. Results in relation to demographic characteristics was presented using a frequency table and interpretation and interpreted using percentages. Correlation Analysis was used to examine the nature of the relationship between studied variables(Nelson et al., 2023). The results were interpreted based on the Pearson Correlation value (r). Regression analysis was used to examine the predictability of studied variables and confirming the significance of the relationship between studied variables. The results were interpreted based Adjusted R², Beta, and p-values.

Measurement of variables

Personality traits: It is generally accepted that there are 5 Big traits that individuals exhibit. These include Chandrasekara, 2019; Lappalainen et al., 2019; Udin & Yuniawan, 2020). Although, this study adopted three dimensions of extraversion, conscientiousness and openness to measure personality traits. The Items presented under each construct were anchored on a 5-Point Likert scale of 1 to 5. Under the scale, 1 will represent strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-not sure, 4-agree and 5-strongly agree.

Service quality was measured using the SERVQUAL model which was initiated by Zeithaml et al., (1988). The model has extensively been used by scholars where it has been tested and recognized as the most appropriate model for assessing service quality (Ali et al., 2021; Pakurár et al., 2019; Ramya et al., (2019). The Items presented under each construct were anchored on a 5-Point Likert scale of 1 to 5.

Ethical Considerations

Voluntary Participation, Informed Consent and the Right to Withdraw

The decision to participate in the study was entirely voluntary, and the participant/ respondent shall deserve the right to withdraw anytime he/she deems fit. No incentives or promises was made to potential respondents to bias their voluntary decision to participate or not to participate in the study. The decision to take part in this study on the side of the respondents was taken after an informed consent. Informed consent in research sense occurs when a respondent agrees to participate in a study as a result of receiving clarity regarding their concerns. The researcher fully briefed respondents about the aspects of the research study, the aim, methodology and intended results. This was done to enable respondents voluntarily take a decision to either participate or refuse to participate in the study.

Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

No personal identities of the respondents such as names or emails were revealed anywhere in the report findings for the purposes of privacy. Information obtained from respondents was treated with utmost confidentiality, and strictly used for academic purposes.

Openness, Justice, and Commitment to Causing no Harm

The study attempted to be open and transparent as much as possible by providing information such as purpose of the study, the potential benefits of the research, methodology and provide explanation for any issues raised by respondents before and during the data collection exercise. The study was committed to ensuring that no reasonable harm is caused towards participants during the research and took full responsibility for any harm caused.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

The study used frequency table to present results in relation to demographic characteristics. These characteristics include gender, age, education, customer location, customer category, and the when the client started using NWSC services. The results are presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.3: Demographic Characteristics

Demographics	Freq	Percent
Gender		
Male	130	47.6
female	143	52.4
Age Bracket		
Less than 30yrs	18	6.6
30-39yrs	20	7.3
40-49yrs	106	38.8
50-59yrs	83	30.4
60 & above	46	16.8
Education level		
Primary	65	23.8
secondary	98	35.9
Tertiary	110	40.3
Customer location		
Nagongera Sub- County	17	6.2
Kwampa	40	14.7
Mella	28	10.3
Merikit	31	11.4
Malaba Town Council	60	22.0
Petta	49	17.9
Osukuru	24	8.8
Magola	24	8.8
Customer Category		
Domestic	105	38.5
Commercial	75	27.5
Industrial	93	34.1

When did you start using NWSC services

Less than 5 years	54	19.8
6-10 years	106	38.8
11 years & above	113	41.4
Total	273	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Results in table 4.3 revealed that most respondents were females. This meant that majority of the NWSC customers are females. Perhaps, females tend never to compromise with service quality. Results further indicated that most respondents were aged between 40-49 yrs. This meant that at least most customers were old enough and had at least used NWSC services for quite some time. Besides, old enough customers tend to be conversant with the trend of service delivery and they possess the required knowhow that is required to improve service quality. In relation to level of education, results in table 4.1 revealed most respondents had at least acquired tertiary education (38.8%). This implied at least majority of the NWSC customer were knowledgeable and could well comprehend how personality trait intersects with service quality. Moreover, results obtained from table 4.1 revealed that most respondents were from Malaba Town Council (22.0%). Perhaps, this locality generated more representative views and opinions necessary for improving service quality of NWSC in Tororo. In addition, results obtained that most respondents were domestic consumers and had been customers of NWSC for at least 11 years and above. This implied that these customers were too conversant and well acquitted with realistic ideas necessary for improving service quality. Perhaps, domestic service consumers tend to be keen and more detail-oriented.

Correlation Analysis

This study used Pearson Correlation Analysis along with narrative statements to determine thenature of the relationship between studied variables. Under the Pearson correlation, the study used “positive” or “negative” relationship to indicate the nature of the statistical result obtained regarding a particular objective. Key narratives corresponding to each objective were also identified and presented, interpreted, and compared with the statistical results before a final conclusive remark regarding the association or relationship between studied variables was made for each objective. These results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variables/Constructs	1	2	3	4
Extraversion trait	1			
Conscientiousness trait	.398**	1		
Openness trait	.415**	.450**	1	
Service Quality	.447**	.540**	.526**	1

Note: n=273, * p<0.05 level (2-tailed), ** p<0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

Extraversion trait and service quality

Correlation results presented in Table 4.4 obtained a significant and positive relationship between extraversion trait and service quality ($r=.447, p<.01$). The results implied that enhancing extraversion trait is associated with a possible improvement in service quality in NWSC Tororo branch.

Conscientiousness trait and service quality

Table 4.4 indicate a significant and positive relationship between conscientiousness trait and service quality ($r=.540, p<0.01$). This implies that enhancing conscientiousness trait is associated with an improvement in service quality in NWSC Tororo branch.

Openness trait and service quality

Results in table 4.4 indicate a positive and significant relationship between openness trait and service quality ($r=.526, p<.01$). The results portray that an improvement in openness trait would increase service quality in NWSC Tororo branch.

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was obtained to determine the predictability of the independent variables (personality traits) in the variances that would be exhibited in the dependent variable (service quality). The study used hierarchical regression model because it is a more elaborative approach as it ably ranks variables according to their order of predictability. These results are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.491	0.177		8.408	0.000
Extraversion trait	0.129	0.036	0.193	3.645	0.000
Conscientiousness trait	0.218	0.036	0.330	6.134	0.000
Openness trait	0.288	0.053	0.297	5.479	0.000
	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.
	.649 ^a	0.421	0.414	65.117	.000 ^b

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.5 obtained Adj. $R^2=.414$ which implied that jointly extraversion trait, conscientiousness trait and openness trait significantly predict 41.4% of the variations in service quality in NWSC Tororo branch. Furthermore, the results indicate standardized coefficients ($\beta=.193$, $p<.05$) in relation to extraversion trait; ($\beta=.330$, $p<.05$) in relation to conscientiousness trait as well as ($\beta=.297$, $p<.05$) in relation to openness trait in NWSC Tororo branch. Based on the p-values, the results signify that jointly extraversion trait, conscientiousness trait and openness trait significantly predict service quality in NWSC Tororo branch. As reflected by the results, a unit change in extraversion trait resulted in a .193 or 19.3% unit change in service quality. Moreover, a unit change in conscientiousness trait resulted into a .330 or 33.0% unit change in service quality. Additionally, a unit change in openness trait resulted in a .297 or 29.7% unit change in service quality. That said, the results revealed that conscientiousness trait is the better predictor of service quality in NWSC Tororo branch.

Discussion of Findings

Extraversion trait and service quality

The findings found out a positive relationship between extraversion trait and service quality in NWSC. The findings meant that enhancement of extraversion traits is bound to enhance the propensity of service delivery within NWSC. According to this research, this can be explained by the positivity behaviour and attitude that extroverts exhibit when executing tasks and responsibilities. This behaviour propels employees to exhibit high degree of commitment, aggressiveness and determination to ensure that customers are provided with the best services. The findings are consistent with Wihler et al., (2017) study which noticed that extraverted leaders usually exhibit excellent communication skills which facilitate service quality. Likewise, Delima (2019) revealed that extroverts are inevitable because they advance employees creativity with the intention of ensuring that service quality. In congruence with these findings, the current research acknowledges that extraversion is an important trait which needs to be identified in employees. More so, the research contributes to literature by clearly availing empirical evidence in a more localized context.

Notably, the study finds that employees who exercise extraversion will tend to execute their work with honesty. This honesty is important because it builds a lot of confidence and trusting of employees by customers. Moreover, honesty is highly likely to enhance employees' responsiveness and empathy as they deliver services to customers, hence improving service quality. In the same way, the study reveals that extraversion would encourage employees to communicate properly with customers, which would translate in improving service delivery. This can be explained by the fact that good communication would motivate customers to express their needs and concerns they find with the services rendered to them. This information would be crucial for the organization in undertaking necessary innovations intended to improve service quality.

A plethora of empirical research is available to recognize the manifestation of the relationship between extraversion and service quality. For instance, Pickett et al., (2019) concluded that extraversion is one of the most important traits which shapes employees' actions putting into consideration the nature of service they require. Similarly, Pinjisakikool (2018) in Holland demonstrated that provision of service quality depends on the traits exhibited by employees. Much as these studies exist, the current research provides more clarity of how extraversion actually relates with service quality. Moreover, it provides recent empirical research, unlike available ones which are relatively old to contribute to the reasoning that extraversion remains crucial in the prevailing environment as far as boosting service quality is concerned.

This research finds that extraversion would make employees to devote a lot of energy towards their work. This would have serious implication on service quality because it would encourage employees to exercise responsiveness, as well as become accountable for their actions. Likewise, this study postulates that when an employee shows concern whenever a customer raises any matter, it would increase on the propensity of boosting service quality. This can be explained by the fact that employees who show concern are empathetic towards customers and they ensure they offer customers the necessary attention and desire to address their concerns. The current findings supplement earlier research conducted by Youshan and Hassan (2015) where it was concluded that all personality traits including extraversion are key in influencing employee conduct in manner that prompts them to provide the desired services to customers.

Conscientiousness trait and service quality

The study found out that conscientiousness is positively associated with service quality within NWSC. The findings meant that expression of conscientiousness when rendering services to customers is more likely to stimulate service delivery. This is so because conscientious employees express a high degree of psychological attachment towards work. They are extremely careful when executing tasks and responsibilities because they do not want to make any mistakes which would frustrate customers. This kind of mentality is important increasing employees' empathy towards customers, as well as making employees extremely responsive to issues raised by customers.

The findings are consistent with previous work of Ellershaw et al., (2016) who revealed that conscientiousness is one of the solidest predictors of service delivery. This trait propels employees to focus on how to enhance the relevance of the employer by focusing on the needs and expectations of customers. Likewise, a study by Kertechian (2018) in France found that conscientiousness arouses proactiveness and inhibitive qualities which are key predictors of all dimensions of service delivery. The consistence expressed between current and previous research informs sends a communication that the relevance of conscientiousness has not changed in current prevailing environment as it was

the case in the previous. It informs policy makers and managers that they can guarantee service quality of their institutions in case they possess a highly conscientious labour force.

Furthermore, this research denotes that conscientiousness would make employees become dependable, hence increasing the extent to which they execute tasks and responsibilities within time, and accept additional responsibilities for the sake of ensuring that customers get the best service. The findings further indicate that conscientious employees who show persistence when rendering services are bound to stimulate service quality. They would become more aggressive, determined and committed to deliver to their expectations amidst difficulties. Moreover, this research also postulates that conscientiousness would make employees develop a feeling of consideration for customers. As such, it is likely that customers would become highly empathetic and responsible enough as they handle customer issues, which would result in improved service quality. According to this research, conscientiousness would enhance employees' desire to achieve customers' expressed needs, something which is expected to increase employees' empathetic and responsiveness. These findings are consistent with Arora and Rangnekar (2016) who established that conscientious employees are dependable and reliable when executing their tasks and responsibilities.

Openness trait and service quality

Findings noted that there is a positive relationship between openness trait and service quality, more so in NWSC. These findings meant that enhancing openness trait would increase the propensity of enhancing service quality to customers of NWSC. According to this research, this can be explained by the fact when employees are open, they create an environment where they are easily approachable. This enables customers to submit their thoughts, concerns and complements regarding the status of service quality within NWSC. Moreover, openness makes employees feel confident and brave to report all issues they receive from customers which they perceive to be depriving service quality to facilitate appropriate decisions.

The findings are consistent with previous work of Tan et al., (2019) who revealed that openness traits play an integral role in improving levels of service delivery. Likewise, Bhatti et al., (2014) emphasized that openness to experience allows for proper and suitable work adjustments and liaisons which further results into increased dependability and adaptability among employees. Accordingly, this research contributes literature by providing empirical evidence which is streamlined in Uganda's context. Moreover, it provides empirical evidence which is recent and therefore reflective of the prevailing status quo. Therefore, this study sends a signal to employees of institutions, more so those of NWSC to always be open-minded whenever they are facing customers.

In particular, this study reveals that openness would increase the extent to which employees show creativity when executing tasks and responsibilities. This is expected to drive employees in identifying solutions to concerns reported

by customers in the field however much they are to be found challenging. Furthermore, this study notifies that employees who exhibit an innovative mindset is more likely to develop unique solutions to customers' problems which would give them a good experience and perception of high quality. Moreover, openness would increase the extent to which employees fulfill in accordance to what they promise customers. This is bound to increase efficiency in offering services as well as building confidence of customers in the services rendered by the organization, in particular NWSC. The findings are consistent with Gridwichai et al., (2020) who stressed that openness drives change and motivates employees to become accountable and therefore execute tasks with a lot of professionalism which increases service quality.

Conclusion

Personal traits exhibited by employees have a strong inclination to the level of service quality an institution can be able to deliver to its customers. They traits are important in defining how an employee conducts him/herself when interfacing with the customer, or executing their tasks and responsibilities. In this research, it is noticed that it is prudent that employees within an institution, specifically NWSC exhibit behavioral tendencies for extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness. In particular, this research teaches us a lesson that when employees show extrovert traits, they will be full of self-esteem, and energy to deliver to the service quality expectation of customers. Highly conscientious employees will also make sure they are responsible, dependable, and considerate to desist from actions and behavior which may compromise service quality. This research also teaches that employees who show openness when associating with customers will exercise innovativeness, creativity, and determination to deliver according to promise whenever they are handling issues. This research is with policy and managerial implications. It alerts managers and policy makers to clearly evaluate and understand traits of those they employ because their actions can facilitate achievement of service quality.

Recommendations

NWSC should carryout proper recruitment and selection process to guarantee that employees employed possess appropriate attributes or traits. The organization should make sure that all employees go through the normal recruitment process before they are placed.

NWSC should continuously train and develop its employees to equip them with the necessary skills, knowledge and abilities to enhance service delivery. The organization should therefore increase on the its budget allocated to training and development. They should consistently remind employees of the best traits they should exhibit whenever they are executing tasks and responsibilities.

Limitations of the Study

This study focused on one branch in the whole of NWSC. As such, the results obtained in this report may not necessarily inform the extent to which personality traits influences employee performance NWSC as a whole or in other organizations.

This research applied a cross-sectional research design. This research design does not reflect the changes overtime which occur to the studied variables.

The study was only confined to traits of Openness, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion. It excluded traits of Agreeableness and Neuroticism in examining the relationship between personal traits and service quality. Accordingly, it could be argued that the study findings do not comprehensively and holistically reflect the magnitude to which personal traits relate with service quality.

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