



Balancing the Delicate Space between Organizational Culture and Customer Service Quality: An Empirical Review for Systemic Excellence in the Electrical Energy Sector in Kenya

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Authors' contributions

This work is the creation of three authors. Author FS conceptualized the study, collected and reviewed literature. Author AAA performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author SK managed the analyses of the study. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This systematic and empirical review attempted to expand the frontiers of knowledge by analyzing the existing delicate space between organizational culture and customer service quality, using Kenya Power as a statistical representative sample of the Electrical Energy Sector in Kenya. Organizational culture has been a topical issue in the corporate world for many decades due to its assumed ability to predict business effectiveness and success. Whereas this conviction is a true story in most companies across the globe, in some companies, it is a dreadful undertaking and Kenya Power is no exception. To examine this delicate space, the study tested a null hypothesis of no significant effect between (X) organizational culture and (Y) customer service quality while taking into account the existing multiple covariates within the causal chain. Utilizing a mixed method approach, the study collected both numerical and qualitative data from 76 respondents (n)

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(statistically obtained from 95 N) and 10 key informants respectively. At the univariate level, frequency counts and means were used while at the multivariate level, multiple linear regression analysis was applied in order to determine the total impact of X(s) on Y, while qualitative analysis was carried out through thematic and discursive methods. Study findings revealed that, all the 7 constructs of the independent variable had a positive and significant effect on the dependent variable. The R Square, which indicates the total impact of X(s) on Y stands at 76%, implying that, the constructs of the independent variable positively and significantly predicted the dependent variable. The extraneous variables, which in this case were competing with the independent variable to explain a change in the dependent variable stand at 24%. Implying that, the excluded independent variables as far as quantitative data were concerned, had a weak impact on the dependent variable. However, the interview results indicated a divergence in opinion and reasoning. Key informants alluded that, re-branding strategies, customer focused models, political factors, ICT adoption, research, quality management system and so on are more relevant than culture itself in predicting organizational effectiveness and customer satisfaction. It is upon this basis that this study recommended that, much as organizational culture is being applauded for shaping customer service quality by the numerical data, it is much more logical to focus on the new inroads provided by the qualitative data in this study. Integrating research, ICT, customer-driven models, and quality management systems in the business processes at Kenya Power, will not only help the firm to establish a competitive culture; rather, will keep it afloat and sound in a business context.

Keywords: Cultural DNA; organizational culture; customer service; quality; stories; legends; rituals; ceremonies; artifacts; symbols; mission; vision; language; slogans; values; assumptions and organizational practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every company has its own culture, whether by design or by default. Culture is a pattern of basic assumptions that a group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. Culture is the personality of the corporation, and the environment it provides [1]. The culture is the sum of a company's beliefs, ethics, expectations, goals, values and mission. Organizational culture is therefore a pattern of shared values and beliefs that help individuals understand organizational functioning and thus provide them with the norms for behavior in the organization [2]. It is a set of cognitions shared by members of a social unit.

According to Zeyada [3], organizational culture is a combination of traditions, values, policies, beliefs, and attitude that establish a general framework for everything done in an organization. It can also refer to the form of beliefs, values, and ways of managing experience that has developed during the course of the organization's history, and becomes noticeable in its material arrangements and the behaviour of its members. Zeyada [3] opined that

organizational culture is a set of unwritten rules meant to guide the employees towards a standardized and rewarding behaviour. One may argue that, unwritten rules may not fit to represent any form of organizational culture due to high level of subjectivity; however, most recent studies such as [4,5,6,7] have corroborated this reasoning.

From the above definitions, it is tempting to assume that organizational culture (written or unwritten) is what a company stands for, and struggles to maintain and/or uphold during her lifespan. This suggests that, the type of service or product offered to customers is determined by the quality of organizational culture. Strong culture, in this case may have a positive connotation on service delivery, employee behavior and vice versa. Inability to give up despite reasons to give up [5], strongly held and widely shared set of beliefs that are supported by strategy and structure all put together engineer success [8]. Conversely, a poor culture will facilitate high turnover, poor customer relations, passiveness, and disorientation all of which are detrimental to organizational success [9].

Despite this, there is still little understanding of how organizational culture actually works and how it predicts customer satisfaction [10], theorists lack the practical touch to ably guide practice, whilst, practitioners are caught in a

storm of conflicting and misleading literature whose capacity to guide practice is sparse and anecdotal. This wave of uncertainty has hatched bedrock of tension that is deservingly looking for attention from the behavioral scientists, anthropologists and management scientists. This synergy, if well attended to, can ably address most of the cultural related matters currently faced by most organizations.

Customer service quality on the other hand, cannot be over-emphasized, it is not voluntary rather a must have to boost economic performance [11]. Service quality means the degree to which customer's expectations have been met, "it is a comparison between expected and perceived service [8]". Good quality service can be achieved when a quality management system which is a mechanism to manage and continually improve quality of products and services is integrated within the organizational culture and business processes. Quality management system provides confidence to customers that organizations are in control of their processes. With that assurance, customers believe that organizations will be able to consistently meet their requirements and even strive to exceed them [12]. This piece of literature references to the fact that, good organizational culture predicts service quality. Without applying too much reasoning this piece of literature may sound adequate, however, when critical examination is adopted, the same falls short of credence on grounds that, "good culture" is relative and no universal standards to this effect have been established. What works for one company may not necessarily work for another and thence, standardization is deemed impractical. This degree of subjectivity makes organizational culture a complex matter to handle, no wonder, despite several studies, practice is still wanting.

Several studies have been carried out on organizational culture and service quality across organizations in the recent past such as; [13,14, 15], despite the fact that these writers differ in their goals, orientation and point of departure, they seem to allude to the fact that, service quality is a deliberate quest, traceable in the cultural DNA of any credible organization. Customer service satisfaction is never accidental [13], it is deliberate [15]. Despite this agreement, a lot much more is left unanswered in the same context, according to these studies, organizational culture is limited to values, norms,

stories, and human behavior. At least, this is common among the reviewed studies; but less convincingly is said about how mission, vision, rituals and ceremonies make a vibrant culture, fit to attract customer satisfaction. One can confidently argue that, vision and mission statements rarely mean anything in the practical world; most organizations copy these slogans and hardily strive to meet anything detailed in them. It is not surprising any longer to find a mismatch between organizational slogans (vision and mission) and practice. This fading relationship between slogans and customer service quality could have discouraged many researchers and thence, sparse empirical evidence. This study, carefully utilizes this vacuum by providing a more holistic understanding between the less attended to cultural constructs against customer service quality.

On a broader perspective, [16] asserts that, dimensions of culture are central to all aspects of organizational life as organizational culture forms the integrative means of regulating the behavior of the organization's members and permeates all its activities, as a specific catalyst for growth and development of the organization. Leithy [17] on local and multinational companies' employees located in Cairo, Egypt showed that both work-related attitudes and work behavior are related to organizational performance. It may be correct in isolated terms as established by these researchers, but what is unarguable is the fact that human behavior is determined less by organizational culture and more by the technological and prevailing conditions at the workplace [18], and for this matter organizational growth and development may not be adequately explained by organizational culture. It is quite challenging today, where employees look at themselves as just mere individuals with selfish ambitions, interests and motive in an organization. They are indifferent to the existing organizational culture if any, and strive to fulfill their targets at the expense of the firm. Likewise, company owners are equally struggling to excel at the expense of employees, regardless of the prevailing conditions. Fire and hire is the best language they understand most, and this kind of atmosphere cannot offer a competitive culture that can help a firm excel. Many researchers have drawn sweeping conclusions to the effect that, strong organizational culture is a gateway to organizational success. These are ridiculous conclusions because most organizations excel accidentally or unintentionally with no input at all

on their culture. In the case of UMEME in Uganda, for example, success is tangible because it is the only service power providing firm, and lack of comparison may make customers think that the service received is the best in the region. Surprisingly, several studies have attributed this success to the strong culture in UMEME, which many researchers are bound to dispute. True, monopolistic tendencies in the marketplace have made UMEME enjoy good returns on investment, but attributing this "success" to a strong culture is a daunting undertaking at the moment.

Additionally, organizations rarely keep their employees to retirement, the fire and hire practice has kept many organizations "young and upcoming" despite many years of operation. This doesn't only affect the image of the firm, rather has detrimental consequences on the organizational culture and the quality of service offered to customers. The fire and hire practice makes firms loose track and institutional memory, thence cementing a threatening weak culture in such firms. Important to note is that, weak culture, however, doesn't always guarantee organizational failure as most people assume, companies can continue to thrive despite weak culture, for example, companies with a short term focus, and limited ambitions less benefit from strong culture, and find no reason to invest in it. Again, the political, economic, social and technological forces, jointly or individually may cause a threat to companies and in the end, companies fail to have a sound reason to establish strong culture. This is typical of companies in the third world countries and war infested countries. When assessing the impact of culture, one has to be cognizant of the existing extraneous forces so as to make an accurate conclusion based on facts and guided by evidence.

1.1 Research Problem

Whereas management gurus, anthropologists and behavior scientists agree that strong organizational culture is the gateway to success, little guidance is provided on what constitutes a good culture, the delicate space between bad and good culture seems unknown, and the reason why companies with strong and well tested culture collapse is another interesting puzzle which most theorists and practitioners mutely talk about. This wave of uncertainty has not exonerated the Electrical Energy Sector in Kenya. Despite her attractive vision, mission,

core values, and practices with resemblance to strong culture, plus the monopolistic benefits enjoyed by this company for a couple of decades, her clients have consistently questioned the quality of service offered to them [19]. Since January 2018, the company has found itself under siege by an organically mobilized and extremely angry battalion of Kenyans from all walks of life in their quest for energy justice [20]. For both domestic and commercial consumers, electricity has become nothing but unaffordable, save the irregular supply throughout the country [21].

In light of these uncertainties, Kenya Power didn't sit on her wheels, it tried to re-brand herself as one of the strategies to keep afloat in the marketplace. Despite her effort, the firm is still challenged in many areas. It is reported by [19] that, adopting ICT in the production process was a fitting inroad for efficiency and effectiveness, however, the strategy fell short of credence on two grounds; 1. The majority of the employees from 2010 to date have been technically unsound in the ICT world, 2. The ICT infrastructure at the company is weak to accommodate the growing demand for power in the country. He further reports that, the financial constraints which stand at 15%, power networking 7.1%, frequent vandalism 9.7%, all impede service delivery. Additionally, it is said that this company is in the hands of mafia-like cartels who control both the policy and procurement sides of electricity generation, transmission, regulation, distribution and sale [20]. This, coupled with unfriendly bilateral agreements have challenged the company.

In 2010, Kenya Power began a change of culture and with new mission, new values and new vision [22]. In 2011, it embarked on the change process characterized by change of culture and corporate re-branding of the organization from Kenya Power & Lighting Company (KPLC) to Kenya Power [23]. However, despite the reorganization and re-branding, customer complaints have increased and Kenya Power has been accused of mismanagement, nepotism, inefficiency and the key indicators set by Kenya Power have kept on dropping instead of rising [24]. Changing the company's name and her philosophy is one thing and changing customer attitude to your advantage is another complex undertaking. It takes time for the company's culture to trickle down into customers' physiology. Whereas it may look obvious that

any positive change in the company's culture (vision, mission, beliefs, norms, practices and so on) may attract a positive correlation in customer attitude and satisfaction, on the other hand, we shouldn't forget that there are so many variables in the causal chain which may impede this assumption to happen. For example, the complex and hyper-competitive global business environment in which firms are competing for the same customers who themselves are becoming increasingly global and more sophisticated with an unrelenting demand for near perfect products and services [25].

The endless number of organizations that have not benefited from the implementation of quality management system, and cultural adjustment strategies makes the whole game insurmountable. This study is set out to guide theory and practice, act as a basis for policy review and adoption, share with the readers the errors committed in cultural related studies by the previous researchers, and how Kenya Power can reposition herself in the current chaotic business environment.

1.2 General Research Objective

To establish the effect of organizational culture on customer service quality in the Electrical Energy Sector, using Kenya Power as a sample case.

1.3 Specific Objectives

- To examine the effect of stories and legends on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.
- To assess the effect of rituals and ceremonies on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.
- To determine the effect of artifacts and symbols on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.
- To establish the effect of mission and vision statements on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.
- To analyze the effect of language and slogans on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.
- To assess the effect of values and assumptions on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.
- To appreciate the effect of organizational practices on customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.

1.4 Hypothesis (H₀)

Organizational culture does not significantly affect customer service quality in Kenya Power industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review refers to a critical and analytical examination of the existing research on a particular theme [26]. It is simply a summary of what existing scholarship knows about a particular topic under discussion [27]. In light of this study, related literature on organizational culture and customer service quality is hereunder provided.

Chukwu and Aguwamba [28] sought to determine the influence of organizational culture on performance of banking industry in Nigeria and showed that there existed a significant and positive relationship between cultural fit, reinforcement of pillar of existence, enhancement of organizational effectiveness and organizational performance. The study also showed a significant but negative relationship between consistent pattern of behavior and organizational performance. In the same vein, [29] established a positive relationship between organizational culture and performance in the banking industry in Ghana with mission being the cultural trait with the strongest potential of impacting positively on performance. Noted is the fact that, these two studies are in agreement that organizational culture predicts organizational efficiency and effectiveness, however, this conclusion can be challenged on grounds that, they only looked at a simple linearity between the independent and dependent variables thence, exposing their conclusions to a lot of scrutiny.

Culture is the sum of the beliefs and values that shape norms of behavior and dictate the way things get done [30]. To ascertain this belief, [31] carried out a study on how organizational culture predicts work performance of employees in the manufacturing industries in Kampala City, Uganda. His study observes, that culture which in this case focused on values, norms, slogans, and company philosophy, was less capable to attract any positive variation in employee work performance. This suggests that, much as it may be true that, organizational culture is a gateway to success, the same may not hold in some companies. Why companies succeed is much more beyond what researchers can point at [31]. In the current chaotic business environment across the world, it is hard to determine what

makes companies succeed [30]. Using developing world as an example, most companies are owned by the political actors whose access to state resources is unchallenged, they divert state resources to their advantage, keep their companies afloat using state resources, frustrate competent competitors and so on, while fronting simplistic reasons to justify the success of their business empires, such as; strong business culture, and so on. This kind of reasoning is supported by [32] whose study on culture as a predictor of employee performance alludes to the fact that, culture is undoubtedly less capable to measure employee performance.

Considering the above observation, researchers have to critically unearth the underlying factors which by face value may make organizational culture look significant in predicting performance, whereas not in the actual sense. Lim [33], runs a confirmatory study to prove the validity of Rousseau's findings cited above, he surprisingly came up with opposite findings, proving that culture predicts performance. Which lessons do we draw from these cases? It may be true that the latest study conducted 5 years later took cognizance of the emerging forces which the original study genuinely never considered. It may also be valid to assume that both studies erred in the whole research process, or the latest used an appropriate methodology, thus varying conclusions. Whatever answer is provided to this puzzle, the most critical aspect in studies involving intangibles like culture, is a thorough examination of all aspects in the causal chain. Saving this case, there are several studies in favor of Rousseau such as; [34,35,36] and in disagreement as well, such as; [18,37].

The claim that organizational culture predicts performance is premised on the apparent role culture plays in causing a competitive advantage [38]. Practitioners and academics suggest that the performance of an organization is dependent on the degree to which the values of the culture are comprehensively shared [38]. Culture is the culmination of the shared values, beliefs, and assumptions that shape the behavior of the organization the unwritten rules that guide the thousands of decisions employees make throughout the company every day. It is the pattern of values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and assumptions that may not have been articulated, but shape the way in which people behave and things get done.

In the same spirit, [39] Infer that, unwritten rules which dominate managers' routine, they are nowhere documented, but consistently shape how things are done [40]. "Things are done this way here" is a statement highly pronounced in companies where unwritten rules shape human action. [41] whose study is premised on norms, values and languages as correlates to organizational performance, agrees to the statement that unwritten rules (norms, values and languages) positively affect organizational performance. Consistently, [42] establishes that; it is necessary for the management to identify the norms and values of the organization for the employees to adopt. One may argue that; these studies are outdated, and perhaps their findings are obsolete. However, recent studies such as [43,44,45] have all corroborated these findings, implying that, norms and values have a direct positive connotation on organizational success.

Looking at the relationship between organizational culture, leadership behavior and job satisfaction of employees, [46] concludes that, organizational culture positively, and significantly correlate with leadership behavior, job satisfaction, and leadership behavior. In the same line, [43], while analyzing the impact of cooperate culture on organizational success, alludes that; corporate culture is not the ideals, vision, and mission laid out in the corporate marketing materials rather, the widely shared values within an organization that provide coherence and cooperation to achieve goals. This means that corporate culture glues employees together and also enable them cooperate towards the achievement of organizational goals [43]. This observation is in conflict with so many studies [41,25,38] which conclude that written vision and mission statements determine the type of culture prevailing in organizations. In sincere terms, vision and mission statements may not mean anything to organizational success, companies are currently infested with beautiful statements which remain on paper but cannot be translated into action. A more worrying case is that, companies have got leaders and managers who don't know the mission and vision statements of the companies they are serving. So if the organizational culture of some companies is limited to such statements (vision and mission), then it is undoubtedly fair to assume that such companies are accidentally surviving. Organizational culture is way beyond slogans, "*it is a shared mental model*" which most companies lack [18]. Companies that have

invested in culture as their brand name have less need for close supervision of employees, not to mention policy manuals, organization charts, and formal rules, procedures and controls. This implies that good organizational leaders, create a culture that emphasizes cooperation and joy in serving customers, and that culture results in self-motivated employees who need minimal supervision.

Looking at the amount of literature on this theme, one can confidently assume that there is a lot so far done by the previous researchers to warrant no further investigation, however, considering the way the academic terrain is unfolding, coupled with uneven business dynamics, insatiable customer needs, political atmosphere, globalization, technological factors and alike, much more investigations are needed to keep track of the emerging issues and consistently guide practice.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework represents the researcher's synthesis of literature on how to explain a given phenomenon under study [47]. It is a structure which the researcher believes can best explain the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied [48]. In view of this, the study draws attention to 7 constructs of organizational culture which are assumed to have a linear and direct causal connection with customer service quality. The diagram is cognizant of the existing extraneous variables in the causal path which may interfere with the assumed linearity between X and Y (Fig. 1).

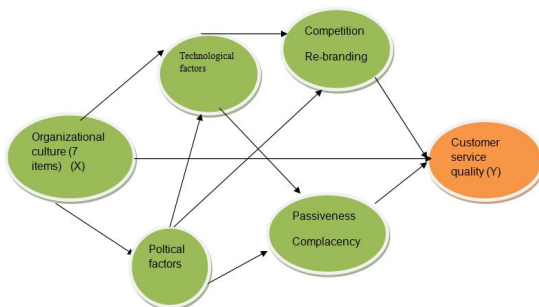


Fig. 1. Organizational Culture and Customer Service Quality

Organizational culture = stories and legends, rituals and ceremonies, artifacts and symbols, mission and vision, language and slogans, values and assumptions, organizational practices.

Source: Mapped upon the ideas of (Pereira et al 2010, Bulach et al, 2012, & Nawaseret al, 2014)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the systematic and theoretical analysis of the techniques applied to a field of study. It systematically describes the procedures that have been followed in conducting a study [49]. This section of the study, addresses the design, population, samples and techniques, instrumentation, data analysis, limitations and ethical approval as indicated.

3.1 Research Design

A study design is the process that guides researchers on how to collect, analyze and interpret observations. It is a logical model that guides the investigator in the various stages of the research [50]. This study adopted a descriptive design in order to describe the characteristics of events in a more convincing manner. Descriptive studies systematically search, identify, select, appraise, and synthesize research evidence relevant to the question using methodology that is explicit, reproducible, and leads to bias minimization [47]. This design was accompanied and strengthened by triangulation design where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected at the same time. Triangulation is used when the strengths of one method offset the weaknesses of the other, so that together, they provide a more comprehensive set of data [51].

3.2 Target Population

The target population consisted of two strata; the administrative, and management staff working at Kenya Power in Nairobi. They were selected because; they were better placed to provide reliable data concerning organizational culture and customer service quality. They included the top management/ executives, middle management comprising of section heads and the low level management consisting of supervisory staff. A total of 76 respondents (sample size) for only quantitative data was statistically obtained from 95 target population using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination matrix, and a group of 10 key informants for qualitative data (5 regional heads for Kenya Power and 5 service recipients/ industrialists) were purposively selected for this study.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

3.3.1 Questionnaire method

This study utilized self-administered questionnaire for primary data collection. This tool consisted of two main parts that is; the background section addressing the demographic characteristics of the respondents, and the main and last section addressing specific questions mapped upon the study objectives.

3.3.2 Interview method

This study, further utilized interviews in order to obtain non-numerical data from the key informants through face to face sessions. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions, mapped upon the specific objectives which guided this study. The choice for this method is that, it provides in-depth information about the study that other methods of data collection cannot provide. A total of 10 key informants (5 regional heads for Kenya Power and 5 service recipients/industrialists) were obtained for qualitative responses so as to strengthen the quantitative data method.

3.4 Measurement of Variables

In this study, the standard way of describing variability was based on a 4 level Likert Scale as shown in the table below. It is the most flexible and accurate scale, and can be constructed more easily than most other types of scales [26] (Table 1).

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Quantitative analysis

Before processing the primary data, the researchers ensured a significant retrieval rate of

the questionnaires, completeness and consistency. The primary raw data collected were coded prior to being fed into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) for analysis. At the univariate level, frequency counts and means were used while at the multivariate level, multiple linear regression analysis was applied in order to determine the total impact of X on Y while considering a set of other variables in the causal chain, as [49] observe, multiple regression attempts to determine whether a group of variables put together predict a given dependent variable.

3.5.2 Qualitative analysis

The qualitative data collected were coded and grouped according to research items and emerging themes. Qualitative analysis was carried out through thematic and discursive methods. Views with similar meanings were presented together, while, the discursive method focused on the details of these views.

3.6 Study Findings

3.6.1 Numerical data

To establish whether organizational culture has a significant bearing on customer service quality, the study tested a null hypothesis. Seven items of the independent variable were measured against the dependent variable and the total impact of the extraneous variables on the dependent was also established as indicated in the tables. Table 1 shows the model summary which was used to test the total impact of X on Y while, Table 2 shows the impact of the individual independent variables on the dependent (Table 2).

Table 1. Measurement of variables

Mean range	Response range	Interpretation
3.26-4.00	Strongly agree	Very high
2.51-3.25	Agree	High
1.76-2.50	Disagree	Low
1.00-1.75	Strongly disagree	Very low

Table 2. Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.872 ^a	.760	.341	.52947

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stories and legends; rituals and ceremonies; artifacts and symbols; mission and vision; language and slogans; values and assumptions; and organizational practices b. Dependent Variable: Quality of customer service

Table 3. Regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T-value	Sig.(P-Value)
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.778	0.453		10.548	0.0429
Stories and legends	0.619	0.145	0.103	4.269	0.034
Organizational practices	0.755	0.126	0.054	5.992	0.021
Mission and vision	0.879	0.108	0.029	8.139	0.013
Values and assumptions	0.712	0.137	0.064	5.197	0.024
Language and slogans	0.497	0.149	0.233	3.336	0.025
Artifacts and symbols	0.489	0.093	0.227	2.034	0.026
Rituals and ceremonies	0.417	0.102	0.315	2.133	0.028

Source: Primary Data (2020)

The correlation coefficient, which shows the degree of association between X and Y stands at 0.872. The R Square, which in this case indicate the total impact X has on Y stands at 76%, implying that, the independent variable positively and significantly predicted the dependent variable. The extraneous variables, which in this case were competing with the independent variable to explain any change in the dependent variable stand at 24%. Implying that, the excluded independent variables as far as quantitative data were concerned, had a weak impact on the dependent variable. Statistically, one may argue that Adjusted R² is a better measure of goodness of fit and as such, it should take precedence in this regard, however, in this model, X is treated as one item, and thence, R² can ably determine the degree of fit between variables (Table 3).

The regression analysis gave rise to a standard regression model as provided below;

$$Y=4.778+0.619 X_1+0.755X_2+0.879X_3+0.712 X_4+0.497X_5+0.489X_6+0.417X_7$$

The results shown in the equation above reveal that, holding the predictor variables constant, the customer service quality in Keya Power would be 4.778 units. Findings further indicate that, taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in stories and legends will lead to 0.619 increase in customer service quality. A unit increase in organizational practices will lead to 0.755 increase in customer service quality, and a unit increase in mission and vision, will lead to 0.879 increase in customer service quality as well. In addition, a unit increase in values and assumptions will lead to 0.712 increase in customer service quality, a unit increase in language and slogans will lead to 0.497 increase

in customer service quality, a unit increase in artifacts and symbols will lead to 0.489 increase in customer service quality, and finally, a unit increase in rituals and ceremonies will lead to 0.417 increase in customer service quality.

These results infer that mission and vision contribute more to customer service quality, followed by organizational practices, then values and assumptions, stories and legends, followed by language and slogans, then artifacts and symbols while rituals and ceremonies contribute the least to customer service quality in Kenya Power. Important to note is the fact that, all the 7 constructs of the independent variable had a significant effect since all the sig-values as indicated in the table above are less than 0.05 which is the standard level of significance required to declare a significant effect.

3.6.2 Interview results

Unlike the quantitative data, interview data obtained from the key informants indicate a high degree of divergence in peoples' opinions about the problem under investigation. Whereas it is true that mission and vision statements are ranked highly quantitatively, interviews have found this item having no significant impact on customer service quality. One of the key informants from the regional office alluded that, vision and mission statements are indeed mere slogans which mean nothing at all to our success. *"It is interesting that, some of our line managers don't even know our vision statement and those who know it don't understand it."* If the target is to boost our operations and competitiveness, then the focus should be placed on other significant aspects such as technology to boost efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, minimize political interference, and so on, he added.

Rituals and ceremonies count so much in forging a shared mental model among employees, but in the case of Kenya Power, key informants found this item lacking. The majority of the key informants consistently disregarded this aspect and instead advised the executives to benchmark their strategies with the most lucrative international power firms. *The world is open, why don't we emulate what others are doing? One of the key informants during the interview asked.* The target should be on re-branding strategies, customer focused models, ICT adoption, Research, quality management system and so on. These aspects are very critical now, for their capacity to predict organizational success is indisputable, he added.

One of the industrialists was so bitter; power supply is irregular and expensive at the same time, the company is controlled by the political mafias and our concerns as industrialists are neither discussed nor respected. Save our case, domestic consumers complain too, he added.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Quantitative results of the study have indicated that, mission and vision statements significantly affect customer service quality. This finding is consistent with [29] whose conclusion suggests that, vision and mission statements are the core foundations of organizational culture. Whereas the key informants disregarded this aspect as having no significant effect on customer service quality, it is important to remember that, several studies have qualified this variable such as; [1,2, 3].

Organizational practices, values and assumptions significantly predicted the dependent variable in this study. This finding seems to agree with [3,52], although in conflict with [43], whose findings indicate that assumptions have less impact on customer satisfaction. These conflicting submissions set a favorable ground for a continuous debate and indulgence into more studies on the same problem. This perhaps explains why cultural studies are in numbers. This study was partly set out to sort out this irony and guide debate to a desired end. Interviews held with the key informants represent a more solid base for this study. They represent the true mindset of power consumers (industrialists and domestic consumers), for quantitative data, one may argue that the questions in the instruments were restricted to a Likert Scale which limits responses

to a given standard, and so, important responses could have been left out.

Artifacts, symbols, rituals and ceremonies moderately affected customer service quality. This is not news because [43] all disqualified these variables as having no impact on customer satisfaction. This consistence n reasoning, agrees with the interview data for this study. Key informants unanimously alluded that, ceremonies, symbols and rituals have no significant impact on customer service quality. The current business dynamics in Kenya demand for a more competitive strategy that is hardly emphasized by artifacts, symbols and ceremonies. This submission is consistent with [43] who observes that, for competitive advantage, companies should invest in a cooperate culture that glues employees and customers together for organizational excellence. According to him, corporate culture is not the ideal, vision, and mission laid out in the corporate marketing materials rather, the widely shared values within an organization that provide coherence and cooperation to achieve goals. At the time of this study, Kenya power was falling short of credence on this aspect.

Interview reports indicate that, the best way to enhance organizational culture at the moment is to integrate customer quality systems in the existing culture domain of the company. The existing cultural practices seem obsolete in the face of the current business dynamics in Kenya. Re-branding efforts should dominate the agenda at the moment, recruitment of competent staff, fit to address the demands of the current situation, re-thinking and adopting customer-driven culture models, and so on will keep the firm afloat. These interview remarks are in line with [23,25, 38]. One may argue that, some of these studies are outdated; however, many earlier and current studies are in congruence with these findings such as; [12,16,18,40,25,6]

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that organizational culture is the personality of an organization, the written and unwritten rules, behaviors and norms that make it unique. Cultivating a great organizational culture is important not only for employee engagement, happiness and retention, but also, plotting the blueprints for a thriving business; regardless of the economic climate.

The study further concludes that, organizational culture is a delicate phenomenon that is hardly

understood by the business actors at all levels. Kenya Power has lived for decades, but interestingly some line managers were not so certain about the dominant cultural practices in the company at the time of this study. Linking operations to culture was another interesting case as most of them couldn't establish any association between them. No wonder, during the interviews, most respondents disregarded culture as a true predictor of customer service quality. This sounds to reason that, people don't know how important culture is to organizational competitiveness, and success.

Much as organizational culture is being applauded for shaping customer service quality by the numerical data, it is much more logical to focus on the new inroads the qualitative data have provided in this study. There is an urgent need to focus on re-branding strategies, customer focused models, ICT adoption, research, quality management system and so on. Culture in isolation won't do much.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the managers of firms in the electrical energy sector should ensure that employees are introduced to the norms and pattern of work right during recruitment and top leaders publicly support the organization culture for better results. This process will inculcate a sense of belonging and enables the employee to better understand the core functions and mandate of the institution hence increased efficiency.

The study recommends that Kenya Power should put more efforts on the adoption of good organizational culture, since culture has today become a strategic tool in the marketplace for attaining a sustainable competitive advantage. The study recommends that organization should facilitate trainings and learning for the employees to be able to adapt to new changes, strategies and policies that directly involve the employees in the organization.

In addition, Kenya Power should ensure that the organizational culture is well aligned with the organizational strategies and policies. Since customer interests are addressed in the organizational strategies, aligning them with organizational policies and objectives is a direct intervention of bringing the company close to the public.

Reasonable tariffs to both industrial and domestic consumers is needed at this time when Kenya Power is struggling to establish a competitive edge in the region. Fraudulent billing, illegal tariffs and third-party vendor services which frustrate consumers should be dropped for the sake of organizational survival.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard written participant consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The researchers adhered to ethical guidelines at all stages, mainly concerning participants' anonymity, confidentiality and freedom. Others include citations and authority from relevant institutions to collect data. Additionally, the study purpose was explained to all the participants and confidentiality of their responses was assured.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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