MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

THE IMPACT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON BRAND EQUITY IN PUBLIC ROAD TRANSPORT: A CASE OF ZIMBABWE UNITED PASSENGERS COMPANY

By

Batsirai Joseph Toronga

R111003V

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF COMMERCE HONOURS DEGREE IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT

(November 2014)

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to Midlands State University for acceptance of a research project titled "The Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity: A Case Of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company" submitted by Batsirai Joseph Toronga in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the bachelor of commerce honours degree in marketing management.

Supervisor.. Date...

Chairperson.. Date...

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: BATSIRAI JOSEPH TORONGA

REG NUMBER: R111003V

Research Topic: **"The Impact Of Service Quality On Brand Equity In Public Road Transport: A Case Of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company"**

Permission is hereby granted to Midlands State University to produce single copies of this project and lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only. The author reserves other publication rights neither the project nor extensive from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

Signed   ....

Address   14 Sabi Flats Quendon Road Malbereign Harare

Date   OCTOBER 2014

DEDICATIONS

To my loving mother Mrs Mavis Toronga and sister Wadzanai Toronga

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

The research study was carried out to evaluate The Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity in Public Road Transport a Case of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company. ZUPCO is undoubtedly facing a tough time and is losing credibility with travelling publics. There is need for ZUPCO to shake of its image of perceived poor management, poor maintenance of fleet and generally being unreliable interms of willingness to help it stakeholders and provide prompt services. It is against this background the research sort to find out the impact of service tangibles on brand awareness, to ascertain the impact of service reliability on brand perceptions and to find out the impact of service assurance on brand loyalty. Literature from different scholars was reviewed and discussed to get an appreciation of the impact of service quality on brand equity in the service industry in general and in public road transport. The study adopted a combination of exploratory and causal research designs. Chi-Square was used to test the statistical significance of the research findings. The research study had a target population of 500 respondents and a sample size of 100 respondents. The sample size was made up of 55 customers (cross border travellers), 40 employees and 5 managers. Stratified random sampling, judgemental sampling and convenience sampling techniques were used to select respondents to participate in the research. Questionnaires and interviews were used as key research instruments to collect data. The study revealed that there are statistically significant positive relationships between the following, service tangibles and brand awareness, service reliability and brand perceptions, service assurance and brand loyalty. It was therefore concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between service quality and brand equity in public road transport. The research recommended ZUPCO to continuously improve and develop a culture a quality within the organization. Improve its physical facilities appearance and offer a service that is in line with customer preferences and tastes in order to offer a service that travellers' considers value for money.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION   **PAGE**

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

General Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the impact of service quality on brand equity in the public transport sector a case of ZUPCO. The chapter provides the background to the research relevant to the study. It also indicates the statement of the problem, provides the objectives, hypothesis, the significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study, and lastly the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background Of The Study

Service quality measures the level of service delivered compared to customer expectations and at the same time delivering a quality service means conforming to customers' expectations on a consistent basis (Joewono and Kubota, 2007; Transportation Research Board, 1999, 2007). Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988 and 1994) identified five basic dimensions widely used by many researchers: Direct evidence (tangibles), Reliability, Responsiveness, Security (assurance) and empathy. Furthermore other researchers have proposed service quality dimensions that apply to the public road transport sector. Transportation Research Board (2004), safety, comfort, the ease of using the system, convenience, performance/reliability, facilities and value.

Brand equity has various definitions, but the most accepted definitions are those proposed by Aaker (1997) and Keller (1993). Keller (1993) defined brand equity as the differential effect of brand knowledge on the consumer response to the marketing of a brand. Aaker (1997) defined brand equity as a set of assets and brand liabilities which relate to certain brands, name or symbol, which increase or decrease the value which is given by the result product of a company. Brand equity is divided in to four indicators, which are: perceived quality

(impression quality), brand loyalty, brand awareness (brand consciousness and brand associations).

Budiarti, Surachman and Djumahir (2013), investigated whether there is a relationship between service quality and brand equity in the airlines industry. Their work had several conclusions: service quality is very dominant to explain brand equity and service quality increase brand equity. Hong Youl Ha (2009) indicated that when the moderating effects of satisfaction, brand associations and brand loyalty and considered, the effects of physical service quality on brand equity is much stronger. Furthermore other research studies do not review a direct relationship between service quality and brand equity in various services industries. Khatri Puja and Ahhula Yukti (2011) it is evident that better service quality captures more customers but whether it can enhance brand loyalty quotient is questionable. While researchers have examined the concepts of service quality and brand equity in the public road transport service sector.

Zimbabwe United Passengers Company is a parastatal in Zimbabwe, which operates urban and long-distance bus routes. ZUPCO is one of those companies that were hit hard by the economic challenges the country faced. However, it should be noted that ZUPCO, even before the sanctions induced problem, the company was already struggling to compete against commuter omnibuses and other private players (Zimbabwe Independent – Editorial Comment – ZUPCO must revamp operations – be customer centred June 19 2013)

ZUPCO used to be the only reliable passenger transport. In fact ZUPCO was the Alpha and Omega in the public transport business. Its services stretched to every part of the country leaving both urban and rural commuters satisfied. The mention of the name ZUPCO during its heydays conjured various images in the minds of many people. The company used to have well-dressed conductors issuing tickets to passengers on board. Then there were the ticket

issuers stationed at bus termini as well as inspectors commonly referred to as bus ticket checkers. The company used to have a policy that allowed families of its employees, senior citizens as well as school children wearing uniforms to travel free of charge (Harare24 - 18 July 2014– ZUPCO a sad story of thing gone wrong – published by Charlotte Musarurwa in 2012).

ZUPCO is failing to widen its services and modernise them in line with current trends, such as a return to timetables, and using internet based systems to track its buses and also to provide buses where they are required at any particular time. Observers say ZUPCO should have moved with time and diversify its operations or purchased new vehicles, but the company was one of the fist entities to benefit from the look east policy through the purchase of buses from china. Regrettably, many of the buses that were purchased six years ago are now grounded (Zimbabwe Independent – Editorial Comment - ZUPCO must revamp operations – be customer centred June 19 2013).

ZUPCO's position in delivering quality transport services to citizens has turned out to be very unclear and hidden. ZUPCO has been recapitalising since 2011 and now it is understood to be operating less than 400 buses (SW Radio Africa 04 July 2014). The company used to boost of a running fleet of over 800 buses (Harare24 - 18 July 2014 – ZUPCO a sad story of things gone wrong – published by Charlotte Musarurwa). The coverage of the buses used to go the remotest parts of the country side. Currently not many of these buses seem to be plying the remotest areas of Zimbabwe, yet the company bought an additional 100 75-seater buses from china at a cost of **US$8 million** which were meant to service rural routes where there is less completion because of poor roads (ZUPCO boosts fleet – The Herald April 26 2013).

Currently there are very few buses painted in the blue and yellow which are seen ferrying people in their hundreds. Many of ZUPCO buses are now brand in other companies' names.

Schweppes, Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals and Harare Hospital are some of the institutions that have these buses. To date many of ZUPCO compound stations are now a hub of wrecks of buses. Many public resources are found in the value of heaps of metals, broken down buses, flat tires which seem like an area that is neglected and receiving no attention (Zimbabwe United Passengers Company Grounded – CPA Zimbabwe 21 July 2013 – published by Simbarashe Mudhokwani).

In April 2014 the state run Sunday News newspaper revealed how ZUPCO buses had been running without passenger insurance since October 2013. Passenger insurance is mandatory for all public transport and covers medical bill for passengers injured and funeral expenses in cases of death. This shows lack of caring individualized attention ZUPCO should provide its stakeholders. Memories of fatalities cannot be erased easily. They linger in peoples' minds for a long time. Still in peoples' minds are two of ZUPCO buses that were involved in fatal accidents in February 2014 on the same day (Sunday News 13 April 2014).

Customers' can use company employees as a specific criterion to judge a company's service quality offering. Employees are an integral part in offering quality service to customers. ZUPCO seem not to understand this by continually treating its employees with disrespect. Workers at the company have not been paid their March and April salaries with only half the workers being paid their February dues (ZUPCO – Things Fall Apart – Zimbabwe Independent April 25 2014). Transport and General Works Union of Zimbabwe Secretary General Tafadzwa Matanhire told SW Radio Africa that, "workers are getting a raw deal and this is causing them a lot of stress. This is not good for the workers and it is not good for the passengers who have to be transported by stressed drivers. Drivers cannot concentrate on the roads because they are almost always preoccupied with issues of their unpaid wages and this puts lives of the passenger at risk" (SW Radio Africa – ZUPCO fails to pay workers – Friday 4 July 2014)

ZUPCO, once the pride of the Zimbabwean roads is undoubtedly facing a tough time and has lost credibility with travelling publics (Harare24 – 18 July 2014 - ZUPCO a sad story of things gone wrong – published by Charlotte Musarurwa in 2012). The problems highlighted in the background have therefore prompted research on the impact of service quality on brand equity in the public road transport sector.

1.2 Problem Statement

Zimbabwe United Passengers Company is undoubtedly facing a tough time and is losing credibility with travelling publics. ZUPCO needs to shake of its image of perceived poor management, poor maintenance of fleet and generally being unreliable in terms of willingness to help its stakeholders and provide prompt services.

1.3 Research Objectives

- ❖ To find out the impact of tangibles on ZUPCO's brand awareness.
- ❖ To ascertain the impact of reliability on brand perceptions about ZUPCO.
- ❖ To find out the impact of assurance on ZUPCO's brand loyalty.

1.4 Hypothesis

H_1 There is a positive relationship between tangibles and brand awareness.

H_0 There is no positive relationship between tangibles and brand awareness.

H_2 There is a positive relationship between reliability and brand perceptions.

H_0 There is no positive relationship between reliability and brand perception.

H_3 There is a positive relationship between assurance and brand loyalty.

H_0 There is no positive relationship between assurance and brand loyalty.

1.5 Importance Of The Study

This research will be of great importance to the following stakeholders:

Student

- ❖ The research will enhance knowledge to the student in the area of study.

- ❖ The research will be a foundation for further researches and advanced studies.

- ❖ The research will be an opportunity to convert the learnt theory into practice as this will also help the researcher to appreciate how to gather information, analyze and present it in the process of coming up with strategic and advanced business decisions.

- ❖ The research will give a strong comprehensive understanding on how service quality can be managed.

ZUPCO

- ❖ It is hoped that the findings will go a long way in assisting ZUPCO to make relevant and desirable revisions on its service quality strategies.

- ❖ ZUPCO will unquestionably benefit especially by tapping from some of the ideas and findings of this research study.

- ❖ It will assist the organization achieve better service quality.

- ❖ The research will enable ZUPCO management to have an insight on the overall service quality of the company.

Midlands State University

- ❖ There are a number of issues or gaps that this study will try to fill. It's the researchers' intention to bring out new issues that should form part of new knowledge that this study endeavours to project. Indeed reference to this study by educators, colleagues and universities should continue to jolt minds to continue inquiries on this subject of service quality and brand equity. Therefore the research is important to the university.

1.6 Delimitations

❖ The research focused on ZUPCO, specifically the Head Office in Harare.

❖ The target respondents included ZUPCO management (departmental managers and supervisors), employees (drivers, conductors, office workers and engineers) and customers (cross border travellers). The research study used cross border travellers to ensure tangible measurement of the variables since these customers use ZUPCO's services on a regular basis so there are in a position to understand variables under investigation.

❖ The research study dwelt mainly on literature based on 3 aspects of service quality (tangibles, reliability and assurance) and brand equity (awareness, perceptions and loyalty) in public road transport sector.

❖ For the purpose of this study service reliability is taken in the context of adherence to service schedule as proposed by Vincent and Hamilton (2008)

❖ The research study had a limited time frame from the year 2008 to 2014. This is the period which the company has struggled to deliver its services as a reliable public road passenger transporter.

❖ The research study stretched from July 2014 to November 2014.

1.7 Assumptions

❖ Respondents were aware of the ZUPCO brand.

❖ Respondents to the research gave honest and correct information.

❖ Respondents understand the concept of brand equity and service quality.

❖ There was no bias from respondents' side in the collection of data.

❖ That the chosen sample size of 100 respondents was a true representative of the population.

❖ The researcher was given access to required information by ZUPCO.

1.8 Limitations

❖ Employees were reluctant to give information. Generally individuals are resistant in providing corrective and sensitive information. In trying to curb this problem the researcher explained to the respondents that the information was for academic purposes only.

❖ The collection of secondary data was difficult as the company tried to protect its information. In trying to curb this problem the researcher explained to them that the information was for academic purposes only.

❖ Time constrains faced by ZUPCO management posed a negative impact on the accuracy of the research findings; therefore appointments were booked to meet with managers and executives on their free time.

❖ Since this was the researchers first time carrying out such a research, problems were faced in gathering, analyzing and interpreting data due to lack of experience. To minimize this problem, the researcher sort regular assistance and guidance from his supervisor and other lectures.

❖ Employees felt that giving negative responses on questionnaires would lead to them being discredited by management. The researcher assured the respondents high anonymity and confidentiality which resulted in unbiased responses.

1.9 Definition Of Key Terms

Service quality: Parasuraman et al (1990), posit that service quality is an extrinsically perceived attribution based on customer's experience about the service that the customer perceived through the service encounter.

Brand equity: Represents the value customers or stock, markets in the sum history the customer has with a brand.

Corporate credibility: the ability of a firm to instil trust in customers through delivering products and services that can satisfy needs (Erdem and Swait, 1998, Fomburn, 1998).

Public service: Refers to the provision of services or serve the needs of the person or people who have interest in the organization in accordance with the rules and basic procedure that has been set (Doddy Hendra Wijaya 2009)

Public Transport: Is all modes provided by the government to the public such as buses, train, monorail, taxis and others (Zakaraia, Hussin, Batau and Zakaria (2010)

1.10 Summary

The direction the research is going to take has been outlined in this chapter, as stated by the background of the study. The organization being investigated is ZUPCO (Zimbabwe United Passengers Company). The problems being faced by the company have been stated in the statement of the problem. Objectives of the research are outlined preceding the research hypothesis. This chapter also dealt with the assumptions of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study. The following chapter will review literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a demonstration of the researcher's knowledge about the topic of research. The literature is based on the collective opinions of authors in the field concerning the research hypothesis. With this in mind, this chapter analysed the related literature mainly on the concept of service quality and brand equity in public road transport service. The chapter provided an assortment of service, brand, service quality and brand equity definitions from various authors in the field, as well as models that can be used to measure these variables.

2.1 Service Quality

Gronroos (1983) service quality is broadly grouped into technical and functional perspectives. The technical perspectives cater to the nature of the service provided, while the functional perspective explores the mode of service provision. Gronroos (1984) defines service quality as the result of an evaluation process, which helps a consumer compare his/her expectations with his perceptions of the service received, in other words the customer is placing the perceived service and the expected service opposite one another. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1990) described service quality as extrinsically perceived attribution based on the customer's experience of the service that the customer perceived through the service encounter (Service quality = Perception − Expectation). Oliver (1997) opined that service quality was a result of customers' view of the difference between their expectations about a service being offered and their perceptions about the service provider. Kumara (2008) argued that service quality involved also the production and delivery process and not the final product or service alone. Alok (2013: p.189) defined service quality as the extent to which

the service, the service process and the service organization can satisfy the expectations of the user. Zeithaml et al (2006) opined that service quality is a focused evaluation that shows customers' perceptions on reliability, assurance, responsiveness, empathy and tangibles. They also added that reliability dimension has been shown consistently to be the most important dimension in service quality.

2.1.1 How To Measure Service Quality

SERVQUAL and SERVPERF model are the most widely used measurement models of service quality. The SERQUAL Model also referred to as the Gaps model by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) over the years has been proven to be the best method to evaluate the quality of a service provider's service offerings to customers. P.Z.B (1988) Gaps model measures 5 basic dimensions to come up with an overall service quality score for an organization which are, direct evidence (tangible), reliability, responsiveness, security (assurance) and empathy. This is the most recognized and most popular measurement model of evaluating service quality perceptions versus expectations

- Tangibles - the physical surroundings represented by objects and subjects, including equipment, dress code of service employees, cleanliness of premises.

- Responsiveness – service provider willingness to assist its customers by proving fast and efficient service performance. Assurance – diverse features that provide confidence to customers (such as company's service knowledge, politeness and trustworthy behaviour of employees. The service provider will be evaluated on the basis of the ability to inspire trust and confidence to customers. This dimension covers the aspect of competence and knowledge levels in the company's dealings with customers.

- Empathy – the service firms readiness to provide each customer with personnel.

- Reliability - This is the ability to perform services as promised, both dependably and accurately. The service provider will be evaluated on the basis of delivering on promises made as well as complying to service level agreements with customers.

The expectations of customers concerning a service and the perceived levels of service activity provided. In marking these measurements respondents are asked to indicate there degree of agreement with certain statements on a liker type scale. For each item measured, a gap score (G) is then calculated as the difference between the perception score (P) and expectation score (E). The greater the gap scores the higher the score for perceived service quality (Parasuraman et al, 1988). Parasuraman et al (1988) postulate that service quality can be measured by identifying the gaps between customer expectations of a service to be rendered and their perceptions of the actual performance of the service. Agbor (2011) opine that the total sum of the difference that exist between expectations and perception as postulated by the five dimensions form what is known as the global perceived quality construct.
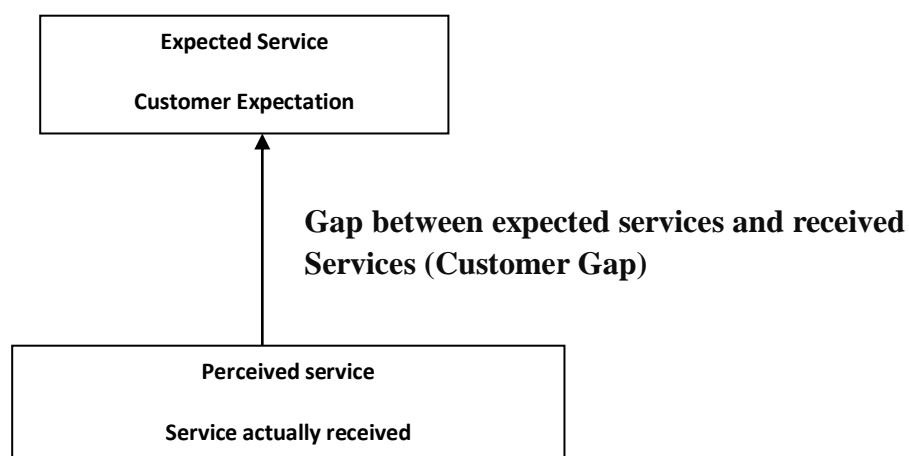
Figure 2.1 Gap Model
Source: Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988)

Lee, Lee and Yoo (2000) after the SERVQUAL was proposed by Parasuraman et al (1988), several critiques were levied against it. Researchers such as Gronroos (1983) felt the need for additional components of service expectations that is functional and technical dimensions. Gronroos suggested that customers evaluate service quality on the basis of technical dimensions (what is delivered) and functional dimension (how, why, who and when it is delivered)
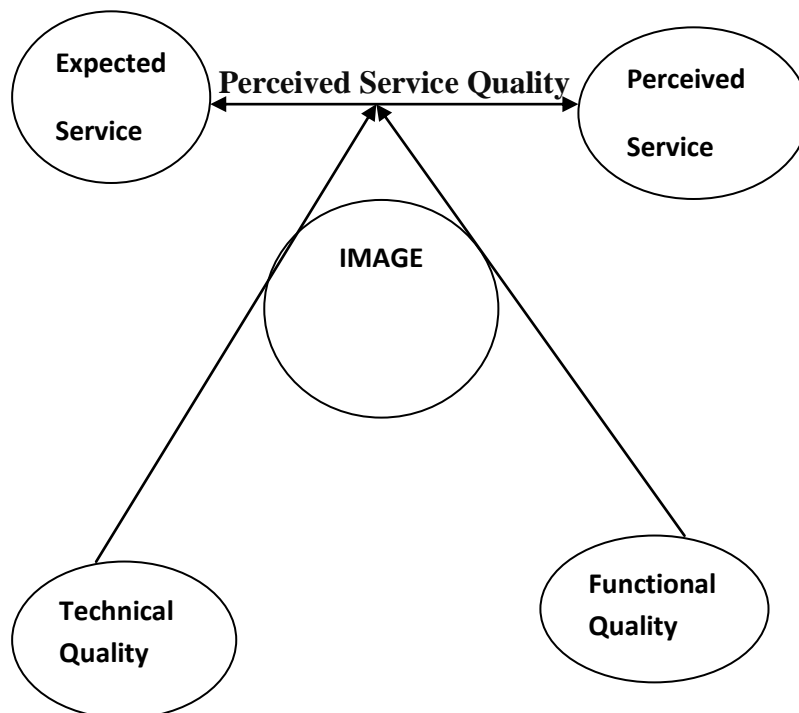
Figure 2.2 The Nordic Model
Gronroos (1984)

Cronin and Taylor (1992) carved up the SERVPERF from the SERVQUAL Model and basis its measurement of service quality on performance rather than expectations as suggested by the SERVQUAL. Cronin and Taylor (1992) argued that only performance is sufficient enough to measure service quality and therefore expectations should not be include as suggested by the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al, 1988 and Baunman, 2007). Agbor (2011) suggested that the SERVPERF model over the years has been found not only to be a

superior model in measurement of service quality but also in reducing the number of items to be measured by 50%. SERVPERF is used as a basic tool in assessing service quality of various service providers in different service industries. Mohd (2013) suggested that the model revolves around the same five dimensions of service quality as the SERVQUAL model: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy. Furthermore, as a drawback of the SERVPERF model it only focuses on performance aspect alone.

Besides the SERVQUAL AND SERVPERF models, other researchers have proposed dimensions that could well be used to measure service quality. Gronroos (1983) proposes ten dimensions of service quality: reliability, competence, responsiveness, access, communication, courtesy, credibility, security, tangibles and understanding customers. Kono's model (1984) must-be requirements, one-dimensional requirements, attractive requirement and reverse quality.

Leblanc and Nguyen (1988) five components which consist of corporation image, internal organization, physical support of service producing system, staff/customer interaction and level of customer satisfaction. Garvin's (1988) nine dimensions: performance, features, conformance, reliability, durability, service response, aesthetics and reputation. Oliver and Rust (1994) three dimension structure consist of functional quality, technical quality and environmental quality. Loiacono, Watson and Goodhue (2000) WebQual model: information fit to ask, interactivity, trust, responsiveness, design, intuitiveness, visual appeal, innovativeness, websites flow, integrated communication, business process and viable substitute, accessibility, speed, navigability and site content. Yoo and Donthu (2001) SIT-E-QUAL model: ease of use, aesthetic design, processing speed and security.

Barnes and Vidgen (2002) WEB-QUAL model: usability, design information, trust and empathy. Wolfinbarger and Gilly (2003) eTailQ model: design, personalization, fulfilment,

reliability, privacy/security and customer service. Association of Research Libraries (2005) DigiQual: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Malhota (2005) E-S-QUAL and E-RecS QUAL model: efficiency, fulfilment, system availability, privacy, responsiveness, compensation and contact. Tsoukatos and Rand (2007) GIQUAL model: responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles. Tan, Liew, William and Michelle (2012) suggested that service quality can be measured using the following dimensions: tangibles, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, recovery and knowledge.

Brady and Cronin (2000) suggested that although it is apparent that perceptions of service quality are based on multiple dimensions, there is no general agreement as to the nature or content of these dimensions. Conclusively, Parasuraman et al (1988) SERVQUAL model is the back born of all service quality dimension models that are used to measure service quality. The proposed models have either being an extension of the SERVQUAL model or a breakdown of the SERVQUAL into simplified dimensions that apply to specific industries.

2.2 Service Quality In Public Road Transport

Zaherawati Zakaria, Zaliha Hj Hussin, Mohamed Fajil Abdul Batau and Zuriawati Zakaria (2010) propose the following; tangibles (cleanliness/comfortableness of physical facilities), reliability (punctuality/frequencies), responsiveness (attitude/willingness employees). Hu and Jen (2003) propose the following dimensions: interaction with passengers, tangibles, service equipment, convenience of service and operating management support. Wen, Len and Cheng (2005) propose the following: onboard amenity, crew attitude, station performance and operational performance.

Transportation Research Board (2004) proposes the following dimensions: safety, comfort, the ease of using the system, convenience, performance, reliability and facilities. Lai and Chen (2011) propose the following two dimensions: core service and psychical environment.

Prasad and Shekhar (2010) propose the following dimensions: assurance, empathy, reliability, responsiveness, tangibles, comfort, connection and convenience. Caro and Garcia (2007) proposed the following: personal interaction, design, physical environment and outcome.

Joewono and Kubota (2007) propose the following 10 dimensions of service quality: availability, accessibility, reliability, information, customer service, comfort, safety, security, fare and environmental impact. Disney (1998) identified the following as dimensions of service quality to be of significance to public transportation as reliability and frequency of service, friendliness of service, clean bus interiors, comfort of vehicles, value for your money, clean bus exteriors, easy access, reasonable fares, easy to understand and remember timetables. Kotler and Keller (2012) propose the following; accessibility, distance, ease of getting there, convenience, costs, physical facilities and continuity of care.

2.3 Brand Equity

Brand equity is regarded as very important in business practices as well as in academic research because companies can gain competitive advantage through successful brands. Keller (1993) describes brand equity as the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of a brand. Aaker (1997) defines brand equity as a set of assets and brand liabilities which relate to a certain brand, name or symbol, which increase or decrease the value which is given by the result product of a company. Brand equity as defined by (Yoo et al, 2000; Rust et al, 2001) as the inclusion of attributes which are broad in their nature having the ability to derive customer choice. Beckman and Rigby (2006, p.316) described brand equity as the value customers and stock markets place in the sum of history the customer had with a brand. Wood (2000) describes brand equity as a measure of the strength of consumers' attachment to a brand and the description of the association and belief the customer has about the brand.

2.3.1 Measuring Brand Equity

Aaker (1991) developed the brand equity model as shown in figure 2.2 below. Aaker suggested that brand equity is measured through six dimensions, brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and other proprietary brand assets.

Brand Loyalty	Brand Awareness	Perceived Quality	Brand Association	Other Proprietary Brand
Reduced marketing cost	Anchor to which other association can be attached	Reason to buy	Help process and retrieve information	Competitive advantage
Attracting new customers	Familiarity	Differentiate/ position	Differentiate/ position	
Time to respond to competitive threats	Signal of substance	Price	Reason to buy	
	Brand to be considered	Channel member interest	Barrier to competitors	
		Extensions	Extensions	

Brand Equity

Provide value to Customer by enhancing customers:

- Interpretation/ Processing o information
- Confidence in the purchase decision
- Use satisfaction

Provides value to firm by enhancing:

- Efficiency of marketing programs
- Brand loyalty
- Prices/ margins
- Brand extensions
- Trade leverage
- Competitive advantage

Figure 2.3 Brand Equity Model
Source: David Aaker (1991)
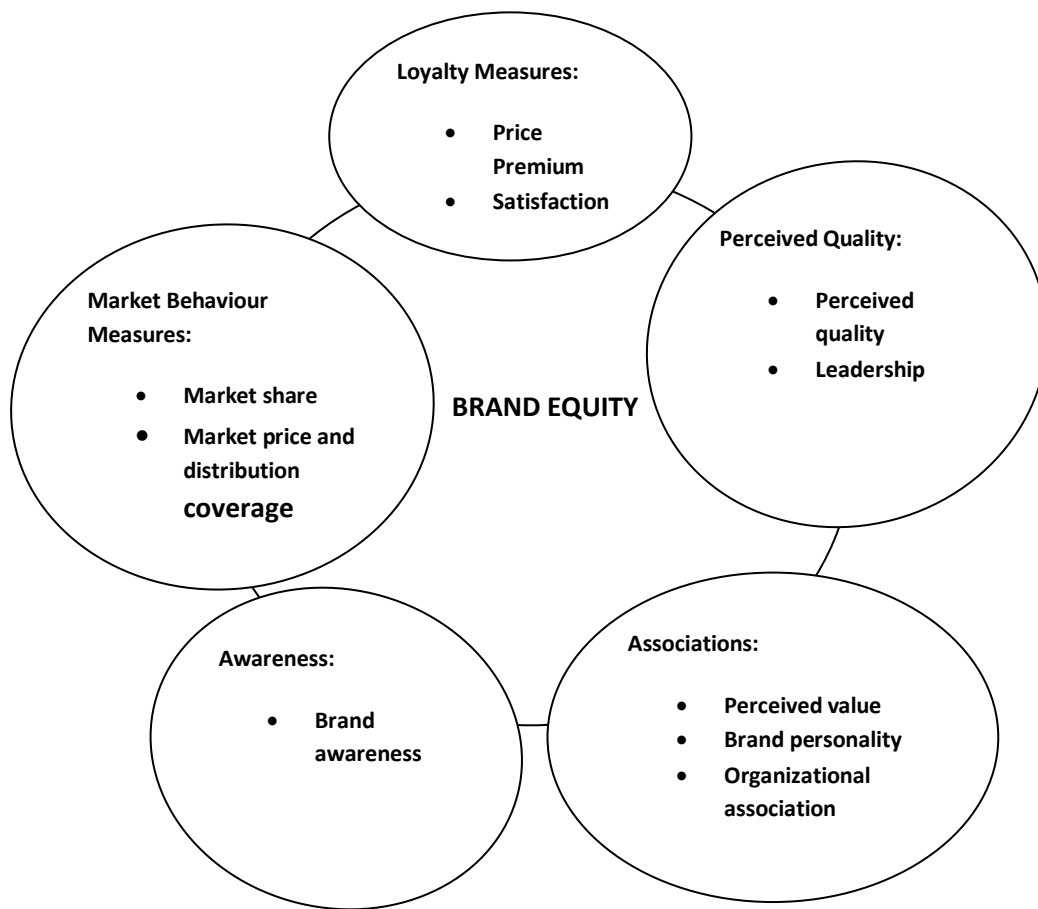
Figure 2.4 Brand Equity Ten Model
Source: David Aaker (2002)

The models indicate that brand equity is measured by four interrelated dimensions. The four dimensions of; loyalty, perceived quality/leadership, associations/differentiation and awareness measures indicate customer's perceptions of the brand whereas the last dimension, market behaviour in the brand ten equity model represents market based behaviour of customers (Aaker, 2002). Keller (1998) suggeste that brand equity can only be measured from a customer based view of the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand in question.

2.3.2 The Value Of A Brand In The Service Sector

Bateson and Hoffman (1999) the likeness of service branding makes it difficult for customers to differentiate between different services until the customer experience it. They go on to say that there are more perceived risks connected to the purchase of a service as compared to the purchase of good/product. Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2001) the confusion that consumers face about the potential positive and negative effect of their purchase decision is what is called perceived risk.

Consumers have now resorted to purchasing brands that they are familiar with, brands they trust and know to reduce the perceived risk connected with buying a service (William 2002). Berry (1991) service branding increases consumers' trust of any given brand and can also reduce perceived risk interms of social, monetary and safety in purchasing services which are hard to evaluate before purchasing is done. Muller and Wood (1998) suggested 3 key element a brand is expected to focus on for it to have a strong value in the market place compared to other brands.

- Quality product and service

- Performance of service delivery

- Establishing a symbolic and evocative image

Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2010) in their model service brand equity they incorporated the following dimensions of brand awareness, perceived quality, brand differentiation, brand association and brand trust.

Conclusively, service branding enables a service organization reduce perceived risk that customers face about the potential positive and negative effects of their purchase decision. The traditional four dimensions as suggested by Aaker (1991, 2002) apply to any service industry.

2.4 The Impact of Service Tangible on Brand Awareness

Parasuraman et al (1991) the dimension of tangibles is characterized by, the availability of physical facilities, equipment and communication facilities and others that should be in the process of services. The attributes or variables that exist in this dimension are: Appearance of physical facilities and modern equipment, Employees who have a neat and professional look, visually appealing materials associated with the service. Gronroos (1983) opine that the tangible dimension of service quality comprised of physical aspects of the service such as physical facilities, appearance of personnel, tools of equipment that is used to provide the service, physical representations or other customers in the service facility. Aaker (1991:62) brand awareness can be viewed in three levels:

Brand Recognition – This is the ability to identify a certain brand amongst others.

Brand Recall – This is a situation whereby a consumer is expected to name a brand in a product class.

Top of Mind - This is referred to as the first brand that a consumer can recall amongst a given class of product.

Keller (2003), suggest that brand awareness consist of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand recognition relates to customers ability to confirm a brand prior exposure through a service providers tangible assets (Aaker, 1991). Keller (2009), brand awareness is customers' ability to recognize and/or recall a brand under different conditions. The value of brand awareness lies in the strength of the company's presence or appearance in the minds of customers brought about by a company's appearance in the eyes of customers (Balaji, 2011). Song, Hur and Kim (2012:331) brand awareness refers to the strength of brand presence in the customers mind. Conradie, Lombard and Klopper (2014), brand awareness is created by increasing the familiarity of the brand through repeated exposure and strong associations with, relevant cues, enabling the customer to recall the brand effectively.

Scholars of branding and marketing agree with the notion that there is a relationship between service tangibles and brand awareness. Conraide, Lambord and Klopper (2014), believe that internal branding or service employees' branding was equally important to external branding as it influenced customers brand awareness. Chen, Chen and hung (2012), since brand awareness dealt with the various ways in which customers' remembered a brand, they found out that the need for a service provider to ensure facilities were physically attractive in the eyes of customers was important to create brand awareness.

Conraide et al (2014) in their research study found out that brand awareness heavily depended on continuously increasing the level of familiarity of customers through a company service environment. As service employees are part of a company's service tangibles they are an important factor in creating customer perceptions and awareness of a brand during a service encounter (Conradie et al 2014)

2.4.1 Service Brand Model
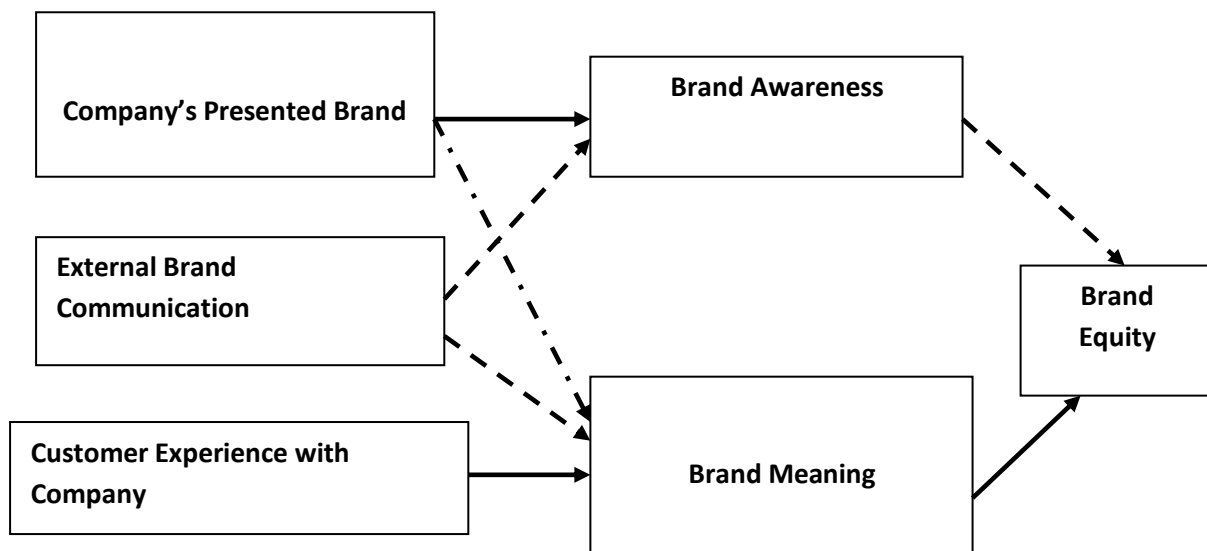
Figure 2.5 Service Brand Model
Primary Impact
Secondary Impact
Berry (2000)

Berry (2000), suggests brand equity comprised of two components, brand awareness and brand meaning or image. He claimed that the primary source of brand awareness is company's presented brand. Company presented brand includes the following: advertising, service facilities (equipment and physical facilities), company name and logo (Berry, 2000). Aaker (2002) supports Berry, by suggesting that a brand interacts and makes impression on customers, employees and other stakeholders through a company's physical offerings that support a service/product.

He goes on to say that a brand can reach or touch its customers in several ways. Each of these touches is called brand touch-point. Dunn and Davis (2002), defined touch-points as the interaction between a service, a brand, or a product with customers, no-customers, employees and other stakeholders before, during and after a transaction is done. Every touch-point increases a company's brand awareness with its customers (Aaker, 2002).

De Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2013), suggests that due to the intangibility nature of services, it is important to use tangible, material elements of a service in order to communicate the value of the service which results increased brand awareness. Service brands need to be made tangible/ visible such that they represent well-defined reference point for customers'. McDonalds, De Chernatony and Harris (2011) postulate that the use of many physical elements, such that customers can link to a brand is efficient in building strong service brands and increase tangibility. Zeithaml et al (1985) the physical surroundings in which a service is delivered affects service brand awareness.

Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal and Voss (2002) suggest that there were three components that influenced the service encounter elements. The first component they believed to influence service encounter was the physical environment, the second being customers interactions with intangible and tangible elements in the service environment and the periods when

customers interact with physical facilities and other tangibles elements in the service environment will stimulate their awareness in the future.

2.5 The Impact Of Service Reliability On Brand Perception

Gronroos (1983) suggests that reliability is connected to the consistency of performance and dependability. Parasuraman et al (1991) considers reliability as the ability to provide promised services at the right time (accurately) and the ability to be trusted (dependability) by customers. Zeithaml et al (2006) states that reliability is performing a service right first time of asking as promised. Fitzsimmons (2004) is of the opinion that service reliability is the service provider's ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Keller and Kotler (2009) defined perception as a mind processing of consumers selection, organization and information interpretation.

Van Iwaarden, Van der Wiele, Ball and Millen (2013) opined that reliability is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately in a way that will have an effect on customers perceptions of a company's service or product offerings. Liz (2010) stated that customers are not easily guided by an organization to select their brand, because a brand is all about perception and perception is all about providing a service or product right the first time of asking by customers. Hsu, Hung and Tang (2012) supported this view by suggesting that customers' perception of the overall superiority of a brand in regards to its purpose, and compared to other brands is greatly influenced by the way a service provider ability to perform a service dependably and accurately

Zeithaml (1998) cited in Kushi and Tabaku (2013) perceived quality is customers overall assessment of the utility of a product/service based on perceptions of what is received and in the manner it is given. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) perceived quality is a special type of association, partly because it influence brand associations and perceptions. Zeithaml (1988)

opined that perceived quality is consumers judgement about a product overall excellence or superiority. Aaker (1991) defined perceived quality as customers' perceptions of the overall quality or superiority of a service or product in relation to its prime purpose, relative to alternatives. Aaker believed that customers would choose a brand over that of a competitor because of the service provider's ability to perform its duty and offer a service/product when it is need most. Research Centre (1995) defines perceived quality as the ability of a service or product to provide key customized requirements and the reliability of these requirements.

Brand perception is an important element of brand equity, as the dimension relates to customer's willingness to pay a price premium, brand choice and brand purchase intention. Low and Lamb Jr (2000) opined that brand perception is how customers perceive the superiority of a brand as compared to alternative brands.

2.5.1 Service Reliability in Public Transport

McKnight, Pagano and Paswell (2011) service reliability in the public transport sector relates to the ability of a service provider to perform the promised service dependably and accurately in terms of adherence to scheduled routes, punctuality and adherence to timetables. Levinson (2009) service reliability relates to the adherence to bus schedules, maintain uniform headways and minimizing the variance of maximum passengers' loads. Carrasco (2011) opined that reliability as a dimension of service quality is important in any public transport service.

Vincent and Hamilton (2008) suggested that reliability in relation to public transportation meant the uncertainty in the time taken to travel from start of journey to the end of a journey by a traveller. Govender (2014) postulated that service reliability is how the public transport operator delivers on the promised service punctually. Zakaria (2010) reliability in public

transport focuses on frequencies of the public transport availability in particular areas. Litman (2014) reliability in the public transport sector relates to the following variables:

Operational scheduled trips

Minimum vehicle breakdowns

The service operates on time transfer connections are made

Transit priority measures are used to eliminate schedule delays

2.5.2 Brand Perception in Public Transport

Ayanda Vilikazi and Prof Krishna Govender (2014) in their research study found out that measuring perceived quality also known as brand perception in public transport was a bit difficult due to the fact that customers judgement of proper service quality included perceptions of multiple dimensions that apply to all services. Nutsugbodo (2013) suggested that perception is about what the traveller realizes after experiencing what the public transport operator has to offer. Furthermore clients perceptions of a service offering come about through quality of a service and how satisfied they are with the overall service experience. Excellent perceived quality materialise when what the customer experiences meet his/her expectations. Unrealistic expectations result in low perceived quality whether what the customer experiences is good (Gronroos 2007)

2.5.3 Dimensions of Public Transport Service Reliability

Reliability can be defined in many ways, depending on the context or discipline in which it is being treated (Carrasco 2011). Both public transport operators and commuters view reliability in different ways (Carrasco 2011). Travellers experience reliability mostly through punctuality and travel time whereas public transport operators focus on a number of features

of their system to characterize reliability such as schedule adherence, headway regularity and percentage of completed trips (Carrasco 2011).

Table 2.1 Dimensions' Of Public Transport Service Reliability
Source: Vincent and Hamilton (2008)

Term	Definition
Punctuality	Adherence to service schedule
Cancellation	Whether a scheduled train or bus actually arrives
Variability	Spread around expected time which could average time or targeted time
Waiting time variability	Spread around average waiting time

The dimension of service reliability in public transport can again be sub-divided into three more variable (Vincent and Hamilton 2008):

Departure time

Travel time

Arrival time

2.5.4 The Value of Service Reliability In Public Transport

Carrasco (2011) travellers are influenced by the level of reliability of the public transport operator. Vincent and Hamilton (2008) believe reliability is a significant factor for operators and passengers alike. Carrasco (2011) postulated that the amount placed on reliability compared to other service attributes, will outline the level at which travellers choices are influenced. Carrasco further suggest that reliability has a significant impact on departure time decision for the journey commuters intend to take. Zeithmal et al (2003) suggested that service providers should keep their promises, as clients want to be associated with service providers who stick to their promises.

It is evident that reliability plays an important role in public transport, as to which operator a traveller can choose to travel with.

2.6 The Impact Of Service Assurance On Brand Loyalty

Zeithaml et al (1990) opined that assurance consisted of seven original dimensions suggested by Gronroos (1983) which include: communication, credibility, security, competence, courtesy, understanding, access and knowing customers. Assurance in its simplest of definition means customers want to rely on courteous and knowledgeable employees who show trust and ensure confidence (Kabir and Carlsson, 2010). Parasuraman et al (1988) assurance refers to knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence in customers.

Van Iwaarden, Van der Wiele and Millen (2013) opined that assurance as a dimension of service quality meant competence, courtesy, credibility and security of employees as well as their ability to inspire trust and confidence and it has some sort of connection to customers loyalty towards a service provider. Bitner and Cremler (2006) opined that assurance just like any dimension of service quality had an influence on customer loyalty as shown in figure 2.5 below.
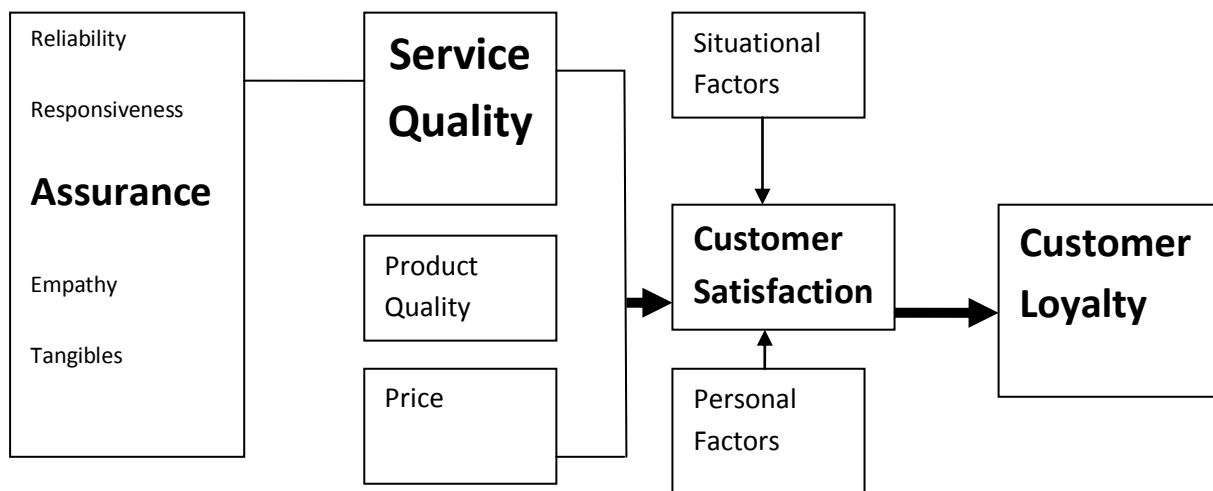
Figure 2.6 Customer Perceptions of Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Source: Bitner and Gremler (2006)

Aaker (1991), brand loyalty is that bond a customer has to a band. That bond comes about through trust and confidence (assurance) a customer has in a service provider (Aaker 1991). Yoo and Donthun (2001) in their research study found out that brand loyalty was the tendency to be loyal to a brand such that consumer buy that particular brand as a foremost choice due to the degree of confidence (assurance) in a product or service to satisfy current needs.

Oliver (1991) defined brand loyalty as deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetition of the same brand, despite situational influence and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour.

Odin, Odin and Florence (2010) opined that brand loyalty came in two forms, behavioural or attitudinal. Ukpebor and Ipogah (2012) the definition of behavioural brand loyalty is all about consumers true loyalty as indicated by their purchase choice due to excellent service being provided while the definition based on attitudinal perspective focuses on the intentions of a consumer to be loyal to a brand as a result of long lasting first impression from the service provider to instil trust and confidence. Brand loyalty is a behavioural response expressed by a composite measure with respect to a preferred product or service due to the assurance a service provider gives a customer that the product/service will meet their expected needs (Hong Youl Ha, 2013).

So brand loyalty can be said to be the degree to which a bond between a customer and a brand is created. Brand loyalty will result in repeat purchase or continual usage of a brand by a customer for as long the customer feels confident in the service provider.

2.7 Summary

This chapter was assessing the different theoretical views of several scholars with regards to the variables under study. Included in this chapter is the definition of a service as well as that of brand equity. The researcher went on to write about the dimensions of service quality as proposed by different authors. The measurements of both service quality and brand equity were discussed in this chapter. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is going to discuss the research design and techniques that are going to be used in the research to gather and collect data. The chapter is divided into sections which include: the research design, target population, sampling, the research instruments, data collection procedures and finally reliability and validity.

3.1 Research Design

Research design details the procedures necessary for obtaining the information needed to solve marketing research problems. A research design is the researcher's plan on how to proceed. The research design shows the type of data to be collected. Research design is a detailed blueprint used to guide the implementation of a research study towards the realisation of its objectives.

The rational of using a research design is for the researcher to plan his work so that the validity of the research is enhanced. This helped the researcher to have an in-depth analysis and understand various research strategies prior to implementation. This increased efficiency and flexibility of the research out comes. For the purpose of this study the researcher used Exploratory and Causal research designs.

3.1.1 Exploratory Research Design

The researcher used exploratory research to explore insights and beliefs that customers have towards the service offered by ZUPCO. This type of research design was also used to shed light on the nature of the situation and identify any specific objectives and data needs to be

addressed through additional research. Exploratory research was done in the form of a pilot study.

3.1.2 Causal Research Design

The research study adopted a causal research design. Causal research looks at the influences of a variable on another variable. A causal relationship presents if a variable is correlated to another variable. Causality is the relationship between events, where one set of events (the effects) is a direct consequence of another set of events (the causes). In terms of causality nature, two variables are related if particular values of a variable produce the values of another variable. Descriptive research is fine for testing hypothesis about relationships between variables, but for the purpose of this research study a causal research design did enough justice to test the cause-and-effect relationships that exist.

The independent variables in this research study were service tangibles, service reliability and service assurance while the dependent variables were brand awareness, brand perception and brand loyalty. Chi-square test was used to test the statistical significance of the results at 0.01 probability level.

$$x^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{(Oi - Ei)^2}{Ei}$$

χ^2 = the chi-square statistic
Oi = the observed Responses
Ei = the expected Responses
I = the number of the cell

Degrees of Freedom = (Number of Response Category – 1)

3.2 Target Population

Target population is that group which the researcher is interested in gaining information at drawing conclusions. Population is the totality of cases that conform to some designated specifications. In this research study the target population comprises of ZUPCO management, employees and customers (cross border travellers) who were considered based on the company's customer database. The researcher used a target population of 500 respondents.

Table 3.1 Target Population Distribution

Category	Population
Managers	25
Employees	200
Customers (Cross border travellers)	275
TOTAL	**500**

3.3 Sample

A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observations. The sample consisted of ZUPCO management, employees and customers.

In reality there is simply not enough time, energy, money, labour/manpower, equipment and access to suitable sites to measure every single item or site within the parent population or whole sampling frame. Therefore the researcher adopted an appropriate sampling strategy to obtain a true representative and statistically valid sample of the whole.

3.4 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a relatively small number of elements from a large sub set of elements such that information gathered from the smaller group allows one to make judgements about that large group of elements.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the process of choosing units from a population of concern. Sampling is concerned with selecting individual observations intending to yield knowledge based on the population of interest, especially for the purpose of statistical inference. There are two types of sampling methods, probability and non-probability which the research adopted for the purpose of this research study.

3.5.1 Probability Sampling

A probability sampling is any method of sampling that utilizes some form or random selection. In order to have a random selection method, one must set up same process or procedure that assures that different units in the population have equal probabilities of being chosen. Out of the various probability sampling methods, the researcher used stratified random sampling.

3.5.1.2 Stratified Random Sampling

Stratified random sampling is simply variations on random sampling method. This method is widely used where the population is divided into groups or strata. Random samples are taken from stratum or category. The researcher adopted this method because it was the best in choosing the right sample. With stratified random sampling, the sample selected was a true representative of the population since it guaranteed that every important stratum had elements in the final sample. The structure of the chosen sample reflected that of the population was the same proportion of individuals chosen from each stratum. Since each category was represented by a randomly chosen sample, inferences were made about each stratum. Precision was increased since sampling took place within strata's and because the range of variation was less in each stratum than in the population as a whole and variations between

strata did not enter as a chance effect thus there was high levels of precision was obtainable. The strata's were made up of ZUPCO's management, employees and customers.

3.5.2 Non-Probability Sampling

A non-probability sampling method is a sampling method where some of the elements in a population do not stand a chance of being selected. The researcher used non-probability sampling in the form of convenience and judgmental to select customers, management and employees.

3.5.2.1 Judgemental Sampling

Judgemental sampling is a form of non-probability sampling technique where the researcher selects units to be sampled based on his/her knowledge and professional judgements. The sampling technique is also known as purposive sampling or authoritative sampling. The process was mainly about purposely handpicking individuals from the population based on the authorities or on the researchers' knowledge and judgement.

Judgemental sampling was used because not all managers and employees understood the concept of Brand Equity as well as Service Quality, so the researcher selected those managers and employees that had clear understanding of the concepts' being investigated. Judgemental sampling also had the advantage of eliminating bias with prior knowledge of the concepts under investigation can be picked to give responses.

3.5.2.2 Convenience Sampling

Convenience sample refers to the most accessible population members. Participants from which to obtain information are selected in a way that is easy in terms of reaching them.

The researcher used this method to select customers and employees because it allowed picking respondents from the sample of individuals who were readily available so as to save

time. The method also helped to save costs in that those who offered the most convenience were selected.

3.6 Sample Size

Zikmund (2003) suggest that for a more general perspective the larger and more diverse the sample size, the more accurate the research results. The researcher used 20% of the target population as suggested by Zikmund (2003). A sample size of 100 respondents was used by the researcher. The researcher used stratified random sampling technique to ensure the sample size was a true representative of the population.

Calculations:

1) Management: $(25 \div 500) \times 100 = 5$

2) Employees: $(200 \div 500) \times 100 = 40$

3) Customers $(275 \div 500) \times 100 = 55$

Table 3.2 Sample Size Distribution

Category	Sample Size
Managers	5
Employees	40
Customers	55
TOTAL	**100**

3.7 Data Sources

The researcher used both primary data and secondary data sources to obtain data to answer the research objectives. To obtain primary data the researcher used questionnaires and interviews.

The researcher used of secondary data which was confirmed to be authentic in the research well enough to be reliable and accepted in academic circles. The researcher used customer service records, customer database, daily and monthly reports, text books and e-journals.

3.8 Research Instruments

Research instruments are tools for collecting data need to find solutions to the issues under investigation. The most commonly used instruments are the questionnaire, focus groups and interviews. In this research, both questionnaires and interviews were used.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a document that asks the same questions to all the participants in the population. A questionnaire is document with pre-set questions sent to respondents to solicit appropriate responses about a given phenomenon. To extract the required information from respondents, the researcher will make use of questionnaires. The questionnaires included closed ended questions.

The researcher used questionnaires because they were practical. With questionnaires large amounts of information was collected from a large number of people in a short period of time in an effective way. Questionnaires can be carried out by the researcher or by any number of people with limited affect to the validity and reliability of the research. The results of the questionnaires were quickly and easily quantified by the researcher. Questionnaires enabled data collected to be analyzed more scientifically and objectively than other forms of research instruments. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires was used to test the existing hypothesis.

3.8.1.1 Closed Ended (Or Structured) Questions

Closed ended questions are questions that require respondents to choose from a pre-determined set of responses or scale point. The researcher made use of closed ended

questions such as Likert Scale questions, Numerical questions and Categorical questions. This will give fewer headaches when compiling data. With structured questions there was less chance of researcher and respondent errors in recording answers. Also such questions were more convenient to respondents in terms of time needed to respond and ease of responding.

3.8.2 Interviews

Personal interviews are considered to be face to face interactions in which one interviewer asks the respondents to answer questions. The motive of this technique is to get full understanding of the respondents' actions and discover more vital reasons underlying the respondents' attitude. An interview guide was used to make sure that questions asked were relevant to the study.

3.8.2.1 Structured Interviews

The researcher conducted structured interviews. The interviews had questions prepared in advance. The interviews were designed to last for at least 20 minutes. An interview guide was used during the course of the interviews.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

A data collection procedure is a set of steps taken in administering instruments and collection of data from subjects under study.

Before conducting an interview with the respective management, an interview guide was constructed with the necessary questions pertaining to the study. The researcher booked appointments before the interview date. Copies of the interview guides were given to managers from the following departments: Marketing, Human Resource, Operations, Accounting/Finance and Engineering. The researcher delivered the copies in person upon booking of appointments to ensure the guides reached the intended respondents.

The researcher distributed a total of 40 questionnaires to employees and 55 questionnaires to customers. For employees the questionnaires were delivered in person and retrieved after a period of one week. Full responsibility was given to bus drivers and conductors upon their cooperation to distribute questionnaires to customers upon entry into the buses. Clients were kindly asked to fill and drop off the questionnaires upon arrival at chosen destinations. The researcher also distributed questionnaires to customers who were readily available by means of convenience. It took the researcher one week and 3days to collect data

3.10 Reliability and Validity

3.10.1 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which an instrument or line of action would give the same results in different situations if duplicated under similar circumstances. This is important to ascertain that there is consistence in terms of the measurements used in the study. The researcher used test and retest reliability as well as split half reliability to ensure reliability is achieved. As some respondents are unwilling to answer questions, to ensure reliability the researcher ensured respondents were informed of the essence of the research through introductory letters. The researcher used simple language and avoided using technical terms. Reliability was also achieved through the design of good questions by avoiding leading and ambiguous questions. In the study the use of anonymity was employed to ensure honest and willingness to answer personal questions.

3.10.1.1 Pilot Study

A Pilot Study ensured that instruments measured what they were intended to measure before using them in the actual research. The researcher carried out a Pilot Study among other students which helped to establish the research instruments to be used. Before the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents, it was tested for validity and reliability. The same was done for the interview guide. This was done in order to get the respondents'

reactions, attitude and ability to answer the demand for the instruments. Relevant adjustments were made such as language used and expressions making the instruments relevant and suitable for the study.

3.10.2 Validity

To strengthen validity of the research, the researcher used interviews and written documents. In collecting the empirical data semi-structured interviews made it a more open discussion giving corporation with the respondents. This made it possible to clearly misunderstand along the way which was important when connecting the theoretical framework with the empirical findings. The semi-structured interviews gave respondents an equal opportunity to speak in a free way about the predetermined topics. This enabled the researcher to find out more profound answers and thus increasing validity.

The tools designed measured the variables actually intended to be measured in the study. The researcher utilized content and construct validity. Great care was used in choosing words and phrases which the target population understood. Questions were in an unambiguous way, with meaning of all terms clearly defined so as to have the same meaning to all respondents. The use of face to face interviews assured validity as answers to some questions could be checked from body language.

3.11 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher focused on the research design citing the different designs which were used. The target population was identified, and the different methods of sampling explained. These sampling methods were highlighted in this chapter. Also, the research instruments used are explained and justified, as well as how they were administered. The next chapter focuses on the presentation of data, description and analysis. It will focus on the discussion of the finding.

CHAPTER 4

Data Analysis, Presentation And Discussion Of Findings

4.0 Introduction

This chapter seeks to present and analyze the research data in a bid to ascertain the impact of service quality on brand equity in the public transport sector. The findings are based on the responses from management, employees and customers who constituted the sample of the research study. The findings are presented graphically, in tabular form and pie charts and analysed using Microsoft Office Excel. Chi-square was used to test the statistical significance of the results. The findings were obtained from questionnaires distributed to ZUPCO customers and employees as well as interviews carried out with management.

4.1 Demographic Response Rate

Table 4.1 Questionnaire and Interview Response rate

Instrument Used	Type of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Responses Received	Response Rate
Questionnaires	Customers	55	45	82%
Questionnaires	Employees	40	40	100%
Interview	Management	5	1	20%
Total		100	86	86%

From the above table, the overall response rate was 86%. 55 questionnaires were distributed to customers and 45 responded while all 40 of the employees who were given questionnaires responded. Of the 5 interviews the researcher hoped to conduct only 1 was successful. An overall response rate of 86% response was achieved because the researcher managed to give

respondents enough time to respond and also ensured that questions were short and straight to the point, hence it was easy for respondents to answer.

Table 4.2 Customers Age and Gender Distribution

Gender	Female	Male	Total
Age	2	1	3
21-25	4	3	7
26-30	6	4	10
31-35	7	9	16
36-40	4	5	9
41 and above			
Total	23	22	**45**

Table 4.3 Employees Age, Gender and Years of Employment Distribution

Gender	Female	Male
Age		
21-30	2	
26-30	3	7
31-35	4	2
36-40	3	5
41 and above	6	8
Years of Employment		
Less than 5 years	3	1
5-10 years	9	5
More than 10 years	10	12

4.2 ZUPCO's Service Quality Analysis

Respondents were asked general questions to rate ZUPCO's current state of service quality. Their responses are summarized in figures 4.1 and 4.2 below.

4.2.1 Travellers' View of ZUPCO's Service Quality

Travellers were asked to rate how they felt about the present state of ZUPCO's service quality and their responses are summarized in figure 4.1 below.
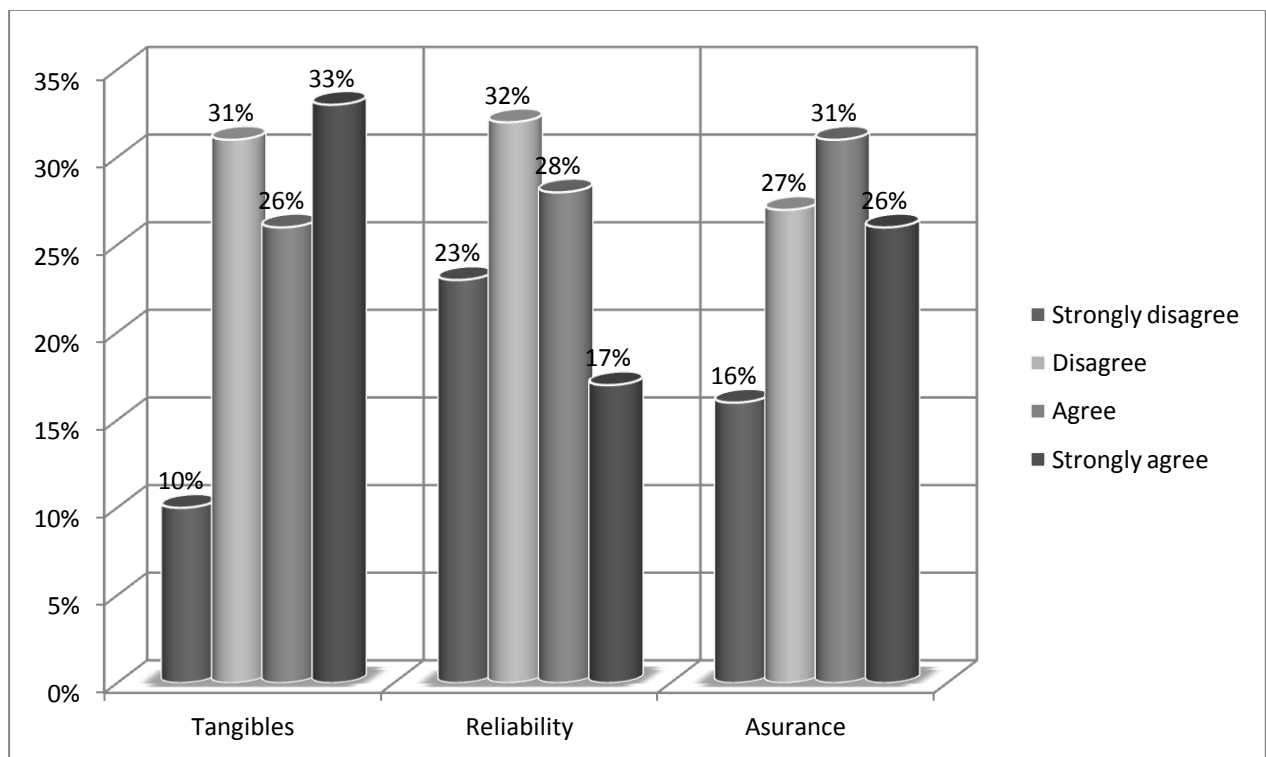
 Figure 4.1 Traveller's Response Rate on Service Quality

33% of the respondents strongly agreed ZUPCO tangibalised its service through attractive physical facilities, clean bus interiors and exteriors, having proper shelters and benches at bus stops. 26% agreed while 31% disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed.

On the dimension of Reliability 32% of the respondents disagreed ZUPCO adhered to its service schedule in terms of all scheduled trips being operational, minimum vehicle

breakdowns and buses always arriving at the destination on time. 23% strongly disagreed, 28% agreed while a minority 17% strongly agreed.

When asked to rate whether ZUPCO had the ability to inspire trust and confidence in travellers', 31% of the respondents agreed while 26% strongly agreed, 27% and 16% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

4.2.2 Staff Members' View of Service Quality

Employees were asked to evaluate the present state of ZUPCO's service quality and their responses are summarized in figure 4.2 below.
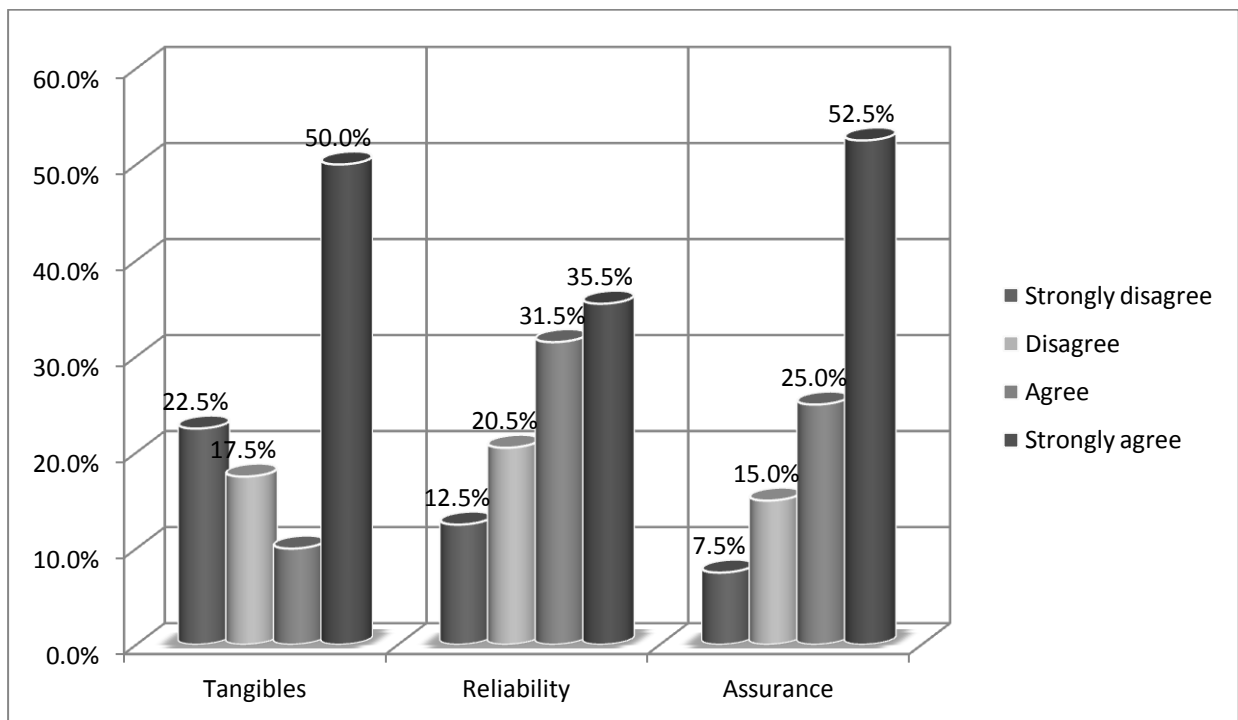
Figure 4.2 Staff Members' Response Rate on Service Quality

50% of the respondents strongly agreed that ZUPCO' services were tangibalised in terms of attractiveness of physical facilities, clean bus interiors and exteriors, the availability of proper shelters and benches at bus stops. 10% agreed while 17.5% and 22.5% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

Respondents were also asked to rate whether ZUPCO's ability to adhere to its service schedule interms of acceptable waiting time, all scheduled trips being operational, minimum vehicle breakdowns, departure of buses on time and arrival at destinations on time. 31.5% agreed while 35.5% strongly agreed, 20.5% disagreed while 12.5% strongly disagreed.

On the dimension of Assurance 52.5% strongly disagree that ZUPCO instilled trust and confidence in travelling passengers', 25% agreed while 15% and 7.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

4.3 Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity

4.3.1 The Impact of Tangibles on Brand Awareness

Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about the influence of service tangibles on brand awareness.

4.3.1.1 Passengers' View of Tangibles on Brand Awareness

Passengers' were asked to rate weather tangibles were sufficient enough to make them aware or familiar with ZUPCO. Their responses are summarized in figure 4.3 below.
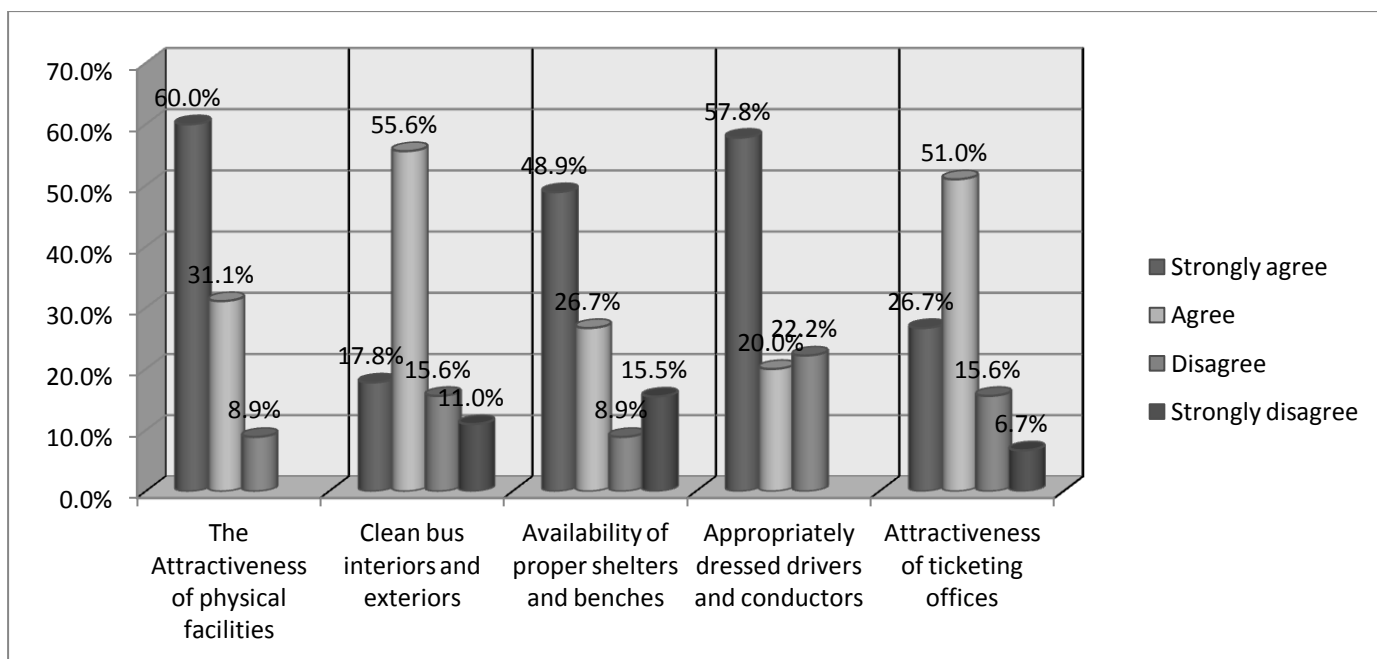
Figure 4.3 Travellers' Response To The Impact Of Tangibles On Brand Awareness

When asked to rate how attractiveness of physical facilities would result in awareness, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 31.1% agreed while 8.9% disagreed. This showed that the majority of the respondents felt attractiveness would make them aware of the ZUPCO brand.

55.6% agreed that clean bus interiors and exteriors would result in brand awareness while 17.8% strongly agreed, 15.6% disagreed while 11% strongly disagree.

48.9% and 26.7% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that availability of proper shelters and benches would result in awareness of ZUPCO, 26.7% agreed while 15.5% strongly disagreed and 8.9% disagreed.

57.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that drivers and conductors being appropriately dressed will result in brand awareness, 20% agreed while 22.2% strongly disagree.

51% of the respondents agreed that the attractiveness of ticketing offices would make them aware/familiar with ZUPCO, 26.7% strongly agreed, 15.6% disagreed while 6.7% strongly disagreed.

4.3.1.2 Employees View of Tangibles on Brand Awareness

Employees were asked to rate the importance of tangibles on creating brand awareness. Their

results are summarized in figure 4.4 below.
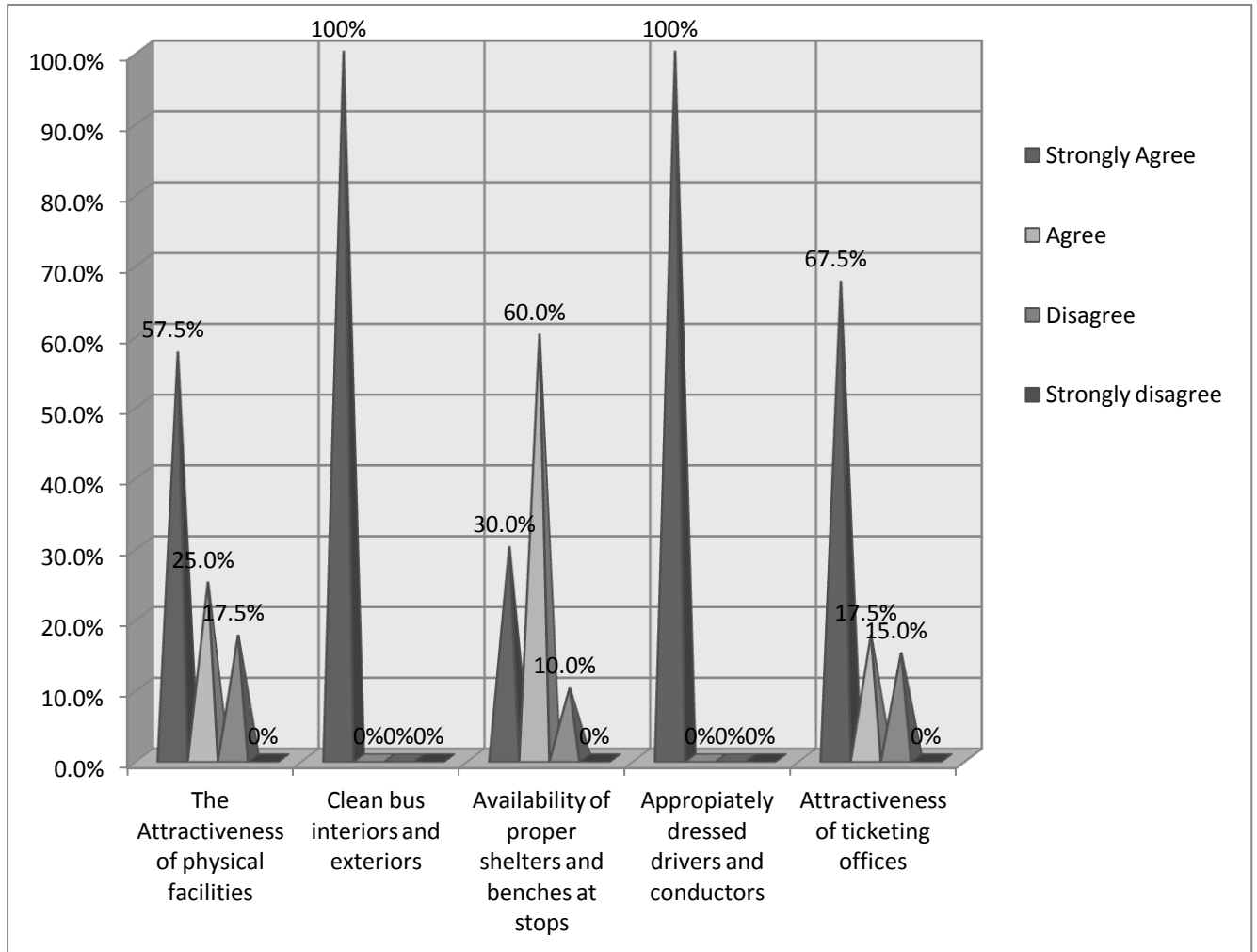
Figure 4.4 Employees' Response To The Impact Of Tangibles On Brand Awareness

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of tangible variables in creating favourable

brand awareness. 57.5% of the respondents strongly agreed the attractiveness of physical

facilities was very important in creating brand awareness, 25% agreed while 17.5% disagreed

it was not very important.

100% of the respondents strongly agreed that clean bus interiors and exteriors were very

important.

60% agreed availability of proper shelters and benches at bus stops was very important in creating brand awareness, 30% strongly agreed while 10% disagreed it was important.

All employees agreed drivers and conductors' dressing appropriately was very important.

67.5% strongly agreed that attractiveness of ticketing offices was very important in creating brand awareness, 17.5% agreed and 15% disagree it was important.

4.3.2 The Impact Reliability on Brand Perception

4.3.2.1 Travellers' View of Reliability on Brand Perception

Travellers' were asked to rate if reliability had an influence on their level of perceptions towards ZUPCO. Their responses are summarized in figure 4.5 below.
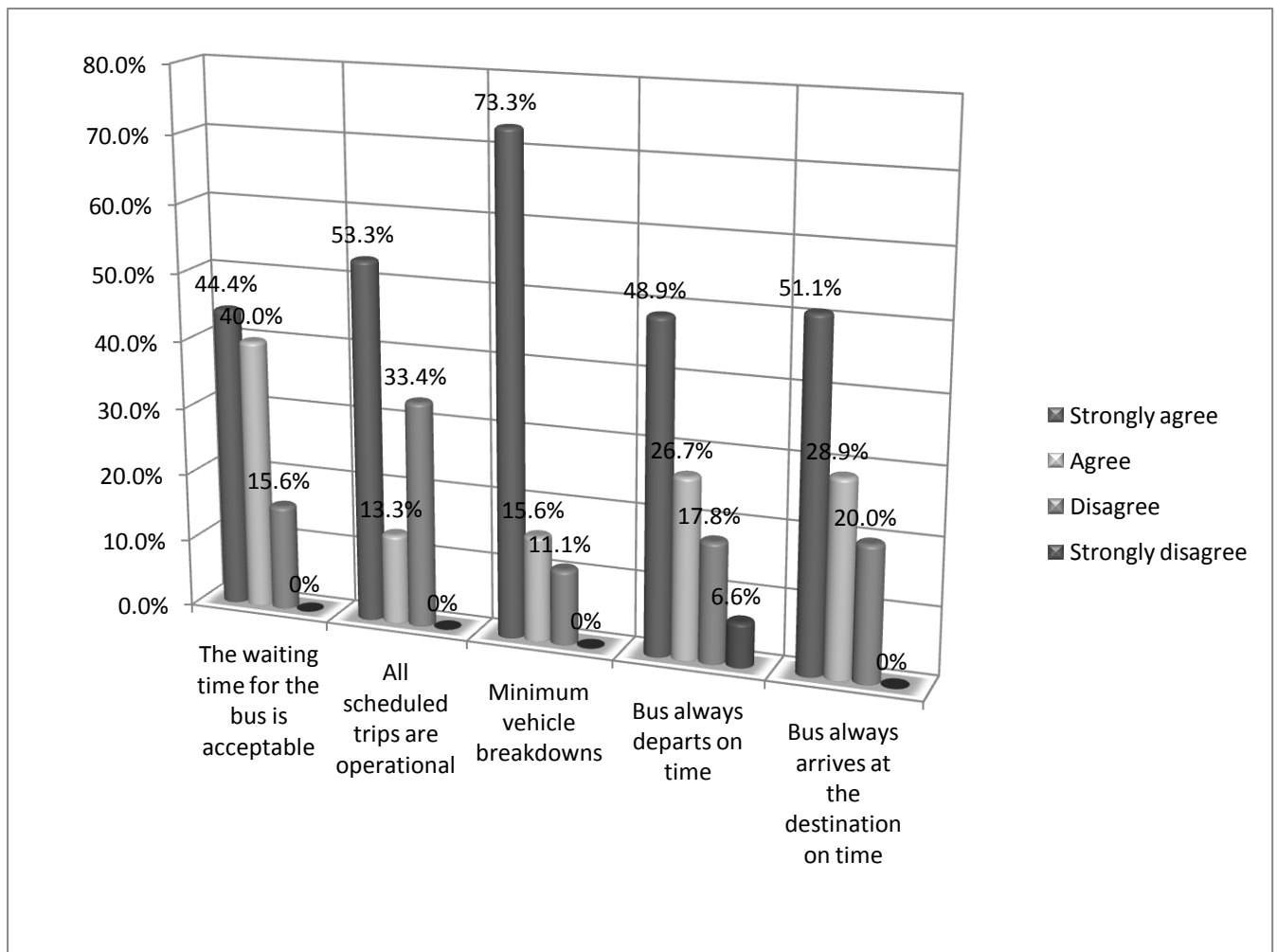
Figure 4.5 Customers Responses To The Impact Of Reliability On Perception

44.4% of the respondents strongly agreed acceptable waiting time for the bus influenced their perceptions, 40% agreed, 44.4% and 15.6% disagreed.

53.3% strongly agreed that all trips being operational influenced their perceptions, 13.3% and 33.4% agreed and disagreed respectively that it influenced their perceptions.

In terms of minimum vehicle breakdowns, 73.3% strongly agreed it influenced their perceptions while 15.6% agreed and 11.1% strongly disagreed.

A majority 48.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the ability of ZUPCO to ensure that buses departed on time influenced their perceptions, 26.7% agreed while 17.8% and 6.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

51.1% and 28.9% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that buses arriving on time at destinations influenced their perceptions while 20% strongly disagreed.

4.3.2.2 Employees View of Reliability on Brand Perception

Respondents were asked to rate whether service adherence had any influence on passengers' perceived quality about ZUPCO. Their responses are summarized in figure 4.6 below.
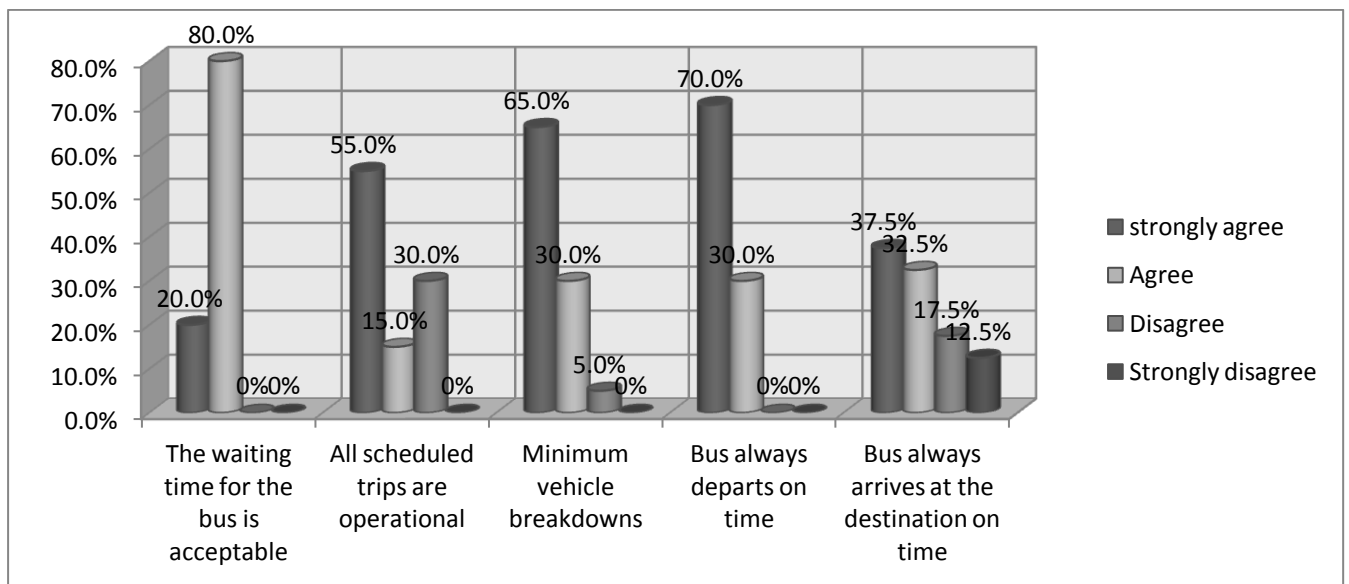
Figure 4.6 Employees Responses On The Impact Of Reliability On Brand Perception

20% strongly agreed the waiting time for the bus service was important in creating favourable brand perception towards ZUPCO while 80% agreed.

55% of the respondents strongly disagreed that trips being operational was important in creating positive brand perception towards ZUPCO, 15% agreed while 30% strongly disagreed it was important.

Minimum vehicle breakdowns was rated important by 65% of the respondents as being important in creating favourable brand perception, 30% agreed while 5% disagreed.

When also asked to rate the importance of departure time of the bus, 70% strongly agreed while 30% that it was important in creating favourable perceived quality.

37.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that arrival at destination on time influenced perceived quality towards ZUPCO, 32.5% agreed, 17.5 disagreed while 12.5% strongly disagreed.

4.3.3 The Impact of Assurance on Brand Loyalty

4.3.3.1 Travellers View of Assurance on Brand Loyalty

Travellers were asked to rate whether ZUPCO's ability to instil trust and confidence influenced their level loyalty towards the service provider. The outcomes of the findings are summarized in figure 4.6 below.
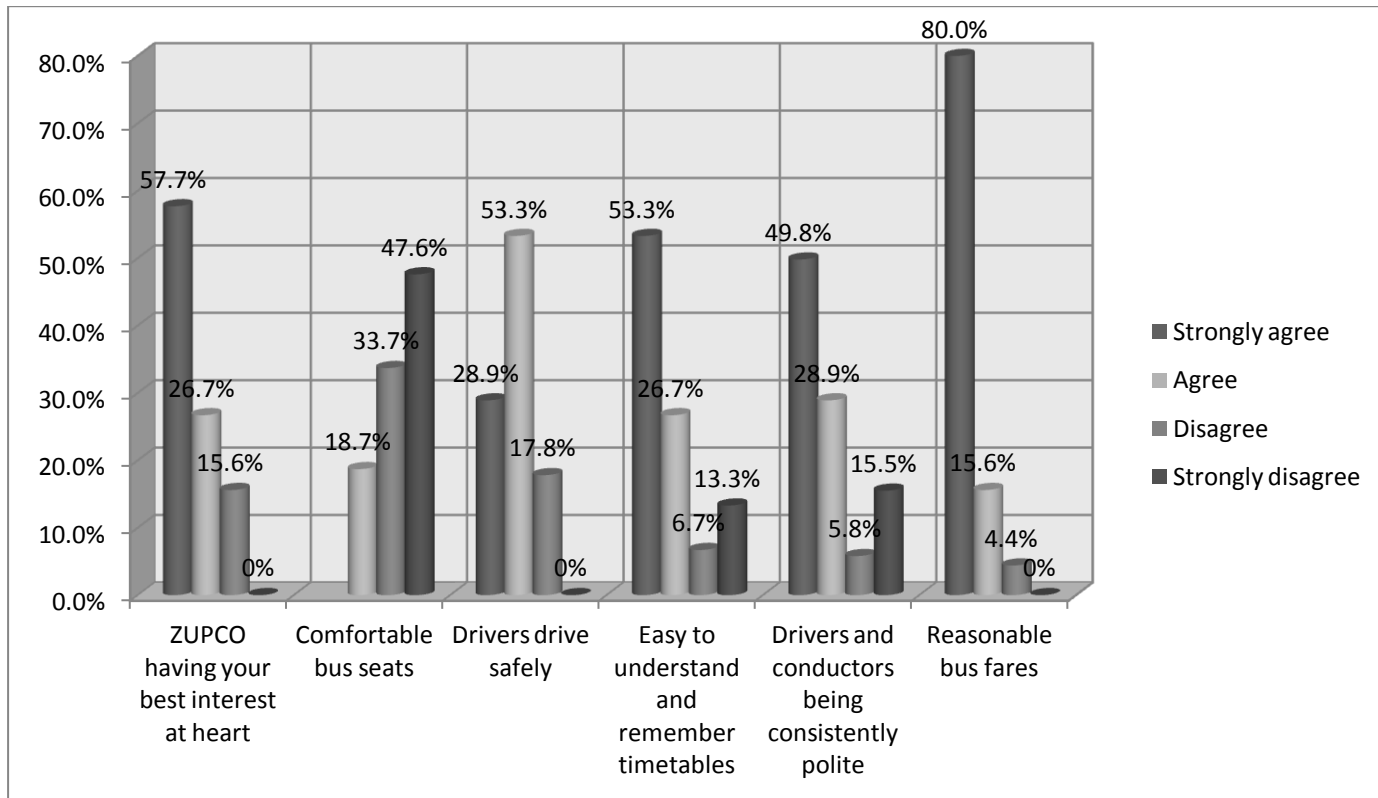
Figure 4.7 Travellers' View Of The Impact Of Assurance on Brand Loyalty

57.7% strongly agreed having travellers' best interests at heart influenced their level of loyalty while 26.7% and 15.6% agreed and disagreed respectively.

18.7% agreed comfortable bus seats would influence the loyalty towards ZUPCO while 33.7% and 47.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

A majority 53.3% and 28.9% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that drivers driving safely influenced their loyalty while 17.8% disagreed.

53.3% and 26.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively, that the degrees with which timetables are easy to understand and remember influenced their level of loyalty towards ZUPCO while 6.7% disagreed and 13.3% strongly disagreed.

49.8% and 28.9% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that consistence in terms of politeness towards passengers influenced loyalty while 5.8% disagreed and 15.5% strongly disagreed.

80% strongly agreed that reasonable fares influenced their loyalty, 15.6% agreed while a minority 4.4% strongly disagreed.

4.3.3.2 Employees View of Assurance on Brand Loyalty

Employees were asked to rate whether ZUPCO having the ability to inspire trust and confidence influenced travellers' loyalty towards the service provider. Their responses are summarized in figure 4.7 below.
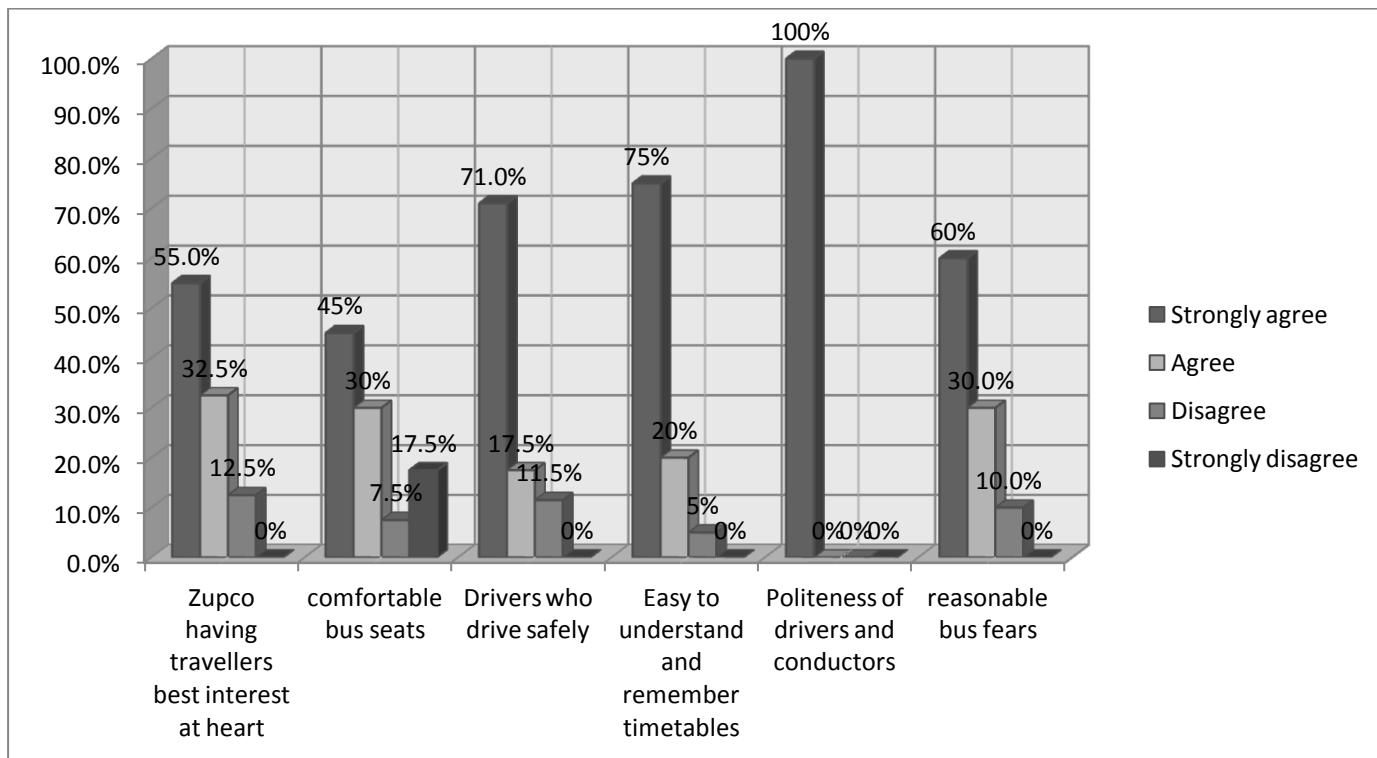
Figure 4.8 Staff Members' View Of The Impact of Assurance On Brand Loyalty

55% strongly agreed having travellers' best interest at heart influenced travellers' loyalty, 32.5% agreed while 12.5% disagreed.

45% strongly agreed that comfortable bus seats influenced travellers' loyalty, 30% agreed, 7.5% disagreed while 17.5% strongly disagreed.

In terms of drivers driving safely, 71% strongly agreed it influenced loyalty, 17.5% agreed and 11.5% disagreed.

A majority 75% and 20% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the degree with which timetables are easy to understand and remember influenced travellers loyalty while a minority 5% disagreed.

100% of the respondents strongly agreed that politeness of drivers and conductors influenced travellers' loyalty.

60% and 30% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that charging reasonable fears would influence travellers' level of loyalty while 10% strongly disagreed.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The Chi-Square statistic was used to test whether or not there is a relationship between Service Quality and Brand Equity. Therefore the Null hypothesis is rejected when the calculated chi-square value is greater than the critical chi-square value at the 0.10 probability level

$$x^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{(Oi - Ei)^2}{Ei}$$

$\chi 2$ = the chi-square statistic

Oi = the observed Responses

Ei = the expected Responses

I = the number of the cell

Degrees of Freedom = Number Of Response Categories – 1

4.4.1 Impact of Tangibles on Brand Awareness

H_1 There is a positive relationship between tangibles and brand awareness.

H_0 There is no positive relationship between tangibles and brand awareness.

Table 4.4 E*i* and O*i* Responses On The Impact Of Tangible And Brand Awareness

Response Category	Ei	Oi
Strongly Agree	21.25	47
Agree	21.25	25
Disagree	21.25	10
Strongly Disagree	21.25	3
Total Responses	85	85

$$\chi2 = \frac{(47-21.25)^2}{21.25} + \frac{(25-21.25)^2}{21.25} + + \frac{(10-21.25)^2}{21.25} + \frac{(3-21.25)^2}{21.25}$$

$$=53.49$$

Degrees of Freedom= Number of response categories – 1

$$4 - 1 = 3$$

The calculated chi-square value of 53.49 is greater than the critical chi-square value of 11.34 at 0.10 probability level at 3 degrees of freedom. The results are statistically significant therefore we reject H_0 and accept H_1.

4.4.2 The Impact Of Reliability On Brand Perception

H_0 There is no positive relationship between reliability and brand perception.

H_2 There is a positive relationship between reliability and brand perceptions.

Table 4.5 Ei and Oi Responses On The Impact Of Reliability On Brand Perception

Response Category	Ei	Oi
Strongly Agree	21.25	42
Agree	21.25	27
Disagree	21.25	14
Strongly Disagree	21.25	2
Total Responses	85	85

$$\chi 2 = \frac{(42-21.25)^2}{21.25} + \frac{(27-21.25)^2}{21.25} + + \frac{(14-21.25)^2}{21.25} + \frac{(2-21.25)^2}{21.25}$$

$$=41.73$$

Degrees of Freedom= Number of response categories – 1

$$4 - 1 = 3$$

The calculated chi-square value of 41.73 is greater than the critical chi-square value of 11.34 at 0.10 probability level. The results are statistically significant therefore we reject H_0 and accept H_2

4.4.3 The Impact of Assurance on Brand Loyalty

H_0 There is no positive relationship between assurance and brand loyalty.

H_3 There is a positive relationship between assurance and brand loyalty.

Table 4.6 Ei and Oi Responses On The Impact Of Assurance On Brand Loyalty

Response Category	Ei	Oi
Strongly Agree	21.25	45
Agree	21.25	19
Disagree	21.25	13
Strongly Disagree	21.25	8
Total Responses	**85**	**85**

$$\chi 2 = \frac{(45-21.25)^2}{21.25} + \frac{(19-21.25)^2}{21.25} + + \frac{(13-21.25)^2}{21.25} + \frac{(8-21.25)^2}{21.25}$$

$$=38.24$$

Degrees of Freedom= Number of response categories – 1

$$4 - 1 = 3$$

The calculated chi-square value of 38.24 is greater than the critical chi-square value of 11.34 at 0.10 probability level. The results are statistically significant therefore we reject H_0 and accept H_3.

4.5 Summary

This chapter presented, analyzed and discussed the data collected from ZUPCO's customers', employees' and management concerning the impact of service quality on brand equity. Hypothesis testing was done using the Chi-square to determine whether or not a relationship exists between service quality and brand equity. The following chapter will look at the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions And Recommendations

5.0 Summary

The research study explored The Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity a Case of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company. The direction of the research study was outlined in the background of the study. The problem being faced by the company was stated in the statement of the problem. Objectives were outlined preceding the research hypothesis. The importance of the research to both the student, university and the company was discussed. The parameters of the research study were outlined in terms of limitations and delimitations. Also discussed were the assumptions of the research study.

Theoretical views from several scholars with regards to service quality and brand equity were discussed and reviewed.

Research designs that applied to the research study were discussed and justified. Sampling techniques, sampling procedure as well as the research instruments used were explained and justified. The research study had a target population of 500 respondents and a sample size of 100 respondents. The sample size was made up of 55 customers (cross border travellers), 40 employees and 5 managers.

The research finding were gathered, analyzed, discussed and presented in the form of tables and graphs. The research study adopted Chi-square to test whether or not a relationship existed between service quality and brand equity. The study revealed that there are statistically positively significant relationships between

❖ service tangibles and brand awareness

❖ service reliability and perceived quality

❖ service assurance and brand loyalty

5.1 Conclusions

5.1.1 <u>The Impact Of Tangibles On Brand Awareness</u>

The study set out to explore the impact of tangibles on brand awareness. It was found out that tangibles had a strong positive relationship with awareness of a brand. 55% of the respondents strongly agreed that tangibles would make them familiar or aware of ZUPCO while 29% agreed, 22% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed. The calculated chi-square value of 53.49 was greater than the critical chi-square value of 11.34 at 0.10 probability level. The results were found to be statistically significant thus H_0 was rejected and H_1 accepted. Concluding that there is a positive relationship between service tangibles and brand awareness.

5.1.2 <u>The Impact Of Reliability On Perceived Quality</u>

The research study found out there is also positive relationship between reliability (adherence to service schedule) and perceived quality towards ZUPCO. 47% of the respondents strongly agreed that reliability would influence perceived quality while 30% agreed, 18% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed. The results were statistically significant as the calculated chi-square value at 3 degrees of freedom was greater than the critical chi-square value at 0.10 probability level. Therefore H_0 was rejected and H_2 accepted. Concluding that there is a positive relationship between service reliability and perceived quality/brand perceptions.

5.1.3 <u>The Impact Of Assurance On Brand Loyalty</u>

The research study also indicated that there was a significant relationship between assurance (ability to inspire trust and confidence) and brand loyalty. 52% of the respondents strongly

agreed that the ability to inspire trust and confidence would influence loyalty towards ZUPCO while 24% agreed, 16% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed. The calculated chi-square value of 38.24 was greater than the critical chi-square value of 11.34 at 0.10 probability level. Therefore H_0 was rejected and H_3 accepted. Concluding that there is a positive relationship between service assurance and brand loyalty.

5.1.4 Overall Conclusion

From the above conclusions, it can be concluded from this research study that there is a positive relationship between service quality and brand equity in public road transportation.

5.2 Recommendations

Zupco could consider improving its physical facilities appearance. Availability of proper shelters and benches at bus stops would increase travellers' awareness of the company.

In terms of adherence to service schedule, ZUPCO could try to minimize vehicle breakdowns, ensure buses arrive at destinations on time as well as making sure all trips are operational. This would go a long way in creating positive perceived quality towards company.

ZUPCO could also consider improving its bus seats such that travellers feel comfortable in their travels. Consideration can also be given to re-testing drivers driving skills to avoid. This will both in the short-run and long-run instil trust and confidence in travelling publics in ZUPCO.

There is need for ZUPCO to continuously improve and develop a culture of quality within the organization. Culture is not delivered in a vacuum, but through an organizations commitment to quality culture and integrating its focus on quality.

The study also recommends ZUPCO to implement customer care strategies such as customer focus, training and empowering service employees especially drivers and conductors on customer care since they are the one who come into contact with customers on a daily basis.

ZUPCO can also consider offering a service that is in line with customer preferences and tastes in order to offer customers a service that is considered to be of value. This in the long-run will result in high levels of customer satisfaction and in turn loyalty towards the company's service offerings.

ZUPCO can consider autonomy. The nerve ends of the organization, those employees in this case drivers and conductors who are in constant contact with travellers on a daily basis. Surely ZUPCO can consider allowing them to make their own decisions when it comes to satisfying customers and enhance service quality.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

For future research studies it can be suggested that researchers adopt the use of interviews specifically for employees and customers to find out more detail from customers and employees. It is possible for a respondent to explain his/her view in relation to the variables under investigation.

Reference List

1. Aaker, D. (1991). <u>Managing Brand Equity</u>. New York: The Free Press.

2. Aaker, D. A. (1991). <u>Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name</u>. New-York: Free Press. pp. 134-140.

3. Agyemang, I.W., (2011) <u>Measurement of service quality of TROTORO as public transport in Ghana: A case study – the City of Kumasi,</u> Paper delivered at the 32nd Annual Southern African Transport Conference, Pretoria, South Africa, 8–11 July.

4. Alok, K. R. (2013). <u>Customer relationship management: Concepts and cases (2nd ed).</u> New Delhi, India: PHI Learning.

5. Balaji, M.S. (2011) <u>Building strong service brands: the hierarchical relationship between brand equity dimensions,</u> IUP Journal of Brand Management, 8(3): 7–24.

6. Bates, J., Polak, J., Jones, P., and Cook, A (2001) <u>The valuation of reliability for personal travel.</u> Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review 37, 191-229.

7. Berry, L. L. (2000). <u>Cultivating Service Brand Equity.</u> Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 28 (1), 128-137.

8. Brady, M.K. and Cronin, J.J. (2001), <u>Some New Thoughts on Conceptualizing Perceived Service Quality: A Hierarchical Approach,</u> Journal of Marketing, Vol.65, pp.34-49.

9. Carrasco., N (2011) <u>Quantifying public transport reliability in Zurich,</u> Conference Paper, Swiss Transport Research Conference, Monte Verita, Ascona

10. Chang, H. H., & Wang, H.-W. (2011). <u>The moderating effect of customer perceived value on online shopping behaviour.</u> Online Information Review, 35(3), 333–359.

11. Chen, C., Chen, C.K. and Huang, C (2012) <u>Brands and consumer behaviour, Social Behaviour and Personality</u>, 40(1): 105-114 (online) Available at http://search.global.epnet.com/ accessed: 26 August 2014.

12. Conradie, E.S., Lombard, M., and Klopper, H.B (2014) <u>The Influence of eleven P's: An Internal Marketing and Brand awareness perspective in Service environment</u>, Southern African Business volume 18

13. De Chernatony, L. and Segal-Horn, S (2013), <u>Building on Services' Characteristics to Develop Successful Services Brands,</u> Journal of Marketing Management, 17, 645-669.

14. Gattuso, D., et al., (2010) <u>Transit reliability performances - Some contribution of a COST research</u>, Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria: Reggio Calabria.

15. Gronroos, C. (2007). <u>Service Management and Marketing: Customer Management in Service Competition</u> (3rd edition). Chichester: Wiley.

16. Grönroos, C. (1984). <u>A Service Quality Model and Its Marketing Implications. European Journal of Marketing</u>, 18(4), 36–45.

17. Grönroos C. (1990). <u>Service Management and Marketing</u>. Massachusetts: Lexington Books.

18. He, H. & Li, Y. (2011). <u>Key service drivers for high-tech service brand equity: The mediating role of overall service quality and perceived value.</u> Journal of Marketing Management. Vol. 27 (1-2), pp. 77–79.

19. Hsu, T., Hung, L. and Tang, J. (2012) <u>An analytical model for building brand equity in hospitality firms,</u> Annals of operations Research 195(1).

20. Joewono, T. B., & Kubota, H. (2007). <u>User satisfaction with Para-transit in competition with motorization in Indonesia: anticipation of future implications</u>. Transportation, 34, 337–354.

21. Kabir, H. and Carlsson, T (2010) <u>Service Quality – Expectations, Perceptions and Satisfaction about Service Quality at Destination Gotland</u>, Master's Thesis, Gotland University, Bo Lennstrand, Gotland University.

22. Kayaman, R. & Arasli, H. (2007). <u>Customer based brand equity: Evidence from the hotel industry,</u> Managing Service Quality, 17(1): 92–109.

23. Keller, Kevin (1993). <u>Conceptualizing, Measuring and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity.</u> Journal of Marketing, 1993:1, pp. 1-22.

24. Keller, K.L. 2009. <u>Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment,</u> Journal of Marketing Communications, 15(2–3): 139–155.

25. Kimpakon, N. And Tocquer, G (2010) <u>Service brand equity and employee brand commitment</u>, Journal of service Marketing.

26. Kim, K.H., Kim, K.S., Kim, D.Y., Kim, J.H. & Kang, S.K. (2008) <u>Brand equity in hospital marketing</u>, Journal of Business Research, 61(1): 75–82.

27. Kotler P and Keller L K (2012) <u>Marketing Management</u>, 14th Edition, Prentice Hall, New Delhi.

28. Kotler, P. and K. L. Keller, (2006). <u>Marketing Management</u>, 12th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson).

29. Kotler, P., Bowen, J. and Makens, J. (1996), <u>Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism</u>, Prentice-Hall,Upper Saddle River, NJ.

30. Kotler, P., and K.L. Keller. (2009). <u>Marketing management</u>. 13th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

31. Keller, K. L (1993), <u>Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity,</u> Journal of Marketing, 1-22.

32. Lai, W.-T., & Chen, C.-F. (2011). <u>Behavioral intention of public transit passenger the role of service quality, perceived value, satisfaction and involvement</u>. Transport Policy, 18, 318–325.

33. Litman,T. (2014) <u>Valuing Transit Service Quality Improvements: considering comfort and convenience in Transport project evaluation,</u> Victoria Transport Policy Institute.

34. Lovelock Christoffer & Wirtz Jochen, (2010) <u>Service Marketing- People, Technology and Strategy</u>, Pearson Prentice Hall.

35. McDonald, M. H. B., de Chernatony, L., & Harris, F. (2011). <u>Corporate Marketing and Service Brands – Moving beyond the fast-moving consumer products model</u>. European Journal of Marketing.

36. Mohd A, Mohammad O F, Albkour A M, (2013), <u>SERVQUAL and SERVPERF: A review of measures in services marketing research</u>, Global journal of management, vol. 13 (16).

37. Nguyen, Nh, & Leblanc, G. (1998). <u>The mediating role of corporate image on customers' retention decisions: An investigation in financial services</u>. International Journal of Bank Marketing, 16(2), 52–65.

38. Nziinga J, Mbaabu L, and English M, (2013), <u>Service delivery in Kenyan district hospitals- what can we learn from literature on mid-level managers?</u> Biomed central, Vol. 11 (10): 34-35.

39. Oliver, R.L. (1993) <u>A conceptual model of service quality and service satisfaction: Compatible goals, different concepts</u>. In: Swartz TA, Bowen DE, Brown SW, ed., Advances in Marketing and Management Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, Inc.,

40. Oliver, R. L. (1997), <u>Satisfaction: A Behavioural Perspective on the Consumer</u>, New York, McGraw-Hill.

41. Rust, R.T., Lemon, K.N. and Zeithaml, V.A (2001), <u>Driving Customer Equity: Linking Customer Lifetime Value to strategic Decision,</u> report No.01-108, Marketing Science Institute Working Paper Series, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge.

42. Parasuraman, A . Berry, L. and Zeithaml, V.A (1988) <u>SERVQUAL: a multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality</u>, Journal of Retailing, Vol.64 No.1, pp.12-40.

43. Parasuraman, A. Berry, L. and Zeithaml, V.A. (1985) <u>A conceptual model of service quality and its implication for future research,</u> Journal of Marketing, Vol.49, No.4, pp.41-50.

44. Parasuraman, A., Valarie, A., Zeithmal, V., & Berry, L. L. (1988). <u>SERVQUAL: A multiple item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality</u>. Journal of Retailing, 64(1), 12-40.

45. Song, Y., Hur, W. & Kim, M. (2012) <u>Brand trust and affect in the luxury brand–customer relationship,</u> Social Behaviour and Personality, 40(2): 331–338.

46. Tabaku, E., and Kushi, E., (2013) <u>Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Perceived value and Brand loyalty: A critical review of the literature</u>, academic journal of interdisciplinary studies, MCSER Publishing – Rome, Italy.

47. Transportation Research Board. (2004). Transit <u>capacity and quality of service manual</u>. TRCP Report 100 (2nd ed).

48. Vilikazi, A.M and Govender, K.K (2014) <u>Exploring public bus service quality in south Africa: A structural equation modelling approach.</u> Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management 8(1)

49. Wang, W. & Li, H. 2012. <u>Factors influencing mobile services adoption: A brand-equity perspective,</u> Internet Research, 22(2): 142–179.

50. Wang, H. (2008). <u>Global brand equity model: combining customer based with product-market outcome approaches</u>. Journal of product & brand manage, Vol. 17, pp. 305

51. Wang, Zhi gang (2003): <u>The perception of food safety and purchase behaviour- case from Tianjing</u>, Journal of China Agricultural Economics, Vol.4: pp. 41-48.

52. Wonglorsaichon P, Sathainrapabayut P (2008). <u>Brand Perception and Brand Equity of Baby Accessory Products in Working Moms'Perspective</u>. Int. Rev. Bus. Res. Papers, Vol. 4, pp. 385-395.

53. Yoo, B., Donthu, N., & Lee, S. (2000). <u>An Examination of Selected Marketing Mix Elements and Brand Equity.</u> Academy of marketing Science Journal, spring, 28 (2), 195-211.

54. Zeithaml, V. A., Parasuraman, A., & Berry, L. L. (1985). <u>Problems and Strategies in Services Marketing</u>. Journal of Marketing, spring, 49 (2), 33-46.

55. Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). <u>Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality, and Value: A Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence</u>. Journal of Marketing, 52(3), pp. 2–22.

56. Zikmund, WG. (2003) <u>Business Research Methods</u>, (7th ed.). Thompson SouthWestern, Boston, MA, USA.

57. Zeithaml, V.A., Berry, L.L. and Parasuraman, A. (1996), <u>The behavioural consequences of service quality,</u> Journal of Marketing, Vol. 60, (April), pp. 31-46.

58. Zeithaml V.A. (1988) <u>Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence</u>, Journal of Marketing, Vol.52, pp. 2–22.

59. Zeithaml, V., & Bitner, M. J. (2003) <u>Services marketing</u> (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Irwin.

60. Zeithaml, V. A. Bitner, M. J. and Gremler, D. D. (2006) <u>Services marketing</u>, 4th edition, McGraw-Hill

Appendix A

Midlands State University
The Department of Marketing
P.Bag 9055
Gweru
15 September 2014

Zimbabwe United Passengers Company
Head Office
109 Belvedere Road
PO Box 3298
Harare

Dear sir/madam

RE: <u>Permission To Carry Out A Research Study On Zimbabwe United Passengers Company</u>

My name is Batsirai Joseph Toronga a fourth year student at Midlands State University studying towards a Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree. I am carrying out an academic research on the Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity a Case of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company.

I do hereby kindly request your permission and assistance to carry out a research study using ZUPCO as a case study. All information is guaranteed to remain confidential and will be used for academic purpose only by the researcher.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation

Regards

Batsirai Joseph Toronga

Appendix B

Interview Guide For Management

Good day! My name is Batsirai Joseph Toronga a fourth year student at Midlands State University. I am doing a Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree. I am carrying out an academic research on the impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity a case of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company. I kindly ask for your participation in answering the following questions.

1) What impact do you think ZUPCO's physical facilities have on brand awareness?

2) What effect does performance a service dependably and accurately has on travellers' perceptions about ZUPCO?

3) What impact does the provision of confidence in terms of service knowledge, politeness and trustworthy behaviour of employees has on travellers' level of loyalty towards ZUPCO?

Thank You!

Appendix C

Research Questionnaire For Customers'

Dear Respondent

Good day! My name is Batsirai Joseph Toronga a fourth year student at Midlands State University studying towards a Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree. I am carrying out an academic research on the Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity a Case of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO). You are invited to participate in this research study by kindly filling in the given questionnaire. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this research study. You are assured of anonymity and the research findings will be used purely for academic purposes only.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Section A: Demographic Information

1) Gender :   Male   Female

                           | 1 | | 2 |

2) Age: 21-25 years old | 1 | 25-30 years old | 2 |

                  31-35 years old | 3 | 36-40 years old | 4 |

                  41 years old and above | 5 |

Section B: SERVQUAL Information

Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The appearance of tangibles. (1)Strongly Agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The physical facilities of ZUPCO are attractive					
2	Clean bus interiors and exteriors					
3	Proper shelter and benches are available at bus stops					
4	Drivers and conductors are well dressed					
5	The ticketing office is attractive					

3) Please tick in each feature that is close to your liking. Adherence to service schedule. (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The waiting time for the bus service is acceptable					
2	All scheduled trips are operational					
3	Vehicle breakdowns are minimized					
4	Bus always departs on time					
5	Bus always arrives at the destination on time					

4) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The ability to inspire trust and confidence. (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	ZUPCO has your best interest at heart					
2	Drivers and conductors are consistently polite.					
3	Drivers drive safely					
4	Comfortable bus seats					
5	Easy to understand and remember timetables					
6	Reasonable fears					

Section C: SERVQUAL on Brand Equity Information

5) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables will make you familiar or aware of ZUPCO. (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The attractiveness of physical facilities					
2	Clean bus interiors and exteriors					
3	Availability of proper shelters and benches at bus stops					
4	Appropriately dressed drivers and					

	conductors					
5	The ticketing office is attractive					

6) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables will influence your perception about ZUPCO. (1)Strongly Agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The waiting time for the bus service to be acceptable					
2	All scheduled trips to be operational					
3	Minimum vehicle breakdowns					
4	Bus always departs on time					
5	Bus always arrives at the destination on time					

7) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables will influence your level of loyalty towards ZUPCO. (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (2)Disagree, (1)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	ZUPCO has your best interest at heart					
2	Comfortable bus seats					
3	Drivers drive safely					
4	Easy to understand and remember timetables					
5	Drivers and conductors are consistently polite					
6	Reasonable fares					

Thank You!

Appendix D

Research Questionnaire For Employees

Dear Respondent

Good day! My name is Batsirai Joseph Toronga a fourth year student at Midlands State University studying towards a Bachelor of Commerce Marketing Management Honours Degree. I am carrying out an academic research on the Impact of Service Quality on Brand Equity a Case of Zimbabwe United Passengers Company (ZUPCO). You are invited to participate in this research study by kindly filling in the given questionnaire. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this research study. You are assured of anonymity and the research findings will be used purely for academic purposes only.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Section A: Demographic Information

1) Gender: Male   Female

                                 1   2

2) Age: 21-25 years old   1

                     26-30 years old   2

                     31-35 years old   3

                     36-40 years old   4

                     41 years old and above   5

3) For how long have you been employed?

                     Less than 5 years   1

                     5 – 10 years   2

                     More than 10 years   3

Section B: SERVQUAL Information

4) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The appearance of tangibles. (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The physical facilities of ZUPCO are attractive					
2	Clean bus exteriors and interiors					
3	Proper shelter and benches are available at bus stops					
4	Drivers and conductors are well dressed					
5	The ticketing offices are attractive					

5) Please tick in each feature that is close to your liking. Adherence to service schedule. (1)Strongly Agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly Disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The waiting time for the bus service is acceptable					
2	All scheduled trips are operational					
3	Vehicle breakdowns are minimized					
4	Bus always depart on time					
5	Bus always arrives at the destination on time					

6) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables relate to the ability inspire trust and confidence in travellers? (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (5)Disagree, (5)Strongly disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Having stakeholders best interest at heart					
2	Drivers who drive safely					
3	Comfortable bus seats					
4	Easy to understand and remember timetables					

5	Reasonable fares					
6	Politeness of drivers and conductors towards travellers.					

Section C: SERVQUAL on Brand Equity Information

7) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables are important in making customers familiar or aware of ZUPCO? (1)Strongly Agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Agree, (5)Strongly disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Attractiveness of physical facilities					
2	Clean bus interiors and exteriors					
3	Availability of proper shelters and benches at bus stops					
4	Appropriately dressed drivers and conductors					
5	The ticketing offices being attractive					

8) Please tick or mark each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables are important in creating favourable perceived quality towards ZUPCO. (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Acceptable waiting time for the bus service.					
2	All scheduled trips being operational					
3	Minimized vehicles breakdowns					
4	Bus always leaving on time					
5	Bus always arriving at the destination on time					

9) Please tick or mark in each feature that is close to your liking. The following variables are important in creating favourable loyalty towards ZUPCO? (1)Strongly agree, (2)Agree, (3)Undecided, (4)Disagree, (5)Strongly disagree.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Having stakeholders best interest at heart					
2	Drivers who drive safely					
3	Comfortable bus seats					
4	Easy to understand and remember timetables					
5	Reasonable fares					
6	Politeness of drivers and conductors towards travellers.					

Thank You!