

**UTILIZATION OF CLIENT SERVICE CHARTER: AN
EXPERIENCE FROM DODOMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL –
TANZANIA**

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ABSTRACT

Inconsistency of Clients Service Charter (CSC) effects and lack of literature on CSC influenced this study to be conducted by examining the utilization of CSC in Local Authorities (LAs) with particular reference to Dodoma Municipal Council. This study employed a case study design. A sample size of 118 clients was purposively selected. The sample comprised 60 internal customers' and 58 external customers.

The study concludes that there is poor utilization of CSC in DMC because since the establishment of the charter, it has not been made public. In addition there is no any effort taken by the DMC management to make it operational. The study found that despite CSC being not implemented, majority of the external customers were satisfied by the services provided by DMC. On the other hand, majority of the internal customers were not satisfactory by the services offered by DMC.

Keywords: client; service charter; client service charter; charter; internal clients; external clients

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1.0 Introduction

Client Service Charter (CSC) is an important tool for customers and organizations. It provides a means for customers to provide feedback and suggest improvements. It also helps them to complain if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of their interaction with the organization. It is important for organizations as it helps to maintain or improve quality of service through customer's suggestions or criticism (Scotter, 2010).

Broadly, CSC has two main purposes; to promote customer-oriented modes of operation where by customers rights are created; and to improve service provision by creating an internal pressure to meet service delivery targets (PO-PSM, 2004). CSC intends to support the peoples' demand for accountability at institutional level (Bana, 2009).

CSC as part of Performance Management System for Public Organizations has been gaining international acceptance over the past decade (Kijazi, 2004). It has been implemented in the Great Britain public service since 1991; Canada had its client charter in 2000 and Indonesia the client charter concept was introduced since 1995 and consented for all ministries and departments to have their own client charters in 1997 (ACCSM, 2007).

In Africa, charter of the Public Service was deliberated in 2001 (Simataa, 2004). CSC in Tanzania was initiated by President's Office-Public Service Management (PO-PSM) to promote customer-oriented operations and improve service provision. The CSC guided by the core principles of Public Service Delivery (Kirenga et al., 2009).

The installation of client service charters in Tanzania was designed for all ministries, departments, agencies and regional secretariats (Bana, 2009). Since then it is noted that only 40 or 30% LGAs have managed to introduce the client service charter (Hoseah, 2009). Some researchers shows that the charters have shown promising result (see PO-PSM, 2008 and Yambesi, 2008) while others outlined failures of CSC (see World Bank, 2008 cited in Bana 2009; PO-PSM, 2008; PO-PSM, 2009; and Kayombo, 2010).

This contradicting information about success of CSC implies that introducing new tools and systems for performance management is one thing but implementing them effectively and efficiently is a different thing (Bana, 2009). Apart from different arguments, inadequate empirical literature specifically on client service charter in Local Governments Authorities. Service delivery

surveys have been undertaken once or twice but have never been widely publicized and used as a basis for performance improvement and holding responsible officials accountable (Ulanga, 2008). Inconsistency of CSC effects and lack of literature on CSC influenced a study to be conducted by examining the utilization of CSC in local government authorities with particular reference to Dodoma Municipal Council (DMC).

2.0 Material and Methods

2.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in Dodoma Municipal Council in Dodoma region. Selection of the study area was based on the fact that it is government headquarters. The municipality has different customers who are from within the country and also from outside. In recent years population of the municipality has increased because of the establishment of several academic institutions such as the University of Dodoma, St. John University, Institute of Rural Development Planning, Local Government Training Institute, College of Business Education, Mineral College and Capital teachers college. Basic on these facts there was a need of knowing how the council satisfied customers as the municipal council is image of the country.

2.2 Research Design

This study employed a case study design. This study intended to assess the implementation of CSC in Dodoma Municipal Council. A case here was utilization of CSC in the municipal council, but the case could not be considered without the context, Dodoma Municipal Council. In that case the chosen research design suited this study.

2.3 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary methods were adopted during data collection. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaire and interviews. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from 118 council's employees (internal customers) and Dodoma residents (external customers). Data for external customers was collected from two wards: Hombolo and Majengo.

Hombolo (21) and Majengo (39) wards were involved in the study. Hombolo ward represented rural characteristics while Majengo represented urban characteristics. The sample size was purposively selected. The technique was preferred because it enabled the researcher to select respondents according to sex, age, working experience, location, availability and willingness of the respondents. About 58 internal customers were participated in the study. Interview method was used to collect information from human resource department of Dodoma Municipal Council.

Secondary data was collected through documentary review of DMC files, reports and minutes. The information helped the researcher to come up with a strong research concept and also to fill knowledge gaps.

2.4 Data Analysis

Before data analysis, questionnaires were edited by checking that the questionnaires were well filled. Thereafter, answers from open ended questions were coded ready for data entry. Data entry template was created using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data analysis approach that used was descriptive as no any statistical test was adopted. In order to measure implementation of CSC, five drivers were used: CSC committee, promotion of CSC, service recovery system, monitoring and evaluation and improvement.

To measure customer satisfaction, the study adopted core questions suggested by the government of South Australia. The approach is based on Common Measurement Tool (CMT) suggested by Canadian Institute for Citizen-Centred Service. The satisfaction measured was used based on five drivers: timeliness, outcome, knowledge, extra mile and fairness. In making sure instruments had face and content validity, certified instruments were adopted.

3.0 Results

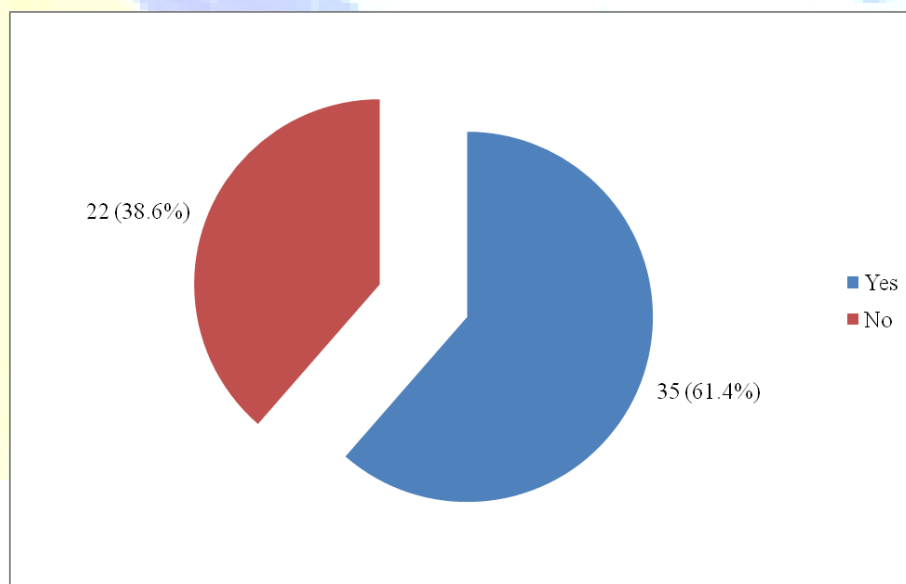
3.1 Client Service Charter implementation at DMC

In order to examine the presence and how CSC works in the municipality, the study collected information from the Municipal Human Resource Officer (MHRO) and other employees in different sections.

The study found that the CSC in the municipality was established in the year 2007. CSC was established to increase awareness, quality, and availability of services provided by DMC. The charter intended to give clients capabilities of understanding functions of DMC. Furthermore it intended to provide ways of communicating for any customer if she/he is not satisfied with quality of services provided. Ways of how customer's claims processed also outline by the charter. The charter also indicated that clients could have chance of getting their rights and claims if proved to be true.

The response from human resource office indicated that CSC, to some extent, was implemented when delivering municipal services since its establishment. Normally this is done by considering the outlined time frame of dealings with various requests. One of the services which CSC is considered was mentioned to be sewerage services. Response from other employees showed that, majority of them (61.4%) are aware with the presence of CSC while 38.6% were not aware (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Awareness of DMC employees about CSC



Source: Field data, 2011

A reason for 38.6% of employees not being aware with the CSC that established with this study

was that many of them were junior. They were having few years worked with DMC. Unfortunately they were not introduced to CSC and they could not able to access as the charter was not displayed to the clients. This implies that both internal and external clients fail to get information and content about CSC.

By the time the study was conducted no CSC committee had been formed. Explanation from MHRO revealed that no any CSC review was so far done by that time. Moreover, there was no continuous process of measuring CSC achievement. This result illustrate that the developed charter was not implemented. The developed charter was kept in shelve. The charter was not used in delivering the services. It seems that the charter was developed just to obey the order of PO-PSM that every ministry and agencies must have CSC.

3.2 Levels of Satisfaction of Clients

In order to find the levels of satisfaction of the clients in relation to the services offered, both internal and external clients were taken into account. This section is divided into two subsections: external; and internal satisfaction.

3.2.1 Levels of Satisfaction of External Clients

Table 1 present first three drivers that used to measure client's satisfaction in relation to external satisfaction: overall satisfaction, accessibility and timeliness. When asked to express how they were satisfied with the overall quality of service delivery by DMC, about 14 or 25% of the external client's respondents said that they were somewhat dissatisfied. About 31 or 55.4% were satisfied, 9 or 16.1% were very satisfied and 2 or 3.5% were completely satisfied. This response illustrate that about 75% of external clients were satisfied with the quality of the services offered by the council (see Table 1).

For the case of accessibility of services offered, the study found that majority of the clients were satisfied as only 14 or 25% were dissatisfied. That percent comprised 2 or 3.6% of clients who were very dissatisfied and 12 or 21.4% of who were somewhat dissatisfied. Time taken to get

services was satisfied by majority of the respondents because 25 or 44.6% were satisfied, 10 or 17.9% were very satisfied and 4 or 7.1% were completely satisfied.

Table 1: Clients satisfaction

Driver			Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Completely satisfied
Overall satisfaction	How satisfied were you with the overall quality of service delivery?	Response	-	14	31	9	2
		%	-	25	55.4	16.1	3.5
Accessibility	How satisfied were you with the accessibility of the service/product?	Response	2	12	27	13	2
		%	3.6	21.4	48.2	23.2	3.6
Timeliness	How satisfied were you with the amount of time it took to get the services?	Response	5	12	25	10	4
		%	8.9	21.4	44.6	17.9	7.1
Average		Response	4	13	28	11	3
		%	6.8	22	47.6	18.6	5.1

Source: Field data, 2011

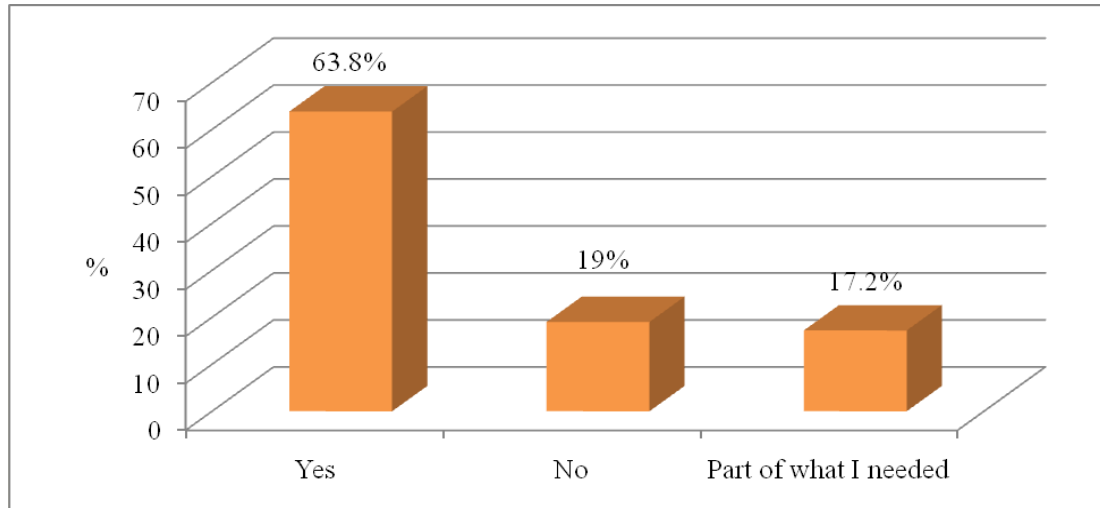
Other drivers used to measure satisfaction were fairness, information, knowledge/competence and extra mile/courtesy (see Table 2). The study found that 15 or 32.6% of the clients were not satisfied by the treatment given by DMC. The other respondents (54.4%) were agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that a client was fairly treated. The rest of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and were 6 or 13%. Like in fairness, majority of the clients were satisfied with information, knowledge/competence and extra mile drivers.

Table 2: Clients satisfaction fairness, information, knowledge/competence and extra mile/courtesy drivers

			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagreed nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Driver							
Fairness	I was treated fairly	Response	9	6	6	19	6
		%	19.6	13	13	41.4	13
Information	I was informed of everything I had to do to get the service/product	Response	-	8	22	19	7
		%	-	14.3	39.3	33.9	12.5
Knowledge/ Competence	Staff were knowledgeable and competent	Response	-	3	21	21	12
		%	-	5.3	36.8	36.8	21.1
Extra mile/ courtesy	Staff went the extra mile to make sure I got what I needed	Response	3	3	22	21	6
		%	5.5	5.5	40	38.2	10.9
Average		Response	6	5	18	20	8
		%	10.5	8.8	31.6	35.1	14

Source: Field data, 2011

After examining the satisfaction of external clients using the drivers presented in Tables 1 and 2 the study was interested to found out whether a client achieved what he/she needed. Figure 2 below illustrate that majority of the clients got what they needed as 37 or 63.8% responded to Yes answer. It was only 11 or 19% of the clients who said that they did not get what they needed from DMC while 10 or 17.2% said that they got partial service they wanted.

Figure 2: Did you get what you needed?

Source: Field data, 2011

3.2.2 Levels of Satisfaction of Internal Clients

In order to measure the level of commitment of employees to the DMC, the study collected information from internal clients who were employees of the Council about teamwork, organization communication, independency of employees in performing daily responsibilities; contribution; supervisory relationships and job and work attitudes. Services offered by DMC were determined by commitment and satisfaction of the employees. It was from this fact that the study found it very important to explore commitment and satisfaction of employees.

Teamwork

It is expected that there will be poor cooperation between workers if employees are not committed to any organization. Table 3 below present's working situation among the employees in the council. The result indicates that about 7 or 12.3% of employees strongly agreed that there was team work in all level in the department and with the DMC staffs. Response to the same question shows that about 33 or 57.9% agreed with the questions while only 10 or 17.5% which comprised 8 or 14% agreed and 2 or 3.5% strongly agreed. The result shows that 31 or 54.4% of all

employees either strongly agreed or agreed that there was teamwork among employees in the council.

Table 3: Teamwork

Question		Strongly agree	Agree	disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
All levels in my department or staff work together as a team	Response	7	33	7	8	2
	%	12.3	57.9	12.3	14	3.5
There is a teamwork spirit among those in my work group	Response	7	24	4	12	10
	%	12.3	42.1	7	21.1	17.5
Those in my work group are usually easy to approach with a work problem	Response	4	39	6	5	-
	%	7.4	72.2	11.1	9.3	-
The people I work with cooperate to get the job done	Response	4	32	14	3	-
	%	7.5	60.4	26.4	5.7	-
Around here, work groups or departments seem to work against each other	Response	2	19	19	14	3
	%	3.5	33.3	33.3	24.6	5.3
In my area, work groups or departments who depend on each other plan their work together	Response	2	23	15	17	-
	%	3.5	40.4	26.3	29.8	-
In my area, my work performance suffers from lack of teamwork between departments or other work groups	Response	10	8	8	6	10
	%	17.5	40.4	14	10.5	17.5
Average	Response	5	25	10	9	6
	%	9.1	45.5	18.2	16.4	10.8

Source: Field data, 2011

Responses from the council employees indicate that there was satisfactory cooperation among employees as majority (45.5%) said that there was teamwork in the municipality. This is an indication that employees committed to the organization function. Attitude to employees themselves is good.

Communication

Communication is another factor which determines employee commitment. It intended to explore information about communication of employees with higher authorities, access of information in the council and free and flow of information in the municipality. Table 4 below presents different responses from employees.

Table 4: Communications

		Strongly agree	Agree	disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There is a free and open flow of work information down to me from higher levels	Response	10	25	5	12	5
	%	17.5	43.9	8.8	21.1	8.8
There is a free and open flow of work information upward from me from to higher levels	Response	9	21	23	2	2
	%	15.8	36.8	40.4	3.5	3.5
Those in my work group get enough chances to tell higher-ups how we feel about things affecting our work	Response	4	26	7	15	5
	%	7	45.6	12.3	26.3	8.8
Around here, there is a free and open flow of information between the different work groups or departments	Response	-	28	13	9	7
	%	-	49.1	22.8	15.8	12.3
I am told enough to help me see why things are done the way they are here	Response	4	32	17	2	2
	%	7	56.1	29.8	3.5	3.5

The information I get arrives in time to help me	Response	6	12	18	19	2
	%	10.5	21.1	31.6	33.3	3.5
I have enough information to do my job well	Response	2	29	10	12	2
	%	3.6	52.7	18.2	21.8	3.6
The information I get from management is true	Response	6	16	26	5	2
	%	10.9	29.1	47.3	9.1	3.6
Higher-ups in this place seriously listen to what people at my level have to say	Response	2	22	4	25	2
	%	3.6	40	7.3	45.5	3.6
Around here, we are not afraid to say what we really think	Response	2	27	14	8	6
	%	3.5	47.4	24.6	14	10.5
Sufficient efforts is made by higher management to get the opinions of those who work here	Response	2	22	13	18	2
	%	3.5	38.6	22.8	31.6	3.5
I always know what I must accomplish on my job	Response	11	39	5	2	-
	%	19.3	68.4	8.8	3.5	-
Average	Response	5	26	14	12	3
	%	8.8	43.8	22.8	19.3	5.3

Source: Field data, 2011

Majority of employees 25 or 43.9% agreed that there was free and open flow of work information down to employees from higher levels. About 10 or 17.5% were strongly agreed to the question. About 17 or 29.9% employees responded against the question as 12 or 21.1% disagreed while 5 or 8.8% strongly agreed.

The freeness and openness of flow of information from either low to higher levels or higher to low levels found to be not in time because only 6 or 10.5% strongly agreed and 12 or 21.1%

agreed. The percent of employee who disagreed was 19 or 33.3% while 2 or 3.5% strongly disagreed to the question. This result indicates that there is a need of improving time taken for the information to reach the intended person. The good thing although not so convincing is that the information flow are true as about 22 or 40% of employees responded said that the information they got from management was true. This indicates that not only low levels of employees are committed to the organization but also high levels. True and accurate information helps much to the organization to meet the objectives.

Independency

Table 5 below presents responses about independency of employees in their daily activities in the municipality. The results shows that about 12 or 21.1% of respondents strongly agreed while 26 or 45.6% agreed with the statement asking whether employees are able to change the structure and control of their own work.

Table 5: Employee Independency

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am able to change the structure and control of my own work	Response	12	26	13	6	-
	%	21.1	45.6	22.8	10.5	-
I have sufficient say in setting my work goals	Response	11	22	8	9	5
	%	20	40	14.5	16.4	9.1
I would do my job better if I had more	Response	12	32	4	7	2

freedom to act on my own	%	21.1	56.1	7	12.3	3.5
		12	27	8	7	2
Average	%	21.4	48.2	14.3	12.5	3.6

Source: Field data, 2011

In setting own work goals majority of respondents 33 or 60% said that they had sufficient say in setting the goals as only 14 or 25.5% disagreed. Despite the results indicates that employees had independency in their work, majority of them (77.2%) responded that they could do better in their job position if they had more freedom to act in their own.

Contribution

Apart from other reasons, employees would be committed if they feel that they utilize the skills they have which develops their carrier. This not only increase commitment but also influence quality of services offered and hence improve organization performance. It is from this fact that the study explored information from employees about their professional contribution to the municipality. In responding to the question asked whether jobs make good use of skills and abilities, about 15 or 26.3% respondents strongly agreed with the question as 12 or 21.1% agreed. This implies that 27 or 47.4% agreed that their job position related to their professions (see Table 6).

Table 6: Contribution

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

My job makes good use of my skills and abilities	Response	15	12	15	13	2
	%	26.3	21.1	26.3	22.8	3.5
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment	Response	6	24	16	11	-
	%	10.5	42.1	28.1	19.3	-
On my job, I have a chance to do some things that really test my ability	Response	4	26	14	11	-
	%	7.3	47.3	25.5	20	-
I am less productive than I used to be	Response	9	6	19	19	4
	%	15.8	10.5	13.3	33.3	7
My work group is very productive	Response	2	37	12	6	-
	%	2	37	12	6	-
My work group puts all of their efforts into their job	Response	-	34	14	7	2
	%	-	59.6	24.6	12.3	3.5
Average	Response	7	23	15	11	3
	%	11.9	39	25.4	18.6	5.1

Source: Field data, 2011

Majority of employees (52.6%) illustrated that the job they had gave them feeling of personal accomplishment. About 23 or 40.3% of the employees responded by disagreed that they are less productive than they used to be. This result indicates that majority of DMC employees were happy with their current job positions and thus their commitment was somewhat high.

Supervisory Relationships

The study also interested to explore information about supervisory relationship with the intention of finding out to what extent do employees have courage of reporting themselves for any wrong doing and the existing relationship them. About 7 or 12.3% of employees strongly responded that they can honestly tell the boss what they really think while 35 or 61.4% agreed. It was only about

6 or 10.5% said that they could not tell their boss honestly what they really think. This shows good indication of commitment because many employees are able to say the truth regardless whether the boss would be happy or not. Table 7 presents supervisor relationship in DCM.

Among the reasons which encourage the employee to say the truth might be good response they get from their bosses. The study found that 27 or 47.4% of employees said that their bosses accept constructive criticism raised by them. This did not only encourage employees to express their views which they believe benefited the municipality but also considered that they were valued which increased their commitment and improved municipality performance. High performance was experienced to be low in the municipality as only 16 or 28.1% agreed with the statement that boss maintained high standards of performance while 20 or 35.1% disagreed and 4 or 7% were strongly disagreed.

Table 7: Supervisory Relationship

		Strongly agree	Agree	disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I can honestly tell my boss what I really think	Response	7	35	9	2	4
	%	12.3	61.4	15.8	3.5	7
My boss accepts constructive criticism from his/her subordinates	Response	-	27	18	4	8
	%	-	47.4	31.6	7	14
When I make a serious mistake, I am not reluctant to go to my boss for help	Response	2	30	10	13	2
	%	2	52.6	17.5	22.8	3.5
My boss deals fairly with	Response	3	21	15	14	4

everyone	%	5.3	36.8	26.3	24.6	7
My boss stands up for his/her subordinates	Response	-	31	16	6	4
	%	-	54.4	28.1	10.5	7
My supervisor does a good job of building teamwork in his/her group	Response	13	24	6	14	-
	%	22.8	42.1	10.5	24.6	-
My boss maintains high standards of performance	Response	22.8	16	17	20	4
	%	-	28.1	29.8	35.1	7
Average	Response	6	26	13	10	4
	%	10.2	44.1	22	16.9	6.8

Source: Field data, 2011

Job and Work Attitudes

From Table 8 below, when asked how employees were satisfied by their job, about 16 or 28.1% agreed that they were satisfied. This response is low compared to those who did not agree (45.6%) while the employees who neither disagreed nor agreed were 15 or 26.3%. The DMC employees responded that they were not satisfied with the information they received from management on what's going on in the municipality because only 7 or 12.3% were agreed. About satisfaction with the way management operates, 16 or 28.1% agreed.

It is their poor satisfaction in the municipal Council which makes majority of employees (61.4%) said that they would not recommend the Council to their friends. About 23 or 40.4% of respondents were able to defend the Council when they heard someone criticize it. Actually the results indicate that the DMC employees were not committed to the Council.

Table 8: Job and Work Attitudes

		Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	Response	16	15	21	5
	%	28.1	26.3	37	8.8
How satisfied are you with the information you received from management on what's going on in the company	Response	7	18	7	7
	%	12.3	31.6	44	12.3
Overall, rate your satisfaction with the way your management operates	Response	16	22	15	4
	%	28.1	38.6	26	7
Considering everything, how would you rate your satisfaction with your department/unit?	Response	14	27	16	-
	%	24.6	47.4	28	-
Considering everything, how would you rate your current satisfaction in your work locations?	Response	17	27	11	2
	%	29.8	47.4	19	3.5
As a place to work, things around the location seem to be getting better	Response	23	16	16	2
	%	40.4	28.1	28	3.5
I recommend the municipal to my friends	Response	8	14	33	2
	%	14	24.6	58	3.5
I would recommend the municipal as a good place to work	Response	18	15	17	7
	%	31.6	26.3	30	12.3
I defend the municipal when I hear someone criticizing it	Response	23	25	7	2
	%	40.4	43.9	12	3.5

Average	Response	16	20	16	4
	%	28.6	35.7	28.6	7.1

Source: Field data, 2011

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that there is poor utilization of CSC in DMC because since the establishment of the charter, it has not been made public. In addition there is no any effort taken by the DMC management to make it operational. The study found that despite CSC being not implemented, majority of the external customers were satisfied by the services provided by DMC. On the other hand, majority of the internal customers were not satisfactory by the services offered by DMC.

Since CSC is not well known to customers of what it contains, there is a need of DMC to form CSC committee which will engineer its implementation including increasing awareness and make it public. Both clients and employees need to be well exposed or trained on the charter. It is through this where the objectives of adopting CSC can be met. In order to increase level of satisfaction of internal clients, it is recommended that DMC management should improve work environment to its employees though providing incentives, improve staff training, implement open door policy to allow employees air their views, etc.

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