

# Customer Management and Organizational Performance of Banking Sector: A Case Study of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Haramaya Branch and Harar Branches

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## Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate customer management and organizational performance of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Haramaya and Harar branches. A total of 53 questionnaires were administered to bank employees, out of which 45 completed in questionnaires were received back and then the data is analyzed with aid of SPSS 20 version. The hypothesis test confirms that there is a positive relationship between customer management and organizational performance. The finding indicates customer management practices can significantly lead to improvement of organizational performance in respect of customer attraction, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. The findings also point to some measures which can be taken to enhance organizational performance of the banks. The study also contributes to banking sector literature by indicating the key role of customer management. Moreover, it also contributes to close the gap of empirical research in the field, which exists particularly due to the diverse nature of the banking sector in Ethiopia.

**Keywords:** Customer Management, Organizational Performance, Customer Attraction, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Retention.

## 1. Introduction

The Commercial Bank of Ethiopia was established in its present form by a merger of one the nationalized private banks (Addis Bank) with that of the publicly owned commercial bank by proclamation No.184(1980). Since 1992 Ethiopia has been gradually liberalizing its financial sector. One of the main targets of financial institutions is mobilizing resources specifically domestic savings and channeling investment (Alemayehu, 2006). Financial institutions act as the most important engine of economic growth for several economies in the world. In Ethiopia the major financial institutions operating are banks, insurance companies and micro-finance institutions. The market structure for commercial banks in the economy is highly concentrated especially, in the area of total assets and deposits (Ebisa, 2012). Commercial banks should not only focus on quantitative analysis and safety but also on effective qualitative analysis about bank risk control, internal management and customer service levels when it does performance assessments. With the ever improving information technology, commercial banks will inevitably change in service model, in order to adapt to the trend of social development. Of course, that will depend on improvement of financial security technologies, so that banks can continue to innovate financial products, and enhance core competitiveness (Zhang & Li, 2009). However, today Commercial Bank of Ethiopia are facing stiff competition from Zemen Bank and Dashen Bank of Private banks in utilizing modern technologies and they have to make efforts to survive in a competitive market and uncertain market place to continue generating profits. Banks increasingly realize that managing customer is a very important factor for their success in increasing organizational performance in respect of customer attraction, customer satisfaction and customer retention. Customer management is a strategy that can help them build strong relationships with their customers and increase their profits through the right management system and the application of customer-focused profit generating institutions. The organizational efficiency of banking sector has been one of the major issues in the financial turmoil and dynamic financial environment of the world. Thus, the evolution of customer management is found in relationship marketing theory which is intended at improving long term customer relationship by changing from transaction based marketing, with its emphasis on attracting new customers, to customer retention through effective management of customer relationships to cope up with unstable financial crisis Christopher *et al.*, (1991). Reich and Sasser (1990) stated that, those customers who have been around long enough to get familiar with the company's rules, regulations, ethics and principles, will make more valuable business partnership, will acquire more business profits and will be less price sensitive on individual offers. Mainly organizational performance focuses as attracting, maintaining and improving customer management. The implementation of customer management as a tool of competitive strategy is on the rise in different financial institutions across the world. Yet there is no doubt that an effective and efficient practice of customer management is important to the successes of financial institutions such as banks. According to Parvatiyar and Sheth,(2002) argued that, most of the firms implementing customer management are highly benefit of it, because there are no laid down guidelines and procedures on adoption, implementation and practices. However,

most banking systems experience some degree of inefficiency in the utilization of their resources and, especially with regard to managing the quality of service to service-seekers and service provider client partnership. Previous studies have been concluded that: the service is very complex and customized in the transaction process, the external environment is sensitive to change rather than stable, and the marketing is uncertain when sellers are not sure what the service seekers want. Banks operating in Ethiopia are consequently put into a lot of pressure due to the increasing modern banking technology competition from Private Banks. In Ethiopia banking sector, customers perceive very little difference in banking products offered by banks dealing in services as any new offering is quickly matched by competitors. There is customer's dissatisfaction over the service offered and the available services don't match the expectation of the customer (Mesay, 2012).

Currently Commercial Bank of Ethiopia face challenges due to the introduction and expansion of the use of technological interfaces such as automated teller machines. Even though, automated machine were introduced in Ethiopia for the first time by Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Dashen Bank and Zemen Bank have the highest number of visa card users, the distribution of the automated machine usage is not implemented in all branches and Commercial Bank of Ethiopia unable to manage system failures. This show; in the case of commercial Bank of Ethiopia, the use of latest technology has not much helped much to improve customer satisfaction. There are customers who still seek staff contact or personalized banking. (Singh ,2004) noted that banks need to know who they are providing service, what their needs and problems are, and what their financial priorities are. It is important for banks to focus management of customers, because it is more profitable to retain a customer than to obtain a new customer (Payne & Frow, 2005).

Not many studies have been done on customer management and organizational performance of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. Banks increasingly find it difficult to handle customer management and organizational performance. Thus, there is stiff competition among banks in attracting the customers of one another and Ethiopian banks are introducing innovative banking technologies to satisfy customer interests. However, problems remain in areas of customer handling, service quality. This study aims to investigate the issues identified above in relation to customer management and organizational performance of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Haramaya and Harar branches.

### **1.1. Objective of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to assess customer management and organizational performance of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Haramaya and Harar branches.

### **1.2. Hypothesis Testing**

The aim of this investigation is to study customer management practices and its effects on organizational performance, the result will display by the following Hypothesis:

### **1.3. The Main Hypotheses**

There is a significant relationship between the degree of utilizing customer management concept, and increasing the level of an organizational performance indicator. This leads to the following three hypotheses:

H1: There is a significant relationship between customer focus and organizational performance.

H2: There is a significant relationship between organizational efficiency and organizational performance.

H3: There is a significant relationship between customer management and organizational performance.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Customer Management**

The main difference among some of these definitions is technological and relationship aspects. Some authors from marketing background emphasize the marketing side while others consider information technology perspectives. Peppers & Rogers (1995) observe that "The market place of the future is undergoing a technology-driven metamorphosis". Buttle (2009) state that customer management is: "The core business strategy that link internal processes and functions, and external networks, to create and deliver value to targeted customers at a profit. It is grounded on high quality customer related data and enabled by information technology and it is a management approach to understanding and influencing customer behavior by managing relationships through meaningful communication to improve customer turnover". In this study, customer management is defined as an inter linkage of organizational efficiency, customer knowledge management and technology-based customer management in order to implement a successful way for increasing organizational performance.

The essence of customer management ideas originated from three concepts in marketing management: Customer Orientation, Relationship Marketing, and Database Marketing. With the advancement of information communication technology, these three marketing views have come together in the paradigm of customer management (Langerak & Peter, 2004). More recently, (Yim, Anderson & Swaminathan, 2005) identified three marketing concepts: Customer orientation, relationship marketing and database marketing for the evolution of the idea of customer management. At different levels of management, it may be used to express different

perspectives. For instance, at the middle level of management it may be equated to data-base marketing or electronic marketing; at the strategic level, may be interpreted as customer retention or partnering with customers (Peppers & Rogers, 1995). At the theoretical level, it may be seen as an emerging research paradigm in management most often loosely equated to existing perspectives. Besides theoretical level, there are four key areas necessary for successful customer relationship management implementations such as: strategy, people, processes, and technology considered as precondition for the effectiveness of implementing it (ibid).

Thus on the analyses of the customer management literature, customer management implementations usually involve activities specifically: focusing on main customers (Srivastava, Shervani, & Fahey, 1999); (Vandermerwe, 2004), organizing around customer management Homburg *et al.*, (2000); managing knowledge Stefanou *et al.*, (2003), and incorporating customer management-based technology (Bhaskar, 2004). Thus on the concepts of customer management noted in the conceptual framework, the study tried to examine activities related to customer management and organizational performance of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Haramaya and Harar branches. Managing customer is a very important issue for banks. It has gained more attention recently due to high competitive arise between domestic Private Banks and Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. Specifically when the popularity of Balanced Score Card calls for mechanism to cascade and to enforce corporate strategy down through the organization and to ensure that strategy plan is actually implemented, organizational performance is one of the practices that assist organization to link organizational goals to individual goals through customer management. Thus, managing customer interests and serving the interest of customers helps banks to maintain the existing customers as truly representatives of the bank. However, the challenging part for the bank is attracting new customers being innovative and maintaining reputability in the eyes of customers in this turbulent financial environment of banking sector.

## 2.2. Conceptual Framework of Customer Management

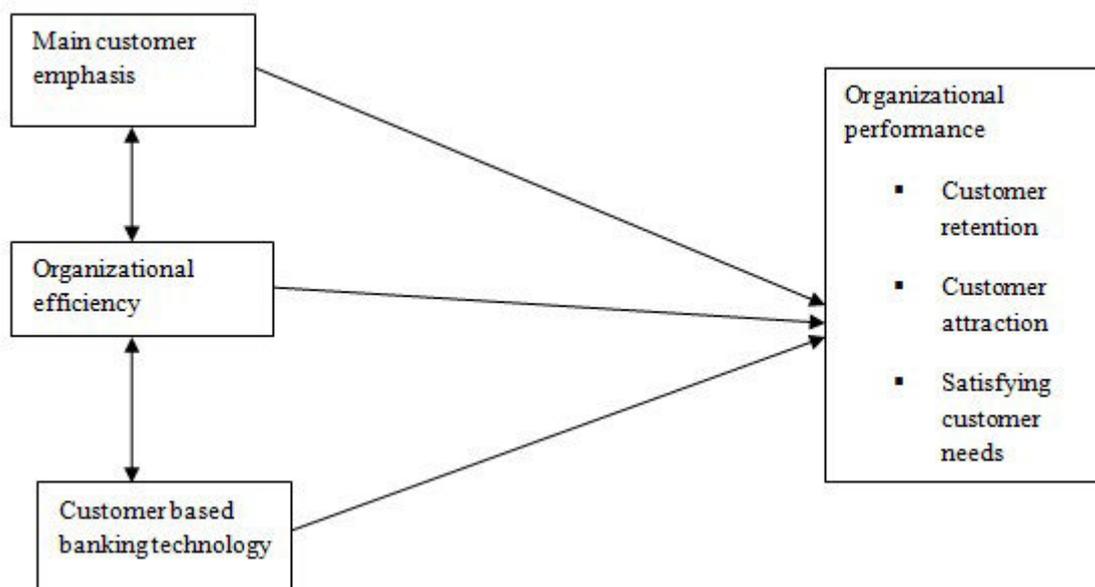


Figure 2.1: conceptual framework

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Sampling design, Methods of data collection, Data sources, and Methods of data analysis

In selecting the research subjects, stratified random sampling was used. Under stratified sampling the population of the study was divided into two: Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Haramay Branch and Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Harar which consists of three branches. The selection of the sample was limited to employees of the banks. Because of, the objective of the study was only assessing customer management and organizational performance from employee's perspective.

### 3.2. Data gathering instruments

The primary data was collected by using a questionnaire which was developed for this study. The questionnaire was developed and put through a pilot test before distributing to respondents of the banks. The pilot test helped to validate content and their sequence and test the accuracy of data gathering instrument. The questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part of the questionnaire was designed to identify the demographic characteristics

of respondents such as: gender, age, working experience, educational qualification, specialization and position held. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of questions on customer management and organizational performance in which the respondents were asked to indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with various statements on a five point likert type scaling range from Strongly agree(5), Agree(4), Neutral(3), Disagree(2) and Strongly disagree(1). The secondary data was gathered from different sources such as reviewing published journal articles, magazines, books and annual reports of the bank.

### 3.3. Study population and analysis unit

A total of 53 questionnaires were distributed to four branches of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia which are in Haramaya and Harar. The questionnaires are distributed by hand and once completed, they were collected. Of the 53 questionnaires that were distributed, 45 questionnaires completed and returned. The researcher uses a statistical packaging SPSS 20 for doing statistical analyses. The units of study were branch Managers, Accountants and Customer officers in the banks.

## 4. Results and Discussions

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents (n =45)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	28	62.2
Female	17	37.8
Age:		
18-25	17	36.2
26-30	9	19.1
31-36	9	19.1
37-42	4	8.5
43-48	5	10.6
49-54	1	2.2
Working experience(years)		
Less than one year	1	2.2
1-4	20	42.6
5-8	9	19.1
9-12	7	14.9
13-16	6	12.8
17-20	1	2.2
Greater than 20 years	1	2.2
Educational level:		
College Diploma	6	12.8
BA/BSc	39	83
Working Positions:		
Controllers	2	4.3
Tellers	3	6.4
Customer service officers	39	83
Managers	2	4.3

As indicated in Table 1 of the above, it describes the demographic characteristics of respondents in terms of gender, age, working experience, educational level, and working positions. The data in Table1 depicted that, the majority of respondents 28(62.2%) were male and 17(37.8%) were female and this shows that there is unbalanced gender in the study area. The data in table 1 show that respondents who are in the category of 18-25 years old represents the highest percentages among respondents with 17(36.2%) and this results were occurred due to the minimum age of work in the country is 18 years of old and this indicates in the selected branches is a young population is very high. whereas 26-30 years old percentage were 9(19.1%),from 31-36 years old were 9(19.1%),from 37-42 years old 4(8.5%),from 43-48 years old 5(10.6%),only 49-54 years old were 1(2.2%). The data in Table1 shows that in the bank,1(2.2%) were among less than one working experience,5-8 years were 9(19.1%),9-12 years were 7(14.9%),13-16 years 6(12.8%), 17-20 years 1(2.2%),greater than twenty years were 1(2.2) and this shows the majority of respondents were between 5-8 years of working experience. The data in Table 1 shows that the highest percentage 39(83%) were holders of bachelor's degree while the remaining 6(12.8%) attained College diploma.

Finally 2(4.3%) of the respondents were controllers, 3(6.4%) of respondents were tellers, 39(83%) of respondents were customer service officers and 2(4.3%) of the respondents were branch managers. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were customer service officers since the study focus on customer management and its effects on organizational performance.

#### 4.2.1. Customer management and focusing on main customers

Table 4.2.1: Summary of key customers focus

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Providing services based on modern technology	0(0.0%)	4(8.9%)	5(11.1%)	16(35.6%)	20(44.4%)
Working with key customers to customize offerings	0(0.0%)	8(17.8%)	8(17.8%)	17(37.8%)	12(26.7%)
Treating customers based on their service interest	1(2.2%)	4(8.9%)	8(17.8%)	20(44.4%)	12(26.7%)

Table 4.2.1 denotes that, with respect to providing services based on modern technology given to key customers of the bank, nearly 8.9% of the respondents(employee) are disagree about modern technology of the bank to provide services to the customers in their bank and 11.1% of them are neutral. On the contrary, 80% of the respondents (employee) agree that the bank providing services based on advanced banking technology. On the other hand, 17.8% of the respondents are disagree,17.8% of the respondents are neutral and the remaining 64.5% of the respondents are agree about working with key customers to customize offerings. In addition to this,11.1% of the respondents are disagree regarding to treatment of customers based on their interest whereas 17.8% of the respondents are neutral and the remaining 71.1% of the respondents are agree about treatment of customers in their bank based on their interest. From this one can infer that, the bank providing services to the customer based on modern technology, customize offerings and treating customers based on their interest with some variation in utilizing effectively.

#### 4.2.2. Organizing service around customers

Table 4.2.2: Summary of organizational efficiency

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Clear performance measurement policy related to customer acquisition	3(6.7%)	11(24.4%)	5(11.1%)	17(37.8%)	9(20%)
Commits time and resource to manage customer interest	2(4.4%)	9(20%)	12(26.7%)	14(31.1%)	8(17.8%)
Employee reward based on meeting customer needs	2(4.4%)	15(33.3%)	10(22.2%)	10(22.2%)	8(17.8%)
Training program designed to deepening customer management	2(4.4%)	15(33.3%)	10(22.2%)	11(24.4%)	7(14.9%)
The bank structure is primarily designed based on customers need	1(2.2%)	10(22.2%)	8(17.0%)	15(33.3%)	11(24.4%)

The above Table 4.2.2 depicts, regarding the organizational efficiency dimensions 31.1% of respondents are disagree regarding performance measurements policy related to customer acquisition. Conversely 57.8% of the respondents are agreed about the bank has clear performance measurement policy related customer attracting and retaining. On the other hand 24.4% of the respondents agree the regarding the commitment of bank towards time and resource to manage customer needs. On the contrary, virtually 26.7% of the respondents are neutral (38.9% are agree and strongly agree) about customer issue and resource management to deploy for customer services. Whereas,37.7% of the respondents are disagree that employee reward based on meeting customer needs,22.2% of the respondents are preferred to be neutral on the issue of employee reward and 40% are agree. Regarding training program designed to deepening customer management, 37.7% and 22.2% of the total 45 respondents are disagree and neutral respectively. In contrast, 39.3% of the respondents are agree about training program designed to deepening customer management. On the other hand, 24.4% of the respondents are disagree about the bank structure is primarily designed based on customers need. On the contrary, 17.0% of the respondents are neutral (57.7% of the respondents are agree) about the structure of the bank whether it's primarily designed upon customer need and interests.

### 4.2.3. Customer management based on technology

Table 4.2.3: Summary of incorporating technology based customer management

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Maintains online database of customers	3(6.7%)	8(17.8%)	10(22.2%)	12(26.7%)	12(26.7%)
Hardware facilities to serve the customers	1(2.2%)	6(13.3%)	11(24.4%)	15(33.3%)	12(26.7%)
Software facilities to serve the customers	1(2.2%)	8(17.8%)	10(22.2%)	18(40.0%)	8(17.8%)
Technical personnel support	2(4.4%)	6(13.3%)	10(22.2%)	16(35.6%)	11(24.4%)
Individual customer information availability	1(2.2%)	10(22.2%)	8(17.85)	17(37.8%)	9(20%)
Maximizing organizational performance	0(0.0%)	11(24.4%)	6(13.3%)	22(48.9%)	6(13.3%)

Table 4.2.3 denotes, that with respect to comprehensive online database of customers, nearly 24.5% of the respondents are disagree (22.2% of the respondents are neutral, 53.4% of the respondents are agree) about supporting customer service through online database technology. On the other hand, 15.5% of the respondents disagree on the availability of hardware facilities to serve customers. On the Contrary, 24.4% of the respondents are neutral and 60% of the respondents agree about the availability of the hardware facilities. In addition to this, 20% of the respondents disagree about the modern facilities of software technology to serve the customers while 22.2% of the respondents are neutral. Conversely, 57.8% of the respondents agree that the bank has software facilities to serve his customer. 17.7% of the respondents are disagree about technical personnel support of technology utilization in the bank such as new version of banking softwares, 22.2% of the respondents are neutral and the remaining 60% of the respondents agree that there is technical personnel support. The respondents were also asked about individual customer information availability of the bank and the replied 24.4% disagree, 17.85% neutral, and the rest 57.8% of the respondents are agree regarding individual customer information availability. Whereas 24.4% of the respondents disagree about the bank has effectively maximizing its organizational performance to manage his customer. On the contrary to this, 13.3% neutral, and 62% of the respondents agree regarding effectively maximizing organizational performance in retaining and attracting customers.

## 5. Results and Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant relationship between main customer focus and organizational performance.

### Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.365 <sup>a</sup>	.133	.113	.955

a. Predictors: (Constant), Working with key customers

b. Dependent variable: Organizational performance

Correlation coefficient between working with key customers and organizational performance is = 36.5% which indicates that there is a strong relationship (direct effects) between the two variables. R Square (coefficient of determination = 13.3%) which means that 36.5% of the variability in the customer management is due to offering customized services to key customers and the rest 95.55 to other factors, F = 6.594 at a significance level = 0.014 which indicates that there is a significant relationship between working with key customers through dialogue and overall organizational performance of the bank.

### ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	6.015	1	6.015	6.594	.014 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	39.229	43	.912		
Total	45.244	44			

a. Predictors: (Constant), working with key customers

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance

The value of t = 2.568 at 0.014 significance level which means that working with key customers is an important variable to determine the organizational performance of the bank with respect customer management.

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std.Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.200	.530		4.152	.000
Working with key customers	.351	.137	.365	2.568	.014

a. dependent Variable: Organizational performance

The regression coefficient is = .365 and the significance level is 0.014 (P<0.05). Therefore null hypothesis can be rejected. So working with key customers through dialogue has direct effect on organizational performance of the bank.

H2: There is a significant relationship between organizational efficiency and organizational performance.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std.Error of the Estimate
1	.333 <sup>a</sup>	.111	.090	.967

a. Predictors : (constant),bank structure design is based on customers interest

b. Dependent Variable :Organizational performance

Correlation coefficient between bank design structure and organizational performance is = 33.3% which indicates that there is strong relationship between the two variables. R Square (coefficient of determination) is =11.1% which means that 11.1% of the variability in the bank design structure and organizational performance while the rest 96.7% to other factors. F = 5.364 at sig = 0.025 significance level which means designing the bank structure on the basis of customer interest is an important variable to determine the organizational performance of the bank.

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5.018	1	5.018	5.364	.025 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	40.227	43	.936		
Total	45.244	44			

a. Predictors:( constant),bank design structure

b. Dependent variable : Organizational performance

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std.Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.475	.470		5.267	.000
Bank structure	.291	.126	.333	2.316	.025

a. Dependent Variable : Organizational performance

The regression coefficients is 0.333 and the significance level is 0.025(P<0.05). Therefore, null hypothesis can be rejected. So design of bank structure on the basis of customer interest has direct effect on organizational performance of the bank.

H3: there is a significant relationship between technology based customer management and organizational performance.

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std.Error of the Estimate
1	.482 <sup>a</sup>	.232	.214	.899

a. Predictors : ( constant),Software facilities to serve customers

b. Dependent Variable : Organizational performance

The correlation coefficient between availability of software facilities and organizational performance is = 48.2% which indicates that there is a strong relationship (direct effect) between the two variables. R Square (coefficient of determination) is 23.2% which means that 48.2% of the variability in software facilities and the rest 89.9% to other factors, F = 13.002 at sig = 0.001 which indicates that there is a significant relationship between utilizing bank technology and organizational performance. The value t = 3.606 at 0.001 significance level which means

availability of modern banking software is an important variable to determine organizational performance and it should be included in the model.

**ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	10.504	1	10.504	13.002	.001 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	34.740	43	.808		
Total	45.244	44			

- a. Predictors: ( constant),availability of bank software facilities
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std.Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.879	.472		3.978	.000
Banking software	.462	.128	.482	3.606	.001

- a. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance  
 The regression coefficient is = .482 and the significance level is 0.001 (P<0.05). Therefore null hypothesis can be rejected. Thus modern banking software technology has direct effect on an organizational performance.

**Results and discussion**

The hypothesis test confirms that there is a significant and positive correlation between focusing on main customers and organizational performance, organizational efficiency and organizational performance, and utilizing technology and organizational performance of banking sector in Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Haramaya and Harar branches. The positive relationship indicates that attempt of customer management and organizational performance practices can significantly lead to improvement of organizational performance in respect of customer attraction, customer satisfaction, and customer retention. According to t-test, utilizing technology based customer management shows the highest positive correlation with organizational performance. Organizational efficiency shows the least positive correlation with organization performance in Ethiopia Commercial Bank of Ethiopia for the selected branches.

**Limitation and future research**

The main objective of this study is investigating customer management practices on organizational performance of Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Haramaya and Harar branches. Despite of these encouraged result, this study still have some limitation, the most obvious limitation of the study is limited by cost and time and that reflect on response rate. Many recommendations could be made for future research relating to customer management and organizational performance incorporating response from customer side. A comparative study can be carried government owned banks with private banks. In addition to same research can be applied include large sample from different branches of the bank in different region of a country and organization size to research more generalzability, and the completeness of this study.

**Implication**

The primary purpose of this research was to assess the impact of customer management and organizational performance in respect customer attraction, customer satisfaction and customer retention in selected bank of Commercial bank of Ethiopia. The results of the study show that all thirteen customer management variables are positively correlated with banking sector organizational performance. This indicates that all the thirteen variables important for organizational performance. Comparing all variables one can see that the major variables contribute maximum toward organizational performance of bank. It's fair to conclude that customer management is very crucial concepts for banks since their profit is generated from service rendering to customers and this do lead to organizational performance.

**Acknowledgment**

The author gratefully acknowledges Professor Pereira from College of Business and Economics Haramaya University for his constructive guidance and valuable comments in all aspects of the work.

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