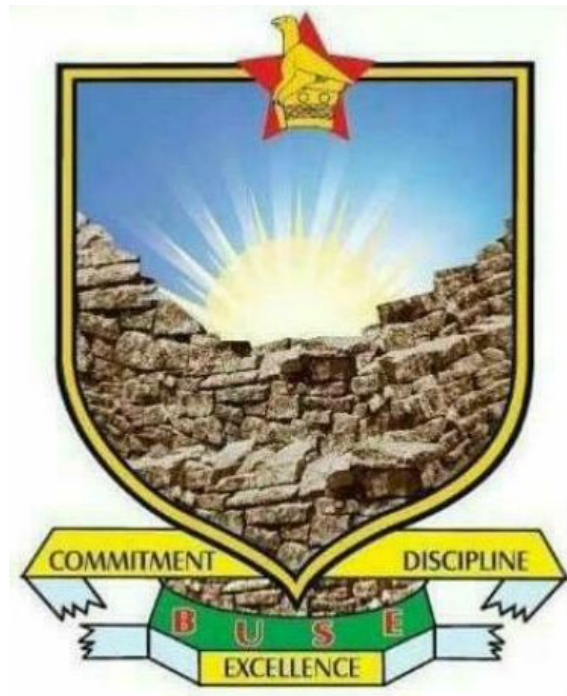


## **BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**



### **FACULTY OF COMMERCE**

**An investigation on high customer complaints. A case study of James North Zimbabwe (Pvt) Ltd**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Bachelors of Commerce Degree in Accounting


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SUBMISSION DATE :07/06/2024


## DECLARATION

***Student's Declaration*** - I, MITCHELL R RUOKO, do hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgements, references, and by comments included in the body of the report, and that this dissertation is therefore my original work and has not been presented in part or in full for any other degree in any other University.

  
Signature .....Date ...16/10/24.....Student Number: B200604B

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***Supervisor's Declaration*** – I, Mr Masinire, confirm that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out by the candidate under my supervision as the University supervisor. This dissertation has been submitted with my approval as University Supervisor.

  
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NAME: Mr Masinire

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**Abstract**

James North Zimbabwe, a well-known producer of canvas goods, PPE, and clothing, has experienced a significant increase in consumer complaints, endangering both its clientele and brand. A convergent mixed-methods strategy was used in this case study, which combined document analysis, interviews, and surveys. The study involved 25 clients who have previously complained as the sample. The study found that the main causes of consumer complaints were unmet expectations with regards to quality control problems that is defective products, late delivery, pricing and poor customer service. Significant relationships between these variables and consumer satisfaction were found through statistical research. By emphasizing the need for better quality control, efficient complaint processing, and increased customer interaction, this study advances our understanding of consumer complaints in the manufacturing sector. The goals of the recommendations are to raise customer satisfaction, decrease complaints from customers, build loyalty and boost James North Zimbabwe's overall performance.

**Keywords:** customer complaints, quality management, customer satisfaction, manufacturing industry, case study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	2
Abstract.....	3
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	6
Background of the study.....	6
Statement of the Problem.....	9
Purpose of the Study.....	10
Objectives.....	10
Research Questions:.....	10
Statement of Hypothesis.....	11
Significance of the Study.....	11
<i>To the researcher</i> .....	11
<i>To the company</i> .....	11
Assumptions.....	12
Delimitations.....	13
Limitations.....	13
Definition of Terms.....	14
Chapter Summary:.....	15
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	15
Introduction.....	15
Conceptual framework.....	16
	4

<i>Product Quality</i> .....	16
<i>Service Quality</i> .....	17
<i>Delivery time</i> .....	17
Theoretical framework.....	17
Customer Complaints.....	18
Theories Related to Customer Complaints.....	18
Empirical studies.....	19
Causes of Customer Complaints.....	20
Customer Satisfaction.....	20
Customer Feedback.....	21
Service Recovery.....	21
Customer Engagement.....	22
Causes of High Customer Complaints in the Manufacturing Industry.....	22
Ways to reduces customer complaints.....	23
Gap Analysis.....	25
Chapter Summary.....	26
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	27
3.1. Introduction.....	27
3.2. Research Paradigm / Philosophy.....	27
3.3. Research Design.....	27
3.4. Research Approach.....	28
3.5. Research Strategy.....	29
3.6. Methodological Choice.....	30
3.6.1. Population.....	31
3.6.2. Sampling.....	31
3.6.5. Data sources.....	33
Research instruments.....	33
3.6.6. Survey Questionnaires.....	33
3.6.8. Company Records.....	34
3.7. Data Collection Timeline.....	35

3.8. Data Quality Control.....	35
3.9. Procedures for gathering data.....	35
3.9.1. Validity.....	36
3.9.2. Reliability.....	36
3.10. Data presentation and analysis.....	36
3.11. Ethical consideration.....	37
3.12. Chapter Summary.....	37
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS.....	38
4.1. Introduction.....	38
4.2. . Response Rate.....	39
4.3. A Recap of The Study Objectives.....	39
4.5. The research findings against research questions.....	40
4.6. Chapter summary.....	43
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	43
5.1. Introduction.....	43
5.2. Summary.....	44
5.3. Conclusions.....	44
5.4. Recommendations.....	44
REFERENCES.....	45
Survey Questionnaire: Customer Satisfaction and Quality Control.....	54

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the study**

Customer happiness is critical to the profitability and long-term viability of a manufacturing company in today's cutthroat business environment. The well-known producer of high-quality goods James North Zimbabwe is experiencing a big problem as a result of an increase in consumer complaints. In addition to damaging the company's brand, this rise in discontent jeopardises its position in the market and its financial results. The root causes of customer complaints must be found and examined in order to resolve this problem. These factors could have to do with operating procedures, customer service, or product quality. Using a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative data from customer feedback surveys with qualitative insights from in-depth interviews with customers, employees, and management, this study seeks to identify the underlying causes of customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe. This research aims to boost customer happiness and loyalty, help the company improve its products and services, and advance the understanding of customer satisfaction in the manufacturing sector by offering practical insights.

Customer complaints are a major sign of discontent with a business, and customer happiness is a critical component of corporate success (Santouridis et al., 2015). According to (Kotler and Keller, 2006) Customer satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which a product or service fulfils or surpasses the expectations of the client. Conversely, customer complaints are the way that a consumer expresses their displeasure with a good or service (Balaji et al 2017).

Customer complaints are influenced by a number of aspects, such as delivery time,

price perception, communication efficacy, product and service quality, and delivery quality (Wattoo and Iqbal). The degree to which a product satisfies client expectations is referred to as its quality (Angelova and Zekiri , 2011). Conversely, service quality describes how well a service fulfils the needs and expectations of the client (Lukea Bhiwajee et al 2010). According to (Agnihotri et al.,2009) communication effectiveness is the degree to which information is communicated between a business and its clients in a clear and timely manner. The customer's subjective assessment of the product's price in relation to its perceived worth is known as price perception (Monroe, 2022). According to (Rudyanto et al 2020), delivery time is the amount of time it takes for a product to be delivered to a consumer.

According to a recent study (Kumar et al., 2019), it's critical to comprehend consumer concerns in the manufacturing sector. For instance, a study conducted in by (Choi et al.,2019) discovered that in the manufacturing sector, customer complaints are significantly predicted by the quality of the product and the service. (Jiang and Rosenbloom,2005) study also discovered that pricing perception and the efficacy of communication are significant variables influencing consumer complaints.

Consumer complaints are a crucial component of any company since they offer insightful information about areas that can be improved (Dwivedi et al. , 2017). Elevated client grievances may result in patron discontent, allegiance, and eventually, company collapse (Le Billion ,2003). There is no exception in the manufacturing sector, which includes producers of canvas, protective gear, and apparel (Bonacich and Appelbaum,2000).

Based in Harare, James North Zimbabwe is a maker of canvas, protective clothes, and tents. In recent years, the company has received a lot of complaints from customers. Customer happiness and loyalty have decreased as a result, which has eventually hurt the business's reputation and financial performance.

A range of characteristics, including product quality, delivery time, and customer service, might contribute to consumer complaints (Cho et al.,2002). (Saragih et al .,2020)



assert that quality management and supply chain management are crucial elements that impact customer satisfaction in the manufacturing sector.

In the industrial sector, a number of research have looked into the reasons behind consumer complaints . Research on the precise reasons behind consumer complaints, however, is lacking in Zimbabwe's canvas, protective clothing, and apparel manufacturing sectors.

Customer complaints can be significantly predicted by factors such as communication efficacy, service quality, and product quality, according to a study by (Angelova and Zekiri, 2011). Customer complaints are also influenced by delivery time and pricing perception, according to a different study by (Yan et al.,2021).

According to a 2017 study by (Zindiye,2008) consumer complaints are a major issue in Zimbabwe's manufacturing sector, with the primary causes being poor product and service quality. Customer complaints in Zimbabwe's manufacturing business are also influenced by pricing perception and the efficacy of communication, according to a different study by (Lovemore et al.,2023).

Consumer complaints are a major problem in the manufacturing sector, costing businesses millions of dollars in lost sales as a result of subpar goods and services as well as ineffective communication (. Customer complaints may have a detrimental effect on the growth and development of the manufacturing sector, which plays a major role in Zimbabwe's GDP (Lynch,2009).

One of Zimbabwe's top producers of PVC-coated textiles and tents is James North Zimbabwe, the business that is the subject of the investigation. In recent years, the company has received a lot of complaints from customers, primarily related to the quality of its products and services. To address these problems, the company has put in place a number of initiatives, such as training programmes for customer care representatives and quality control procedures. Nevertheless, the complaints continue, underscoring the necessity of more research into the reasons behind James North Zimbabwe's customers' grievances.

This study's practical value comes from its capacity to shed light on the reasons behind consumer complaints at James North Zimbabwe and to pinpoint tactics for raising the calibre of goods and services as well as communication, delivery times, price perception, and product quality. By resolving these problems, the business will be more profitable and competitive as well as boost customer happiness and loyalty.

The purpose of this study is to look at the reasons behind excessive customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, with an emphasis on customer service, delivery time, and product quality. The results of this study will help identify improvement methods and offer insightful information about the reasons behind consumer complaints.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is high customer dissatisfaction at James North Zimbabwe. This is evidenced by a high rate of customer complaints. In 2023, more than 20 complaints were received through phone calls about defective products and late delivery of orders resulting in significant financial losses, reputational damage and sales returns. This research seeks investigate the causes of customer complaints and to suggest ways of addressing them.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes of high customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, a leading manufacturer of garment, protective clothing, and canvas products in Harare, Zimbabwe. The study aims to identify the specific factors contributing to customer dissatisfaction and provide recommendations for improvement.

### **Objectives**

1. To identify the main causes of customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe.
2. To determine the relationship between product quality, delivery time, and

customer service and customer complaints..

3. To identify best practices in complaint handling ways in the manufacturing industry and assess their applicability to James North Zimbabwe.
4. To measure the impact of complains at James North Zimbabwe on customer loyalty.
5. To provide recommendations for improving product quality, delivery time, and customer service to reduce customer complaints and enhance customer satisfaction at James North Zimbabwe.

#### **Research Questions:**

1. What are the most common causes of customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, and how do they relate to product quality, delivery time, and customer service?
2. How do product quality, delivery time, and customer service influence customer satisfaction and loyalty at James North Zimbabwe?
3. What best practices in complaint handling can be adopted by James North Zimbabwe to reduce customer complaints and enhance customer satisfaction?
4. Does complains and their resolution impact customer loyalty?
5. How can James North Zimbabwe measure the effectiveness of its strategies to reduce customer complaints and improve customer satisfaction?

#### **Statement of Hypothesis**

*H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis):* There is no significant relationship between product quality, delivery time, and customer service and customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe.

*H<sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis):* There is a significant relationship between product quality,

delivery time, and customer service and customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe.

## **Significance of the Study**

### ***To the researcher***

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the researcher's academic and professional development. By conducting this research, the researcher will meet the requirements for their Accounting Honours Degree and gain essential skills and knowledge in research methodology. Additionally, the researcher will benefit from applying theoretical concepts to practical issues, enhancing their understanding and expertise in the field. The study's findings will provide valuable insights that the researcher can apply in their future professional endeavors, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

### ***To the university***

The findings will advance understanding and open door for further student research.

### ***To the company***

1. Identification of Causes of Customer Complaints: This study will help identify the specific causes of customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, which will inform strategies for improvement.
2. Improvement of Customer Satisfaction: By addressing the causes of customer complaints, James North Zimbabwe can improve customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention, leading to increased customer loyalty and retention.
3. Enhanced Reputation: By reducing customer complaints and improving customer satisfaction, James North Zimbabwe can enhance its reputation and competitiveness in the market.
4. Increased Business Performance: Improved customer satisfaction and loyalty

can lead to increased sales, revenue, and business growth.

5. Contribution to Knowledge: This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on customer complaints, customer satisfaction, and quality management in the manufacturing industry.
6. Best Practices: The study will identify best practices in customer service and complaint handling that can be adopted by James North Zimbabwe and other manufacturing companies.
7. Empirical Evidence: The study will provide empirical evidence on the relationship between product quality, delivery time, and customer service and customer complaints, which will inform decision-making at James North Zimbabwe.

### **Assumptions**

1. Customer complaints are a valid measure of customer dissatisfaction.
2. The data collected from customer complaints is accurate and reliable.
3. The sample of customers surveyed is representative of the entire customer base of James North Zimbabwe.
4. The variables measured (product quality, delivery time, and customer service) are the most significant factors contributing to customer complaints.
5. The relationships between the variables are linear and causal.
6. The respondents will provide honest and unbiased responses to the survey questions.
7. The study will be able to collect a sufficient number of responses to achieve statistical significance.
8. The results of the study can be generalized to other manufacturing companies in Zimbabwe and beyond.

9. The study will be able to control for extraneous variables that may affect the relationships between the variables.
10. The data analysis methods used will be appropriate and effective in identifying the relationships between the variables.

## **Delimitations**

1. Geographical Scope: The study will only focus on James North Zimbabwe, a manufacturing company based in Harare, Zimbabwe.
2. Population: The study will only consider the customers of James North Zimbabwe who have filed complaints with the company.
3. Time Frame: The study will only examine customer complaints filed within the last 12 months.
4. Variables: The study will only investigate the relationships between product quality, delivery time, and customer service and customer complaints.
5. Methodology: The study will only use a survey research design and statistical analysis to examine the relationships between the variables.
6. Sample Size: The study will only survey a sample of 50 customers who have filed complaints with James North Zimbabwe.
7. Data Collection: The study will only collect data through a self-administered questionnaire and analysis of existing customer complaint data.
8. Theoretical Framework: The study will only draw on the customer satisfaction and quality management literature to inform the theoretical framework.
9. Generalizability: The study findings may not be generalizable to other industries, companies, or contexts.
10. Data Analysis: The study will only use descriptive and inferential statistical

analysis to examine the relationships between the variables.

## **Limitations**

1. Self-reported data: The study relies on self-reported data from customers, which may be subjective and biased.
2. Small sample size: The study only surveys 25 customers, which may not be representative of the entire customer base.
3. Limited geographical scope: The study only focuses on James North Zimbabwe, a manufacturing company based in Harare, Zimbabwe, which may not be generalizable to other contexts.
4. Limited variables: The study only examines the relationships between product quality, delivery time, and customer service and customer complaints, and may not consider other important variables.
5. Cross-sectional design: The study uses a cross-sectional design, which only provides a snapshot of the relationships between the variables and does not allow for causal inferences.
6. Lack of control group: The study does not have a control group to compare the results with, which may limit the ability to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the strategies implemented.
7. Data analysis limitations: The study only uses descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, which may not be sufficient to fully explore the complex relationships between the variables.
8. Time constraints: The study has a limited timeframe, which may not allow for an in-depth exploration of the research questions.
9. Resource constraints: The study has limited resources, which may limit the ability to collect and analyze data, and implement strategies.

10. **Researcher bias:** The study is conducted by a single researcher, which may introduce bias in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

## **Definition of Terms**

1. **Customer Complaints:** Expression of dissatisfaction towards products or services.
2. **Product Quality:** Degree to which products meet customer expectations and requirements.
3. **Delivery Time:** Time taken to deliver products after receiving an order.
4. **Customer Service:** Assistance and support provided before, during, and after sales.
5. **Customer Satisfaction:** Extent to which customers are happy and content with products and services.
6. **Quality Management:** Processes and systems ensuring product and service quality.
7. **Supply Chain Management:** Management of goods, services, and information flow from raw materials to end customers.
8. **Customer Loyalty:** Extent to which customers continue to purchase and recommend products and services.
9. **Customer Retention:** Ability to keep customers over time and prevent switching to competitors.
10. **Empathy:** Ability to understand and share customer feelings.
11. **Responsiveness:** Ability to respond promptly and effectively to customer inquiries and complaints.
12. **Reliability:** Ability of products and services to perform consistently and meet



customer expectations

### **Chapter Summary:**

This chapter introduced the research study on customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, a leading manufacturer of garment, protective clothing, and canvas products in Harare, Zimbabwe. The chapter provided an overview of the research problem, purpose, and objectives, as well as the significance, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and definition of terms. The chapter highlighted the importance of addressing customer complaints and improving customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention in the manufacturing industry. It also outlined the research questions, hypothesis, and methodology used in the study. The chapter concluded by summarizing the key points and providing a clear direction for the rest of the research study. The next chapter will review the literature on customer complaints, customer satisfaction, and quality management in the manufacturing industry.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

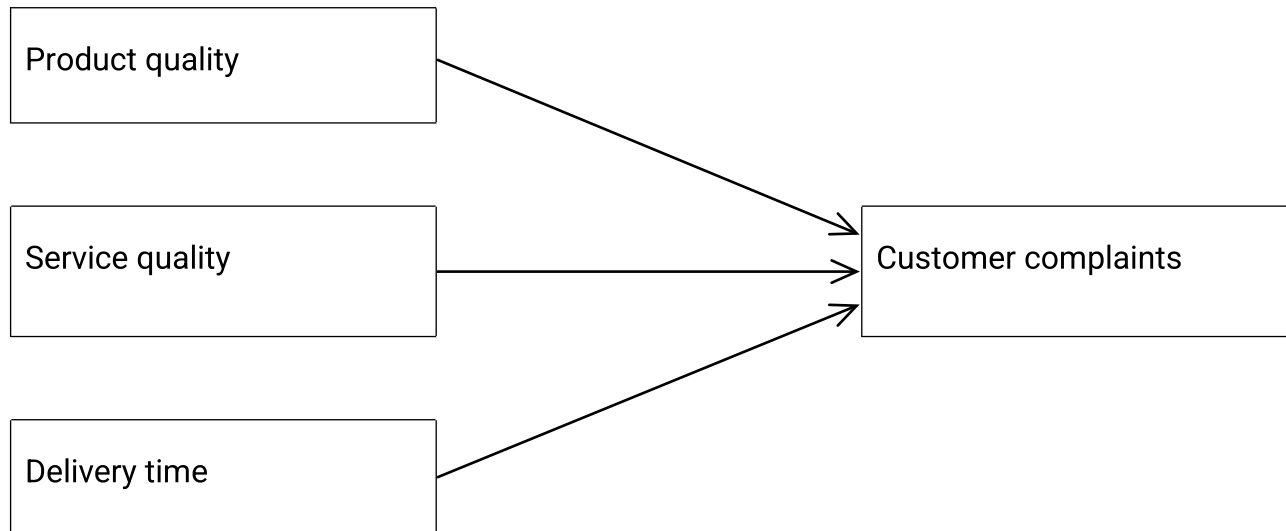
This chapter examines the body of research on quality control, customer satisfaction, and complaints from customers in the industrial sector. This literature review's objectives are to fill in any gaps in the body of knowledge about customer complaints, customer satisfaction, and quality management by offering a thorough understanding of the theories and concepts involved.

The definitions, reasons, and effects of customer complaints will all be covered in the literature review, along with tactics for efficient complaint processing and resolution. It will also look at how loyalty, retention, and customer happiness are related, as well as how important quality management is to reaching high customer satisfaction levels. The research study will have a strong basis thanks to this assessment of the literature, which will also aid in identifying the important variables and relationships that will be looked into in the upcoming chapters.

## Conceptual framework

*Independent variables*

*Dependent variable*



### Independent variable 1

#### *Product Quality*

The capacity of a product to fulfil consumer expectations and carry out its intended functions is referred to as product quality (Kotler & Keller, 2009). It has two components: the company's desired quality level, which supports the usefulness and placement of the product, and consistency in product development. It's vital to keep your goods at a high standard. Weenas (2013) asserts that consumer satisfaction is greatly impacted by product quality, especially in terms of consistency and defect-free performance. A consumer's complaint over a PVC-coated fabric product, for example, emphasises how crucial it is to guarantee product quality.

### Independent variable 2

### *Service Quality*

The ability of a business to fulfil the requirements and expectations of its clients while providing accurate and reliable services is referred to as service quality. Tjiptono (2015) defined service quality as an organization's endeavour to satisfy customers, maintain market viability, and foster consumer confidence. Unfortunately, a customer has had a bad experience due to poor service quality; they have complained about long wait times and unhelpful staff. This emphasises how crucial it is to provide top-notch service in order to satisfy clients and keep them happy.

### **Independent variable 3**

#### *Delivery time*

According to (Yim et al.,2008) the length of time it takes to deliver the goods to the client, which affects their loyalty and level of happiness. A customer has complained about a delayed delivery, which has caused them inconvenience and may cause them to lose faith in the organisation.

In summary customer complaints are closely tied to product quality, service quality and delivery time .Companies that prioritize these aspects can reduce customer complaints ,increase customer satisfaction and build loyalty.

### **Theoretical framework**

This chapter reviews the theories and concepts that are relevant to understanding the causes of high customer complaints for the Manufacturer of PVC coated fabrics, tents James North Zimbabwe. The chapter will begin by defining customer complaints and exploring the importance of addressing them. It will then discuss the theories related to customer complaints, including the customer satisfaction theory, service quality theory, and customer relationship management theory. Finally, the chapter will present recent research studies that have investigated the causes of high customer complaints in the manufacturing industry.

## Customer Complaints

Customer complaints can be defined as any expression of discontent or dissatisfaction with a product or service provided by a company (Angelovska,2021). They can range from minor issues such as a product defect to major issues such as poor customer service. Customer complaints are important for businesses as they provide valuable feedback that can help identify areas for improvement and prevent the loss of customers (Goodman,2019). Therefore, it is crucial for companies to understand the causes of high customer complaints and take necessary actions to address them.

## Theories Related to Customer Complaints

### *Customer Satisfaction Theory*

Customer satisfaction is achieved when a company meets or exceeds customer expectations, leading to loyalty and positive word-of-mouth (Oliver, 2006). Conversely, unmet expectations result in dissatisfaction, driving customers to competitors (Siqueiral et al.,2020). Understanding and meeting customer expectations is crucial for maintaining high satisfaction levels and minimizing complaints.

### *Service Quality Theory*

According to the service quality framework, customers evaluate a company's service based on five critical aspects: dependability, promptness, trust, understanding, and physical evidence (Parasuraman, et al., 1988). In the context of James North Zimbabwe, a manufacturer of PVC coated fabrics and tents, customers may express dissatisfaction with product performance, the company's ability to address their concerns, and the overall service encounter. To minimize complaints and ensure customer satisfaction, the company must regularly assess and improve these key service dimensions, fostering a culture of continuous enhancement and excellence.

### *Customer Relationship Management Theory*

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) theory emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships with customers (Payne & Frow, 2013). In

the context of customer complaints, effective CRM can help companies address and resolve issues in a timely and satisfactory manner, leading to increased customer loyalty and reduced complaints. Therefore, it is important for the Manufacturer of PVC coated fabrics, tents James North Zimbabwe to have a well-developed CRM strategy in place to manage customer complaints effectively.

### **Empirical studies**

The amount of complaints received by James North Zimbabwe, a manufacturer of PVC-coated fabrics and tents, has significantly increased recently. This has sparked questions about the calibre of goods and services the business offers. Therefore, in order to address these issues and raise overall customer satisfaction, it is essential to look into the root causes of these complaints.

Customers' grievances or discontentment regarding a product or service is termed as customer complaints (Kim et al., 2003). These complaints serve as a vital feedback mechanism for businesses, offering valuable understanding of customer experiences and pinpointing opportunities for growth. Nevertheless, an excessive volume of complaints can significantly tarnish a company's brand image and financial well-being, underscoring the importance of effective complaint management and resolution.

A study by (Oogarah-Hanuman and Naicker,2016) found that the number of customer complaints is increasing globally, with the manufacturing industry being one of the most affected sectors. This is mainly attributed to the ever-increasing expectations of customers and the growing competition in the market. In the case of the Manufacturer of PVC coated fabrics and tents, the high number of customer complaints could be an indicator of underlying issues that need urgent attention.

### **Causes of Customer Complaints**

Several factors can contribute to high customer complaints in the manufacturing industry. These can be categorized as internal or external factors. Internal factors are within the control of the company, while external factors are beyond the control of the company (Cheah et al.,2011)).

Internal Factors includes the quality of a product is a vital aspect that directly affects customer satisfaction. If the PVC coated fabrics and tents manufactured by James North are of poor quality, customers are likely to complain and seek alternatives from competitors ,Ineffective Customer Service: Poor customer service, such as delays in responding to queries and complaints, can lead to high customer complaints. Customers expect prompt and efficient responses to their issues, and failure to deliver this can result in dissatisfaction,Lack of Communication: Effective communication is crucial in managing customer expectations and addressing their concerns. Miscommunication or lack of communication can lead to misunderstandings, which can result in customer complaints.

External Factors includes Market Competition: In the manufacturing industry, companies face intense competition from both local and international players. If the Manufacturer of PVC coated fabrics and tents is unable to keep up with market trends and provide innovative products, customers may turn to competitors, resulting in higher complaints,

Changes in Consumer Preferences: Consumer preferences and needs are constantly evolving, and companies need to adapt to these changes to stay relevant. Failure to do so can lead to customer dissatisfaction and complaints,

Economic Factors: Economic downturns or fluctuations can also contribute to high customer complaints. In times of economic hardship, customers become more selective in their purchasing decisions, and any perceived quality issues may result in complaints.

## **Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is defined as the degree to which a company's products or services meet a customer's needs and expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Achieving high customer satisfaction is vital for business success and sustainability, as satisfied customers tend to become repeat customers and recommend the company to others through positive word-of-mouth.

Research by (Van Doorn and Verhoef,2008) revealed a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and reduced customer complaints, suggesting that improving customer satisfaction can lead to a decrease in complaints. In manufacturing industry customer satisfaction has significantly negatively correlates with customer complaints and positively correlates with customer loyalty, indicating that enhancing customer satisfaction can reduce complaints and boost loyalty.

Additionally, (Rajendran et al.,2023) identified that poor product quality, inadequate customer service, and poor communication as primary causes of customer complaints, aligning with the internal factors identified in this review.

### **Customer Loyalty**

Customer loyalty is crucial for businesses, as loyal customers are more likely to return and recommend the business to others (KHAN,2013). In the garment, canvas, and tent factory, customer loyalty can be improved by addressing customer complaints, providing excellent customer service, and ensuring fair and transparent business practices.

### **Customer Feedback**

Customer feedback is essential for businesses, as it provides valuable insights into customer needs and preferences (Patil and Rane,2023). In the garment, canvas, and tent factory, customer feedback can be used to improve product quality, customer service, and overall customer experience.

### **Service Recovery**

Effective service recovery is crucial to address customer complaints and prevent future complaints (Kim and Baker, 2020). In the garment, canvas, and tent factory, service recovery can include actions such as apologizing, offering refunds or replacements, and providing compensation. Training staff on effective service recovery strategies can help reduce customer complaints.

## **Customer Engagement**

Customer engagement is critical to prevent customer complaints and improve customer satisfaction (Pansari and Kumar,2017). In the garment, canvas, and tent factory, customer engagement can include actions such as responding to customer feedback, providing clear product information, and offering personalized services. Improving customer engagement can help reduce customer complaints.

## **Causes of High Customer Complaints in the Manufacturing Industry**

A study by (Gebauer et al ., 2005)identified product quality, product availability, and service reliability as the main factors contributing to high customer complaints in the manufacturing industry. Similarly, a study by (Ozkan et al.,2010) found that product quality, delivery time, and customer service were the key factors influencing customer complaints in the manufacturing sector. These findings suggest that ensuring high product quality and reliable services are crucial for reducing customer complaints in the manufacturing industry.

Another recent study by (Bendall-Lyon and Powers,2001) identified lack of communication, inadequate training of employees, and inefficient complaint handling processes as major causes of high customer complaints in the manufacturing industry. This highlights the importance of effective communication, proper training of employees, and efficient complaint resolution processes in addressing customer complaints.

The garment manufacturing industry faces numerous challenges in meeting customer expectations, leading to high customer complaints (Bruce et al.,2004). Poor communication between designers and manufacturers can result in production delays and defects (Sanders et al.,2016). Furthermore, inadequate quality control processes and inefficient production planning can lead to defects and wasted resources (Colledani et al.,2014).

To address these challenges, garment manufacturers can implement various strategies, such as total quality management (TQM) and lean manufacturing (Syduzzaman et



al.,2014). TQM focuses on continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, while lean manufacturing aims to minimize waste and maximize efficiency.

In addition, advancements in technology, such as 3D design and automation, can improve production efficiency and reduce defects (Ashima et al., 2021). However, the adoption of new technologies also requires investment in employee training and development .

Consumer complaints can have serious repercussions for firms, such as reduced revenue, reputational harm, and clientele loss (Cheng et al.,2020). Poor service quality is a major contributor to customer complaints, according to research that has repeatedly demonstrated this (Ramachandran and Chidambaram,2012). This covers problems including lengthy wait times, impolite employees, and low expectations. Consumer complaints may result in a decline in sales, harm to one's reputation, and loss of clients (Luo,2007). In order to decrease customer complaints, businesses must put customer pleasure first. Businesses must handle complaints effectively if they want to decrease complaints from customers and raise customer satisfaction levels (Goodman,2019). Customers who have their complaints resolved quickly and efficiently are more likely to remain loyal to the company (Barlow,J., and Moller,C.2008). Furthermore, effective complaint handling can lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention (Mensah,J.K.B.2016).

Communication breakdowns between customers and businesses can also lead to misunderstandings, miscommunications, and ultimately, customer complaints (Lockwood,J.2010,P.2024). When customer expectations are not met, it can lead to dissatisfaction and complaints (Osarenkhoe,a.,andKomunda,M.B.,2013). Customers who perceive injustice or unfair treatment are more likely to complain (Schoefer,K.,and Ennew,C.,2005). Businesses must prioritize effective communication to reduce customer complaints (Ahmad,A.2022). This includes actively listening to customers, empathizing with their concerns, and providing clear and concise responses . Businesses must also ensure that their staff is trained to handle customer complaints effectively.

## **Ways to reduces customer complaints**

Businesses can decrease customer complaints in addition to efficiently managing complaints by putting in place customer feedback systems . Customers can share their experiences through customer feedback systems, which enables firms to find and fix problems before they become serious ones . Companies need to give consumers' feedback top priority and use it to improve their goods and services (Fead and Forbes,2010).

Companies that adopt employee training programmes can also decrease consumer complaints. Employee education initiatives can assist staff members in gaining the abilities and know-how required to deliver superior customer service .This include teaching staff members efficient customer handling techniques, customer communication techniques, and problem-solving techniques(Homburg and Furtst,2005).

Additionally, companies that use complaint management systems can lower the number of client complaints they receive . Through the use of complaint management systems, companies can monitor and examine client complaints, seeing patterns and trends that can aid in the creation of workable solutions. Companies need to give complaint handling top priority and use it to enhance their goods and services (Faed,2013).

Also, by putting customer happiness first, companies can lower the number of complaints they receive from clients . This entails comprehending the preferences and wants of the consumer and creating goods and services to satisfy those needs . Companies need to put the needs of their customers first and use that feedback to improve their goods and services (Hansemark and Albinsson,2014).

By using customer-centric methods, businesses can also lower the number of complaints they receive from customers. Customer satisfaction is given priority in customer-centric initiatives, which utilise it to develop products and services . This entails comprehending the preferences and demands of the consumer and creating goods and services to satisfy those needs (Fornell,Morgeson III ,Hut, et al.,2020).

Additionally, companies can lower customer complaints by using technology to enhance customer service and lower complaints from customers . This includes responding quickly and effectively to frequent consumer complaints through the use of chatbots and AI-powered customer support platforms (Jiang et al.,2022).

Additionally, employing employee empowerment can help organisations lower consumer complaints. Employee empowerment confers onto employees the power to decide and act in a way that best serves the customer. This entails arming staff members with the authority and tools necessary to promptly and effectively address consumer complaints (Denove and power,2007).

### **Gap Analysis**

The current state of research on customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe reveals a significant gap in understanding the root causes of this issue. Despite high customer complaints, existing research has methodological limitations and a narrow scope, focusing primarily on product quality while neglecting other factors . This limited understanding hinders the development of effective strategies to address customer complaints and improve customer satisfaction.

On the other hand, the ideal situation would be to pinpoint the underlying reasons for a high volume of customer complaints, create a thorough grasp of the elements that lead to complaints, and offer doable suggestions for raising customer satisfaction levels and lowering complaint rate. It takes a thorough investigation using a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data to reach this intended condition (Creswell, 2014).

The gaps between the current and desired states are significant. The lack of empirical research specifically focused on James North Zimbabwe, limited understanding of the root causes of customer complaints, inadequate methodology in existing research, and limited scope of existing research all contribute to the need for a comprehensive study. Furthermore, the absence of actionable recommendations for improving customer satisfaction and reducing customer complaints highlights the need for a study that

provides practical solutions .

In conclusion, the gaps in understanding customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe highlight the need for a rigorous and comprehensive study that addresses the methodological limitations and narrow scope of existing research. By employing a mixed-methods approach and considering the company's specific context and industry, this study can provide actionable recommendations for improving customer satisfaction and reducing customer complaints, ultimately contributing to the company's success.

### **Chapter Summary**

In summary, customer complaints in the manufacturing industry are a growing concern globally. In the case of the Manufacturer of PVC coated fabrics and tents, a high number of customer complaints could be attributed to factors such as poor product quality, ineffective customer service, market competition, and changes in consumer preferences. To reduce the number of complaints, the company should focus on improving customer satisfaction through effective communication, continuous innovation, and delivering high-quality products and services.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter explains the research methodology used to investigate customer complaints and quality control in the garment, PPE, and canvas manufacturing industries, specifically at James North Zimbabwe. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. The research design was a case study, with a purposive sampling strategy used to select participants. Data was collected through survey questionnaires and the data collection procedures were designed to ensure data quality, validity, and reliability. The chapter also covers the ethical considerations adhered to during the data collection process.

### **3.2. Research Paradigm / Philosophy**

A research framework serves as a guiding structure that shapes our approach to knowledge generation, inquiry formation, and solution seeking (Creswell, 2014). The dominant research paradigms include positivist, interpretivist, and critical realist/pragmatic perspectives. Positivism prioritizes quantitative data, objective observation, and hypothesis testing to establish causal connections (Yin, 2014). In contrast, interpretivism emphasizes qualitative data, subjective experience, and meaning interpretation to understand complex social phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Critical realism integrates elements of both paradigms, acknowledging both objective reality and subjective interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study adopts a combined positivist and interpretivist approach to investigate the multifaceted

reasons behind customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe. By leveraging this paradigm, we can conduct an in-depth examination of the social and cultural context, gathering rich and detailed data through questionnaire responses. This approach provides valuable insights into customer and employee experiences, enabling the identification of meaningful solutions to address the root causes of customer complaints.

### **3.3. Research Design**

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), research design is the overall plan for carrying out a study that describes the procedures, methods, and approaches for gathering and evaluating data in order to address research questions. The choice of research design, which might be exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive, is influenced by the study questions and desired conclusion. In order to present a comprehensive picture of the current condition, descriptive research designs gather data using surveys, questionnaires, and interviews with the goal of describing a phenomena or scenario (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). By adjusting variables, explanatory research design seeks to clarify cause-and-effect linkages between variables and tests theories and hypotheses (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). By using in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observation to generate theories, hypotheses, and models, exploratory research design seeks to understand a phenomenon or circumstance (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

This study employed a combined explanatory and descriptive research design to investigate customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe. The explanatory design aimed to identify the causes of high customer complaints, while the descriptive design aimed to describe the frequency, nature, and patterns of customer complaints. By combining both designs, we gained a comprehensive understanding of customer complaints, including the "what" (descriptive) and the "why" (explanatory). The exploratory approach identified and understood customer complaints, while the descriptive

### **3.4. Research Approach**

Research approaches are the plans and methods used to carry out investigations; they range from general theories to particular procedures for gathering, analysing, and interpreting data (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This study will examine three different research methodologies:

i) Deductive research approach: To accomplish a particular research goal, this method entails developing hypotheses to test a theoretical framework before verifying them through empirical data (Bryman, 2016). Using this method, researchers formulate a hypothesis based on a theoretical framework, gather data to test the hypothesis, and then evaluate the findings to support or contradict the theory.

ii) Inductive research approach: Using an inductive research methodology, one moves from detailed observations to more generalised generalisations and theories based on pattern recognition. This process is done by making observations in order to construct a theoretical framework or hypothesis (Bryman, 2016). After gathering data, researchers use the data to construct a theory or hypothesis.

iii) Abductive research approach: This method combines aspects of deductive and inductive reasoning to determine the most likely explanation for a phenomenon (Tavakoli, 2018). Abduction is a versatile and adaptable method for comprehending complicated problems because it makes use of past knowledge, observations, and intuition to work through an issue and deduce a solution. Tavakoli (2018) claims that Abduction reasoned through an issue and deduced a solution using the researcher's observations, past knowledge, and intuitionistic method. This method works especially well when answering complicated or unclear research questions. This method was selected for this study because of its adaptability and flexibility, which makes it helpful for complicated, confusing problems. Because it permits iteration between data gathering, analysis, and theory construction, it can be used to comprehend a variety of challenging real-world issues, including customer complaints.

### **3.5. Research Strategy**

According to Wedawatta et al. (2010), a research strategy is the methodical technique that researchers use to meet particular research questions and objectives. According to Saunders et al. (2016), the goals and objectives of the study, the breadth of the body of knowledge in the field, the time and resources available, and the researcher's philosophical underpinnings must all be taken into consideration when choosing an appropriate research approach. According to Saunders et al. (2016), common research methodologies include surveys, experiments, case studies, ethnographies, grounded theories, and content analysis.

A survey is a type of research approach that gathers information through interviews or self-report questionnaires in order to identify patterns and attitudes (Kumar, 2014).

Experiments: A controlled research approach in which independent factors are changed to see how they affect dependent variables in order to test hypotheses (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009).

A case study is a thorough examination of a person, a group, or a phenomenon that draws information from numerous sources (Kumar, 2014).

Ethnography is a study method that entails closely observing and documenting the attitudes and behaviours of a certain social or cultural group (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). Developing theories from evidence rather than testing preconceived notions is the goal of grounded theory, an inductive method of research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). In order to obtain insights into communication, media, and cultural production, content analysis is a research approach that finds themes or patterns in textual, visual, or auditory data (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

For the research topic, the researcher decided to use a case study methodology. The rationale for the choice was that a case study provides a comprehensive examination of a specific phenomena, circumstance, or establishment. The case study approach makes it possible to gather comprehensive and rich data from a variety of sources, such as observations, interviews, and document analysis. Case studies have been used



to support this selection in the study of subjects like financial performance and sustainability that need for a deep and contextualised understanding. Yin (2014) asserts that case studies are helpful for comprehending unique or complex occurrences. In order to offer a thorough examination of consumer concerns in the manufacturing of clothing, protective gear, and canvas, the case study method was selected.

### **3.6. Methodological Choice**

Choosing an approach that fits the study topic, aims, and questions is an essential part of selecting the appropriate methodology (Saunders et al., 2016). A mixed-methods strategy is the most appropriate choice for this study. A research methodology is a plan for gathering and analysing data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The goal of this strategy is to create a thorough grasp of the research topic, which is analysing the reasons behind significant customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. In this instance, mixed-approaches research will allow for the collecting and analysis of both numerical and non-numerical data from multiple sources. Mixed-methods research entails using multiple methods to address a research topic (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). While qualitative research focuses on non-numerical data, such as observations and interviews, to gain meaning and understanding, quantitative research focuses on numerical data and statistical analysis. This approach will increase the validity and reliability of the findings, provide a more thorough understanding of the research topic, and capture the diverse perspectives of the participants (Creswell, 2014).

#### **3.6.1. Population**

According to Gay et al. (2019), a population is a particular group of people, things, or events that have something in common and are of interest to academics. A population is essentially the whole set of items from which researchers want to derive conclusions (Scheaffer et al., 2019). Customers of James North Zimbabwe, a company that produces clothing, personal protection equipment (PPE), and canvas items, make up the population in this case study. This population is the subject of the study, and the results will attempt to capture the attitudes, experiences, and habits of this particular consumer

base.

### **3.6.2. Sampling**

The process of choosing a portion of people, things, or events to include in a study from the research population is known as sampling (Gay et al., 2019). According to (Polit and Beck, 2017) In order to gather data about the full population, it entails choosing a subset of people, things, or observations from a broader population. Sampling is an essential component of research because it allows scientists to draw conclusions about a population from a limited amount of data. Sampling is regarded as the crucial component of research design, according to Trochim (2006, p. 10), because it establishes the calibre of the study and the applicability of the findings to the target population. A researcher can employ various kinds of sampling techniques, such as:

- i) Simple Random Sampling: Choosing people at random from the population with a uniform probability of selection (Polit & Beck, 2017).
- ii) Stratified Sampling: This method involves randomly picking individuals from each stratum after dividing the population into subgroups or strata according to specific criteria (Trochim, 2006).
- iii) Cluster Sampling: Choosing groups or clusters of people from a population as opposed to choosing people one at a time (Polit & Beck, 2017).
- iv) Convenience sampling, which involves choosing people who are conveniently reachable or available (Polit & Beck, 2017).
- v) Snowball sampling: choosing people who fit certain requirements and asking them to recommend other people who might also fit the requirements (Creswell, 2014)
- vi) Purposive sampling: choosing subjects in accordance with the researcher's judgement and level of experience (Creswell, 2014).

Purposive and convenience sampling are two non-probability sample methods that the researcher used in this investigation. The reason purposeful sampling was chosen is because it enables the researcher to pick people who are pertinent to the issues and goals of the study. To guarantee accessibility, convenience sampling was chosen. For

this case study, participants were chosen using a purposive sample technique. Customers who have purchased clothing, personal protective equipment, or canvas items from James North Zimbabwe were included in the sampling criteria, especially those who had lodged complaints. Purposive and convenience sampling were combined as part of a non-probability sampling strategy used in this study (Creswell, 2014). The researcher was able to select individuals who were pertinent to the study's goals through the use of purposeful sampling, while accessible subjects were selected using convenience sampling. Customers who bought clothing, PPE, or canvas products from James North Zimbabwe were the main focus of the sampling criteria, especially those who had lodged complaints.

### **3.6.3. Sample Size:**

For the purposes of this case study, a sample of 25 customers who had previously complained were given survey questionnaire to complete.

### **3.6.4. Procedure for Sampling:**

The following steps were engaged in the sampling procedure:

1. Identification of potential participants through company records and customer databases
2. Screening of potential participants based on the sampling criteria
3. Selection of participants who met the sampling criteria
4. Contacting selected participants to request their participation in the case study
5. Collection of data through survey questionnaires, and document analysis

By focusing on James North Zimbabwe, this case study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of customer complaints, quality control, and manufacturing processes within the company, and identify best practices for improving customer satisfaction and quality control.

### **3.6.5. Data sources**

A data source, in the words of Flowerdew and Martin (2013), is the originating site of the data that was used in a study. Primary and secondary data sources are the two categories into which they fall. Primary data sources are those that directly gather fresh information from individuals using techniques like surveys, observations, and interviews. Conversely, secondary data sources entail utilising pre-existing information gathered by third parties, such governmental documents, scholarly articles, and business records. The researcher will combine primary and secondary data sources for this investigation. Questionnaires will be used to gather primary data from customers who have complained about defective goods and delayed deliveries. To determine the volume of consumer complaints, secondary data will be gathered from company records, such as databases of customer complaints and sales income information over time. The investigator is of the opinion that the sources they have chosen will offer significant perspectives on the subject matter, hence rendering the investigation thorough and dependable.

This section outlines the procedures used to collect data from customers of James North Zimbabwe for this case study.

### **Research instruments**

Research instruments are essential data collection tools in research studies ,as they enable researchers to gather accurate and reliable information (Saunders et al .,2016).By utilizing these instruments ,researchers can make informed decisions and draw valid conclusions.This study employs two data collection methods which are survey questionnaires and a review of company documents.

### **3.6.6. Survey Questionnaires**

A popular tool for gathering data, research questionnaires use a predetermined set of questions to elicit information from a chosen sample of participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). They are self-administered and frequently used to gather quantitative data, which makes them an affordable way to gather data from big sample sizes (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Because questionnaires are standardised, data collecting is

consistent and bias is reduced. But they might not be able to thoroughly examine the research issue because they can't fully capture contextual nuances and complexities (Saunders et al., 2016). In order to lessen this, a survey questionnaire was thoughtfully created to collect information from clients who have bought clothing, personal protective equipment, or canvas goods from James North Zimbabwe. The twenty-odd questions on the questionnaire were intended to extract data on customer satisfaction, quality expectations, and customer complaint experiences. The survey was distributed both offline and online in order to contact as many people as possible.

### **3.6.7. Interviews**

According to Saunders et al. (2016), researchers utilize interviews as a data collection tool, engaging in direct conversations with participants to gather information. The approach can be tailored to fit the research goals, ranging from structured and formal to flexible and open-ended (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Interviews offer a unique opportunity to capture participants' personal experiences, opinions, and emotions, providing rich and nuanced insights into the research topic. With various modes of communication available, such as in-person, phone, or video conferencing, interviews can be adapted to suit different research needs and contexts.

### **3.6.8. Company Records**

Tavakoli (2018) has pointed out that internal corporate records, like sales statistics, financial reports, and customer information, provide important insights into the inner workings of a business. Researchers can do accurate and dependable analysis of trends, patterns, and performance using the secondary data found in these documents (Tavakoli, 2018). Saunders et al. (2016), however, point out that corporate data might not be able to fully explain a particular research topic. In order to learn more about the firm's quality control practices and customer complaint handling procedures, a variety of company documents were reviewed in this study. These papers included manufacturing process documents, customer complaint records, and quality control guidelines. To get a more thorough grasp of the research topic, industry reports and scholarly literature were also examined in order to obtain insights on best practices in

quality control and customer complaint resolution.

### **3.7. Data Collection Timeline**

- Survey questionnaires were administered over a period of two weeks.
- Document analysis was conducted over a period of four weeks.

### **3.8. Data Quality Control**

- Data was checked for completeness and accuracy.
- Survey questionnaires were pilot-tested before administration.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted by a trained researcher.
- Document analysis was conducted by a trained researcher.

By using a combination of survey questionnaires and document analysis, this case study aimed to gather a comprehensive understanding of customer complaints, quality control, and manufacturing processes at James North Zimbabwe.

### **3.9. Procedures for gathering data**

The university provided the researcher with a letter of licence for data collection from James North Zimbabwe, a case study located in Harare. The corporation was also asked to cooperate and assist in the letter. Equipped with this missive, the investigator proceeded to James North Zimbabwe and facilitated communication between the regulatory bodies, sales, and finance departments. An agreement was made that the customers of James North Zimbabwe who had complained before would complete the questionnaires which they duly did.

### **Methodological Norms**

Methodological norms were defined as the standards that scientists must adhere to in order to guarantee the dependability and correctness of their data(Martin et al.2019).These standards, which specify how researchers should plan studies, gather data, analyse findings, and deliver conclusions, are developed through the scientific

method and best practices in research (Feilzer, 2019). Respecting these standards is essential since not doing so can lead to poor research, untrustworthy findings, and a lack of confidence in study conclusions.

### **3.9.1. Validity**

A study by (Koo and Li (2016), a research study's validity is determined by how well it measures the intended outcome. It's an important idea in research of all kinds, including the following:

Construct validity: The degree to which the study captures the fundamental idea that it's meant to capture (Lee & Chua, 2019).

Content validity: The extent to which the study addresses every facet of the topic under investigation (Kanji & Jamal, 2018).

Validity is essentially a crucial component of research quality and reliability since it guarantees that the research measures the things it purports to test.

### **3.9.2. Reliability**

Martin et al. (2019) define dependability as the stability and consistency of measurements, which is essential in research to guarantee reproducible and consistent results. The researcher took several steps to ensure reliability in this research: they gained enough knowledge about the subject to effectively guide interviews and ask pertinent questions; they gave interviewees enough time to express their opinions without being influenced or interrupted; they created objective, clear questionnaire items with high face validity; and they obtained permission to access accurate and current company records. The researcher wanted to assure accurate findings, minimise errors, and provide valid and reliable data by following these methodological norms.

## **3.10. Data presentation and analysis**

As Bazeley (2018) emphasizes, the stages of data presentation and analysis are pivotal in research, involving a systematic process of examining, interpreting, and synthesizing collected data. This process transforms raw data into meaningful information,

presented in a clear and concise manner using visual aids like tables, pie charts, and text to facilitate reader understanding. In this study, quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 22 , and descriptive statistical analysis was used to summarise data into figures and tables for easy interpretation. Additionally, data from SPSS and Microsoft Excel will be presented in tables, and charts to enhance understanding and facilitate visualisation of the results. Data analysis uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to extract valuable insights from the data (Bazeley, 2018). To ensure clarity and conciseness, presentations must adhere to specific guidelines, while analyses must align with the research methodology to maintain relevance and validity (Creswell, 2014).

### **3.11. Ethical consideration**

The moral precepts and beliefs known as ethical considerations serve as a framework for research projects, directing how participants are handled and how responsibly and respectfully data is handled by researchers. The following important ethical guidelines were followed in this study:

- i. Told consent: Prior to giving consent, participants were fully told about the goals, advantages, and risks of the study.
- ii. Confidentiality: Only authorised sharing of personal information was done. - Respect for autonomy: Without compulsion or manipulation, participants' rights to make their own decisions were upheld.
- iii. Integrity: The researcher reported findings fairly and accurately, acting with integrity and remaining open and honest about their methods.
- iv. Permission: Prior to doing any research, the study complied with established protocols and obtained the required approvals from university and organisational authorities. The protection and welfare of the research subjects was given priority during the responsible conduct of the study by adhering to these ethical principles.

### **3.12. Chapter Summary**

With an emphasis on James North Zimbabwe, this chapter outlines the research



methods used to investigate customer complaints and quality control in the apparel, PPE, and canvas manufacturing industries. Utilising a convergent mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data collecting and analysis methodologies were integrated. A purposive sample method was used to choose participants in the case study research design. To guarantee data quality, validity, and reliability, data gathering methods comprised survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. An summary of the survey questionnaire and interview guide that were used to collect data from James North Zimbabwe's clients and staff is provided at the end of the chapter. The following are the main lessons to be learned from this chapter: The investigation of customer complaints and quality control was done using a convergent mixed-methods methodology. Purposive sampling was utilised to choose participants in a case study research approach that focused on James North Zimbabwe. Data gathering processes were created to guarantee data quality, validity, and reliability. Survey questionnaires and document analysis were two of the approaches used in data collection. The ethical principles upheld throughout the data collection procedure and the research project as a whole were also covered in this chapter. The data that has been gathered will be presented, examined, and discussed in the next chapter within the framework of pertinent academic literature.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1. Introduction

The study's conclusions are presented in this chapter: a study on the volume of complaints from customers. James North Zimbabwe (Pvt) Ltd. as a case study. This chapter will present the results of the data analysis and provide a discussion of the findings.

### 4.2. . Response Rate

In the study 25 customers who had once complained were selected and were given questionnaires to complete. All the 23 participants responded giving a response rate of 92%. The response rate has been presented on the pie chart below.

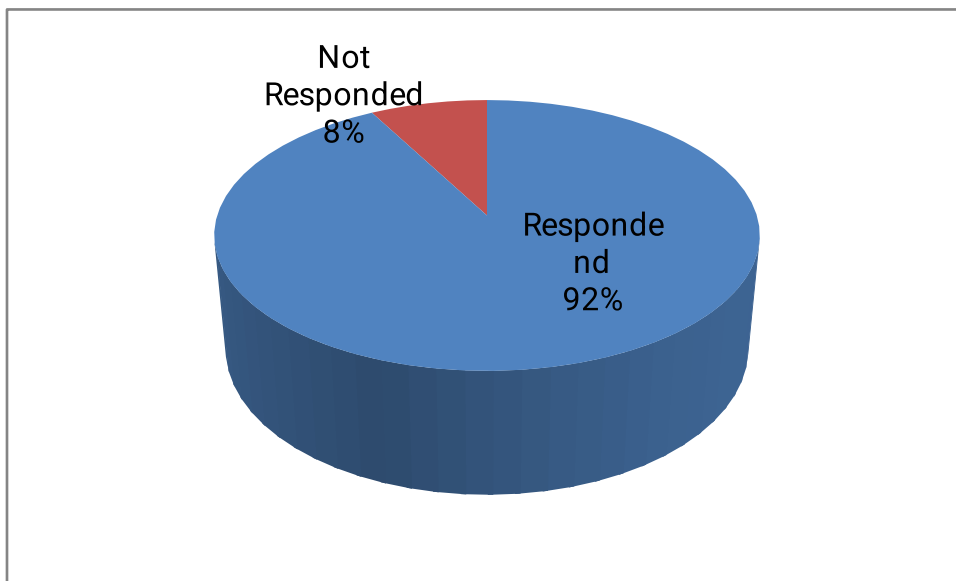


Chart 1: Study response rate

#### **4.3. A Recap of The Study Objectives.**

*The study goals were as follows:*

1. To identify the main causes of customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe.
2. To determine the relationship between product quality, delivery time, and customer service and customer complaints.
3. To identify best practices in complaint handling ways in the manufacturing industry and assess their applicability to James North Zimbabwe.
4. To make suggestions for enhancing James North Zimbabwe's product quality, delivery schedule, and customer care in order to lower complaint rates and raise satisfaction levels.
5. To measure the impact of complains at James North Zimbabwe on customer loyalty

#### **4.4. A Recap of the hypothesis**

H0 (Null Hypothesis): James North Zimbabwe's customer complaints have no discernible link to product quality, delivery time, or customer service.

H1 (Alternative Hypothesis): At James North Zimbabwe, there is a substantial correlation between customer complaints, delivery times, and product quality.

#### **4.5. The research findings against research questions**

**4.5.1.** *What are the most common causes of customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, and how do they relate to product quality, delivery time, and customer service?*

The parameter under main causes was:

- i. The reason for complaint

*The parameters gave the following frequency table for various reasons customers were complaining about:*

Table 1 below shows the main reasons for complains against the number of customers who complained. The table a show that the main cause of complains were defects as shown by 69.6% of customers have complained about it. Late delivery was also a reason for concern as 26.1% of customers complained about it.

Table1: Reason for Complaint

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Defect	16	69.6	69.6	69.6
Late Delivery	6	26.1	26.1	95.7
Pricing	1	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

*Finding 1: Defective goods are the main cause of customer complains at James North (Pvt) Ltd.*

#### *4.5.2. How do product quality, delivery time, and customer service influence customer satisfaction and loyalty at James North Zimbabwe?*

The parameter used was:

- i. Overall customer satisfaction

*The parameters gave the following cross-tabulation between customers who*

*complained and if they are satisfied by the goods and services at James North (Pvt) Ltd:*

Table 2 below shows the relationship between customer complains versus customer satisfaction which represents product quality, delivery time and customer service. The table shows that 65.2% of customers were not satisfied by product quality, delivery time and customer service at James North and only 34.8% were satisfied.

Table 2: Complained vs Overall Satisfaction Cross tabulation

Count

	Overall Satisfaction		Total
	No	Yes	
Complaine Yes d	15(65.2%)	8(34.8%)	23
Total	15	8	23

*Finding 2: More than half of James North customers are not satisfied with the product quality, delivery time and customer service.*

#### **4.5.3. What best practices in complaint handling can be adopted by James North Zimbabwe to reduce customer complaints and enhance customer satisfaction?**

The parameters used were:

- i. Complain resolved by,*
- ii. Satisfied by Complain resolution*

*The parameters gave the following cross-tabulation between how the complaint was resolved and if the customers were satisfied by how their complaint was:*

Table 2 below shows the relationship between complaint resolution and customer satisfaction by the resolution. It shows that 60.9% were satisfied by how their complaints were resolved versus 39.1% who were not satisfied. However, it is important to note that 5 out of 11(45%) customers whose complains were resolved by replacement were not satisfied by this resolution.

Table 3: Complain resolved by Versus Satisfied by resolution Cross-tabulation  
Count

		Satisfied By Resolution		Total
		No	Yes	
Complain resolved by	Replacement	5	6	11
	Refund	3	4	7
	Repair	1	4	5
Total		9(39.1%)	14(60.9%)	23

*Finding 3: More than half of James North customers are happy with how their complains are handled. However, almost half (45%) of those whose products were replaced were not satisfied.*

#### 4.5.4. Does complains and their resolution impact customer loyalty?

The parameter used was:

- i. Likely to continue buying

*The parameter gave the following frequency table on the customers who complained but are likely to purchase again from James North Zimbabwe:*

Table 4 below shows the likelihood of repeat purchase by a customer who once complained. The table shows that 69.9% of customers who once complained are not likely to buy again from James North Zimbabwe. This signifies a significant loss of customers.

Table 4: Likelihood to continue purchasing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	16	69.6	69.6	69.6

Yes	7	30.4	30.4	100.0
Total	23	100.0	100.0	

*Finding 4: A significant number of customers who once complained were not likely to make a repeat purchase from James North Zimbabwe.*

#### **4.6. Chapter summary**

The results of the data collection were compiled and presented in this chapter. The results were presented in respect to the primary reasons why customers file complaints. The complaints and their effect on consumer loyalty were the main topics of the chapter. The synopsis, suggestions, and places for additional investigation are provided in the upcoming chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of findings on the causes of high customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe. The findings of this study will be discussed relating them to the research questions and objectives. The discussion section interprets the results, highlighting the key takeaways and implications. The conclusion summarizes the main contributions of the study and the recommendations provide practical suggestions for stakeholders.

### **5.2. Summary**

Defective products were found to be the main reason for complaints at James North Zimbabwe. 69.6% of complaints made were due to defective products followed by 26.1% who complained about late delivery of goods. 4.3% of the complaints were made

on the pricing. It is important to note that 65.2% of the complainants were not satisfied by the way their complaints were handled while 34.8% were satisfied.

Almost half (47.8%) of the complainants had their products replaced when they complained while 30.4% were refunded. 21.8% had their products repaired. All the participants in this research had at some point lodged a complaint at James North Zimbabwe and 69.6% indicated that they were not likely to buy from James North Zimbabwe again. 30.4% were likely to buy from the company again.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

1. The main cause of complaints at James North Zimbabwe was defective products.
2. The company does not handle complaints well.
3. The company prioritises replacing and refunding for defective products returned by complaining customers
4. Customers who once complained are not likely to buy again from the company
5. The Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), which held that there is no substantial correlation between product quality, delivery time, customer service, and customer complaints at James North Zimbabwe, was rejected by the researcher based on the findings.

### **5.4. Recommendations**

1. Introduce a stand-alone quality control department
2. Every product must pass through quality control checks
3. Every product must be stamped to indicate that it has passed through quality control checks
4. Organise and allow staff to undergo refresher courses
5. Establish a clear complaint handling procedure



6. Respond to complains timely
7. Establish a customer feedback system

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## **Survey Questionnaire: Customer Satisfaction and Quality Control**

This survey questionnaire is designed to gather information on customer satisfaction, quality control, and customer complaint handling at James North Zimbabwe. The responses will provide valuable insights for improving products, processes, and customer service.

### **Introduction:**

- Thank you for participating in this survey! Your feedback is important to us.
- Please answer the questions honestly, and to the best of your ability.
- All responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

General questions

### **Gender**

1. Male
2. Female

### **Location**

1. Urban
2. Rural

### **Highest level of education**

1. Ordinary level
2. Advanced level
3. Diploma level
4. Degree level

### **Section 1: Customer Information**

Q1- What type of product do you primarily purchase from James North Zimbabwe?

1. Garments
2. PPE
3. Canvas

4. Garments, PPE & Canvas

Q2- How often do you purchase products from James North Zimbabwe?

1. Once off
2. Daily
3. Monthly
4. Annually

Q3- How long have you been a customer of James North Zimbabwe?

1. <1 year
2. 1-2years
3. 2-3years
4. >3years

## **Section 2: Quality Control and Customer Complaints**

Q1- Have you ever experienced a quality control issue with a product from James North Zimbabwe (e.g., defect, damage)?

1. No
2. Yes

Q2- If yes, how did you report the issue?

1. Phone
2. Email
3. In-person

Q3- How was the issue resolved?

1. Replacement
2. Refund
3. Repair

Q4- Where you satisfied are you with the resolution of the issue?

1. No
2. Yes

### **Section 3: Customer Satisfaction**

Q1- Are you satisfied with the overall quality of products from James North Zimbabwe?

1. No
2. Yes

Q2- Are you likely to recommend James North Zimbabwe to a friend or colleague?

1. No
2. Yes

Q3- Are you likely going to continue purchasing products from James North Zimbabwe in the future?

1. No
2. Yes

### **Section 4: Improvement Suggestions**

Q1- What changes would you suggest making to improve the quality control process at James North Zimbabwe?

1. Every product must pass through quality control checks
2. Refresher courses for production staff
3. Regular quality inspections
4. All the above

Q2- What changes would you suggest making to improve customer complaint handling at James North Zimbabwe?

1. Establish a Clear complaint handling procedure
2. Timely response and resolution
3. Customer Feedback system
4. All the above

- Are there any additional comments or feedback you would like to provide?

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on: **Conclusi**

- Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey! Your feedback is valuable to us.