

Customers' Satisfaction on Service Quality: A Study on Interk Bangladesh
S.M. Akterujjaman¹ Md. Abdur Rakib²

Abstract:

At present Bangladesh is depending on ready-made garments that were started in the 1970s with few workers but now there are working almost 4.5 million workers, the majority of them are female and they are from rural areas of Bangladesh. Customer satisfaction mainly depends on the commitment of the company. The present study aims to examine the customers' satisfaction with the service quality of Interk. This study attempted to understand the customers' perceptions of different service quality dimensions while dealing with this company. The main objective of the study was to know about the customers' perception and satisfaction, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibility of service quality of Interk. The total sample size was 200 customers. The data was based on quantitative analysis through the survey method. The data were collected through a questionnaire in which a customer's responded to a series of questions based on five key dimensions- Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy. The study concluded with some recommendations to improve the satisfaction of the customers.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, Service quality, Interk, SERVQUAL, Customer expectations, Perceptions

Introduction

For more than 130 years, companies around the world have depended on Interk to help ensure the quality and safety of their products, processes, and systems. Interk goes beyond testing, inspecting and certifying products; it is a Total Quality Assurance provider to industries worldwide. Through its global network of state-of-the-art facilities and industry-leading technical expertise, it provides innovative and bespoke assurance, testing, inspection, and certification services to customers. Interk provides a systemic approach to supporting its customers' quality assurance efforts in each of the areas of their operations including R&D, raw materials sourcing, components suppliers, manufacturing, transportation, distribution, retail channels, and customer management.

Interk is an industry leader with more than 40,000 employees in 1,000 locations in over 100 countries. Interk delivers quality assurance solutions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with their industry-leading processes and customer-centric culture. Whether the business is local or global, Interk can ensure product quality, health, environmental safety, and social accountability standards for virtually any market around the world. Interk holds extensive global accreditations, recognitions, agreements, and its knowledge of expertise in overcoming regulatory, market, and supply chain hurdles are unrivaled.

To satisfy the customers' qualities of services is vital and the firm's successes decline it (Karim & Chowdhury, 2014). Several measurement techniques were recognized to cram

¹ Nyenrode Business University, The Netherlands and ² Department of Business Administration
¹ BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh
¹ E-mail: amakter2010@gmail.com
² Department of Social Sciences, BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh
² E-mail: abdulrakib@buft.edu.bd

service quality for satisfying customers such as SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988), SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992), Synthesized model of service quality (Brogowicz et al., 1990). In a simple word, excellence is the capacity for producing the desired result. So, the excellence of customers is, how customers perceive services, how they assess whether they have experienced quality services and whether they are satisfied or not. When it refers to the excellence of customers, we assume that the dimensions of services and how customers evaluate services are similar where the customer is internal & external of the organization.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to know about the customers' satisfaction on service quality of Interk Bangladesh. Whereas the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To know about the customers' reliability on service quality of Interk;
2. To explore about the customers' responsiveness on service quality of Interk;
3. To know about the customers' assurance on service quality of Interk;
4. To discover about the customers' empathy on service quality of Interk;
5. To find out about the customers' tangibles on service quality of Interk.

Literature Review

Angelova & Zekiri (2011) mentioned that companies must understand about service quality and customer satisfaction to survive in the competitive market. They also depicted that satisfied customers tend to repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth. However, our study will examine customer satisfaction with the help of the SERVQUAL Model and customer satisfaction survey with a questionnaire. Akterujjaman & Kalam (2016) assessed the performance gap of Clinics and Diagnostic centers by considering one gap of five gaps in the service quality concept and that was reliability gap analysis. Whereas, this paper will try to measure quality assurance solutions and customer satisfaction provided by Interk. Altindag (2018) stated that for achieving a competitive advantage it is very important to make a good relationship with the customers and satisfy them through quality services. We will try to establish that it is possible to gain customer satisfaction by ensuring quality service in our service categories. Akterujjaman & Ahmad (2016) found that the ready-made garments sector of Bangladesh received more than three fourth of the total export earnings of the country, though the workers are not satisfied with working environments and wages. But our research will give concentration on customer satisfaction on quality services provided by Interk Bangladesh. Karim & Chowdhury (2014) discovered the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction in Bangladesh by surveying the customers of private commercial banks. On the other hand, our study will be on customers' satisfaction with the service quality of Interk Bangladesh.

Methodology

The Methodology adopted for the current study is presented below in a sequential manner:

Sources of Data

This study was based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a personal interview with a structured questionnaire and direct observations. Secondary data were collected from the published official statistics, report documents, books, articles, periodicals of different domestic and international agencies, annual reports of Interk Bangladesh, websites, etc.

Questionnaire Design

The primary data were collected from the customers who have taken services from Interk Bangladesh. A total of 200 customers were surveyed through the judgmental sampling method with a structured questionnaire from October to November 2018. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions. The questionnaire was pre-tested to maintain proper wording, length, and sequence of the questions.

Data Analysis Methods

A five-point Likert type scale statement was used to measure the variables where 1 stands for highly dissatisfied and 5 stands for a highly satisfying effect on the statements (Luthans, 2002). Customers' satisfaction on a particular statement has been determined by the calculating mean of the value corresponding to the opinion of the statement. And the standard deviation (SD) is used to measure the variability of the response among the respondents. The study also used the SERVQUAL model to find out the "service quality gap" that exists between the customers' expected level of services (from the previous experience and word-of-mouth communication) and their perception of the actual level of service delivery. And the model also identifies five gaps that cause unsuccessful delivery.

Conceptual Model of Service Quality Gaps

The SERVQUAL service quality model was developed by a group of American authors, 'Parasu' Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Len Berry who developed five tools to measure service quality- reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness - that create the acronym RATER. Businesses using SERVQUAL to measure and manage service quality deploy a questionnaire that measures both the customer expectations of service quality in terms of these five dimensions and their perceptions of the service they receive. When customer expectations are greater than their perceptions of received delivery, service quality is deemed low in addition to being a measurement model; SERVQUAL is also a management model.

SERVQUAL has two components to it: customer expectations and customer perceptions. Customer expectations are those that the customer expects as "should be" and "can be" type of services. Service offered varies with providers and the amount of variation that customers can tolerate is known as tolerance. The gap between what is thought to be adequate service and desired service is known as the zone of tolerance. The more important the SERVQUAL dimension, the higher is the desired service level and narrower the zone of tolerance. For the less important SERVQUAL dimension, the desired level of service is much lower and the zone of tolerance is broader too. What the

researchers presume here is that retailers do study customer expectations and then design service offerings. Therefore, the first component - customer expectations are not researched in this current study. The present study concentrates on customer perceptions of following SERVQUAL dimensions, price and product quality by five SERVQUAL tools.

Tangibles: Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials.

Reliability: Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.

Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.

Empathy: The caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers'.

Based on this perspective, Parasuraman et al. (1985) developed a scale for measuring service quality, which is most popular and known as SERVQUAL. This scale operationalizes service quality by calculating the difference between expectations and perceptions, through five service quality dimensions known as 'tangibles', 'reliability', 'responsiveness', 'assurance', and 'empathy'.

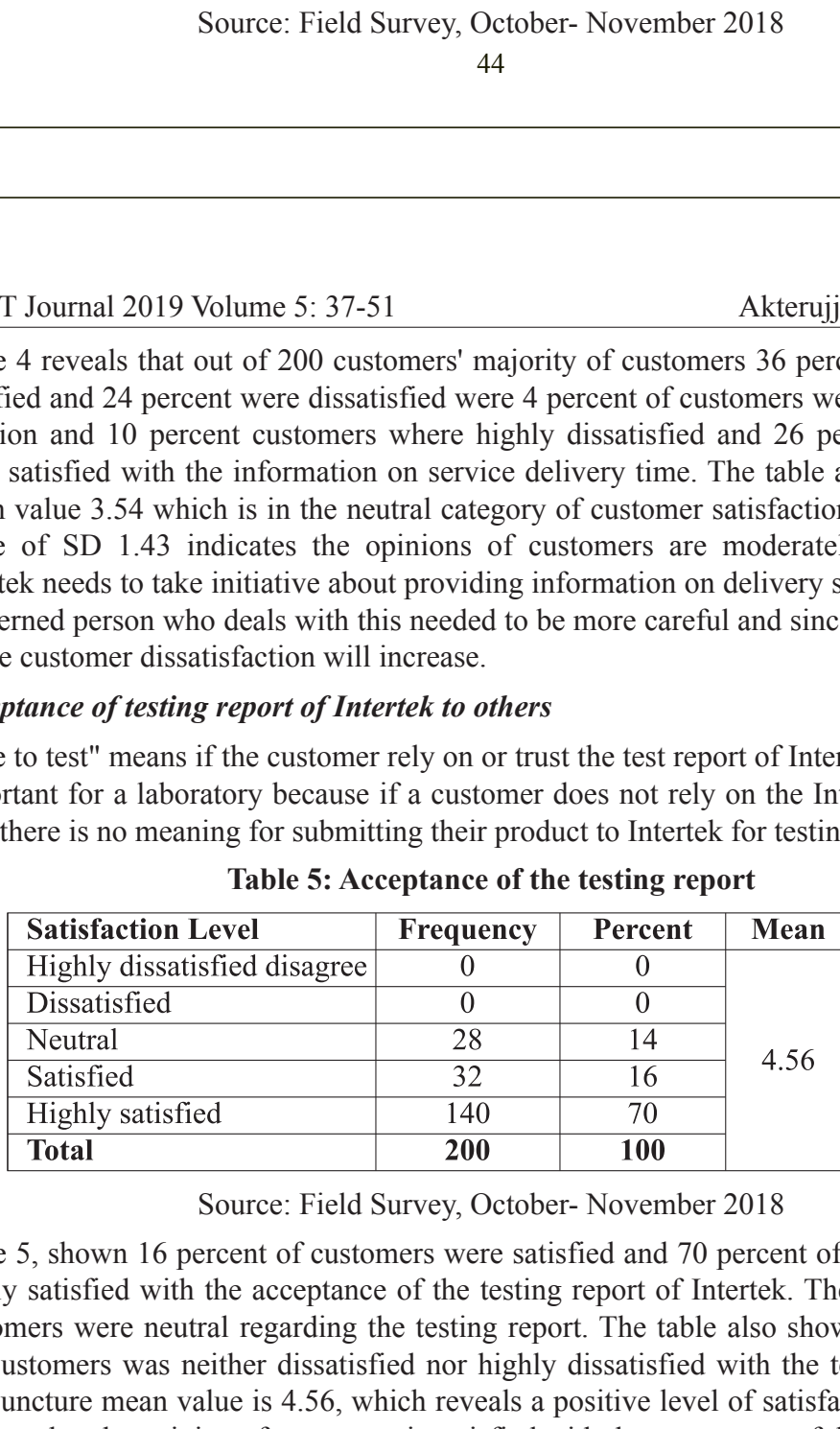


Figure 1: Conceptual model of service quality gaps

Source: Parasuraman et al., (1985)

The SERVQUAL authors identified five Gaps that may cause customers to experience poor service quality.

Gap 1: between management perception of customers' expectations and customers' expected Service

Management does not understand what the customer expects.

Gap 2: between management perception of customers' expectations and service quality specification

Management is not willing or able to put the systems or finance in place to match or exceed customers' expectations.

Gap 3: between service quality specification and service delivery

This gap may arise through service personnel being poorly trained, incapable or unwilling to meet the set service standard. The possible major reasons for this gap are:

- Deficiencies in human resource policies such as ineffective recruitment, role
- Ineffective internal marketing
- Failure to match demand and supply
- Lack of proper customer education and training

Gap 4: between service delivery and external communication

Consumer expectations are highly influenced by statements made by company representatives and advertisements. The gap arises when these assumed expectations are not fulfilled at the time of delivery of the service. The discrepancy between actual service and the promised one may occur due to the following reasons:

- Over-promising in the external communication campaign
- Failure to manage customer expectations
- Failure to perform according to specifications

Gap 5: between expected service and experienced Service

This gap arises when the consumer misinterprets the service quality. For example, a physician may keep visiting the patient to show and ensure care, but the patient may interpret this as an indication that something is wrong.

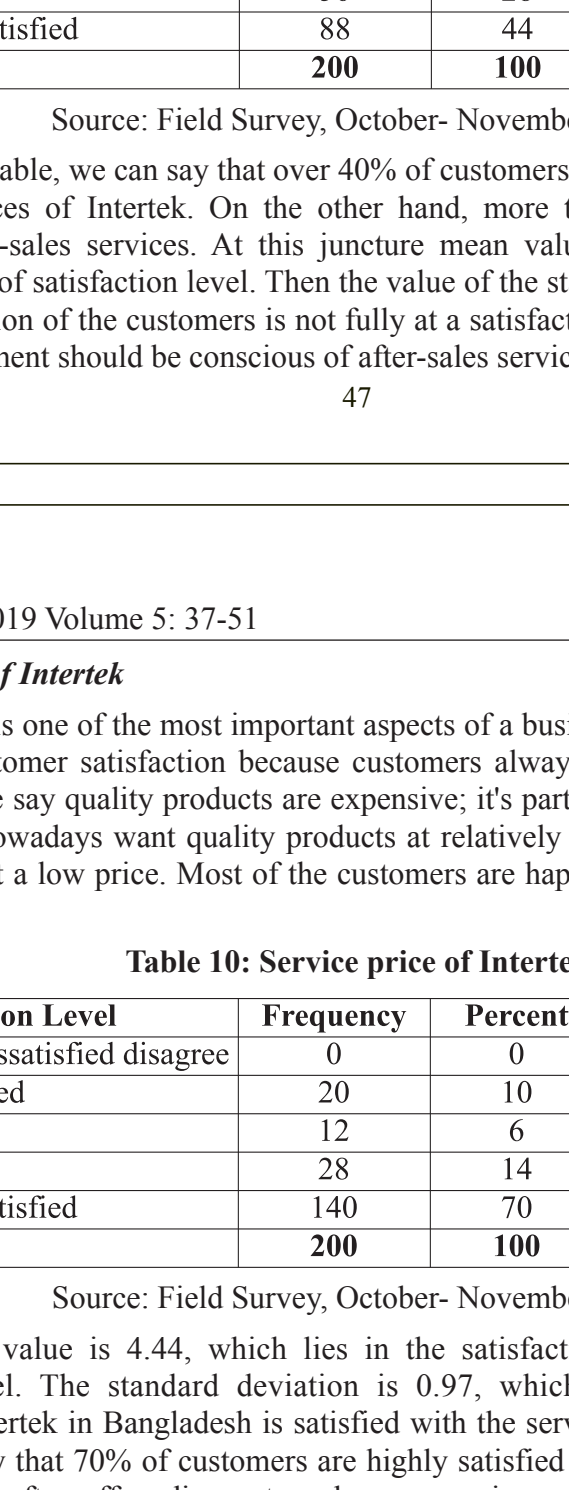


Figure 2: Five dimensions of service quality to their importance

Source: Akterujjaman & Kalam (2016)

This service quality has some dimensions that are presented in the above diagram (figure 2). Quality of service is one of the important factors that influence customer satisfaction. Researchers and managers of service firms concur that service quality involves a comparison of expectations with performance. The five dimensions of service quality are discussed below:

1. Reliability:

- ◆ Providing service as promised
- ◆ Dependability in handling customers' service problems
- ◆ Providing services right the first time
- ◆ Providing services at the promised time.

2. Empathy:

- ◆ Giving customers individual attention
- ◆ Employees who deal with customers' in a caring fashion (recognizing regular customer)
- ◆ Having the customer's best interest at heart.

3. Responsiveness:

- ◆ Keeping customers' informed as to when services will be performed
- ◆ Prompt service to customers (calling back)
- ◆ Willingness to help customers (sending bill)
- ◆ Readiness to respond to customers' requests

4. Tangibles:

- ◆ Modern equipment
- ◆ Visually appealing facilities
- ◆ Employees who have a real, professional appearance

5. Assurance:

- ◆ Employees who have confidence in customers
- ◆ Making customers feel safe in their transactions
- ◆ Consistently courteous employees.
- ◆ Employees who know to answer customer questions.

Results and Discussion

Measuring customer satisfaction indicates how successful the organization is at providing products and services to the marketplace. Customer satisfaction is an ambiguous and abstract concept and the actual manifestation of the state of satisfaction will vary from person to person and from product to product. The state of satisfaction depends on a number of both psychological and physical variables that correlate with satisfaction behaviors such as return and recommend rate. The level of satisfaction can also vary depending on other options. Customers may have other products against which the customers' satisfaction level and the organization's products. A company needs to know what expectations its customers have as its services, the effectiveness of your marketing strategies, and the strength of your company's image as well as the key elements that influence customer retention for its business. The analyses of the collected data through questionnaires are presented below.

Promised services

Customer satisfaction mainly depends on the commitment of the company. It means the company provides its services and products within the time that was promised.

Table 1: Providing services as Interk promised

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Highly dissatisfied/disagree	0	0	4.4	0.69
Dissatisfied	0	0		
Neutral	24	12		
Satisfied	72	36		
Highly satisfied	104	52		
Total	200	100		

Source: Field Survey, October-November 2018

Table 1 reveals that out of 200 customers 36 percent are satisfied, 52 percent of customers are highly satisfied and only 12 percent are neutral regarding providing services of Interk as promised in Bangladesh. However, it is clear about the service quality of Interk because none of the customers are dissatisfied which means most of the customers are highly satisfied and satisfied with service quality, time to time delivery, etc. of Interk. Here the mean value is 4.4, which lies in the satisfied category of customers' satisfaction level. The standard deviation is 0.69, which indicates the number of customers of Interk in Bangladesh, get good quality service. So, maximum workers are satisfied with their promised services.

Prompt action regarding customer query

Taking prompt action is another way to satisfy customers. When the customers get quick solutions then they become satisfied. So customers' satisfaction depends on taking prompt action of the company regarding solving their problems.

Table 2: Prompt action to fulfill customer query

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Highly dissatisfied/disagree	0	0	4.34	0.99
Dissatisfied	20	10		
Neutral	16	8		
Satisfied	40	20		
Highly satisfied	124	62		
Total	200	100		

Source: Field Survey, October-November 2018

Table 2 showed that 20 percent of customers were satisfied and 62 customers were highly satisfied with their prompt action of the query. The table also showed that only 8 percent of customers were neutral and no client was highly dissatisfied. 10 percent were dissatisfied with quick feedback on their queries. Here the mean value 4.34 is in the optimistic position of satisfaction level. The SD 0.99 denotes that the opinions of the customers are satisfied in their prompt action of the query in Interk. However, we can

say that customers are highly satisfied with their prompt service. So the company needs to be more careful about providing their prompt services and solutions.

Providing attention to each customer according to the necessity

An organization should take care of their customers after services. For that, every customer presumes more attention on an individual for their needs of services as per their requisite from the company. So, providing individual attention each time is also a part of customer satisfaction.

Table 3: Attention to the customer each time

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Highly dissatisfied/disagree	0	0	3.80	1.28
Dissatisfied	60	30		
Neutral	0	0		
Satisfied	48	24		
Highly satisfied	92	46		
Total	200	100		

Source: Field Survey, October-November 2018

From table 3, it is found that 46 percent of the customers were highly satisfied and 24 percent of customers were satisfied in their opinion regarding pay attention to each customer according to necessity. On the other hand, only 30 percent of customers were dissatisfied and none of the customers were highly dissatisfied to pay attention to each customer every time. The mean value 3.86 is almost in the satisfied category of customers' satisfaction level and the SD is 1.28, which indicates the opinions of customers are moderately satisfied. So the company needs to pay more attention to individual customers and their demands every time because many customers are dissatisfied. So Interk needs Individual care of customers and pays attention to individual demands.

Information regarding service delivery time

When a customer places his request for his desired service it is very much important to inform him about delivery time. No tolerance, Interk is always bound to deliver the service within their given time. No chance level is accepted here to provide the best service to the customers.

Table 4: Providing services on time

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Highly dissatisfied/disagree	20	10	3.54	1.43
Dissatisfied	48	24		
Neutral	8	4		
Satisfied	52	26		
Highly satisfied	72	36		
Total	200	100		

Source: Field Survey, October-November 2018

Table 4 reveals that out of 200 customers' majority of customers 36 percent were highly satisfied and 24 percent were dissatisfied were 4 percent of customers were in the neutral position and 10 percent customers were highly dissatisfied and 26 percent customers were satisfied with the information on service delivery time. The table also showed that mean value 3.54 which is in the neutral category of customer satisfaction level. Here the SD of SD 1.43 indicates the opinions of customers are moderately satisfied. So, Interk needs to take initiative about providing information on service delivery time. The concerned person who deals with this need to be more careful and sincere, otherwise in future customer dissatisfaction will increase.

Acceptance of testing report of Interk to others

"Safe to test" means if the customer rely on or trust the test report of Interk. This is very important for a laboratory because if a customer does not rely on the Interk test report then there is no meaning for submitting their product to Interk for testing.

Table 5: Acceptance of the testing report

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Highly dissatisfied/disagree	0	0	4.56	0.73
Dissatisfied	0	0		
Neutral	12	6		
Satisfied	32	16		
Highly satisfied	140	70		
Total	200	100		

Source: Field Survey, October-November 2018

Table 5, shown 16 percent of customers were satisfied and 70 percent of customers were highly satisfied with the acceptance of the testing report of Interk. Then 14 percent of customers were neutral regarding the testing report. The table also showed that none of the customers were neither dissatisfied nor highly dissatisfied with the testing report. At this juncture mean value is 4.56, which reveals a positive level of satisfaction. Then 0.73 denotes that the opinion of customers is satisfied with the acceptance of the testing report. So, we can see more than 80% of customers feel safe to test at Interk.

Interk provides an accessible and convenient report to clients

Customers should feel that it is convenient at every aspect of the test at Interk then they would like to take every service when needed. If the process of testing is assessable then it will provide more knowledge regarding the specific testing method and will also help them to understand the final report clearly. Here 36% of customers are satisfied and 104 customers are highly satisfied with the accessibility of Interk and they feel convenient to test at Interk. 12 percent of client who were neutral about the convenience of the report.

The delivery commitment of the report is a vital matter by the company. When a product is submitted at Interk for testing, the countdown starts immediately. There are few services provided by Interk like regular service, Shuttle service, etc.

Table 7: Report delivery commitment

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Highly dissatisfied/disagree	12	6	3.8	1.16
Dissatisfied	16	8		
Neutral	20	10		
Satisfied	104	52		
Highly satisfied	48	24		
Total	200	100		

Source: Field Survey, October-November 2018

Table 7 showed that 52 percent of customers were satisfied and 24 customers were highly satisfied with timely report delivery. Here mean value 3.8 is higher than the neutral position of satisfaction level. The standard deviation of 1.16 denotes that the opinion of the customers is not fully satisfied. This issue may be happening in some cases of political unrest, technical problems, etc. So each person should take the necessary initiative on their respective ends to ensure service or product delivery within committed time. Customer satisfaction of Interk mainly depends on this issue.

Maintain government rules and regulations in the testing procedure

Each testing procedure should have an internal standard. An internal and external audit from abroad and the government are accompanying in Bangladesh. The Audit bodies are BAB, BSTI, NABL, A2LA, etc. Without authorization and accreditation, the laboratory cannot perform any kind of testing. The NABL bodies give a certificate with a

specific time like six months, 1 year or two years. When time is expired, the laboratory cannot perform any kind of testing until making a new accreditation audit.

Table 8: Maintain government rules and regulations