Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Indian Service Industry

B.Mohanapriya

Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, St.Joseph's College for Women, Tirupur

Abstract: *Service Quality is defined as the ability of the service provider to satisfy customer needs. Service quality is not one-dimensional; it encompasses numerous factors that are important to customer satisfaction. There are several reasons why customers must be given quality service. Gaps between perceived and expected levels of service quality delivery result in the failure of the service provider. The servqual instrument designed by Parasuraman, Berry and Zeitham can be adapted to most of the services and can be used to measure service quality. A person is said to be dissatisfied when the perceived delivery is lower than expectation. Issues such as individual customer satisfaction versus meeting the company's objectives have been debated at length in marketing literature. Service can be broadly classified into high-tech, low-touch and low-tech, high touch services. Service strategy will determine what kind of people we need to have and the kind of delivery systems that will effectively blend with the strategy. When the service offered is good to the customers up to their satisfaction, and then automatically customers will get delighted. Once the customer gets satisfied with the service provided, it is easy for the company to retain the customers which plays major role in the growth of company for the long period. It also decides the success of the company.*

Keywords: *Service, Quality, Satisfaction, Expectation, Perception*

I. Introduction

Service Quality is defined as the ability of the service provider to satisfy customer needs. Service quality is not one-dimensional; it encompasses numerous factors that are important to customer satisfaction. There are several reasons why customers must be given quality service. Most important of them are:

1. Industry has become so competitive that customers now have variety of alternatives. If the customers are lost, it can be extremely difficult to win back the individual.
2. Most customers do not complain when they experience problems, these customers simply opt out & take their business elsewhere.

Dimensions of Service Quality

Parasuraman, *Berry* and *Zeitham* listed various aspects that a customer expects from different services.

1. ***Reliability:*** This refers to the ability of the company to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
2. ***Tangibles:*** This refers to the appearance of the physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials.
3. ***Responsiveness:*** This refers to the willingness of the employees to help customers and provide prompt service.
4. ***Assurance:*** This factor is linked to several minor factors such as competency, courtesy, credibility and security.
5. ***Empathy:*** This refers to the caring, individualized attention the firm provides to its customers.

II. The Service Quality Gaps

Gaps between perceived & expected levels of service quality delivery result in the failure of the service provider. The servqual instrument designed by *Parasuraman, Berry* and *Zeitham* can be adapted to most of the services and can be used to measure service quality. This basically will give the gap between customer's expectations and the perceived delivery of service. The same authors have also suggested a gap model, which describes four more gaps.

❖ The First gap does not know what customers expect.
❖ The second gap is between expectations of the customers and the management's perception.
❖ The third gap is with reference to the management's understanding of the customer expectations and the service quality standards set by the management.
❖ The fourth gap is between the quality specifications and actual service delivery.
❖ The fifth gap is between what is communicated to customers and what is actually delivered.

Organization's Strategies for Closing the Gap
- Internal and external research
- What do customers really want from service & create value
- Listening to what customers and employees feel about performance
- Improve the technical service quality as well as functional service quality
- Evaluation of performance
- Action and Monitoring
- Improving and Motivation

Methods for Enhancing Service Quality
- Internal performance analysis
- Customer satisfaction analysis
- Specialist market research

What is Satisfaction?
  Satisfaction = function of {Expectation and Perceived delivery**}**
A person is said to be dissatisfied when the perceived delivery is lower than expectation; he/she is satisfied when they match; delighted when the delivery exceeds expectation and astonished when the delivery far exceeds expectation.

Satisfaction basically is related to expectations and perceived delivery on these dimensions and as shown by the equation given below.The following equations explain these relationships.

Perceived Delivery < Expectation →	Dissatisfaction	
Perceived Delivery = Expectation →	Satisfaction	
Perceived Delivery > Expectation →	Delight	
Perceived Delivery >> Expectation	→	Astonishment

III. Major Issues in Service Quality

  Issues such as individual customer satisfaction versus meeting the corporate objectives have been debated at length in marketing literature. Additionally, employees are bound by the rules and regulations of the organization, whereas the relationships with customers are not tightly governed by rules. Of course when a customer voluntarily enters the premises of an organization to avail its services, he/she will be governed by its rules. For example, a customer entering a McDonald's outlet cannot ask for waiter service.

  However, the organizational relationships are much more complex. Though to some extent we may find parallels in customer relationships, the relationship between one employee and another is much more complex as it is governed by past behavior and other situational factors. Many times, people have hidden agendas and they use organizational issues to settle scores with each other. As the hierarchy is involved, people can use positional power to play polities to achieve their end objectives. These are not going to be very pronounced in the case of customers.

  Service can be broadly classified into *high-tech, low-touch and low-tech, high touch services*. A customer using an ATM to withdraw cash has no human much at all. It is basically a high-tech, low-touch service. On the other hand, if you enter a beauty parlor for hairdressing the service- provider understands the individual customer's needs and customizes the service accordingly. This is an example of a low-tech, high-touch service. The service delivery systems are designed to suit the specific services. Companies are trying to move in the direction of high-tech, low-touch, as it is easier to manager. Federal Express has developed a package tracking- system, which can be accessed through the Internet by its customers. This has greatly reduced customer calls wanting to know whether their packages have been delivered or nor.

  The most important thing in blueprinting of a customer service is to look at the processes from the customer's perspective. Companies should move out of their internal divisions and conveniences to devise delivery systems ideally suited to the consumers. Bank timings are fixed by taking into consideration the convenience of the employees. Some banks have now started the practice of keeping the banks open on Sundays and during late hours. Similarly, a loan applicant will be making to run from section to section to know the status of his application. This is where it makes sense to create a single window clearance system.

Future Service Strategy:
  The traditional marketing strategy revolved around the identification of the target market and deciding on the 4Ps, namely, Product, Price, Place and Promotion to satisfy the needs of the customers. In the case of services, factors that really matter are very different. What is needed is a clear understanding of the customer'

needs that the company would like to meet and then work out a broad strategy for the same. That broad strategy will determine what kind of people we need to have and the kind of delivery systems that will effectively blend with the strategy.

The strategy planning process for service industries is like this.
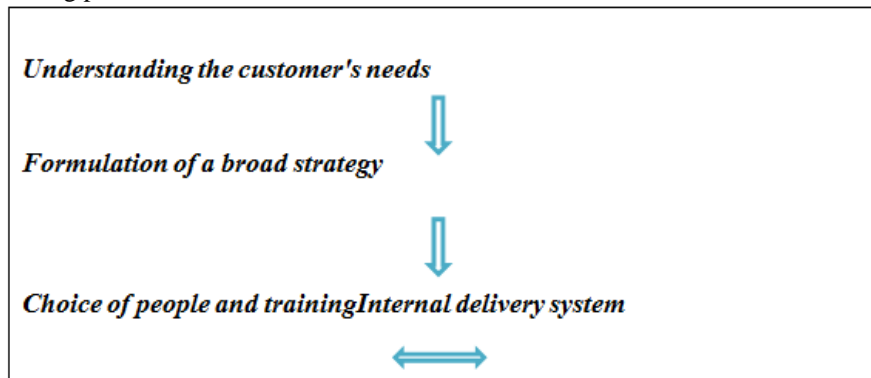
Service strategy basically positions the company and gives a direction to the organization of the activities within the company. A good fast-food restaurant will require a different kind of interior design and procedures as compared to a pub or a bar. The kind of people to be employed and the skills needed will be differed based on the broad positioning. The technology to be used will depend on the nature of service, size of the operation and customer expectations.

IV. Conclusion

When the service offered is good to the customers up to their satisfaction, and then automatically customers will get satisfaction. Once the customer gets satisfied with the service provided, it is easy for the company to retain the customers and it is called customer retention which plays major role in the growth of company for the long period. It also decides the success of the company.

References
[1]. Rampal M K , Service Marketing : Galgotia publishing co. , New Delhi
[2]. Ramaswamy V S , Marketing Management : Macmillan India Ltd.
[3]. Manoj K Trivedi, Service Quality, Kanpur
[4]. Xavier M J , Marketing in the 21st century : Vikas Publishing House
[5]. Shajahan S. : Service Marketing , Himalaya Publishing House