

Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

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Introduction

- Cost is long forgotten but quality is remembered for ever
 - Market is ready to pay a premium for quality. Value is still sought after; performance + price add upto value
 - Multiplying effects of happy / unhappy customer; a satisfied customer is best advertisement
 - Quality is about passion, pride, care, people, consistency, eyeball contact, reaction
 - Living the message of the possibility of perfection & infinite improvements
 - Not a technique, no matter how good
- Quality assessment and quality audit are routine managerial concerns**

Quality in Goods

1. QC and SQC are for management, profit, goods and production oriented enterprises
2. Q circle and TQM are personnel management oriented concepts of Japanese origin; QM / TQM is requirement of all people and all processes in the organisation; Involves (i) customer focus (ii) employees involvement and (iii) continuous improvement
3. QC department with distinct function & responsibility uses SQC to analyse deviations, reduce variations through elaborate inspection & try to conform to predetermined standards
4. QMS is ISO requirement & is part of organisation's management system; ISO is based on 8 quality management principles: (i) Customer focus (ii) leadership (iii) involvement of people (iv) process approach (v) systems approach to management (vi) continual improvement (vii) factual approach to decision making (viii) mutually beneficial supplier relationships

Service Management : The Essence or Core Concern of Librarianship

1. Nature of the product
2. 'Front Office'
3. The moment of truth in service transaction
4. Personality intensive
5. High customisation
6. No inventories
7. Different distribution channels and Service counters
8. Demand fluctuation and capacity planning
9. Client management, client participation and client as coproducer
- 10 Importance of time factor
- 11 Problems of quality control
- 12 Dimensions of service economy / management
 - (i) Service loading : No price carriers like goods(journals subscription)
 - (ii) Relationing : Longer customer relationship; solid and profitable customer contact
 - (iii) Broadening : Training involving more functions or aspects of what the customers do (water and electricity bills)
 - (iv) Un-building and rebuilding : Offerings are customised or standardised & bundled - package deals
 - (v) Enabling and relieving (self-service) : Reshuffling of tasks between producers & customer; knowledge transfer : do it yourself

Service & NFP Organisations

Not-for-profit organisations

- A residual concept
- Non-profit / non-loss
- Found in social economy
- Not having smart premises
- Not being too commercial
- Not paying high salaries
- Concerned with human needs
- Deal with inanimate matters
- Evoke strong emotional responses
- Prime goal is not to create profits
- Assessment in not by economic measures
- May pursue profit making activities in support of prime goal
- Unmeasurable outputs

- Ambiguous goals - Conflicts due to differences among employees, governing body & voluntary workers
- Lack of agreement of means - ends relationships
- Environmental turbulence - Changes in legislation, technology & the structure of society
- The effects of management intervention are unknown

Public Goods (welfare economics)

1. Pure & impure
 2. Durable & nondurable
 3. Global & local (the internet, knowledge)
- (i) Non-excludability (large external benefits)
 - (ii) Non-rival in consumption
 - (iii) Non-rejectability (eg: pollution as 'bad goods')
 - (iv) Decreasing average costs

Service & NFP Organisations contd.

Difficulty in

- Measuring performance
 - Inspecting quality
 - Determining & implementing specs
 - Sampling & trying in advance
 - Costing (blurred relation between costs and benefits)
1. Intangibility (impalpability)
 2. Inseparability (customer participation)
 3. Heterogeneity (variability)
 4. Perishability (noninventoriability)

5. Other characteristics

- Output is mix of physical facilities and mental or physical labour
- No ownership or title transfer
- Personality intensive (dominated by professionals & customers)
- small & operate on single location
- Less significant role played by market forces
- Excellence is rare & mediocrity is common
- Dissatisfaction is rarely conveyed by customer

Quality in Service

Distinctive characteristics of service are :

1. Intangibility
2. Inseparability
3. Heterogeneity
4. Perishability

Quality in services is intangible, relativistic, indivisible & has a tendency to deteriorate

Definition: Meeting customers' expectations. Customers judge quality by comparing their expectations with their perceptions of what they receive (service experience), i.e., it is a customer-oriented phenomenon; it is defined, judged & deduced by customer based on his experience, expertise, service process, environment, etc.

User evaluation is affected by service process, physical evidence & quality of service personnel

Conformance to customer specifications & expectations (expectation profiles) is important & the technical sense is of little value

Service quality is ultimately defined by the customer irrespective of organizations internal quality specifications. But the problems are:

- Different levels of expectations
- Incorrect interpretations of expectations
- Delivery of inappropriate service
- Failing to match expectations with service

contd.

Quality in Service contd.

1. More difficult to achieve (than in goods)/ Elusive concept as product itself is intangible/ fluid & it is difficult to determine and enforce standards (no SQC & standard)
2. Often, service manager is kept in dark due to : (i) failure to recognising quality problem, (ii) Lack of solid measures & (iii) No complaint from dissatisfied customers (96%)
3. Quality of employee is inseparable from the quality of service provided; Personnel (employee) behaviour is integral part of service, i.e., willingness & ability (skill) to serve, language, dress, communication, etc. matter
4. Service process cannot be evaluated, only outcome can be evaluated by us
5. Price is viewed as a surrogate for service quality (strong association of quality with price)

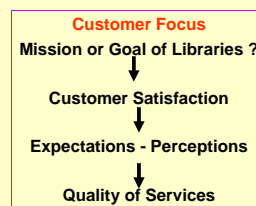
contd.

Quality in Service contd.

6. Service quality is more a function of attitude than technology, i.e., people make quality and not technology or machine, & hence there is a need to overcome the myth that technology equals benefits
7. A shoddy service quality does not necessarily cost less than the superior service quality
8. Service quality = Technical quality (what is received) + Functional quality (how service is received)
9. Quality is greatest lever for marketing (It has to be marketed both internally & externally) & is central to the success of service marketing
10. Difficult to define and measure (like happiness)

Quality of information is the extent to which it meets the needs of users. Quality assessment of information/ information service is complex as the users' perception of accuracy affects

Customer



Five Principles of Gandhi about Customer

1. Customer is the most important person
2. He is not dependent on us, rather we depend on him
3. He is never an interruption to work, rather he is the purpose
4. In serving him the library does no favour to him, rather he obliges us by providing an opportunity to serve him
5. He is not someone to argue with because no one can win an argument with him

Customer Satisfaction

- Priority no. 1
- Measuring satisfaction is nifty; Occurs in 'mental space'
- **Definition:** What a customer expects and how he perceives that service received lived up to those expectations.
Service satisfaction = (customer) expectations – perceptions (of customer)
- **Objective satisfaction** is reduction of the discrepancy between the current situation and the desired situation
- Depend more on customer & his style than technology or system
- Overall post purchase evaluation lead to satisfaction/ dissatisfaction
- A state of experience: intellectual & emotional patron-centered 'Personal reaction / response' depend on (i) Perception (ii) viewpoint (iii) experience & (iv) expertise
- Satisfying a person differs from satisfying a need ; Long term total customer satisfaction is the aim
- Expectations play crucial role & are derived from personal experience ⇒ prior personal knowledge has a strong relation to satisfaction i.e., similar experience & comparison process become important.
- I.o.w. recent performance, cumulative experience, expectations and disconfirmation best predict satisfaction
- Often, wrongly equated with performance (a model) contd.

Customer Satisfaction contd.

1. Customers' expectations tell what to sell and serve (user requirement studies)
 2. Customers' perceptions of service tell how to sell, serve and satisfy (user behavior, attitude, preferences, etc., studies). As they Vary over time & from person to person it has to be on continuous basis
- Perception is a conscious thought process.** It consists of (1) sensory perception (2) association (3) evaluation & (4) decision
- Individual perception is all-encompassing (hopes, fear, upper limits,) and all-powerful.
 - User perception goes deep and when it comes to perception 'feelings are facts'
 - People like to hold on to old ideas and beliefs as though they were valued personal possessions. It requires original thinking which 'hurts' because of considerable effort, self-analysis and risk to adopt new idea.
 - People who do not rethink their past have habitual behaviour. The only people who can change their mind are those who use it
 - Satisfaction has a linear relation to loyalty & repeat purchase (see table for variables (factors) affecting satisfaction)
 - Measuring 'satisfaction' is part of research method. Psychometric factors, practical considerations, choice of scales, administration of questionnaire, etc. are used

Customer Satisfaction in Libraries

1. Expectations

- Image of library helps to determine expectations
- Advertisement & casual conversations affect image
- Image is redefined based on immediate impact when service is approached → dynamic nature
- Previous experience has powerful influence
- Regular users have more realistic expectations ⇒ Gauge through (i) Suggestions(ii) Benchmarking (iii) Focus groups or user panels (iv) Special studies like depth interviews

2. Perception (Both 1 & 2 are linked)

- Impressions & not scientific evaluations
- Formed during delivery process
- Single unfortunate incident can cause changes in other interactions
- To improve : (i) involve customers genuinely (ii) strive for a service wide image of consistency and efficiency

3. Demand

- Satisfaction and demand are closely linked
- Good service generate greater use from limitless pool of latent demand
- Satisfaction is adaptive:-good service over stretched cause drop in satisfaction; poor service retain some customers who are (i) persistent (ii) rarely satisfied and (iii) having low expectations
- The rating further go down as service improves because of (i) attracting more customers (ii) who are more critical (iii) want even higher level of service & (iv) more knowledgeable contd..

User Information Satisfaction (UIS)

- IS function Vs single IS application
- Attribute defined Vs user-defined (idiosyncratic)
- System features Vs system effects
- History based Vs state-based (time frame)
- IS state-based Vs IS schema-based
- UIS is inherently subjective measure
- System quality is considered more objective measure
- UIS & IS use are reciprocally related
- Perceived usefulness mainly measures system's impact
- System's impact on job satisfaction is a complimentary measure (not much research done on both)

UIS as a measure of information system quality has six interdependent categories of measures

1. System quality
2. Information quality
3. User satisfaction
4. Use
5. Individual impact
6. Organizational impact

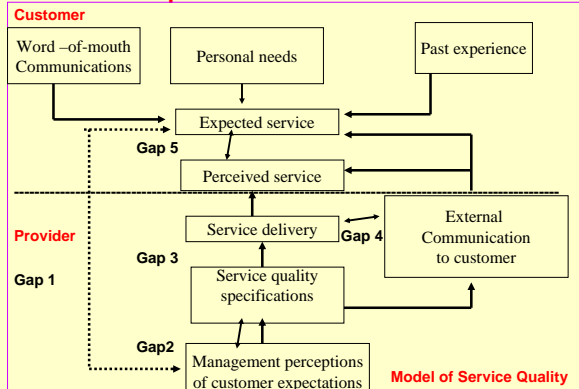
Gaps between Aspiration and Performance in Service Delivery Process

The 5 gaps between aspiration & performance in service delivery process

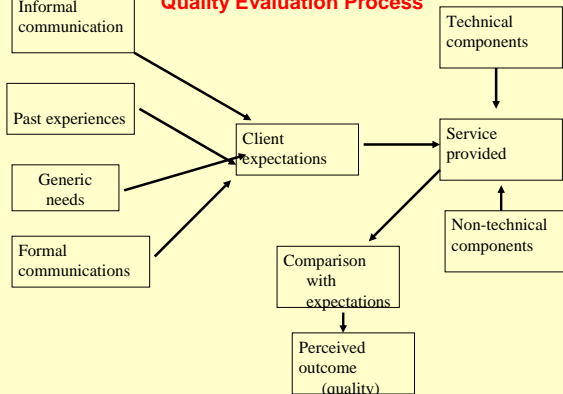
- Gap 1. Not knowing what customers expect
 - Gap 2. Between management's perception of customer's expectations & service quality specifications
 - Gap 3. The service performance gap
 - Gap 4. When promises do not match delivery
 - Gap 5. Between customer's expectations and perceived service
- Service satisfaction = Expectations - Perceptions

Disconfirmation (model) - are expectations (pretrial, post-trial and direct) confirmed by reality (focal / predictive/ normative / average / normal/ ideal / best brand)

The Five Gaps Between Good & Great Service



Quality Evaluation Process



Factors/ Variables Affecting Customer Satisfaction

A. Important

I. Provider

1. Communication process(+ve)
2. Warmth (-ve for female)
3. Interaction type (+ve/-ve)
4. Client perception of provider's interpersonal competence (+ve)

II. Client

1. Involvement(+ve)
2. Amount of effort expended (+ve)
3. Amount/ level of economic reasoning used (+ve)

III. Situation/ Service

1. Long duration of patient-doctor relationship (+ve)
2. Perception by the patient that the doctor cares/has patient's best interests at heart (+ve)
3. Perceived equity or positive non-equity (+ve)
4. Has an intermediary vs an end-user search (+ve)
5. Client being present for an online search(-ve)
6. Greater or more specific product information available (+ve)
7. Speed of reply to a non-monetary complaint

Factors/ Variables Affecting Customer Satisfaction

contd.

B. Unimportant

I. Provider

1. Counselor formality or experience

II. Client (demographic factor & personality characteristics)

1. Gender, age, race, education, income, sociodemographic variables
2. Attitude toward technology
3. Knowledge of databases & topic

III. Situation

1. Format of information provided
2. Number of choices offered

Satisfaction Levels

• Kano map approach

1. **Basic quality**- taken for granted: not formally stated; can produce dissatisfaction only; unless basic is achieved higher level is difficult
2. **Performance quality** - negotiated between customer and supplier; can produce either satisfaction or dissatisfaction
3. **Surprise (delight) quality**- over and above normally and realistically expected; cannot cause dissatisfaction

• Shiv Khera

1. **Miserable**- irritate customer and give unforgettable experience
2. **Careless and unconcerned** - no care; indifferent to customer needs
3. **Anticipated** - no more, no less
4. **Competent** - ability (skill) + desire (positive attitude) to serve
5. **Exceptional** -competence+ courtesy; lead to delightful experience and loyalty

Types of Customers & Reasons for Dissatisfaction

(A Canadian survey of 17 professional services)

Major Reasons for Customer Dissatisfaction

- 19.2% service provided in a careless & unprofessional manner
- 12.3% treated like an object rather than individual
- 8.8% service not performed correctly for the first time
- 8.2% service performed incompletely with harmful results
- 6.8% things were worse after service than before
- 5.9% treated with extreme rudeness

Consumer behaviour in response to unsatisfactory service experience

- 25.9% Decided to quit
- 25.9% warned family and friends
- 8.9% contacted the company to complain

Types of customers

- 36% Happy-go-lucky
- 23% Know-it-all
- 18% Proud and in a hurry
- 9% Worrying and fussy
- 8% Angry and anxious
- 6% Shy and nervous

Why customers quit?

- 1% die
- 3% move away
- 5% form other friendship
- 9% competitive reasons
- 14% product service dissatisfaction
- 68% indifferent attitude of service personnel / employee

Learn from Dissatisfied customers

Dissatisfied customers are our best teachers

- Normally & approximately 1/3 are very satisfied
- 1/3 are reasonably satisfied
- 1/3 are not fully satisfied (10% of this may be fully dissatisfied)
- probe & locate them, 1/3 of problem is solved
- Do not worry, you can never please 100% of customers, 100% of times & 100% of the days

Types of dissatisfied customers

- Mr. Shy : The passive responder
- Mr. Now : The problem solver
- Mr. Revenge : The aggressive responder

Implications of Consumers' Evaluation of Services

1. Emphasise word-of-mouth communication
 2. Match physical facilities to the desired impression of quality image
 3. Alert on consumers' expectations and demands (as consumers play the role of competitor)
 4. Provide incentives for innovation diffusion
 5. Reduce perceived risk
 6. Develop strong brand loyalty
- Types of Employees in a Service Setup**
- Willing employees
 - Neutral employees
 - Impossible employees

Handling Difficult & Complaining Customers

Handling Difficult Customers

- 96 percent dissatisfied customers don't complain
- Expectations of customers are reasonable
- Handle difficult customers with tact

What do complaining customers want?

1. To be taken seriously and to be treated with respect
2. Immediate action feeling or words from your heart
3. Compensation apology
4. Someone to be reprimanded or punished
5. Clear up the problem
6. To be listened to

Expectations of your customers (96%) are reasonable

- Listen to them
- You will "fight" for them
- You will "feel" for them

Customer Service

- customer service - Your best sales tool
- Customers must be given the best possible service
- Customer satisfaction requires a professional work culture
- Satisfying a customer is everybody's business
- Advertising makes promises, but only people can keep them

Customer Management

1. Can timing of demand be influenced?
2. Does the customer have spare time while he is waiting?
3. Do customers and contact personnel meet unnecessarily face to face?
4. Are such contacts used to the maximum effect?
5. Are contact personnel doing respective work which the customer could do himself (e.g. customer-operated machines)
6. Do the customers sometime try to 'get past' the contact personnel and do things themselves? could that interest and knowledge be better utilised?
7. Do the customers show interest in a knowledge about the tasks of the contact personnel?
8. Is there minority of customers which disturbs the service delivery system and its effectiveness?
9. Do the customers ask for information which is available elsewhere?
10. Can the customers do more work for each other, or use the resources of 'third parties'?
11. Can part of the service delivery process be relocated to decrease cost? (e.g. cost of premises)
12. Can the customer be given an opportunity to choose between service levels?

How to Make Customer Happy?

(How to sell, serve & satisfy customers)

Selling

1. Have empathy
2. Customer is boss
3. Customer is profit not overhead
4. Give importance to people
 - Service employees
 - Customers
5. Create customers
6. Communicate continuously

Serving

7. Focus on & serve first 100 customers
8. Be customer-oriented
9. Develop customer-oriented policies

10. Give best possible service
11. Customers want answers & solutions to their problems
12. Fight for your customer

Satisfying

13. Listen
14. Visit customer
15. Check employees attitude towards customers
16. Solve small problems
17. Learn from dissatisfied customers
18. Practice the art of when to say "No"

Effectiveness of Library & Information Services

- effect a library has on its users
- efficiency of process in itself is irrelevant

Orr:

- How good is this library (quality)
 - How much good does this library do ? (value)
- Good implies meeting customer requirements. A library which is 'good' also 'does good', if it does not do good, it is meaningless to call good)
- Use ratio analysis as performance indicator / comparing with standard input as a proxy measure of output
 - Process improvement
 - Professional review
 - Historical data
 - Systems approach
 - Organic approach: survival as primary objective (growth, good health & well-being)
- . Note that UK government (HMSO), IFLA & ISO have measures

ISO Measures of performance

1. **Compliance** - adherence of the measurement to predetermined requirements
2. **Effectiveness** - having a definite or desired effect or result (doing the right job)
 - = $\frac{\text{actual outcome}}{\text{desired outcome}} \times 100$
3. **Efficiency** - the ratio of the actual resource used to the total resource consumed for performing a work (doing the job right)
 - = $\frac{\text{Actual utilization of input or activity}}{\text{Total resource used}} \times 100$
4. **Excellence** - Superior quality of performance and output over and above expected
 - is characterised by (i) obsession for proactive and reflective actions (ii) passion for customer care (iii) encouragement for innovative and creative ideas (iv) respect and value for people as human beings (v) leadership by example (vi) concentration on core competencies (vii) reduced bureaucracy (viii) visionary and strategic approach to planning (ix) ability to treat problems as opportunities (x) control on all forms of waste (xi) supplier relationship (xii) anticipatory problem solving (xiii) value for knowledge and skill

Dimensions or Attributes of Service Quality in LIS

Dimensions or Attributes of Service Quality

1. Performance
2. Features
3. Reliability
4. Conformance
5. Durability (obsolescence / update ness)
6. Serviceability (time & cost)
7. Aesthetics
8. Perceived quality

Service quality in LIS is judged on

1. Friendliness
2. Courtesy
3. Lack of quality
4. Reputation

Tips

- Small incremental changes for continuous improvements
- Pay obsessive attention to details
- Have statistical measures
- Adopt standards & agreed guidelines

Tips for Better Service Quality

- A. Service quality is ultimately defined & decided by customers
 - B. When come to perception 'feelings are facts'
 - Service personnel's willingness and ability to serve (skills), language, dress, etc matter of customer's experience
 - Communication gaps & over promises
 - Service proliferation and complexity; too much newness
 - Viewing customer as statistics (i.e., dehumanizing) & service insensitivity.
 - C. Customer evaluation of service is affected by
 - service delivery process
 - physical evidence
 - quality of service personnel
 - D. In appraising a service, customers give importance to :
 - Reliability** - dependency, accuracy & consistency
 - Responsiveness** - response to demand & prompt delivery
 - Assurance** - Courteous, knowledgeable and assuring service from employee
 - Empathy** - Individualised & personalised attention
- contd.

Tips for Better Service Quality contd.

- Tangibility** - physical evidence associated with the service facilities should be clean and employees should be well groomed
 - Competence** - of service personnel
 - Courtesy** - overall courtesy of employees i.e., politeness, respect, friendliness, security, ease of contact, communication and an honest effort to understand customers
 - E. Service quality
 - Technique quality (what is received-hard part)
 - Functional quality (how it is received - soft part)
 - F. Shoddy service quality does not necessarily cost less than the superior service quality
 - G. Price is a surrogate (carrier) for service quality
 - H. Sell 'Quality' to internal audience: the quality of the employee who provide service is inseparable from the quality of service provided. Sell the idea first to these internal audience (service personnel):- willingness & ability (skill) to serve, language, dress, etc., matter
 - I. Create 'Customer focus & care' culture
 - J. Tangibilise the service & improve physical evidence
- contd.

Tips for Better Service Quality contd.

- K. Encourage 'word of mouth' communication about quality among staff & customers
- L. Promise what can be delivered
- M. Invite complaints

Nutshell

1. Identify quality determinants
2. Manage customer expectations
3. Manage evidence
4. Educate customers
5. Develop quality culture
6. Automating quality
7. Follow up the service

Note: Service quality is the conformance of services to customer specifications and expectations.

1 step: determine the target group's expectations i.e., the benefits that the customer expect from the service

next: Develop appropriate service products to match the customers 'expectation profiles'

Steps to Improve Service quality

1. Recognise 'quality' problem
2. Determine the target group's expectations
3. Develop appropriate service products
4. First sell the idea of 'quality' to the internal audience (staff)
5. Create a 'customer focus & care' culture
6. Look for customer-oriented measures to improve 'quality'
7. Tangibilise the service offered
8. Improve physical evidence
9. Make the service easily understood
10. Encourage 'word of mouth' about quality with staff & users
11. Promise what can be delivered
12. Invite complaints from dissatisfied customers

Conclusions

Remember in appraising/ evaluating service customers give importance to:

- Reliability (dependency, accuracy & consistency)
 - Responsiveness (quick & prompt delivery)
 - Assurance (courteous, knowledgeable & assuring employee)
 - Empathy (individualised & personalised attention)
 - Tangibility (clean physical evidence & well groomed employee)
 - Competency (of service employee)
 - Courtesy (of service personnel)
1. Performance of a library system or service cannot be used as a proxy for customer satisfaction
 2. Patron judgements differ from those of experts
 3. Satisfaction is heavily influenced by expectations.
 4. 'Correcting' the 'incorrect' expectations is necessary
 5. Emotional satisfaction is different from (and not entirely caused by) the satisfaction of a discrete information request.
 6. 'Quality service' can be achieved through broader conception of the 'satisfaction process'

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