

CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF QUALITY SERVICE: A CASE OF PASSPORT OFFICE PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to identify the customer perception towards quality service for passport office Peshawar Pakistan. The study has used the Servqual model for its conceptual framework for the definition of quality in service sector. The model describes eight components of service quality which have been measured on a 5 point likert scale starting from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Study has used non probability sampling and on convenient basis on a sample of 300 respondents the final analysis was made. Findings of the study shows that Passport office Peshawar Pakistan need improvement in their offerings as the eight factors of quality are not offered effectively i.e time and accessibility which leads dissatisfaction. Managers can use this in their offices and can implement these eight dimensions of quality in their offerings and can increase their customer satisfaction.

Key Words: Service, Quality, Customer Perception, Passport Offices Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of quality is defined by various experts but in each and every organization its theme can vary but the concept is the same. The study of Juran (2001) describe that quality is freedom from defects keeping this view in mind every organization must follow the errors and defects free system and offering to their consumers. Understanding the quality system offerings in Pakistan, the passport office is selected for this study to find how consumers of passports offices perceive their quality and offerings. Study has selected the Passport office Peshawar for this reason to find if any gap exists in the offerings of services and the consumers perception and expectations which they have for the Passport office. Kotler (2001) describe the concept of customer perceived value as the cost benefit analysis. In the study of Kotler and Keller (2009) explain that customer value is the positive difference between the benefit customer gain and the cost a customer pay in order to gain the product. He explains that there are four types of benefits and four types of cost that a customer faces Shankar, Amy, Smith & Rangaswamy, 2003 (Shankar et.al, 2003).

The first benefit that a customer gain is product, that product must be in functioned condition and should solve the problem of the customers. The second benefit he explains is the image of the brand that company is providing. Stronger the image greater the advantage for consumers. He also explains that customers are some time provided with personal benefit. The fourth benefit is the value added services which is provided to customer. According to the study of Afshin,et.al (2012) describe that relation base

marketing is a benefit to consumer and increasing benefit obviously increase value. The value added services can further be enriched with help of relation based marketing (Zineldin and Philipson, 2007).

According to the study of Kotler and Keller (2009) it is described that there are four types of cost. The most prominent cost is price of the product or monetary cost. The study of Solomon, et.al Bamossy, Askegaard Hogg (2006) describe that price of the product is the most crucial cost that a customer pays for the product. As per the study of Skindaras (2009), it is discussed that company should reduce the price in order to create maximum value to consumers. The second type of cost is time that a customer consumes in buying of a product. Energy cost is also another cost at consumer end. To gain a product consumer waste his energy along with his psyche (Bowen and Chen 2007). This is the reason that consumers are now days fully provided in all aspect for one particular reason to reduce the customer over all cost Ndubisi (2007). Providing product in market, and ensuring that product is available at every retail store, all this because of one reason to reduce the customer time and energy cost. In certain product, like technology involved items, the concept of user friendly products is increasing for the reason to reduce the psyche cost of the product in order to increase value for the consumers (Crosby & Stephens, Nancy, 2001).

This research will emphasize the consumer perception towards passport office Peshawar Pakistan that what is the perception of the customers of passport office Peshawar Pakistan and what is the realty. Study will also find the gap analysis of the quality service offered by passport office and its comparison with customer perceived value that is this service offering is according to the expectations or not ?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Service:

It is very difficult to define service, as it is something very subjective. Customers react differently to the same service. Same customers can indeed react differently to the same services in different circumstances (Walker 1990).

Gronroos (1984) defines service as something, which is provided by a certain type of organization. Service is something which can be bought and sold but which you cannot drop on your feet. Services are deeds, processes and performances.

Customer Services

According to Juran (1999), a customer is anyone who has an impact by the product or process. The traditional view of customer is someone (a person, company or an entity) who purchases products or services provided by another (person, company or an entity). Customer services can be defined as “where the transaction makes the customer feel you are good business to do business with or the services what make your customers happy to comeback”

Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) state that customer services are provided by all types of companies, e.g. manufacturers, IT companies and service companies in support of a

company's core products. Customer service is the sum total of what an organization has done to meet customer expectations and produce customer satisfaction.”

Quality

First it is important to understand the definition of the quality. There are many definitions; however, still some experts are looking for an appropriate definition, which can cover different perspectives.

- A couple of definitions are given below:
- “Characteristics which can complete the requirements, needs or want of consumers” (ISO 9000:2000).
- “Any thing called quality if it is free from defects”.
- “Quality should cover both current and future wants of consumers” (Edwards Deming).
- “Fitness for use” (Joseph Juran).

Mikel Harry from Six-Sigma Academy defines: quality is a state in which value entitlement is realized for the customer and provider in every aspect of the business relationship”.

In addition to these definitions, Bergman and Klefsjo (2003) have defined quality as the ability of a product to satisfy, or preferably exceed, the needs and expectations of the customer”. Each of these definitions come from different perspectives and emphasizes on different issues. For instance, Crosby has defined quality as “conformance to requirements” that has a producer perspective, and Deming's and Juran's definitions have a user-based perspective. Although, almost all of these definitions are used for manufacturing products and services, since no one has yet satisfactorily defined or measured quality, the marketing of quality remains problematic.

SERVQUAL MODEL OF QUALITY

Time

In service organizations the concept of time is an important factor which contributes for the quality. Time is the duration of an activity which is taken for the completion of a task. In public sector this has been observed that service sector takes more time for the completion of a task as compared to the private sector (Bahia and Nantel, 2000).

Timelines

For the completion of every activity a timeline is given by the firms to perform it. Consumer face problem when the good or service is not provided in the given framework. The study of Bahia and Nantel (2000) describes that complaint handling is an important issue and after the customer complaint the firm has to respond within the given time. Their study shows that private sector organizations are more sensitive towards the deadlines and time frames.

Courtesy

Courtesy is the behavior of employees towards their customers that how smoothly or roughly they are responding towards the clients they face. The rude behavior of employees can make the clients angry their motivation down. The study of Jayaraman, et.al Shankar and Mun (2010) described that in a call center the pleasant talk with customer brought them towards organizational service and convinced them to purchase their offerings. The study of Evans and William (1999) also suggests that courtesy in behavior of front desk employees make consumer loyal towards those offerings.

Consistency

Consistency is the same flow of offerings to each and every customer for the first and the next time. Most of the time a service or an activity consists of various steps. Couple of steps runs smooth but an activity within that process slows down the process which leads consumer dissatisfaction. The study of Biolos (2002) describes that keeping consistent performance in an organization is more difficult than to make the standards for the first time. The study of Walter, Ken and et.al Curtis (1999) describes that one of the most important factor behind the success of a market leader is their consistent performance in all areas of their offerings.

Accessibility and Convenience

The study of Owais (2011) described that availability is the important factor as the consumer rationality is dependent upon its availability. Availability is the first factor for the rest of processes attached to the offerings of a company. The study of Owais (2011) shows that availability makes it convenient to the consumers to get an offering more fast and rapidly in time. Kotler (2001) describes that place is the factor that is related to the convenience premise of access to a particular product.

Accuracy

Accuracy is the right service provided for the first and repeated time. For the retention of consumer accuracy is an important factor and it plays a crucial role. Joseph and Godfrey (1999) describe that behind customer repeat purchases the service accuracy is responsible. There are many factors responsible for the customer satisfaction one of them is accurate offerings.

Responsiveness

Giving feedback to customer on time and appropriate response make the service offering more superior. Understanding the issues and problems of consumers is one of the most important antecedent. A good firm goes beyond the expectations and more for the solution of those problems which are faced by the customer. It also provides a positive unexpected feedback et.al Jayaraman, Shankar and Mun (2010). The non responsive organizations have a greater consumer switching rate due to their dissatisfaction.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This figure below shows that there are eight factors which explain the concept of quality in service sector. These eight factors are time, timelines, completeness, courtesy, consistency, accessibility, accuracy and responsiveness. This research will assess and find these eight dimensions in the content of quality for the passport office of Peshawar Pakistan.

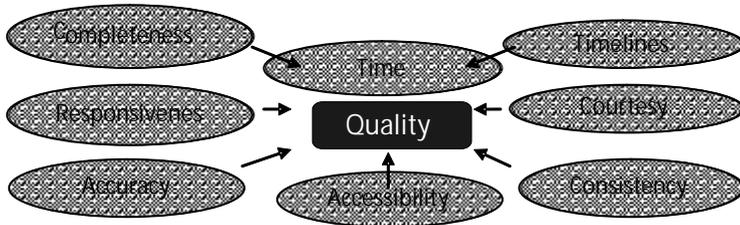


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework of the Study.

METHODOLOGY

The research paper demonstrates to discover the factors that influence customer perception for the quality service offered by passport office Peshawar Pakistan. The research has followed research methodology.

Population and Procedure

The customer of passport office of Peshawar Pakistan were the target of this study. Study had used non probability sampling and on convenience basis a sample of 300 respondents was selected. Total 291 respondents were selected for the final analysis. Discreptive study was used to find out the results of the study.

Questionnaire

For data collection a structured questionnaire was used as an instrument. Series of close ended questions were composed in order to get appropriate information from respondents.

Questionnaire was divided into two parts, first was based on the Demographical background. Second part was based on eight factors of quality in services. A Five point Likert Scale was adopted from the study of Saunders, Lewis and Thoruhill (2003) to measure the variables and the purpose was to indicate that those variables influence customer perception for the passport office Peshawar Pakistan.

Socio-Demographic Profile

Table 1 below shows the demographical analysis of 291 respondents. Descriptive table below shows that 97.6% of the respondents are male and 2.4% respondents are female. Table 1 also explained that 4.1% respondents were in income group of above 10000 and below 20,000. Study shows that 12.4% respondent's income is between 20,000 to 30000 while 24.1% respondent's income is between 30,000 to 40,000. Those respondents'

whose income is between 40,000 to 50,000 are only 49.8% and respondents whose income is more than 50,000 are 9.6%.

Results of the study shows that 89.3% respondents are graduate and only 10.7% respondents are undergraduate. Results of the study shows that 1% respondents belong to education, 1.7% from health sector, 2.4% belong to engineering, 31.6% belong to administration and 63.2% belong to other professions.

Table 1: Demographical Result

Measures	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	284	97.6%
	Female	7	2.4%
Income	10> and < 20	12	4.1%
	20> and < 30	36	12.4%
	30> and < 40	70	24.1%
	40> and < 50	145	49.8%
	50>	28	9.6%
Education	Graduate	260	89.3%
	Undergraduate	31	10.7%
Profession	Education	3	1%
	Health	5	1.7%
	Engineering	7	2.4%
	Administration	91	31.6%
	Other	184	63.2%

RESULTS

The following results in table 2 shows the descriptive statistics results that give a detail for the mean values of each question asked for the respondents regarding the quality service in Passport office Peshawar Pakistan.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Questions	Scale												Mean	Total
	SD		D		N		A		SA					
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%				
1. I wait to receive the service for Hours.	2	.7	27	9.3	62	21.3	163	56	37	12.7	3.7079	291		
2. I receive the service when it is promised	1	.3	54	18.6	119	40.9	74	25.4	43	14.8	3.3574	291		
3. I receive all the aspects of the service (the bundle of the services which I expect)	4	1.4	64	22	82	28.2	126	43.3	15	5.2	3.2887	291		
4. I am received by employees cheerfully	2	.7	41	14.1	105	36.1	105	31.1	35	12	3.4570	291		
5. I believe services are delivered in the same manner for every customer, and every time for the same customer	14	4.8	45	15.5	56	19.2	120	41.2	56	19.2	3.5464	291		
6. It is easy and convenient to obtain services required	15	5.2	79	27.1	81	27.8	69	23.7	47	16.2	3.1856	291		
7. I receive the service right the first time	13	4.5	54	18.6	71	24.2	135	46.4	18	6.2	3.3127	291		
8. The service personnel react quickly	2	.7	52	17.9	77	26.5	126	43.3	34	11.7	3.4742	291		
9. The service personnel resolve unexpected problems	2	.7	35	12	47	16.2	190	65.3	17	5.8	3.6357	291		
10. The service I receive is a good value for money	10	3.4	69	23.7	68	23.4	102	35.1	42	14.4	3.3333	291		
11. The overall quality of services is	4	1.4	64	22	84	28.9	120	41.2	19	6.5	3.2955	291		

The above table 2 represents that respondents for question no 1, only .7% respondents selected strongly disagree, 9.3% disagree, 21.3% are neutral, 56% agree and 12.7% strongly agree. From this it can be observed that more than 68% respondents agree to the statement that they wait to receive the service for hours so time issue must be considered by Passport office Peshawar Pakistan in order to enhance the better quality of its offering.

Tha above table 2 represents that respondents for question no 2, only .3% respondents selected strongly disagree, 18.6% disagree, 40.9% are neutral, 25.4% agree and 14.8% strongly agree. These results can be interpreted that majority of the respondents don't know what the service was supposed to offer and what do they receive from Passport office. While an equal proportion of respondents believe the receive the same service which was promised.

Above table 2 represents that respondents for question no 3, only 1.4% respondents selected strongly disagree, 22% disagree, 28.2% are neutral, 43.3% agree and 5.2% strongly agree. It can be concluded that 50% respondents perceive the expected quality of the services.

Above table 2 shows that respondents for question No 4, only .7% respondents select strongly disagree, 14.1% disagree, 36.1% are neutral, 31.1% agree and 12% strongly agree. From these results it can be concluded that the passport office must (work on what? Describe your Question here).

Above table 2 represent that respondents for question no 5, only 4.8% respondents select strongly disagree, 15.5% disagree, 19.2% are neutral, 41.2% agree and 19.2% strongly agree. From these result it can be concluded that Passport office delivers uniform service to every customer as 60 of respondents agree (write the statement).

From above table 2 it is observed that respondents for question No 6, have this trend, only 5.2% respondent's selected strongly disagree, 27.1% disagree, 27.8% are neutral, 23.7% agree and 16.2% strongly agree.

For question no 7, only 4.5% respondent's selected strongly disagree, 18.6% disagree, 24.2% are neutral, 46.4% agree and 6.2% strongly agree. Respondents of the study show that they receive the right service for the first time.

Above table 2 represents that respondents for question No. 8, 7% selected strongly disagree, 17.9% disagree, 26.5% are neutral, 43.3% agree and 11.7% strongly agree. These results can be interpreted that more than 50% respondents showed that the personnel responded them quickly for the service which mean that the service personnel are efficient in the service offering at passport office Peshawar Pakistan.

The table also represents that respondents for question No. 9, 7% respondents selected strongly disagree, 12% disagree, 16.2% are neutral, 65.3% agree and 5.8% strongly agree. Results show that 70% respondent-s problems were solved at the spot while getting the service.

It also represents that respondents for at the spot question No. 10, 3.4% selected strongly disagree, 23.7% disagree, 23.4% are neutral, 35.1% agree and 14.4% strongly agree.

These results can be interpreted that 505 respondents think that the service they receive is a good value for money.

When respondents were asked about the over all quality service of passport office Peshawar Pakistan in question No. 8, only 1.4% respondents select strongly disagree, 22% disagree, 28.9% are neutral, 41.2% agree and 6.5% strongly agree. The respondents are moderate about the overall quality of the services.

Agreed and Disagree Respondents

The following table 3 shows the responses of agreed and disagreed respondents to the questions asked about the quality service offered at passport office Peshawar Pakistan. Below table 3 states that out of 291 respondents 200 agree that they wait for the service for hours while only 29 believe that they did not wait for the services for hours.

Table 3: Responses of Agreed and Disagreed respondents

Questions	Table 3		
	Disagreed	Agree	Total
	f	f	f
1. I wait to receive the service for (Hours.)	29	200	291
2. I receive the service when it is promised	55	117	291
3. I receive the all the aspects of the service (the bundle of the services which I expect)	68	141	291
4. I am received by employees cheerfully	43	140	291
5. I believe services are delivered in the same manner for every customer, and every time for the same customer	59	176	291
6. It is easy and convenient to obtain services required	94	116	291
7. I receive the service right the first time	67	153	291
8. The service personnel react quickly	54	180	291
9. The service personnel resolve unexpected problems	37	207	291
10. The service I receive is a good value for money	79	144	291
11. The overall quality of services is	68	139	291

55 respondents disagree to the statement they receive the service when it is promised and 117 agree to the statement. 141 respondents agree to the statement that they receive the expected service while 68 respondents disagree to it. 140 respondents were received by employees cheerfully while 43 disagree to this statement. 176 respondents believe that service was uniform to every customer while 59 respondents believe that service is not uniform for all the customers. When respondents were asked about the convenience aspects of service 94 disagree while 116 are agreeing to the statement. In response to question no seven, 67 respondents disagree and 153 are agree. 67 respondents responded that service personnels do not react quickly while 180 respondents believe that they responded efficiently. 37 respondents' thinks that their unexpected problems were not resolved while 207 respondents believe that their problems were solved. 144 respondents agree that the service is a good value for money while 79 disagree. Last the

over all quality of offering, 68 respondents disagree to overall quality of passport office Peshawar Pakistan while 139 agree that the service is of good quality.

Key Findings

Below, table 4 shows the key findings of the study. These findings are provided on the basis of Table No 2.

Table 4:

Questions	Table 4
	Findings
1. I wait to receive the service for (Hours.)	Need serious improvement and consideration in this area as 200 respondents says they take long time to receive the service.
2. I receive the service when it is promised	The service promised 117 agree and 55 disagree
3. I receive all the aspects of the service (the bundle of the services which I expect)	141 agree and 68 disagree
4. I am received by employees cheerfully	140 respondents received cheerfully while 43 are disagree
5. I believe services are delivered in the same manner for every customer, and every time for the same customer	176 agree to the statement while 59 are not agreeing. They must provide the service to everyone in the same manner.
6. It is easy and convenient to obtain services required	116 say that it is easy to receive service while 67 are disagreeing.
7. I receive the service right the first time	153 agree and 67 disagree.
8. The service personnel react quickly	----- -
9. The service personnel resolve unexpected problems	207 respondents' response that their unexpected problems were solved while 37 responses does not agree to the statement.
10. The service I receive is a good value for money	144 respondents believe that the service is good for money while 79 does not think so.
11. The overall quality of services is good	139 respondents were satisfied with overall quality service of Passport office while 68 are disagree to the statement.

The main fact that is inferred from the study is the time factor. As mentioned in table No 3 above a maximum number of respondents are not happy with time factor and they responded that they spent hours for receiving the services.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main aim of this research was to find that how eight components of quality, in Passport office Peshawar Pakistan is affecting customer perception towards passport office offering. From the above results, the following findings and conclusion is drawn. It is concluded that eight factors of quality must be considered seriously in Passport office of Peshawar Pakistan as the respondents mean values are in between 3.2 and 3.7. People agree to the statement that they receive passport service for several hours with mean value of 3.7 (200 respondents agree with 68.7%). Time is an important factor for describing quality concept in service sectors so the passport office must consider this factor more seriously for quality improvement.

Limitations and Future Scope of Research

The study was having several limitations including time frame, resources, data collection and respondents reluctance to respond towards research work. Only a minor percent of female respondents were contacted due to the culture factor. Study can be

further enlarged and can be researched cross sectional to compare the performances of various passport offices services in Pakistan. Study can be conducted with even more large sample to have more appropriate representation of population and final results. Study has used only one model to access the service quality of passport office Peshawar Pakistan. Some other factors and model can also be considered.

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