PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY VS CUSTOMER EXPECTATION IN MOTORCYCLE SHOP

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Science (Information Technology - Management)

Faculty of Computing
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

AUGUST 2014

Dedicated to my beloved family, especially my lovely mother, my brothers and to my friend, whose love, understanding, encouragement and prayers will always guide and inspire me. Thank you so much and may God bless you always.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Dr. **Mohd Zaidi Abd Rozan**, for his constant support during my study at UTM. He inspired me greatly to work on this project. His willingness to motivate me contributed tremendously to our project. I have learned a lot from him and I am fortunate to have him as my mentor and supervisor .

My gratitude also goes to my beloved family members, my lovely mother, my dearest brother Dr. Shahriar Khoshraftar and my friend for their sacrifices, prayers, encouragement, love, understanding, and support, they have extended me every step of my life. It was their love that raised me up again when I got weary.

I thank you all.

ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction is an important concept to any business who wants to be competitive in market places. It is very important for companies to know how to measure this concept from the consumers' perspective in order to better understand of needs and hence satisfy them. In Malaysia, despite the fact that the request of motorcycle is increasing, motorcyclist satisfaction is decreasing due to the reason that unfulfilled customer expectation of motorcycle services provided which resulted in customer dissatisfaction. This can be explained by the fact that the lack of customer satisfaction from motorcycle shops indicates the gap appeared between perception and customer expectation of services and product quality. This problem has been left unnoticed and even unexplored in previous research. Therefore, this study purports to adopt the service quality model for describing the gap existing between consumers' expectations and their perceptions, and adopt the notion of SERVQUAL instrument for measuring this gap. Additionally, this study assessed the level of perceived service quality, satisfaction in motorcycle service context by using mean analysis based on a sample of 302 motorcyclist consist of students, administrative and non-administrative staff from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. By means of the SERVQUAL instrument, it is found that gap do exist between customers' expectations and their perceptions related to motorcycle shop. The result indicates that all dimensions have deep gap and the biggest gap belongs to Tangible which indicates the lack of provision of physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of contact and the lowest gap is devoted to Reliability which shows waiting time in received services, which contributes the motorcyclist dissatisfaction. Based on the finding obtained from the survey, this study recommends to firstly increase capacity such as equipment and employee. Secondly, the implication of using IT (website and social network) would be helpful for increasing interaction with customers and also reduce the time of responses. Finally, training and education of employee is to ensure solving customers problems about the services quality and also the employee is updated to overcome the latest weaknesses discovered of services quality. This analysis of motorcycle shop can be used to evaluate them to fortify the weakness. Also motorcycle shop can find appropriate strategy in order to stay competitive.

ABSTRAK

Kepuasan pelanggan adalah satu konsep yang penting untuk mana-mana perniagaan yang mahu berdaya saing di pasaran semasa. Syarikat perlu meletakkan kepentingan mengetahui bagaimana untuk mengukur konsep kepuasan pelanggan dari perspektif pengguna. Dengan cara ini, mereka akan lebih memahami keperluan dan permintaan pelanggan. Di Malaysia, walaupun terdapat permintaan motorsikal yang tinggi daripada pelanggan, kepuasan penunggang motosikal semakin berkurangan disebabkan oleh permintaan diluar jangkaan dari pelanggan. Ini dibuktikan oleh kekurangan kepuasan pelanggan dari kedai-kedai motosikal yang mewujudkan jurang pandangan dan jangkaan pelanggan dari segi perkhidmatan dan kualiti produk. Masalah ini kurang mendapat perhatian dan kajian-kajian terdahulu juga kurang dilakukan berkaitan masalah ini. Oleh itu, kajian ini menggunakan model kualiti perkhidmatan untuk menerangkan jurang yang sedia ada di antara jangkaan pengguna dan persepsi mereka. Ia juga menerima pakai konsep instrumen SERVQUAL bagi mengukur jurang ini. Selain itu, kajian ini menilai tahap kualiti perkhidmatan berdasarkan kepuasan pelanggan dalam konteks perkhidmatan motorsikal dengan menggunakan analisis purata berdasarkan sampel daripada 302 penunggang motosikal terdiri daripada pelajar, kakitangan pentadbiran dan bukan pentadbiran dari Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Melalui SERVQUAL, didapati terdapat jurang yang wujud di antara jangkaan pelanggan dan persepsi mereka yang berkaitan dengan kedai motosikal. Hasil dapatan menunjukkan bahawa semua dimensi mempunyai jurang yang ketara. Dimensi seperti kekurangan penyediaan kemudahan fizikal, peralatan, komunikasi dan jurang yang paling rendah adalah kebolehpercayaan yang menunjukkan masa menunggu dalam perkhidmatan yang diterima. Hasil dapatan ini mendorong tiga saranan penambahbaikan. Pertama, meningkatkan bilangan peralatan dan pekerja. Kedua, penggunaan IT (laman web dan rangkaian sosial) akan membantu untuk meningkatkan interaksi dengan pelanggan dan juga menyingkatkan tempoh maklumbalas dengan pelanggan. Akhir sekali, perlaksanaan latihan dan pendidikan pekerja adalah untuk mengatasi kelemahan yang mempengaruhi kualiti perkhidmatan. Dengan melaksanakan saranan berikut, kedai motosikal boleh membuat penilaian dan penambahbaikan kualiti servis. Kedai motosikal boleh mencari strategi yang sesuai bagi memantapkan perkhidmatan setanding dengan pesaing.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Customer satisfaction is considered as a serious subject for the achievement of several business activities (Ho and Wu, 1999). For sustaining the development and market share, companies should know different ways for satisfying their customers, as customer satisfaction is important for launching long-term customer associations (Patterson and Spreng, 1997). Additionally, there is essential need of research regarding the customer satisfaction based on the increasing need for the long-term effectiveness of businesses (Pather, Erwin et al., 2003). On the other hand, regarding the motorcycle activities, service quality is identified as the most important factor and; likewise the association between satisfaction and service quality seems important for measuring customer satisfaction (Pitt Watson et al., 1995) by high quality of services, customer would be interested to continue buying whereas low services class leads to low satisfaction. So, customer satisfaction and service quality is a subject of special status to several business like motorcycle services to be competitive in the market areas (Asubonteng, McCleary et al., 1996). Service quality may thus refer to the difference between customer expectation of service and perceived service. Expectation is defined as desire and wants of customers because this allows services provider to know exactly what should be offered and this is based on past experiences and information received. Expectations are also viewed as predictions made by consumers about what is likely to happen during impending transaction or exchange (Zeithaml and Berry, 1988). Also customer perception means customer feeling of pleasure /displeasure or the reaction of the customer in relation to the performance of services. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and as a result customer dissatisfaction happens (Parasuraman, Zeithaml et al. 1985; Lewis and Mitchell 1990). The customer intends if expectation has been encountered by relating the perceived performance with the expected performance. It usually shows the foundation of a judgment for purchasing and also determining purchase satisfaction. After the purchase of the supplies, the customer becomes aware of the actual performance and customer satisfaction happens due to associating the actual performance with expected performance (Häubl, 1996).

Measuring services quality customer expectation and perceived services has been considered as two perceptions which have effects on customer satisfaction. According to Robinson (1999), it is apparent that there is little consensus of opinion and much disagreement about how to measure service quality. The most applicable measurement for services quality is SERVQAL model which has been developed by (Parasuraman, Zeithaml et al., 1985;Zeithaml, Parasuraman et al., 1990; Shahin, 2006). The SERVQUAL model is presented to assess in term of the conceptual of services quality specifically and the gap between customer expectation and perceives services quality (Lewis and Booms 1983;Grönroos 1984;Parasuraman, Zeithaml et al. 1985).

The area of the current study refers to the motorcycle shop activity as variations in the competitive setting and enhancing the customers' expectation regarding product quality, service quality and customers 'satisfaction are driving motorcycle producers' to place a better amount of focus on understanding customers' ideas and behaviour for maintaining and growing market share and success (Shaharudin, Mansor et al., 2011). Recently, motorcycles have become a popular mode of transportation in Malaysia (Agustina and Iman, 2010). Thus, here are several factors contributing to this phenomenon, namely poor public transport system in Malaysia, high car parking rates, and prevalent traffic congestion especially in the city centre. These phenomena have created the interest to study about the motorcycle. They believe that the key causal issues that makes it important is the sector of traffic. They also believed that as a consequence of the accumulative amount of cars on the streets and highway each year; so traffic has stretched a serious level particularly in the city centres. Therefore, by looking at these, motorcycles play the role as a valuable method of transport intended for commuting in the city zone; particularly in traffic because of its small extent and great manoeuvrability. Also, according to Leong, Vien et al., (2006) parking places for motorcycles are easier to discover in comparison with cars. Moreover, the public transport coordination in Malaysia is inadequate. These can be the cause of the cumulative sales of motorcycle. As reported by RMP (2008), in Malaysia, the request for motorcycle is escalating and around 48% of vehicle population are motorcyclist (Khairul, Ibrahim et al., 2011), till end of 2009 the yearly average of registration is around 1,574,475 new motorcycles in Johor. The states of Johor received maximum recorded motorcycle possession (Leong, Vien et al., 2006) and hence, all this phenomena have contributed that the research has been accomplished in motorcycle.

1.2 Background of the Study

Considering customer's needs is one of the most significant elements in competitive market places. Thus, there has been a shift from product-centric to a customer-centric position in companies. Important influences of the factor "satisfaction" on customer retention, has made it of great interest to practitioners (Patterson and Spreng, 1997). Because customers are able to simply shift from one provider to another one, retention has become an important challenge through customers (Khalifa and Liu ,2003).

Customer satisfaction plays a crucial role in the businesses associated with the operation of motorcycle services and related products quality. High quality customer service is the main indicator to determine whether the businesses will succeed or fail (Agustina and Iman, 2010).

According to Li, Ni et al., (2012), in the perspective of research it can be investigated that the study of motorcycles customer satisfactions still unoccupied ,in addition to dissatisfied customers can cause a lot of damage for a business. Smith (2010) observed that dissatisfied customers tend to spread their negative experiences to more people than satisfied customers. According to Li, Ni et al., (2012) initial research in expectations and satisfaction provided evidence that increasing expectations prior to service received resulted in increased negative perceptions about the services, if the performance of the services did not measure up to the expectations. These are great discrepancies between perceived performance and expectation from customers points of view (perceived performance is less than expectation) that make them dissatisfied. Li, Ni et al., (2012) seeks to examine the satisfaction of customers in motorcycle business.

On the other hand, according to the observation the inadequate of motorcycle shop is highlighted in Skudai and according to reported in Malaysia the request for motorcycle is highly increase to around 1,574,475 and also base on the statistic it can be inferred that the states of Johor has the maximum recorded motorcycle possession (Leong, Vien et al., 2006). Parallel to increasing number of people interested in buying motorcycles, there is a lack of adequate market to fulfil their expectation at the same time leads to a waiting time in the process of providing services. Since, most customers do not expect to wait a long time in order to receive services. Particularly, long waiting time contributes to lower customer’s satisfaction stage and cause the customer leave the line and not return (Lee and Lambert, 2006).

Providing operative customer service leads to an effective customer’s relationship which is a substantial factor for industrial businesses to become successful (Sing, 2002). Companies are required to satisfy the customers by providing high quality services and as the result they can receive higher share of the market and better returns (Siu and Mou, 2003). Discovering the most important features used by consumers in their evaluation of overall service quality and satisfaction is a necessary task of service providers.

Lately, large number of industrial companies has utilized novel methods in order to provide their customers with the plenty of services. For instance, affording quick responses such as just in time deliveries of services increases information sharing between the buyer and its customer and make the services easy.

According to Shaharudin, Mansor et al., (2011), competition within the motorcycle industry in Malaysia is continuously increasing from year to year. As a consequence this challenges that motorcycle companies faced causes them to investigate new ways in order to profitable by make themselves differentiated in their activities. Therefore, it given rise to necessitation of measuring service quality of motorcycle companies since many of the most consumers pay a lot of attention to quality of goods and services when they purchase. This assessment will have positive impact on service providers since they could identify critical part of service quality by evaluating the perception of consumer and also realise which part or dimension required further improvement for any weaknesses that has been cleared.

Unquestionably, customer expectation and perception gradually will change since the way that industrial companied operate and build the product and also maintain close relationship with their customers change dramatically. Service quality has become increasingly significant issue as the rapid technological shift and also the competitive market. As a consequence in order to satisfy customer service quality has extremely become a huge challenge (Broderick and Vachirapornpuk, 2002). It is critically important for motorcycle shop to offer high quality services in a close competitive motorcycle shop business. In this case, it is vital for motorcycle shop to determine the attribute in which customer applied to judge the quality of services and observed and improved the performance of service.

This research will be conducted to measure service quality in motorcycle context and evaluate the gap between customer expectation and perceived services quality of motorcycle products in the market place. This gap might occur in line for the incompetent services, not comprehend the customer's problematic issues and not conference the customer's expectations. The important consequence in this gap might decrease the satisfaction of customers. Moreover, reducing the gap amongst the customers' expectation and apparent services quality offers the great equal of satisfaction that will improve the achievement of corporation.

1.3 Problem Statement

According to the Li, Ni et al., (2012), the lack of customer satisfaction has been found in motorcycle shop which contributes the dissatisfaction through the customers. To achieve customer satisfaction, services quality has been determined as significant area related to practitioner base on Douglas and Connor (2003), Saravanan and Rao (2007). Customer satisfaction can be determine based on the level of service quality that has been delivered by the service owner that has been indicated through the customer cumulative experience. Besides, the discrepancy between expectations and perceptions of perceived services (Perception of perceived services– Expectation) set the gap score by which has been applied in order to evaluate service quality parallel to customer satisfaction (Chingang Nde and Lukong, 2010). In this method, five dimensions have been taken into account which is named as followed: it can be extracted that tangible refer to the provision of physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of contact, reliability which is specify the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately, followed by responsiveness by which means The willingness to help customers and to provide a prompt service, in addition assurance that is related to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence; finally, empathy is in regard of the caring and attention provided to customers.

After prudently examining numerous research studies that directed so far by the SERVQUAL model, this study comprehend that numerous study works have been approved in dissimilar service productions such as store, education, restaurants, banking, health care, etc; Nonetheless partial research study that has been accompanied by the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality in motorcycle context and evaluate the gap between customer expectation and perceived services quality of motorcycle products in the market place.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the problem statement described in the previous section, one main research question outlining this research is identified.

What is the gap between the expectations and the perceived services quality (gap 5 in the SERVQUAL model) in the case of motorcycle shop?

This research question is further divided into 2 sub-questions representing the main issue pursued by the research:

1. What is the level of perceived Service quality, satisfaction among motorcyclist in Malaysia?
2. What is the recommendation for motorcycle shop in order to improve services quality and customer satisfaction?

1.5 Research Objective

Today, with the focus on upholding different levels of demand due to growth in technology-driven businesses, the competitive demands must be met along with delivering good services. Hence, the primary objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate the level of motorcyclist's perceived services quality and satisfaction in motorcycle shop.
2. To evaluate the gap between the expectations and the perceived services quality.
3. To provide the recommendation for motorcycle shop to improve customer satisfaction and services quality.

1.6 Scope of Study

This research aims to cover the Scopes which is described below:

The subject domain is constrained to UTM motorcyclist and data will be collected from UTM student and staff which use motorcycle.

1.7 Significant of the Study

The purpose of this research is to measure the service quality and level of customer satisfaction in context of motorcycle shop by testing the SERVQUAL model. The aim of this research is to investigate of level of perceived services quality and customer satisfaction through motorcyclist and also measuring the gap between customer expectation and perceived services quality through the point of view of customers by the SERVQUAL model to assess the gap score obtained between customer expectation and perceived services quality. Additionally, some recommendation has been given to motorcycle shops and their managers to find the feature that can help them to improve the customer satisfaction.

1.8 Summary

In this chapter, initially the introduction of research is presented. Furthermore, the research objectives are explained toward the problem statement and finally the significant of the research study is provided, this chapter aimed to describe for the whole of the project. The next chapter will be explained the literature review to understand better about the perception of research.

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