

Servqual used in a Vodafone India

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Abstract

Vodafone India is a leading telecomm services provider in India. It is a subsidiary of Vodafone, a British Telecommunication giant. After the acquisition of Hutch (Joint Venture of Hutchison and Essar) by Vodafone, the company has shifted its focus to the Indian markets and has managed to capture a significant portion. To understand the performance of the telecommunication services by Vodafone India, we have undertaken a research study through the Servqual Instrument which measures the quality of services on twenty two parameters.

Keywords: Social Media, Vodafone, Customer, Satisfaction, Servqual

1. Introduction

In today’s business environment, the success of a business depends a lot upon the level of satisfaction of its customers. Word of mouth, social media, all play an important role in creating a brand image of the product. In such a case, existence of a service gap can cause significant damage to the business of the company.

dimensions, i.e. tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

Servqual helps in understanding the gap between what the customer expects and what he/she perceives about the company.

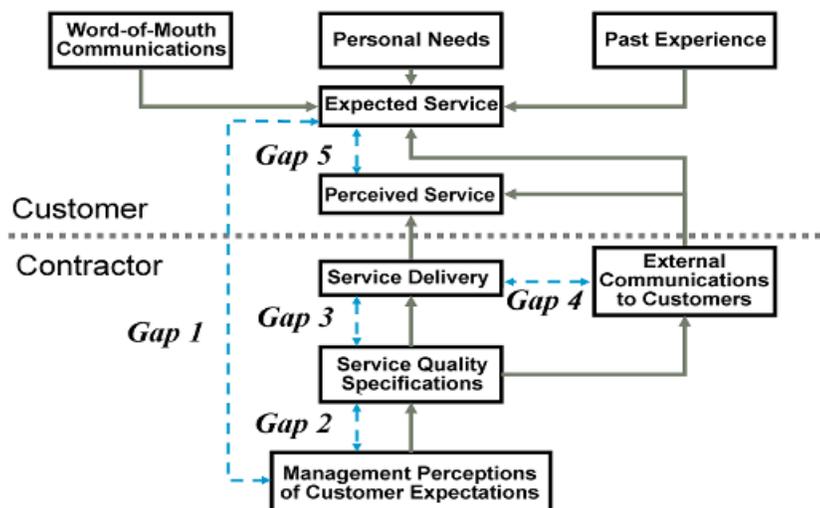
SERVQUAL has been previously used in telecommunication industries in various cultural contexts with high reliability and validity. ‘SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE CELLULAR TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE PROVIDER IN MALAYSIA’ is a research conducted by Anantha Raj A. Arokiasamy and Dr. Abdul Ghani Kanesanbin Abdullah in Malaysia. The research concluded that the importance of responsiveness in influencing customer satisfaction indicates that a strong relationship between the management and customers’ should be emphasized for long term sustainability. The

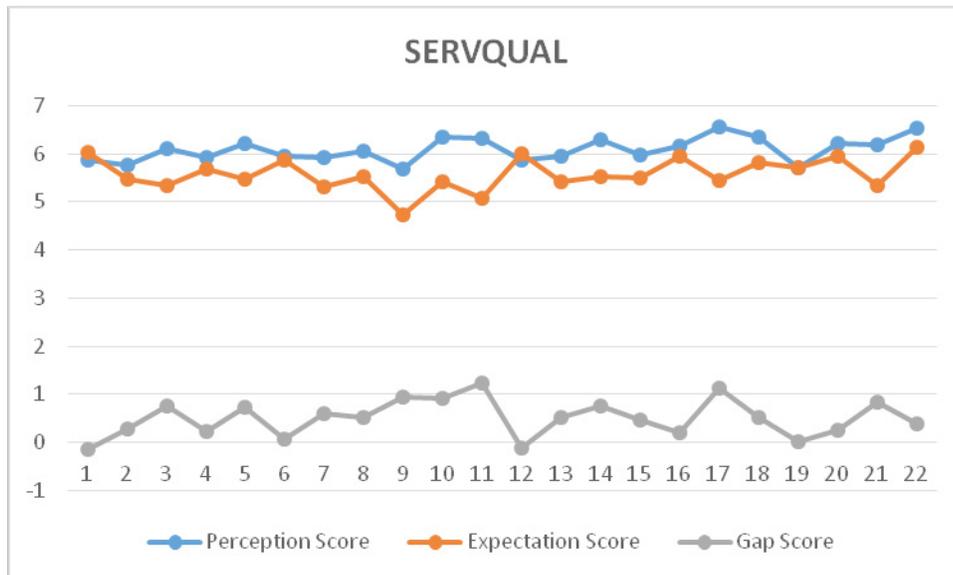
2. Literature Review on Servqual

Servqual is a quality management framework. It was developed in the mid-1980s by Valarie Zeithaml, A. Parasuraman & Leonard Berry to measure quality in the service sector. It is a research instrument that consists of twenty two questions on five

ServQual

Source: Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry. *Delivering Quality Service*





management's strategy should be directed to focus on improving customer responsiveness to strengthen loyalty.

3. Servqual Scale

The five dimensions of the Servqual Scale are:

- **Reliability:** It refers to the consistency of services with respect to performance and dependability.
- **Tangibles:** It refers to the physical aspects of the services as physical facilities, appearance of personnel and tools & equipment used for provision of services.
- **Responsiveness:** It reflects the willingness or readiness of employees to provide quick services to customers.
- **Assurance:** It refers to the employees' knowledge, courtesy and their ability to incorporate trust and confidence.
- **Empathy:** It refers to the magnitude of caring and individual attention given to customers.

4. Objectives of the Study

The objective of our study is to understand the level of satisfaction of the consumers with Vodafone India through SERVQUAL on the following parameters:

- Tangibles
- Reliability
- Responsiveness
- Assurance
- Empathy

5. Research Methodology

To research on the satisfaction of consumers of Vodafone India, a structured questionnaire based on the Servqual instrument was administered both online and offline.

The sample size taken was ninety which consisted of telecommunication users of Vodafone as well as other Companies. Out of these, twenty users were eliminated as they belonged to other companies. Therefore, the total number of respondents came to seventy.

The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions based on 5 dimensions i.e. tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

6. Data Analysis

The hypotheses of the study are:

Null Hypothesis: Ho = The Customer's perception of Vodafone India and expectations of excellent telecommunication companies are equal

Alternate Hypothesis: H1 = The Customer's perception of Vodafone India and expectations of excellent telecommunication companies are not equal

7. Discussions

Servqual GAP= Consumer Perceptions - Consumer Expectations

The Servqual Gap can be depicted graphically as follows:

To analyze our results further, we have applied T Test to the responses for all the 22 questions on the basis of five parameters, i.e. tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

The analyses is as follows:

8. Inference

The Table depicts that after applying T Test to the parameter of TANGIBLES, the critical value from the test turned out to be less than 0.05.

In such a case, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternate hypothesis should be accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that tangibles of Vodafone India, i.e. the physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials are lower than the customer's expectations.

Thus, a gap exists in tangibility and Vodafone India must improve its physical facilities at Vodafone stores

9. Inference

The Table depicts that after applying T Test to the parameter of RELIABILITY, the critical value from the test turned out to be less than 0.05.

In such a case, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternate hypothesis should be accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that users of Vodafone India do not consider it reliable in terms of zero call drops, fulfilment of promises etc.

Thus, a gap in reliability exists and Vodafone India must fulfil the promises it makes to its users.

10. Inference

The Table depicts that after applying T Test to the parameter of RESPONSIVENESS, the critical value from the test turned out to be less than 0.05.

Table 1. Calculations to Obtain Unweighted Servqual Score

Average Tangibles SERVQUAL Score	0.62
Average Reliability SERVQUAL Score	1.83
Average Responsiveness SERVQUAL Score	1.91
Average Assurance SERVQUAL Score	1.37
Average Empathy SERVQUAL Score	1.49
Total	7.22
AVERAGE (= Total / 5) UNWEIGHTED SERVQUAL SCORE	1.44

TANGIBLES

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	6.278	5.0
Variance	0.013425926	0.039074074
Observations	70	70
Pearson Correlation	-0.165746219	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	3	
t Stat	-7.274816726	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002680366	
t Critical one-tail	2.353363435	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.005360731	
t Critical two-tail	3.182446305	

RELIABILITY

	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	5.8956	5.163333333
Variance	0.010222222	0.011166667
Observations	70	70
Pearson Correlation	-0.711083162	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	4	
t Stat	-12.31428478	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000124919	
t Critical one-tail	2.131846782	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000249838	
t Critical two-tail	2.776445105	

RESPONSIVENESS

	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	6.0797	5.3875
Variance	0.001736111	0.008402778
Observations	70	70
Pearson Correlation	-0.551515152	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	3	
t Stat	-21.84210199	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000105024	
t Critical one-tail	2.353363435	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000210049	
t Critical two-tail	3.182446305	

In such a case, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternate hypothesis should be accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that users of Vodafone India, do not consider it responsive enough in solving customer queries and complaints.

Thus, a gap in responsiveness exists and Vodafone India should train and encourage its employees to give prompt reply to consumer problems.

11. Inference

The Table depicts that after applying T Test to the parameter of ASSURANCE, the critical value from the test turned out to be less than 0.05.

In such a case, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternate hypothesis should be accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that in terms of assurance, Vodafone India does not perform up to the customer's expectations.

Thus, a gap exists and the employees of Vodafone India should encourage employees to reflect courteous behavior towards its users.

12. Inference

The Table depicts that after applying T Test to the parameter of EMPATHY, the critical value from the test turned out to be less than 0.05.

ASSURANCE

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	6.028	5.479166667
Variance	0.091365741	0.006736111
Observations	70	70
Pearson Correlation	-0.764194388	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	3	
t Stat	-7.998766072	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002039198	
t Critical one-tail	2.353363435	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.004078397	
t Critical two-tail	3.182446305	

EMPATHY

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	5.863333333	5.233333333
Variance	0.030194444	0.010555556
Observations	70	70
Pearson Correlation	-0.420104365	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	4	
t Stat	-12.97427603	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000101808	
t Critical one-tail	2.131846782	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000203616	
t Critical two-tail	2.776445105	

In such a case, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternate hypothesis should be accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that with respect to empathy, i.e. putting yourself in the shoes of others, Vodafone India does not perform well.

Thus, a gap in empathy exists and Vodafone India must try to understand the specific needs of its users.

13. Recommendations

Application of T Test as well graphical representation of the Servqual gap indicates that Vodafone India has not been able to eliminate gaps with respect to tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

With respect to each parameter, we would like to recommend the following:

- Vodafone Stores are an important contact point for customers. Improving the physical conditions in such stores, providing more information pamphlets in such stores.
- Call dropping is a major concern that affects reliability of calls. Increasing the number of towers to improve call quality is recommended for Vodafone India.
- Many customers complain that they have to wait for a long time to get their complaints registered with telecom companies. Thus, increasing the number of employees to handle customer queries and training them to handle them is recommended.

- When a customer decides to use a particular telecom network, he/she instills his confidence in that operator. Assuring customers that Vodafone India has their best interest at heart through personal frequent communications is recommended.
- Empathy is an important parameter for customer satisfaction. Vodafone India is recommended that they conduct market analysis to understand customers' requirement in terms of call rates, data charges, special offers etc.
- The sample size was 90 out of which 20 respondents were not Vodafone users therefore, the actual sample size was 70 which does not represent the whole customer base.

15. References

1. Arokiasamy ARA, Abdullah AGK. Journal of Arts, Science and Commerce. 2013 Apr; 4(2).

14. Limitations

- Although an online form was administered to cover Vodafone India users across India but the majority of respondents were from Delhi only

Citation:

Aashima Sharma and Nakul Solanki
"Servqual used in a Vodafone India",

Global Journal of Enterprise Information System. Volume-8, Issue-4, October-December, 2016. (<http://informaticsjournals.com/index.php/gjeis>)

Conflict of Interest:

Author of a Paper had no conflict neither financially nor academically.