ASSESSING AFTER SALES SERVICE QUALITY IN AUTOMOBILE SECTOR WITH REFERENCE TO CITY OF PRAYAGRAJ

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Abstract – The Indian automobile customer today is accordant with the global markets and products, and expects the same levels of quality in products and services. The large number of models with so many similarities   being offered among vehicles in the same price range, also pushes customers to shift from one brand to another. Therefore, retention of customer loyalty is of prime concern for Indian manufacturers. Thus, amidst given circumstances, providing effective after - sales service for vehicles has assumed great significance.

The purpose of the study is the identification of various service quality dimensions in Indian automobile industry. The customers preferences and purposes are considered with reference to different automobiles in Prayagraj. The primary data was collected from a sample of 120 automobile customers in city of Prayagraj, through convenience sampling. Chi-Square test were used to test the hypothesis.

Keywords SERVQUAL, Expected service quality, Perceived service quality,

INTRODUCTION

The global automobile trade has been the subject of plenty of research in recent years. whereas world capability creation payoff at a good clip on one hand, continued capability creation inside the face of sluggish sales have led to depressed levels of capability utilization.

The automotive trade is counted amongst the larger contributors to India's economic development, witnessed over the last decade. Today, the Indian automobile trade is one in every of the most important industrial sectors with a turnover that contributes to roughly five per cent of India's gross domestic product. additional significantly, it contributes to employment of over a pair of million individuals directly and indirectly to a different ten million. The trade contributes nineteen per cent of indirect taxes. In twelvemonth 2020, the gross value added from the road transportation sector was the highest across India at around four.32 trillion Indian rupees. The Indian automotive client nowadays is well tuned to world markets and merchandise, and expects identical levels of quality in merchandise and services. The big selection of models and variants provided, with very little differentiation among merchandise, encourages customers to change from one brand to a different one. As a result, retentive client loyalty could be a key concern for manufacturers in India. during this state of affairs, providing effective once sales service for vehicles has assumed augmented importance for service centre in India. Not solely do makers got to give a variety of services and have a widespread service network to cater to the ever-increasing range of vehicles on the road, however conjointly guarantee high levels of service quality and delivery, to retain customers.

Service quality affects relationships and relationship promoting, as customers square measure willing to make relationships with organizations that give service quality. The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et.al., has been utilized by several researchers for the measuring of service quality. Service quality is turning more and more important to automobile firms as a result of clients' satisfaction and customer loyalty causes repeat purchases, that eventually creates business's success and this successively helps to stay them in the market by ensuring that they continuously have certain share of the market share.

Major players of India's automotive business

In terms of progress, the expansion has been tremendous. The country had made around twenty-three million vehicles in fiscal year 2021. it had been the biggest manufacturer of tractors and second largest bus manufacturer in 2020. Asian nation was the conjointly the biggest producer of 2 and three-wheelers across the world. Hero MotoCorp was the leading two-wheeler manufacturer. In fiscal year 2020, the corporate sold around six.4 million units domestically. From fiscal year 2020 to 2021, rider vehicle sales saw decrease for 2 consecutive years, principally thanks to the impact of coronavirus pandemic. The market was dominated by Maruti Suzuki with a share of over fifty percent within the section. the corporate became the sole manufacturer to sell over twenty million rider vehicles cumulatively. industrial vehicles registered a decrease that year at regarding thirty p.c. Tata Motors control a robust command of over forty p.c within the section. Mahindra & Mahindra, Ashok Leyland and Eicher Motors were alternative players within the market.

Therefore, the automotive business has recognized that to fulfil growing client demands, there's a requirement to supply services along with their product, which may be enforced into their core offerings (Velimirović, Duboka, & Damnjanović, 2016). An elementary trend in producing industries is that the movement from a pure producing paradigm to a business model during which a central role is assigned to the service part of product supported the worth they supply to customers (Cohen, Agrawal, & Agrawal, 2006; Guajardo, Cohen, & Netessine, 2016). The movement towards a service-based economy has coincided with this alteration and has inspired several producing companies to place additional stress on the delivery of services related to their product offerings (Shankar, Berry, & Dotzel, 2009).

Problem Statement

Service quality is a peculiar concept which has lot of dimension and parameters. Once the concept of service quality is meant for only service products. With reference to the modern trend where the quality perspective of the services is linked with physical product also, it can be said that the concepts of service quality are now being used in non-service products also. So, it is required to find the answer to the following questions.

•   What are the factors influencing service quality?

•   How the service quality is related with automobile industry?

Objective of the Study

• To spot the service quality dimension in industry.

• To seek out the preferences and functions of automobile customers in Prayagraj town.

•To understand the satisfaction level of consumers on service quality in Prayagraj town.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Service quality is defined by researchers in many different ways. The technical quality, functional quality and reputational quality are the components of service quality identified by Gronroos and used SERVQUAL as widely used approach for measuring service quality to compare customers' expectations with the perceptions of the actual service delivered. The SERVQUAL model has been the main method of measuring consumers' perceptions of service quality. According to Adele Berndt there are five dimensions with respect to automobile service centre, which are mentioned as follows:

1. Reliability (Promised delivery): Dealers are supposed to contact the customer with the claim made that the vehicle will be delivered at a specific time. It is the most vital dimension of service quality.

2. Assurance (Confidence and trust): The dealers, who are the main source of assurance, through their knowledge and manner of interaction with the customer instils trust for the organization.

3. Tangibles (Physical cues): Tangible cues includes the signage, parking and layout of the dealership itself.

4. Empathy (Importance): Empathy can be witnessed in the interactions between the dealer and the customer, and also through the nature of the interaction.

5. Responsiveness (Willingness to serve): This refers to the changes in service hours from just to match the due to the changes in the needs of customers.

Service Quality (SERVQUAL)

Oliver (1981) revealed that the customer's perception of quality is not determined merely by one dimension, only. Five dimensions namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, are considered by the clients in judging the quality of services.

William B Dodds (1991) said that customer satisfaction is in a nut-shell the bundle of emotions resulting from the reaction of disconfirmed expectations are with the consumers' prior feelings about the consumption. The consumer perception of product quality is influenced by various external factors like brand, price and store information.

According to Parasuraman et.al (1991) the quality customer service has become a crucial area of concern of all businesses as it determines satisfaction.

Therefore, customer satisfaction is actually a post consumption judgment with reference to a specific product or service. Goofin and Price (1996) defined the significance of after-sales services resulting in improved product quality and so gaining competitive advantage, which inturn results in high sales and revenue for the business.

Seyed Mohammad SadeqKhaksar. et. al. (2011) explained that technical and after-sales services remain fruitful regarding entrepreneurial prospects of market and product. Farah Sahul Hamid (2011) have highlighted that the customers' perceptions towards the quality-of-service behaviour determines their prime consumer behaviour.

Pallawi et. al (2011) said that service quality is most important for the automobile dealers regarding the comparison of service quality of Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Showrooms at Nagpur. It was also noticed that higher profit margin is obtained by the servicing of the vehicles. Kah-Hin Chai and Yi Ding (2009) in their publication highlighted the presence of spill over effects of service quality and customer satisfaction from product manufacturer to service provider, and vice versa.

Yazdi S.M. et al (2009) have showed the important dimensions of service quality from customers' perspective in automobile service centres. Syed Saad Andaleeb and Amiya K. Basu (1994) noted that perceived characteristics was found to be an important factor for evaluating service quality and its significance based on the customer's knowledge about automobile repairing services.

Early concepts of service quality were defined by Grönroos (1983, 1984), in which service quality was described as something that consumers receive and the way consumers receive the service. This model was based on a disaggrement paradigm (Oliver, 1980) that compares perceived performance and expected service. This was one of the first attempts to measure the quality of service. The Grönroos (1983, 1984) model was general in nature and didn't focus much on measuring technical and functional quality.

A few years later, Parasuraman et al. (1985) jointly published, in the Journal of Retailing, their approach for defining and measuring service quality, SERVQUAL. The service quality model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) depicted that service quality could be measured through five quality dimensions which includes tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. (Figure 1). Quality is, therefore, associated with product durability and robustness, as well consumer satisfaction through the after-sales service process and through advertising by word-of-mouth.

Supporting Ford's slogan, the famous scholar, Gronroos (1984), classified SERVQUAL into two groups: expected service and perceived service. This included technical quality, in which functional quality is considered to be a very significant dimension of a perceived service. There is also the component of functional quality which is about the "how" part of it. (Kang & James, 2004).

Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) explained that the perceived quality of the product/service is caused by the expectation of customers of the services which is depicted as SERVQUAL model According to this model, a questionnaire can be used to measures customer expectations of service quality in terms of the five dimensions.

Research Hypothesis

There is no association between Gender, Occupation and monthly income and satisfaction level of service quality dimension.

Demographic Profile of Respondents		
Demographic Factors	Maximum%	Minimum%
Place	44.2 (Urban)	11.6(Semi urban)
Age	98.3(Male)	16.7
Marital Status	39.2	11.7
Educational Qualification	34.2	18.3
Occupation	69.2	5
Monthly Income	38.3	15
Family Size	49.2	10.8

Table No.2 Association between Gender and Service Quality Dimensions

Particulars	Gender			
	Value	df	P Value	Remarks
Reliability	13.810	6	.032	Significant
Assurance		6	.0343	Not Significant
Tangibility	8.820	4	.066	Not Significant
Empathy		8	.279	Not Significant
Responsiveness	40.644	6	.000	Significant

Table No.3 Association between Monthly Income and Service Quality Dimensions

Particulars	Monthly Income			
	Value	df	P Value	Remarks
Reliability	7.567	9	.578	Not Significant
Assurance	12.388	9	.192	Not Significant
Tangibility	4.130	6	.659	Not Significant
Empathy	13.525	12	.332	Not Significant
Responsiveness	14.043	9	.121	Not Significant

Table No.4 Association between Occupation and Service Quality Dimensions

Particulars	Occupation			
	Value	df	P Value	Remarks
Reliability	22.665	12	.031	Significant
Assurance	33.421	12	.001	Significant
Tangibility	30.806	8	.000	Significant
Empathy	36.970	16	.002	Significant
Responsiveness	26.576	12	.009	2Significant

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

To know expectation and perception concerning automobile service centre's service quality from vehicle owners in Prayagraj city respondents have given their views relating to how ideal showroom would be and the way really it should be. The respondents rated seventeen factors of service quality that square measure as follows:

1.Tangibility: Latest equipment, Physical Facility, Neat appearance of workers, Attractive Material.

2.Reliability: Timely Delivery, Interest in determination of customers 'intention, remaining true to the claims made by you, manufacturing fault-free record.

3.Responsiveness: Complete knowledge of the services, Prompt service to the client, temperament to assist, never too busy to reply.

4. Assurance: Feel safe in the dealings, Courteous personnel, information of personnel.

5. Empathy: Individual attention, Convenient in operation hours.

The mean of the ratings given to those issues is calculated and so a combined mean for every factor. Similar method is completed for combined variance in ratings given.

Just in case of service quality dimensions of reliability and responsiveness of p values square measure .032 and .000 severally. this means that the satisfaction level of the shoppers in numerous genders like male and feminine. Hence, they're statistically vital at five-hitter level and might be terminated that there's associate degree association between gender and repair quality dimension.

In case of satisfaction level of the service quality of palpability, assurance and fellow feeling of p values square measure.066,.343and .279 severally. Since p price is larger than zero.05% level of significance.

Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it's concluded that there's no association between the gender and repair quality dimension.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that there's association between gender, occupation and repair quality dimensions. The automobile dealers must ensure that wherever competition is severe and market is tight, client demands and expectations invariably have to be fulfilled. Continuous improvement in service quality can would enable automobile dealers to remain ahead than their competitors. Systematic and periodic assessment of service quality is important to see the strength and weakness.

Automobile trade is one in all growing and competitive industry of any economy. Through technological advancement we can have improved product performance however the client satisfaction is the result of once sales service provided by the automobile service centre, client satisfaction at service centre is results of quality of service. Among numerous models of service quality SERVQUAL model still hold connection in today's market. The study was tried to analyse gap between expected service quality parameters and their actual performance at service centres that's perceived service quality.

The study recommends that automobile dealers should deal with customers in a more caring way, give the customers interest top priority, try to understand customers while delivering services and give more attention to individual customers. Automobile dealers should also ensure that actual charges are not higher than estimated charges given to customers. They should also charge reasonable prices in terms of after sales service. Finally, auto dealers must provide clear information of technical problems before services are performed, provide clear information on the specifications of spare parts, provide clear information on charges in terms of spare parts and workmanship.

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