



DELIVERING EXCELLENCE: ENHANCING SERVICE QUALITY FOR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN EVENT MANAGEMENT BUSINESS IN TAMILNADU

Dr.S.A. Mohamed Ali¹, Ms. Ranjitha R²

¹Principal, CMS Academy of Management & Technology, Coimbatore 641049

²Research Scholar, CMS Academy of Management & Technology, Coimbatore 641049

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify the factors influencing service quality evaluation in the event management business. It is identified from the customer's point of view. How do customers decide the service quality of event management business, and what do they expect from service providers to the events? Each factor influences the service quality and is defined to match the service environment. Respondents were asked to rate these factors. After analysis, it has been concluded that each attribute strongly influences the service quality and customers' preference for service planners for future services in their families. The study also suggested tips to formulate strategies for service planner business organisations in the area of study. This study can be used to understand customer satisfaction and the service planner business. Since event management is a budding industry with much scope for research and business, one can use the study for research and business purposes based on their need.

KEYWORDS: Service Quality, Event Management, Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, Customer Delight

INTRODUCTION

Customers' changing expectations and preferences drive the latest trends in service quality. Today's customers expect personalised, Omnichannel support, seamless Automation, Proactive support, Employee empowerment and convenient experiences across all touchpoints, whether online or offline. The latest trends in service quality are focused on delivering personalised, seamless, and convenient experiences that meet customers' evolving needs and expectations. By adopting these trends, businesses can improve customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy and differentiate themselves from competitors. The trend in CRM in event management is the increased personalisation of customer experiences. Event organisers now leverage data to create customised experiences catering to each customer's unique preferences. Event organisers are using technology to enhance the overall customer experience. The latest scenario in CRM in event management also involves a shift towards a more customer-centric approach. Event organisers now focus on creating memorable customer experiences rather than just delivering products or services. By focusing on customer experience, event organisers can increase customer loyalty and advocacy and generate positive word-of-mouth marketing. To achieve this, event organisers proactively and personally use data to identify and address customer pain points proactively and personally. By proactively addressing customer pain points, event organisers can prevent negative feedback and enhance customer loyalty.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is critical to event management as it directly impacts the event's success. Customers who are satisfied with their experience are likelier to attend future events, recommend the event to others, and even become brand advocates. Therefore, event organisers must prioritise customer satisfaction to ensure the long-term success of their events. One of the key factors influencing customer satisfaction in event management is the quality of the event itself. Customers expect a high-quality event that meets their needs and exceeds their expectations. This includes factors such as the quality of the speakers, the relevance of the content, the quality of the venue, and the overall atmosphere of the event. Personalisation is also becoming increasingly important in event management, as customers expect experiences that cater to their unique preferences and needs. This includes personalised agendas, customised recommendations, and incentives that enhance their overall experience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A.Parasuraman, V.A. Zeithaml and L.L. Berry proposed the GAP model of service quality in 1985. In this model, the author describes the gap between customer expectation and perception as customers' perception towards services provided by the organisation is a function of service quality. This model tells that poor service delivery is arising due to the gap in the service delivery process. In 1985, they developed a SERVQUAL scale with ten service quality dimensions.



Armstrong et al. (1997) investigated the impact of service quality on attendee loyalty in the context of business events. The study found that service quality was positively related to attendee loyalty and that factors such as Empathy, Reliability, and tangibles (e.g., physical facilities and equipment) significantly shaped attendee perceptions of service quality.

Zhu et al. (2002) studied the service supplier firm using information technology to create value-added services and reduce service costs. This model also investigates various factors affecting customers' perception of IT-based service. To test this model, the author conducted a study, and the findings state that IT-enabled services significantly affect various dimensions of the SERVQUAL model and indirectly affect the level of satisfaction of customers.

Evangelos et al. (2006) analysed the relationship between quality of services and customer loyalty by using customer satisfaction as a mediating variable in the insurance sector. For the study, a SERVQUAL-type scale, namely GIQUAL, was identified to collect primary information from the respondents. A sample of 519 respondents was selected on a random basis. The researcher applies Exploratory and Confirmatory factor techniques to obtain and confirm the factors for measuring service quality in the insurance sector. CFA results state that Tangibility does not affect customer satisfaction.

Nguyen et al. (2020) explored the impact of service quality on attendee loyalty in the context of music festivals. The study found that service quality positively related to attendee loyalty and that factors such as Empathy, Reliability, and Assurance significantly shaped the perceptions of service quality.

Sigala et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the context of sports events. The study found that service quality was positively related to customer satisfaction and that factors such as Responsiveness, Empathy, and Assurance significantly shaped customer perceptions of service quality.

Singh et al. (2023) explored the latest trends in service quality in event management. The review identified several key

trends, including the importance of personalisation, the use of technology to enhance the customer experience, and the need for proactive and responsive customer service.

The following are the factors influencing SERVQUAL
Tangibility: Appearance of physical facilities, i.e. equipment, written material etc.

Reliability: Capability to execute service perfectly

Responsiveness: Enthusiasm to assist customers

Assurance: Knowledge & courtesy of employees

Empathy: Pay individual attention and care to customers

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the influence of Tangibility on customer satisfaction of Event Management Services.
2. To study the influence of Responsiveness on customer satisfaction of Event Management Services.
3. To study the influence of Reliability on customer satisfaction of Event Management Services.
4. To study the influence of Assurance on customer satisfaction of Event Management Services.
5. To study the influence of Empathy on customer satisfaction of Event Management Services.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. H01: Tangibility of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.
2. H02: Responsiveness of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.
3. H03: Service reliability does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.
4. H04: Assurance of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.
5. H05: Empathy for services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Table 1: Testing Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Value of R-Square	P-Value	Status
The Tangibility of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.	0.271	***	Rejected
Responsiveness of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.	0.213	***	Rejected
The Reliability of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.	0.269	***	Rejected
Assurance of services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.	0.197	***	Rejected
Empathy for services does not significantly influence customer satisfaction in ABC event management services.	0.143	***	Rejected



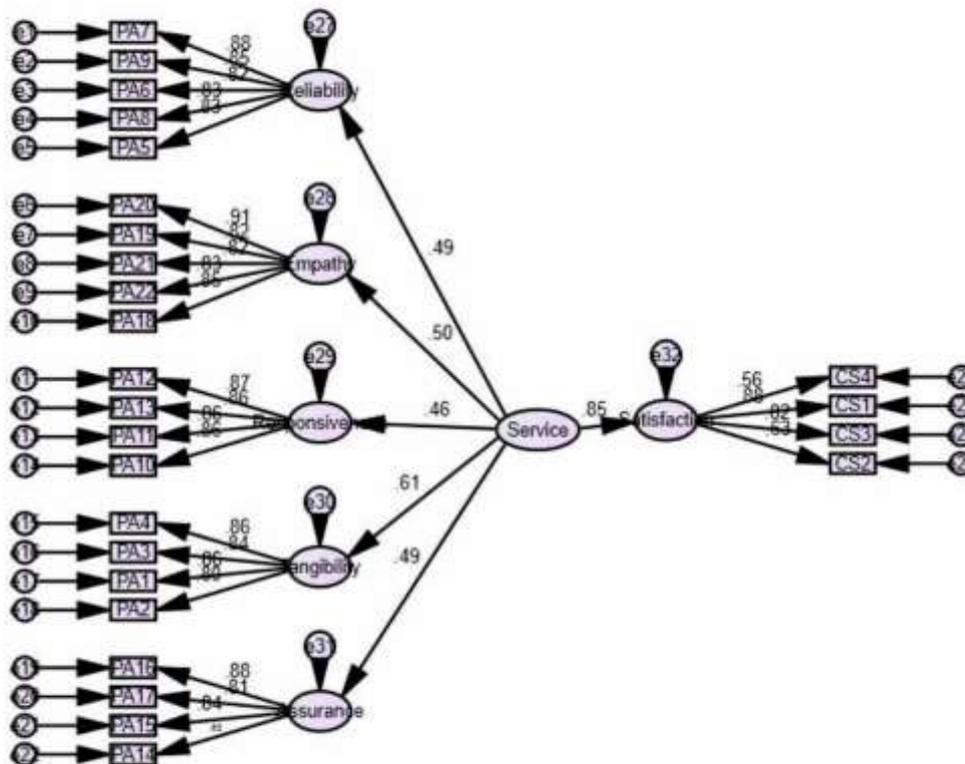
Table 2: Comparison of Correlation between Dimensions of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Assurance	Reliability	Empathy	Responsiveness	Tangibility	Satisfaction
Assurance	0.842					
Reliability	0.237	0.839				
Empathy	0.213	0.294	0.839			
Responsiveness	0.275	0.221	0.239	0.872		
Tangibility	0.317	0.289	0.23	0.315	0.841	
Satisfaction	0.477	0.46	0.41	0.534	0.562	0.766

Table 3: A path analysis

CUST SATISFACTION	<---	Exogenous Variable	Path Coefficient	Regression Weight	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	P-Value	R- Square 48.30%
		Reliability	0.213	0.207	0.03	6.885	***	
		Assurance	0.197	0.176	0.028	6.369	***	
		Responsiveness	0.269	0.213	0.024	8.695	***	
		Empathy	0.143	0.141	0.03	4.695	***	
		Tangibility	0.271	0.253	0.029	8.599	***	

Fig1: Path analysis using SEM model





The output of the path analysis is customer satisfaction which can be taken as an endogenous variable, and five dimensions of service quality are taken as exogenous variables. The structural equation modelling technique analyses the relationship between these variables. The value of the standardised regression weight of each variable ranges from 0.19 to 0.27, revealing a significant dependency of customer satisfaction on various service quality dimensions. The path coefficient (Standardize Regression Weight) estimates reveal that customer satisfaction is highly dependent on the Tangibility dimension ($R^2 = 0.271$), Responsiveness dimension ($R^2 = 0.269$) and Reliability dimension ($R^2 = 0.213$). Customer satisfaction also significantly depends on the Assurance dimension ($R^2 = 0.197$) and Empathy dimension ($R^2 = 0.143$). The path coefficient (Standardize Regression Weight) of the tangibility dimension has the highest value, followed by the Responsiveness, Reliability, assurance and empathy dimension has the lowest value. It explains that customer satisfaction (Endogenous Variable) is explained by 21.3% by the reliability dimension, 19.7% by the assurance dimension, 26.9% by the responsiveness dimension, 14.3% by the empathy dimension and 27.1% by empathy dimension explained by the tangibility dimension of service quality in ABC event management services. So, in the context of the present study, the findings of path analysis show that all five service quality factors are accepted and significantly affect customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction mostly depends on Tangibility and Responsiveness dimensions among all service quality factors. Overall, all the dimensions affect customer satisfaction in a positive direction. The R-Square value of the model shows that all these five service quality factors together explained 48.3% of customer satisfaction. In banking, customer satisfaction is a term that is not only explained by service quality but also by some other factors. So, the researcher concludes that the studied model of service quality explained 48.3% of customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research, it is revealed that SERVQUAL is an effective tool for measuring service quality in the event management industry. It allows event management businesses to evaluate their quality of services and identify improvement areas. SERVQUAL is based on five dimensions of service quality: Reliability, Assurance, tangibles, Empathy, and Responsiveness. These dimensions cover various aspects of service delivery, including the competence and courtesy of staff, the appearance and functionality of facilities, and the promptness and accuracy of service delivery. Using SERVQUAL, event management businesses can gather data on customer expectations and perceptions of service quality. By comparing these two measures, they can identify gaps in service delivery and take steps to close them. This process enables businesses to enhance their service quality, improve customer satisfaction, and ultimately, increase customer loyalty and revenue.

One of the critical benefits of SERVQUAL is its flexibility. The tool can be customised to suit different businesses' and industries' specific needs and preferences. For event

management businesses, SERVQUAL can be adapted to measure service quality across different events, such as weddings, corporate events, or sports events. This versatility makes SERVQUAL a valuable tool for event management businesses looking to improve service quality. However, it is essential to note that SERVQUAL has some limitations. For instance, it may only capture some aspects of service quality that are important to customers.

Additionally, the tool relies on customers' perceptions of service quality, which may be subjective and influenced by their moods or expectations. As such, event management businesses must use SERVQUAL with other feedback mechanisms, such as customer reviews or surveys, to get a more comprehensive view of service quality. In conclusion, SERVQUAL is a valuable tool for event management businesses to measure and improve service quality. It provides a framework for assessing customer expectations and perceptions of service quality and enables businesses to identify gaps in service delivery. While there are limitations to SERVQUAL, its flexibility and adaptability make it a valuable tool for event management businesses looking to enhance their service quality and customer satisfaction.

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