Customer post-purchase perceived service satisfaction for Hero two wheelers in Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

Consumers tend to perceive the quality of a service on the basis of a variety of informational cues that they associate with the product that act either individually or in composite. The purpose of this paper was to find out how the existing customers of Hero motors perceive their service experience they receive through their dealership. It is observed that age, gender and income levels have a serious impact on the service perception of respondents. The research revealed that the customers' service expectations are met and surpassed and the existing customers' in general have a very positive attitude towards their company dealers and technicians. This study helps the company to discover and learn more about their customers' opinions and perceptions. Future research can be carried across comparing the bands of competitors as also on a pan India basis that will help the company to still fine tune the service demand.

Keywords:

Customer Service satisfaction, Hero two wheelers, Cuddalore

Introduction

Consumers tend to perceive the quality of a service on the basis of a variety of informational cues that they associate with the product. These cues act either individually or in composite and can be either intrinsic or extrinsic to the service. It is hard to perceive service quality compared to product quality because services are intangible, variable, and perishable and are simultaneously produced and consumed.

Zeithaml (1990) indicated that the accepted framework for researching service quality stems from the premise that a customer's evaluation of service quality is a function of the magnitude and direction of the gap between the customer's expectations of service and the customer's perception of the service delivered. This study takes a look at the customer perceived service satisfaction factors. Zeithaml (1993) indicated the expectations of a service vary widely among different consumers of the same service and the expectations stem from word of mouth, past experiences, Promise of service in advertisements, the purchase alternatives available and other situational factors.

Parasuraman (1994) suggested that the consumer's overall satisfaction with the transaction is based on the evaluation of three components: service quality, product quality and price. The purpose of this paper was to find out how the existing customers of HERO two wheeler's perceive the service experience

they receive at the dealership.

Objective:

To determine the post purchase service satisfaction as perceived by customers of Hero bikes.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research design has been adopted in this study and the research was conducting using a quantitative questionnaire among the HERO Company's existing customers. A total of 200 respondents were surveyed at Cuddalore district in Tamilnadu. Exploratory factor analysis with a varimax rotation was conducted on the total 20 questions, which were later reduced to five SERVQUAL determinants and One-way Anova Test, t-test was applied to find the influence of SERVQUAL determinants with demographic variables. The SERVQUAL scale designed by Parasuraman (1991) has been used to measure the gap between customers' expectations of services and their perceptions of the actual service delivered, based on five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility.

Dimensions of customers post-purchase perceived service factors

Retained factors	factor loadings	% of variants	mean	S.D
Assurance		8.78		
When I give a complaint, the supervisor properly understands the complaint	.657		3.70	1.04
I am sure the technicians will not misuse my vehicles during the course of service	.614		3.84	.99
I always feel satisfied with the quality of service	.509		3.77	.95
I believe the technicians are careful in handling and do not break parts during the course of work	.509		3.56	1.04
Empathy		8.57		
I believe the dealership is aseptically designed	.668		3.60	.99
I am satisfied that I can fix up an appointment for service at any time of my convenience	.583		3.55	1.07
I believe the time I wait at the dealer during my vehicle service will be comfortable	.532		3.57	1.10
The service experience is always very pleasing	.517		3.54	1.12
Responsibility		7.72		
I believe the dealer ensures that warrantees are properly provided	.693		3.49	.99
I am satisfied the service schedule is properly communicated to men	.565		3.43	1.14
If I get busy they send personnel to pick my vehicle	.540		3.55	1.08
Reliability		7.40		
I get a feeling that my vehicle performance is good after every maintenance	.646		3.51	1.10
I am satisfied the dealership provides me correct timings for my service	.531		3.37	1.04
I do not get a feeling that my vehicle gets worse after a service	.504		3.61	1.10
I believe the dealer transaction is transparent	.479		3.42	1.18
Tangibility		6.94		
All the sections of the vehicle like lighting, electrical work, body work are attended at the same place	.479		3.77	.93
I Believe the dealership do no drag me to unwanted parts replacement	-.467		3.58	.93
I have the option for card payment	.455		3.49	1.02

The above table showing the exploratory factor analysis with a varimax rotation was conducted on the twenty items of questions.

From the factor analysis five factors have been divided and the factor loading above .45 in each column is formed a dimension.

Influence of gender on SERVQUAL determinants

Risk	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Assurance	Male	164	3.72	.63	.05	.955
	Female	36	3.68	.51		
Empathy	Male	164	3.53	.67	-.07	.941
	Female	36	3.56	.71		
Responsibility	Male	164	3.47	.73	-2.53	.012
	Female	36	3.78	.46		
Reliability	Male	164	3.45	.65	-1.06	.290
	Female	36	3.56	.69		
Tangibility	Male	164	3.61	.53	.40	.684
	Female	36	3.59	.59		

The table shows the T-test to find whether the gender of the respondents influence the SERVQUAL determinants. From table it is inferred that there is significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to responsibility factor. The female respondents give more importance to warrantees provided by the dealer and they are more satisfied with the time taken to service the vehicle at the dealership as also the provision of getting the vehicle picked for service at home and the vehicle being handed over at home post service. Adrian palmer et.al (2003) discovered that consumers' perceptions of service quality declined over time, that favorable perceptions of the services tangible features declined the least, and that changes in perceptions impacted the intentions to purchase the service again.

Influence of age on SERVQUAL determinants

Service factors	Age profile	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Assurance	<21	34	3.55	.71	2.908	.036
	21-30	71	3.61	.63		
	31-45	59	3.83	.50		
	>45	36	3.87	.60		
Empathy	<21	34	3.62	.68	.389	.761
	21-30	71	3.55	.53		
	31-45	59	3.49	.67		
	>45	36	3.60	.62		
Responsibility	<21	34	3.55	.66	1.124	.340
	21-30	71	3.55	.69		
	31-45	59	3.40	.80		
	>45	36	3.65	.54		
Reliability	<21	34	3.17	.64	4.156	.007
	21-30	71	3.45	.63		
	31-45	59	3.66	.64		
	>45	36	3.52	.67		
Tangibility	<21	34	3.58	.48	3.590	.015
	21-30	71	3.50	.58		
	31-45	59	3.61	.51		
	>45	36	3.86	.52		

From the above one-way ANOVA table it is observed that the f-values are 2.9 and 3.59 for assurance and tangibility factors respectively, which is significant at 5% level. The respondents with age group above 45 years give more importance to card payment and they believe that the technicians would handle their vehicle carefully and will not break the parts or misuse the vehicle during the course of service (assurance and tangibility factors). The f-value of 4.15 for reliability factor, is significant at 1% level. The respondents with age group 31-45 years are satisfied with the quality of the service compared to other age group of respondents. These group of respondents feel good with the performance of the vehicle after every maintenance, believe the transaction as transparent and dealers keep their appointments regarding timing of service in a prompt manner. Sinha et.al (1998) found that consumers rely on price as an indicator of product quality, that consumers attribute different qualities to identical products that carry different price tags, and that such consumer characteristics as age and income affect the perception of value.

Influence of respondents income on SERVQUAL Determinants

Risk	Source	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Assurance	<20,000	11	4.0909	.59448	2.873	.037
	20001-30000	50	3.8400	.46773		
	30001-40000	122	3.6598	.63071		
	>40000	17	3.5441	.80640		
Empathy	<20,000	11	3.0364	.91572	5.289	.002
	20001-30000	50	3.4000	.63246		
	30001-40000	122	3.6459	.54835		
	>40000	17	3.7294	.60391		
Responsibility	<20,000	11	3.3030	.70639	.746	.526
	20001-30000	50	3.6067	.69560		
	30001-40000	122	3.5355	.72037		
	>40000	17	3.4118	.55938		
Reliability	<20,000	11	3.3636	.63604	.198	.898
	20001-30000	50	3.4550	.64422		
	30001-40000	122	3.4898	.66058		
	>40000	17	3.5441	.76155		
Tangibility	<20,000	11	3.3030	.54680	2.062	.107
	20001-30000	50	3.6267	.52442		
	30001-40000	122	3.6066	.56206		
	>40000	17	3.8235	.44281		

From the above table it can be observed that the factors of assurance and empathy vary significantly based on customer income level at 5 percent and 1 percent respectively. The respondents with monthly income below 20000 rupees give more importance to assurance factor.They believe more on technicians and the technicians understand their complaints properly.The respondents with monthly income above 40000 rupees give importance to a quality service- experience and feel comfortable with the provisions available during waiting time (empathy factor). Schiffman et.al (2008) identified that service providers often try to reduce the perceived waiting time and the likely consequent negative service evaluation by filling the consumer's time". Lesa et.al (2003) revealed that consumers' price reference points include past prices, competitors' prices, and the cost of goods sold. They also showed that these reference points do not adequately reflect the effects of inflation on costs, and the customers attribute price differentials to profit and fail to consider vendor costs.

Influence of vehicle model on SERVQUAL determinants

Service Factors	Vehicle model	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Assurance	passion	48	3.9740	.48717	19.659	.000
	Splendor	67	3.7687	.54584		
	Xtreme	29	3.0259	.72992		
	Pleasure	56	3.7991	.48010		
Empathy	passion	48	3.3083	.56713	5.107	.002
	Splendor	67	3.7194	.55711		
	Xtreme	29	3.4414	.54084		
	Pleasure	56	3.6393	.69536		
Responsibility	passion	48	3.1875	.76231	8.085	.000
	Splendor	67	3.6468	.71039		
	Xtreme	29	3.3563	.66626		
	Pleasure	56	3.7738	.50094		
Reliability	passion	48	3.5365	.68415	6.987	.000
	Splendor	67	3.6604	.52169		
	Xtreme	29	3.0259	.67263		
	Pleasure	56	3.4464	.68376		
Tangibility	passion	48	3.5903	.60039	2.429	.067
	Splendor	67	3.6368	.48801		
	Xtreme	29	3.3908	.57782		
	Pleasure	56	3.7202	.53097		

From the table it is observed that the f-values are 19.65, 5.10, 8.08, and 6.98 for assurance, empathy, responsibility and reliability factors, which are significant at 1% level. It was found that the respondents who have splendour are satisfied with empathy and reliability factors to a greater extent, whereas those owning Pleasure give importance to responsibility factor, and the respondents owning Passion are more satisfied with assurance factors in vehicle service. Almost all the models of Hero studied in this manuscript has a Japanese pedigree. Chueh *et.al* (2004) pointed out that consumers' perceptions of value, risk, trust, attitude towards the brand, satisfaction, familiarity, attachment, and involvement moderate the impact of country-of-origin on perceived quality.

Findings

- It is observed that the gender of the respondents influences the responsibility factor of SERVQUAL determinants.

- It is observed that there is a significant influence of assurance, reliability, and tangibility factors with the respondents' age.

- It is found that the age group above 45 years give more importance to card payment, they believe the technicians and dealers of HERO Company.

- It is noticed that the age group between 31 to 45 years are satisfied with the quality of service, they believe that the dealer provide correct timing for the service and the performance of vehicle is good after service.

- It is noticed that there is a significant difference among different income level of consumers on the factors of assurance and empathy.

- It is observed that the respondents of income level below 20000 rupees are believe more the technicians and the technicians understand their complaints properly.

- It is found that there is a significant influence on modal of vehicle with a SERVQUAL determinants.

Conclusion

Perceptions of high service quality and high customer satisfaction lead to higher levels of purchase intention. Service quality is a determinant of whether the consumer ultimately remains with the company or defects to a competitor. In this study another issue in the perception of service quality is time, using the SERVQUAL scale discovered that consumers' perceptions of service quality increase with dealers' prompt appointment fixation for service and comfortable waiting time during the service. . Zeithaml (1993) indicated consumer's expectations of a service before receiving it is termed predicted service, services evaluated by the customer at the end of the service that significantly exceed the predicted service are perceived as offering of high quality and generate more customer satisfaction, increased probability of repeat patronage, and favorable word-of-mouth.

The research revealed a very positive result, that the customers' service expectations are met and surpassed and the existing customers' in general have a very positive attitude towards their company dealers and technicians.Nevertheless, the results also showed on aspects that the company can work on in future in order to improve the customers' perceptions even more. This study helps the company to discover and learn more about their customers' opinions and perceptions. This will also help the company to serve their customers even better in the future. The quality of services vary from day to day, based on service employee to service employee, and from customer to customer. Hence the need of the hour is to for marketers to standardize their service in order to provide consistency of quality.

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