



## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMPUTER APPLICATION AND MANAGEMENT

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## A JOURNEY FROM CONSUMER SATISFACTION TO CONSUMER DELIGHT: CASE STUDY OF AN INDIAN PRIVATE SECTOR BANK

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### ABSTRACT

*The banking industry in India has witnessed a rapid growth coupled with intense competition. The forces of economic change, coupled with advancements in technology prompt banks to rethink their use of traditional ways and begin thinking of devising ways in which they can not only satisfy rather delight their customers. Capturing and keeping a customer is a great challenge. The marketer is faced with a challenge as to how to create a service package, which wins over the customers and assures their loyalty. This can only be done when the marketer is armed with the knowledge of what satisfies and delights the customer. The present study is a case study which focuses on the journey from consumer satisfaction to consumer and how far have they been successful in reaching their goals.*

### KEYWORDS

Banking industry, service package, economic change, delights.

### INTRODUCTION

Banking sector is the backbone of any financial system and economy (Dutta and Dutta, 2009). Indian commercial banks have undergone reforms since the 1990's. This sector has witnessed a rapid technological deployment, intense price wars almost leading to commoditization of the sector, product innovations, public sector losing their market share to private banks and ultimately an intense competition to win over the customers. The rapidly changing environment is compelling the attention of all banking institutions to lay emphasis on service quality and customer satisfaction (Angur et.al., 1991). It was established that building closer relationships with customers resulted in better returns to companies (Reichheld, 1993). It is not only dissatisfaction inflicted by the marketers which prompt customers to shift their patronage but also the new competitive market which makes the switching easier. The catalyst is the product or service commonality or parity (Verma, 2000). However despite the considerable service quality related literature and in spite of the tremendous market potential afforded, there is a comparative dearth of studies related to developing economies (Sureshchander et.al., 2003). However in the current scenario it is cliché to discuss about customer satisfaction. It was established that building closer relationships with customers resulted in better returns to companies (Reichheld, 1993). It is not only dissatisfaction inflicted by the marketers which prompt customers to shift their patronage but also the new competitive market which makes the switching easier. Customers have a range of satisfaction referred to as a zone of tolerance. It is believed that moving satisfaction beyond the upper threshold of this zone of tolerance may produce exceptional results. This level of customer satisfaction is termed as customer delight.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Delight is a resultant feeling of how customers are treated or dealt with in a service delivery process. In other words it is about how service provider handles the customer's needs of security, justice and self-esteem (Schneider and Bowen, 1990). The limited research available on service delight has tended to apply the limited techniques available to developing countries. However the application of methods designed in one country may not be entirely appropriate for another, due to varying environmental conditions (Reynolds, 2000). Moreover they are likely to be even less applicable to developing regions where disparities will be even greater (Davis and Young, 2002).

Unfortunately there is no commonly accepted scale to measure customer delight. Some studies have determined the emotional responses associated with delight to suggest an appropriate name for an emotion/feeling produced by a mixture of emotions. One study used four emotional adjectives: exhilarated, thrilled, delighted and exuberant to measure delight on a five point scale ranging from very little to very much (Kumar, 2001). Others have used critical incident technique where respondents were asked to describe absolutely, positively delightful experiences (Arnold et.al., 2003). These were labeled by the researchers as delight. Studies have discovered that a dissatisfied customer would positively switch supplier but a satisfied customer may also switch because he or she tends to be indifferent, holding no special preference or commitment to the provider of service (Jones and Sasser, 1995). The customer needs to be pushed to a zone of delight. It is a state where customer feels happy or elated at the service provision, which drives his or commitment and loyalty. Thus key lies in doing what delights and avoiding what offends the customer (Verma, 2003). According to two management consultants "the key to creating a memorable service .... Is to create conditions and do things that are unexpected, unpredictable, valuable, memorable and reproducible" (Bell and Zemke, 2003). Another analyst uses the term "positively outrageous service" for customer delight that he refers to as unexpected, random, extraordinary and disproportionately positive (Gross, 1991). The major difference between satisfaction and delight is the element of surprise. In delightful experience the product's performance, value, variety, purchase experience, and after sales support are outside the buyer's expectation set. Identifying areas of no expectations is an important stage in an organizations strategy of customer delight.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To study customer perception in terms of the variables selected for study.
2. To study the relationship between Service Quality, Customer Delight and Behavioral responses in the chosen Bank.

**METHODOLOGY**

The present research attempts to add to the limited understanding of consumer perceptions of bank service quality in India and what factors are important to delight customers.

**EXPLORATORY RESEARCH**

Exploratory research was conducted to identify the key service dimensions important to Indian customers. Initial research comprised of a literature review, qualitative research as well as piloting the survey instrument amongst consumers. These are exploratory activities recommended in other service quality studies.(Chu,2002; Davis and young,2002; Imrie et.al.,2002; Sureshchandar et.al.,2003). For the qualitative research a series of focus groups were conducted with customers of the ICICI Bank operating at Jaipur district. All participants had visited their regular branch at least once in the previous month and held both savings and current accounts. Groups contained both men and women and were divided into younger and older categories; 25-35 years and over 35 years.

**QUANTITATIVE PHASE**

From the exploratory phase 10 service attributes were identified for inclusion in the Questionnaire. An appropriate scale was considered for designing the questionnaire. A frequent problem with satisfaction scales is a skewed distribution of responses with an inordinate number of responses at the most favorable end of the scale. Hence a scale weighted to the lower extreme was chosen. The scale selected was a five point negatively biased Likert scale: very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied. Piloting revealed that respondents had no difficulty rating dimensions using the scales. Questionnaires were interviewer -administered in bank branches. Face to face interviewing was deemed the most appropriate method, given the questionnaire's length.

**SAMPLING DESIGN**

The formulae calculating required sample size of infinite population is as follows:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 PQ}{B^2}$$

$$= \frac{.078 \times .933 \times 1.96^2}{.05^2}$$

$$= 98$$

Where n= sample size, B = allowable error (precision)

Z= Z score based on desired level of confidence, Q= 1-P

Based on the formula, the required sample size is approximately 98.The approximate sample was 100 taken for the study. This sample size cumulates sampled customers of ICICI Bank. The questionnaires will be distributed to the individuals at selected branches.

**RESEARCH VARIABLES**

S.No.	Variables	Sub -Factors
1	Tangibles	Appearance of physical facilities Appearance of service personnel Visual appeal of physical facilities and service personnel
2	Reliability	Performing services as promised Dependability of service personnel in solving Dependability of automated service equipment Accuracy of service Consistency of service
3	Responsiveness	Prompt service Helpfulness of service personnel Readiness of service
4	Assurance	Competence and Knowledge of service personnel Courtesy of service personnel Credibility and security of service personnel
5	Empathy	Personalized attention Appropriateness of service hours Understanding customers Good communication
6	Price	Fee fairness Perceptual differences in price Worthiness of service value
7	Differentiation	Option value Benefit value Suitability of services relative to competitors Promptness of services relative to competitors Credibility and corporate image differences relative to competitors

**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH RESULTS**

This section deals with the results analyzed to study the difference in consumer propensity to recommend and switching intentions once they are satisfied and delighted with the services offered by the bank. The initial interviews revealed that 25 % of customers expressed they were "very satisfied" (the top category

level of satisfaction on five point scale), 34% expressed themselves as satisfied, 50% described themselves as somewhat to very dissatisfied overall. The sample consists of mostly males (73%) and females (27%). Majority of the respondents were more than 30 years of age (78%). About 38% of the sample earned a salary of 10000 a month. Most respondents have achieved at least a University degree/Bachelor degree (42%). There are more respondents who were married (72.3%). Around 40.5% of the respondents were employed in Private Organizations. As a whole the sample is skewed towards a more educated segment of the population.

The correlation analysis of the customer satisfaction and delight and propensity to recommend and switching intentions revealed that higher propensity to recommend was present when the customer was delighted rather than satisfied. The switching intentions were higher in case of a satisfied customer rather than a delighted customer.

**TABLE 1: CUSTOMER'S PERCEPTION ON SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS**

Service Quality Dimension	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Tangibles	30	35	10	15	10
Reliability	25	30	20	20	5
Responsiveness	26	16	20	30	8
Assurance	23	17	18	23	19
Empathy	18	17	20	30	15
Price	20	35	15	18	12
Differentiation	26	32	12	20	10
Communication	31	26	15	20	8
Credibility	18	12	35	25	10
Security	35	24	20	15	6
<b>Mean</b>	25.2	24.4	18.5	21.6	10.3

**TABLE 2: CUSTOMER RANKING OF SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS:**

Service Quality Dimension Ranking
1. Empathy
2. Responsiveness
3. Communication
4. Price
5. Credibility
6. Reliability
7. Differentiation
8. Tangibles
9. Assurance
10. Security

**TABLE 3 CORRELATION ANALYSES: CUSTOMER DELIGHT, PROPENSITY TO RECOMMEND AND SWITCHING INTENTIONS**

Private Sector Bank	Customer Delight	Propensity to recommend	Switching Intentions
Customer Delight	<b>1.00</b>		
Propensity to recommend	<b>0.943</b>	<b>1.00</b>	
Switching Intentions	<b>.380</b>	<b>.056</b>	<b>1.00</b>

**TABLE 4: CORRELATION ANALYSIS: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, PROPENSITY TO RECOMMEND AND SWITCHING INTENTIONS**

Private Sector Bank	Customer Satisfaction	Propensity to recommend	Switching Intentions
Customer Satisfaction	<b>1.00</b>		
Propensity to recommend	<b>0.889</b>	<b>1.00</b>	
Switching Intentions	<b>.956</b>	<b>.716</b>	<b>1.00</b>

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Several managerial implications emerge from this study. The results indicate that there is higher propensity to recommend (.943) in case of customer delight as compared to customer satisfaction. In case of customer satisfaction the propensity to recommend was .889 which was lower than that of customer delight. The switching intentions were found to be higher in case of customer satisfaction (.956) than in case of customer delight (.380). While the findings and guidelines offered in this study hold promise, they should not be viewed as panacea. The ultimate success of any quality program implemented by bank can duly be ganged by creation and retention of delighted customers. Hence banks should not ignore the specific needs of their customer contact employees such as motivation factors, factors leading to satisfaction and customer delight. The results also suggested that the dimensions corresponding to Empathy, Responsiveness Communication Price Credibility and Reliability are also significant in determining the overall customer satisfaction and delight and inducing positive behavioral outcomes by reducing negative impacts. This suggests that giving prompt services to the customers exactly when the service will be performed; if there is a problem, the willingness of the bank to discuss with the customer; and readiness of the employees to help and respond to the requests is likely to have an important and positive effect on consumer satisfaction and delight. Therefore in their efforts to deliver high quality services to their customer's banks should not ignore the specific basic needs of their customers and the service points where they can actually deliver delight to them.

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