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**A STUDY ON SERVICE QUALITY OF CO-OPERATIVE BANKS IN DINDIGUL DISTRICT**

**N. MEGALAI**  
**RESEARCH SCHOLAR**  
**DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATION**  
**THE GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE-DEEMED UNIVERSITY**  
**GANDHIGRAM**

**Dr. B. TAMILMANI**  
**PROFESSOR**  
**DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATION**  
**THE GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE-DEEMED UNIVERSITY**  
**GANDHIGRAM**

**ABSTRACT**

Commercial banks are playing important role in the Indian Financial System and also the well-being of rural people. These banks are providing loans to rural people for their economic stability. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction has a direct impact. The results of most research studies reveal that service quality and customer satisfaction are indeed independent but are closely related. The service sector has tremendous development due to their differentiated service. In order to retain customers, the organization wants to provide facilities. For this purpose, the organization treat their existing customers in a better way than finding new customers. Customers are always taking the service with a lot of expectation. These expectations can meet by the organization by providing quality services with personal consideration. The importance of service quality has been increased in these recent years some 5 times there may be difference between customer's expectation and actual perception. The cooperative banks also contribute to the development of nation. A number of products and service offered by cooperative banks. The important products offered by the cooperative bank include deposit and loans. The deposits are again classified in to S.B account, Current Account, Recurring deposits, fixed deposits and cash certificates. The loans include loan to salaried employees, housing loans, educational loans, loan of physically challenged persons and etc. Service include clearing, safe deposit locker, ATM, Demand Draft /Pay Order. In this study the service quality of cooperative banks at Dindigul District by taking customers samples. The study is descriptive in nature. Both primary and secondary data are collected for measuring service quality. SERVQUAL tool is used for this purpose.

**KEYWORDS**

service quality, cooperative banks, service quality, customer loyalty, cooperative banks, types of loans.

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**INTRODUCTION**

From the viewpoint of business administration, service quality The basic objective of every type of organization is to increase the profit by increasing the net revenue and by reducing cost. Now a day's customer satisfaction is one of the important factors which influence the return on an organization. Enhancement of customer satisfaction leads to customer loyalty. Keeping good relationship with customers is an easy way for capturing competitive markets. Service sector of Indian economy has tremendous development because of their services. Banking industry especially co-operative banks is not an exempted service sector from this. A number of cooperative banks are entered in to this sector with high level of products and services. In order to compete in this sector, cooperative banks have to more changes in their practices. Customer satisfaction is an important factor for every bank to retain their customers. Customer satisfaction means the attitudinal response of customers towards the functioning of their products and services.

Cooperative banks in India have become an integral part of the success of the Indian Financial Inclusion story. They have achieved many land marks since their creation and have helped a normal rural Indian to feel empowered and secure. The important features of cooperative banks are customer owned, democratic structures, profits are mainly pooled to form reserves while some amount is distributed to members, involved in community development foster financial inclusion by brining banking ton the doorstep of the lowest segment of society. Thus cooperative banks are an important part of the Indian Financial System. They comprise urban cooperative banks and rural cooperative credit institutions. Cooperative banks in India have a history of more than 100 years old Cooperative banks constitute an important segment of the Indian banking system. They have an extensive branch network and reach out to people in remote areas. They have traditionally played an important role in creating banking habits among the lower and middle income groups and strengthen the rural delivery system Cooperative bank is financial entities which belongs to its members, who are same time the owners and the customers of their banks. These banks generally provide their members with a wide range of banking and financial services. They are differing from stake holder's bank by their organization, their goals, values and governance.

**COOPERATIVE BANKS IN INDIA**

Cooperative banks in India have become an integral part of the success of Indian Financial Inclusion story. They have achieved many land marks since their creation and have helped normal rural Indian to feel Empowered and secure. Cooperative banks in India have a history of almost 100 years. Cooperative banks are registered under the Cooperative Societies Act. These banks are also regulated by the RBI and governed by the Banking Regulation Act 1949 and Banking Laws Cooperative Societies Act 1955. The need for cooperative banks in India is much important to support the financial requirements of people. In order to provide much established support to every person in the country and for the development of the nation, cooperative banks are categorized at various dimensions and at various levels. The major strengths of cooperative banks are their local reach, transparent interaction with the customers and their efficient services to common people. It functions with the no profit and loss model. As the other banks in India cooperative banks perform all the basic banking functions look borrowing and lending credits. Thus cooperative banks are deeply rooted inside local areas and communities. They are involved in local development and contribute to sustainable development of communities, as their members and management board usually belongs to communities in which they exercise their activities.

The cooperative banks can be divided in to two categories based on their functions. They are,

1. Long -Term Cooperative Credit Institutions
  - State Level
  - District Level
  - Village Level
2. Short- Term Cooperative Credit Institutions

- State cooperative Banks
  - District Cooperative banks
  - Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies
- Cooperative banks in India finance rural areas under:
- Farming
  - Cattle
  - Milk
  - Hatchery
  - Personal Finance

- Cooperative Banks in India finance urban areas under:
- Self-Employment
  - Industries
  - Small Scale Units
  - Home Finance
  - Personal Finance
  - Consumer Finance

Service quality in banking sector is the most important criteria. It helps to evaluating and satisfying customers and there by increases the customer loyalty and average retention of customers. Among service quality determinants reliability, assurance and empathy have always played a pivotal role.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is an attempt to analyses the expectation and actual perseverance of different customers and also for understanding is there any gap or mismatch between the expectations and actual perseverance of customers of cooperative banks at Dindigul district.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To understand the socio-demographic conditions of customers.
2. To study the customer services offered by this bank.
3. To evaluate the service quality of cooperative banks in Dindigul District.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study includes both primary and secondary data. Primary data collected from 50 customers of cooperative bank of Dindigul District. A structured schedule is used for collecting information from information. Two cooperative banks in Dindigul district are selected for data collection. The data collected from customers who visit the bank during the data collection. The objective of the study is explained to customers for their cooperation it was a free talk between them. Secondary data were collected from different books, journals and various websites.

**TOOLS USED**

Mathematical and statistical tools are like percentage, mean score etc. were used for data analysis. Mainly the mean score of different statements of five dimensions were computed for measuring the service quality. The service quality of co-operative banks was determined by using SERVQUAL tool of Parasuraman.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Extracting meaningful information from the data collected and analyzing the information from the data collected and analyzing the information from the data collected and analyzing. The information statistically. Analysis of the collected data was done with the help were prepared by using SPSS Package.

**TABLE 1**

Variables	Category	(N=50) Numbers	Percentages
Gender	Male	20	40
	Female	30	60
Age	Below 30 years	5	10
	30-40 years	10	20
	40-50 years	16	32
	Above 50 years	19	38
Literacy Level	Illiterate	4	8
	S.S.L.C.	20	40
	H.S.C.	15	30
	Graduates	6	12
	Post-graduates	5	10
Occupation	Agriculturists	5	10
	Businessmen	10	20
	Employed in Private Sectors	20	40
	Government Employees	6	12
	Retired Persons	4	8
	Professionals	5	10

Source: Primary Data

Table No1 shows the demographic profile of customers. When analyzing it is clear that 60% of customers are female and 40 % are male. 38 % customers are included under the age category of Above 50 years. Only 10% included under Below 30 years. Majority of customers have S.S.L.C. education (40%) and a little percentage carried out Illiterate (8%) or more education. 40% customers are included under the Employed in Private Sectors and 8% are under the Retired Persons.

TABLE 2: TYPES OF LOAN AVAILED

S. No.	Particulars	No. of Responses	Percentage to Total
1	Personal Loan	28	4.64
2	Non-farm Sector Loan	70	11.61
3	Jewel Loan	170	28.19
4	Housing Loan	34	5.64
5	House Mortgage Loan	20	3.32
6	Property Loan	67	11.11
7	SHG Loan	28	4.64
8	Micro-credit Loan	10	1.66
9	Kisan Credit Card Loan	51	8.46
10	Working Women Loan	11	1.83
11	Women Entrepreneur Loan	12	1.99
12	Maternity Loan	16	2.65
13	Professional Loan	24	3.98
14	Others	62	10.28
	Total	603	100.00

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows there were 603 responses collected from 186 respondents who have received loan from this bank. As per the survey, first priority is given to jewel loan (28.19%) and followed by non-farm sector loans (11.61%), property loans (11.11%), other loans (10.23%), kisan credit card loans (8.46%), housing loans (5.64%) personal and SHG loan (4.64%) and so on. It is concluded that a majority of the customers availed of the jewel loan, because it requires less formalities.

TABLE 3: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS AND THEIR LEVEL OF SERVICE QUALITY

Educational Qualification	Level of Service quality		Statistical inference
	Low	High	
Below Hsc (n=16)	08	08	X <sup>2</sup> =11.462 Df=1 0.003<0.05 Significant
Above Hsc (n=34)	11	23	

#### RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and their level of service quality.

Chi-square test indicates that there is significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and their level of service quality. Hence, the calculated value is less than table value ( $p < 0.05$ ). The research hypothesis is accepted.

#### CONCLUSION

Now a days it is clear that cooperative banks have very much importance for national development. They are active part in local communities with stronger commitments and social responsibilities. The SERVQUAL was useful for analyzing the service quality. It helped to evaluate and monitor various dimensions of statements. The customers especially from rural areas were come to cooperative banks with lot of expectations. The expectation and the actual perception of customers were different and a mismatch is existed between these two points. The quality gap was more on assurance dimension and it was less in tangibility dimension. The cooperative banks must take care for improving service quality. Otherwise the level of satisfaction will reduce it will affect the future growth of cooperative banks. In the service sector delivering of high quality service has been recognized as a critical factor for developing and maintaining long term and satisfying relationship with customers. In terms of customer-bank relation cooperative banks trend to foster a consciousness and unconsciousness feeling of cognitive trust among customer and anticipate a perception of being fair and more honest institutions compared with other banks.

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