SERVQUAL SCALE MEASURING: MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE QUALITY OF BSNL AND AIRTEL

*Harinadh Karimikonda
MBA-Mktg., NET, (Ph.D.-OU)
Asst. Professor, School of Management Studies,
Sreenidhi Institute of Sciences and Technology (SNIST), Yamnampet, Hyderabad.

**Suneel Sankala
MBA-Mktg., NET, (Ph.D.-AU)
Asst. Professor, School of Management Studies,
Sreenidhi Institute of Sciences and Technology (SNIST), Yamnampet, Hyderabad.

ABSTRACT

Quality is a key aspect to attain customer satisfaction and make business successful. Every company is essentially required to measure their output quality perceived by customers. Particularly in service sector, it is complex and crucial to measure quality of service provided to customer because of its unique characteristics like Intangibility, Inseparability, Variability, Perishability etc. The present study is more reliable on SERVQUAL Scale. The various dimensions of SERVQUAL Scale are Tangibility (appearance of physical elements), Reliability (dependable, accurate performance), Responsiveness (promptness and helpfulness), Assurance (competence, courtesy, credibility and security), and Empathy (easy access, good communications, and customer understanding). The objectives of the paper are to analyze the various dimensions of SERVQUAL Scale and compare mobile telecommunication service quality of BSNL and AIRTEL. Through the study we found that Airtel is providing more quality services than BSNL and Two important points identified under the dimensions of Servqual Scale; There is no much gap is identified under the Assurance and huge gap is identified under the dimension of Tangibility when compare to BSNL and AIRTEL.

Keywords: SERVQUAL Scale, Dimensions of SERVQUAL, Quality of Service, Mobile Telecommunication, BSNL and AIRTEL.

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.
GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE–IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

105 | P a g e

INTRODUCTION

Service quality has become a significant differentiator and the most powerful competitive weapon, which all the service organizations want to possess. Service based organizations need the attention of the service providers on the quality that they are offering to the consumers. Consumer Satisfaction is on ultimate aim of any business. Both survival and growth of business depends on consumer satisfaction towards quality of services. According to Philip Kotler defined Service Quality like below: "Service Quality means the totality of features and characteristics of a service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs" The definitions clear that "**Greater Service Quality Results In Greater Consumer Satisfaction"** and service quality will always vary, depending on the interaction between employees and customers. So, service providers need to identify the expectations of target customers concerning service quality. The five main criteria's to organizations are using to evaluating service quality like tangibles, reliabilities, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. **Service Quality in the Telecommunication** Sector is measured by the provisioning of services such as clear voice, presence of signal even in remote areas, in best possible way. In this sector, reliability is more important than low price. Quality of Service is the main indicator of the performance of a telephone network and of the degree to which the network conforms to the stipulated norms. The basic of Servqual originally leading customer satisfaction researchers, Valarie Zeithaml, A.Parasuraman and Leonard Berry, the ServQual methodology is an invaluable tool for organizations to better understand what customer's value and how well their current organizations are meeting the needs and expectations of customers. Servqual provides a benchmark based on customer opinions of and excellent company, on your company, on the importance ranking of key attributes, and on a comparison to what your employees believe regarding customer's perceptions. It provides detailed information about:

- customer perceptions of services (a benchmark established by your own customers);
- Your performance levels as perceived by customers;
- Customer comments and suggestions;
- Impressions from employees with respect to customer's expectations and satisfaction.

Service quality can be analyzed and divided into several qualities. An influential set of five service qualities are service dimensions SERVQUAL has been presented by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1998): tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.

GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE-IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

106 | P a g e

- *Tangibility*: The appearance of the physical facilities & materials related to the service.

- *Reliability*: The ability to perform the service accurately & dependably.

- *Responsiveness* : The willingness to help customers and provide prompt service

- *Assurance* : The competence of the system and its security, credibility and courtesy

- *Empathy*: the ease of access, approachability and effort taken to understand customer's requirements.

The customer perceptions of quality are compared with customer expectations in their model, and subsequently the gaps are studied. Management is whether the relative importance of these five dimensions is reasonably stable across is a strong dependence on the service setting, is

helpful when deciding how the workspace facilities should be assessed? A set of 22 questions were asked to customers at BSNL Mobile phone services which broadly analysis of the survey findings are giving in the next chapter.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Goods and services are the major marketable entities in most commercial activities. Though the traditional defecation of marketing has now expanded its scope to include ideas, people and so on. It is primarily goods of services that most organization tries to market. Traditionally, goods have occupied a lot of space in academic writing, as there was growing demand for them in most of the previous century, particularly in the western, developed world. As the growth in the market for goods in the developed world got saturated, their attention has turned towards services. The last decade in particular has seen the mushrooming of books, journals, etc. devoted to the 'marketing of services'. Partly, this is due to the growing importance of services in the gross domestic products (GDP) of many countries around the world. As of 2003, many developed countries seem to have 70 per cent or higher of their GDP coming from services and goods manufacturing has shifted out to the developing world. Even in India, around 50 percent of the GDP now coming from the service sector.

The American Marketing Association (1960): The American Marketing Association has taken a lead in defining services as "activities, benefits or satisfactions which are offered for sale or provided in connection with the sale of goods". This definition provides a limited

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.
GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE-IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

107 | P a g e

view for services. However, this was the first major attempt to identify services differently in valuing the output of a society.

Philip Kotler and Bloom (1984): Philip Kotler and Bloom defined services as "any activity or benefits that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product". This definition more or less follows the earlier ones. The focus was given to the absence of ownership as a special feature of services, which has significant business implications.

Customer Satisfaction: Consuegra et al., (2007), and Wong & Zhou (2006) indicate that customer loyalty is partially improved by satisfaction as one of the most influential factors. Actual studies confirm that contented clients have more possibility to repurchase and communicate positively toward an organization (Blodgett & Anderson, 2000; Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002). Customers tend to mention a bad customer service experience to twice as many people compared with sharing a superior service experience. In addition, loyalty is perceived to decrease even faster as satisfaction decreases. Satisfying more consumer expectations during a service generates a higher repurchase probability for a company (Wong & Sohal, 2003). High switching barriers or absence of real alternatives may influence customer loyalty. Satisfaction may also cause customer loyalty; thus, customers would want to continue the relationship (Mokhtar & Maiyaki, 2011). Therefore, choosing satisfaction as one of the main loyalty-determining parameters is essential.

Service Quality : Customer Service Quality   Exceptional service quality level is significant for service providers particularly in the aspect of competing with one another (Yoo & Park, 2007; Bharati & Berg, 2005; Kemp, 2005). A consumer's perception on the competence of a service provider encompasses service quality and is highly correlated to customer satisfaction (Shin & Kim, 2008). A customer's perception on both advantages and disadvantages of a service provider in general is deemed as service quality (Tsoukatos & Rand, 2006). Customers are more inclined to employ services, become less price-sensitive, and endorse positive experiences on services received through quality service (Venetis & Ghauri, 2000). Jones et al., (2002) study identified that service quality and repurchase intention, recommendation, and resistance to superior substitutes are positively correlated. The three elements of repurchase intention, recommendation, and resistance to superior substitutes comprise behavioral intentions that establish customer loyalty.

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.
GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE-IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

108 | P a g e

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- To study the various dimensions of SERVQUAL Scale to analyze mobile telecommunication service quality of BSNL and AIRTEL
- To compare mobile telecommunication service quality of BSNL and AIRTEL by using SERVQUAL Scale

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research design for the study is descriptive in nature. The methodology is based on primary and secondary data a structured questionnaire was used for the study, of which pre testing of the questionnaire was administered on 25 people. 125 questionnaires were administered out of which 100 usable questionnaires were considered for the study. The questionnaire comprised of a series of closed ended questions, a likert scale (1-7) was also used to elicit information from the customer. To analyze the data collected for the study statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 21v) has been used extensively. Tools like descriptive statistics, Wilcoxon singed ranks test have been used in the study.

HYPOTHESIS:

H_0 **:** There is no significance difference between Mobile Telecommunication Service Quality of BSNL and AIRTEL

H_1 **:** There is a significance difference between Mobile Telecommunication Service Quality of BSNL and AIRTEL

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

SERVIQUAL SCALE: MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE QUALITY OF BSNL & AIRTEL

S.NO	SERVQUAL SCALE DIMENSIONS	TOTAL SCORE	BSNL SCORE	AIRTEL SCORE	BSNL GAP ON AIRTEL
I. RELIABILITY					
1	Show sincere interest in solving problem	350	232	254	8.66%
2	Perform well right from the first time	350	224	252	11.11%
3	The problem solved in the predefined time	350	219	259	15.44%
4	Provide the right information needed	350	262	275	4.73%
5	Insist on error free records	350	299	300	0.33%
	TOTAL	**1750**	**1236**	**1340**	**7.76%**
II. RESPONSIVENESS					
1	Always be willing to help customers	350	235	256	8.20%
2	Tell customers exactly when the service will be performed	350	247	252	1.98%

3	Busy to respond to customer requests	350	191	221	13.57%
4	Latest services are provided	350	224	246	8.94%
5	Give prompt services to customers	350	227	232	2.16%
	TOTAL	**1750**	**1124**	**1207**	**6.88%**
III. ASSURANCE					
1	Install confidence in customers	350	219	252	13.10%
2	Ensure safety in transaction with customers	350	289	263	**-9.89%**
3	Courteous to the customer's needs	350	211	220	4.09%
4	Knowledgeable enough to answer customer queries	350	243	274	11.31%
	TOTAL	**1400**	**962**	**1009**	**4.66%**
IV. EMPATHY					
1	Have convenient operating hours for all their customers.	350	253	253	0.00%
2	Understand the specific needs of their customers.	350	207	210	1.43%
3	Give individual attention to the customer	350	175	193	9.33%
	TOTAL	**1050**	**635**	**656**	**3.20%**
V. TANGIBILITY					
1	Corporate image in appearance	350	225	261	13.79%
2	Visually appealing materials associated with the services	350	198	270	26.67%
3	Visually appealing physical facilities	350	220	268	17.91%
4	Offices are easily located and accessible	350	277	206	**-34.5%**
5	Use advanced technology in offices	350	222	254	12.60%
	TOTAL	**1750**	**1142**	**1259**	**9.29%**
	SERVQUAL SCALE TOTAL	**7700**	**5099**	**5471**	**6.80%**

Above table has shown the percentage of performance gap of BSNL mobile services by comparing Airtel scored rating. Airtel has highest performance (6.8%) on Responsiveness, Reliability, Assurance, Empathy and Tangibility dimensions when compare to BSNL. BSNL has highest performance gap in tangibility dimension of service quality i.e. 9.29% and lowest performance gap in empathy dimension of service quality i.e. 3.2% when compare to Airtel.

WILCOXON SINGED RANKS TEST

Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
AIRTELQ – BSNLQ	Negative Ranks	2[a]	15.50	31.00
	Positive Ranks	19[b]	10.53	200.00
	Ties	1[c]		
	Total	22		

a. AIRTELQ < BSNLQ

b. AIRTELQ > BSNLQ

Ranks

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
AIRTELQ – BSNLQ	Negative Ranks	2[a]	15.50	31.00
	Positive Ranks	19[b]	10.53	200.00
	Ties	1[c]		
	Total	22		

a. AIRTELQ < BSNLQ

b. AIRTELQ > BSNLQ

c. AIRTELQ = BSNLQ

Test Statistics[b]

	AIRTELQ – BSNLQ
Z	-2.937[a]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.003

a. Based on negative ranks.

b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

The above wilcoxon signed ranks test table reveals that Z value is -2.937 and has a p-value of 0.003 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is a strong evidence to reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis i.e. there is a significance difference between Service Quality of BSNL and AIRTEL Mobile Telecommunication Services

CONCLUSION

At this competitive age, service quality has become the most powerful competitive advantage in service industry. It makes a vital role in organization growth by attaining consumer satisfaction towards service quality. Every service organization wants to build an effective delivery process to provide quality of service, but some performance gaps make degradation of service quality. We should understand that performance gaps by evaluating consumer satisfaction and attitude towards that service quality. The SERVQUAL Scale is a vital technique to measure and understand the perceived service quality of customers. Tangibility, Assurance and Responsiveness dimensions are given maximum weightage and Reliability & Empathy dimensions of service quality are given minimum weightage by customer in service quality when compare to Airtel and BSNL. Based on Wilcoxon singed ranks test, it is proved

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.

GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE–IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

111 | P a g e

that the customer perceived mobile telecommunication service quality of Airtel is greater than BSNL.

REFERENCE

1. Berry, L., Parasurama, N., and Zeithaml, A. (1988), 'The Service – Quality Puzzle', Business Horizons, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 3543.
2. Arora, P., Garg, A., & Singh, A. (2007). Service Quality in Punjab Telecom Circle. The ICFAI Journal of Service Marketing, 5(2), 19-40.
3. Johnson, William C. & Sirikit, A. (2002). Service Quality in the Thai Telecommunication Industry: A Tool for Achieving a Sustainable Competitive Advantage. Management Decision, 40(7), 693-701
4. Kim, M Park, & Jeong, D. (2004). The effect of customer satisfaction and switching barrier on customer loyalty in Korean mobile Telecommunication Services. Telecommunication Policy, 28(2), 145-159.
5. Lehtinen, J.R., & Lehtinen, U. (1991). Two approaches to service quality dimensions. The Service Industries Journal, 11(3), 287-303.
6. Leisen, Brigit & Vance, Charles. (2001). Cross- National Assessment of Service Quality in the Telecommunication Industry: Evidence from US and Germany. Managing Service Quality, 11(5), 307317.
7. Negi, R. (2009). User's Perceived Service Quality of Mobile Communications: Experience from Ethiopia. International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management, 26(7), 699-711.
8. Parasuraman, A., Berry, L.L. and Zeithaml, V.A. (1991), "Refinement and reassessment of the SERVQUAL scale", Journal of Retailing, Vol. 67, pp. 420-50.
9. Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. and Berry, L. (1985), "A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research", Journal of Marketing, Vol. 49, Fall, pp. 41-50.
10. Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. and Berry, L.L. (1988), "SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality", Journal of Retailing, Vol. 64, Spring, pp. 12-40.
11. Kang, G. and James, J. (2004), 'Service quality dimensions: An examination of Gronroos's service model', Managing Service Quality, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 266-277.
12. Shostack, G. L. and Kingman, L. (1991), 'How to Design Service. In: Congram, C. and Friedman, M. (eds). The AMA Handbook for the Service Industries. New York, NY: Amacom.
13. Babakus, E. and Boller, G.W. (1992), "An empirical assessment of the SERVQUAL scale", Journal of Business Research, Vol. 24, pp. 253-68.
14. Bolton, R.N. and Drew, J.H. (1991), "A multistage model of customers' assessments of service quality and value", Journal of Consumer Research, Vol. 17, March, pp. 375-84.
15. Boulding, W., Kalra, A., Staelin, R. and Zeithaml, V.A. (1993), "A dynamic process model of service quality: from expectations to behavioral intentions", Journal of Marketing Research, Vol. 30, February, pp. 7-27.
16. Brensinger, R.P. and Lambert, D.M. (1990), "Can the SERVQUAL scale be generalized to business-to-business services?", in Knowledge Development in Marketing, AMA's Summer Educators' Conference Proceedings, American Marketing Association, Chicago, IL, p. 289.
17. Brown, S.W. and Swartz, T.A. (1989), "A gap analysis of professional service quality", Journal of Marketing, Vol. 53, April, pp. 92-8.

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.
GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE-IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

112 | P a g e

18. Carman, J.M. (1990), "Consumer perceptions of service quality: an assessment of the SERVQUAL dimensions", Journal of Retailing, Vol. 66, Spring, pp. 33-55.
19. Wisniewski, M. (2001), "Using SERVQUAL to assess customer satisfaction with public sector services", Managing Service Quality, Vol. 11 No. 6, pp. 380-8.
20. Babakus, E., and Boller, G. W. "An empirical assessment of the SERVQUAL scale", Journal of Business Strategies, 24, 3, 1992, 253–268.

A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories.

GE-International Journal of Management Research (GE-IJMR) ISSN: (2321-1709)

113 | P a g e