

A Study on Service Quality in Pet Supply Stores

Yi-Chan Chung, Yao-Wen Hsu, Yun-Hua Tsai, Yu-Wei Po

Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, Minghsin University of Science and Technology,
Taiwan.

Corresponding Author: Yu-Wei Po.

Abstract: Consumers are increasingly demanding higher service quality from pet supply stores. Currently, most businesses lack systematic analysis in service management, making it difficult to accurately prioritize resource allocation. This study uses "Pet Supply Store B" in Hsinchu as an empirical case study, aiming to apply Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) to deeply analyze the gap between customer expectations and actual experiences regarding various service indicators, thereby identifying key service factors affecting satisfaction. This study conducted a sample survey of customers at Pet Supply Store B, collecting questionnaire data which was then processed using statistical software. A total of 130 questionnaires were distributed, and 123 valid questionnaires were returned, achieving a response rate of 94.62%. Based on the five dimensions of SERVQUAL, the study developed 21 service indicators. Using IPA analysis, this study identified several service indicators with extremely high importance but significantly low satisfaction levels, defining them as "priority improvement areas"—service gaps that the store urgently needs to address. The findings of this study can serve as a reference for pet supply retailers to optimize resources, helping them improve service competitiveness and customer loyalty with limited resources.

Keywords: Service quality, IPA, customer satisfaction

Date of Submission: 07-10-2026

Date of Acceptance: 18-10-2026

I. Introduction

The pet supply store market is becoming increasingly saturated, and businesses face severe challenges in a highly competitive environment, including operational pressures and diversified customer demands. Currently, improving service quality and customer satisfaction has become a core issue that businesses urgently need to address. This study focuses on the customer base of Pet Supply Store B, using the SERVQUAL model proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) as the questionnaire design framework to assess customers' expectations and actual feelings about services and analyze their impact on satisfaction. The research process first incorporates Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA), dividing service attributes into four dimensions: Concentrate Here, Maintain Performance, Low Priority, and Possible Overkill, serving as the basis for strategy formulation. This study helps Pet Supply Store B reduce service gaps, accurately grasp customer needs, clearly establish service optimization priorities, thereby optimizing customer experience and business performance, and strengthening overall market competitiveness.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Service Quality

Grönroos (1990) argues that service is a "customer-centric value creation process" characterized by four features: intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and perishability. Haywood-Farmer (1988) believes that service quality should include multi-dimensional indicators such as physical facilities, behavioral procedures, and professional judgment. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) proposed the SERVQUAL model, which divides service quality into five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. This study, based on the SERVQUAL scale proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), divides service quality into five dimensions: responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, empathy, and assurance. Based on relevant literature (Mohsin & Ryan, 2005; Chung & Chen, 2015; Antony et al., 2004; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Haywood-Farmer, 1988), the scale was revised to develop 21 measurement indicators across five dimensions.

2.2 IPA

According to Levenburg and Magal (2005), IPA primarily assesses respondents' expectations and actual satisfaction with specific behaviors or arguments. Its core indicators are defined as follows: Importance refers to respondents' satisfaction with their expectations regarding a specific behavior or argument. Performance refers to respondents' perceived satisfaction with the actual behavior or argument. Kasnad and

Indrayani (2019) pointed out that Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) is a tool to analyze or use to compare the extent to which the performance/service that can be felt by service users compared to the desired level of satisfaction. The IPA analysis matrix divides the plane into four quadrants: I, II, III, and IV (Martilla & James, 1977), including Quadrant I – Maintain Performance: This quadrant represents the area where customers value and currently perceive a good level of performance, which is the company's main competitive advantage and should be maintained. Quadrant II - Concentrate Here: Items in this quadrant are valued by customers but whose current performance level has not yet reached the customer's expected level. The company must invest more resources in prioritizing improvement here; this is the company's main source of weakness. Quadrant III - Low Priority: Items in this quadrant are less valued by customers and have low performance levels. They can be classified as secondary improvement items and are recommended for further adjustment after the priority improvement area is completed. Quadrant IV - Possible Overkill: Items in this quadrant are not considered important by customers, but the company has invested too many resources in them, resulting in excessively high performance levels. The company can consider allocating some resources to areas that need more improvement to improve overall efficiency.

III. Research Method

In establishing the measurement indicators, this study is based on the five dimensions of SERVQUAL proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), and incorporates questionnaire items from domestic and international scholars such as Mohsin & Ryan (2005), Antony et al., 2004; Chung & Chen (2015), and Haywood-Farmer (1988), revising the scale to suit the characteristics of the pet industry. Finally, IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis) is used as the core analytical tool to identify key factors for optimizing service quality. The questionnaire survey for this study was conducted in November 2025, targeting customers of Pet Supply Store B, to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions and feelings about service quality. A total of 130 questionnaires were distributed, and 123 valid questionnaires were returned. The IPA analytical results are shown in Table 1. Variables measured include the following: (1) Responsiveness: Staff can respond to customer needs quickly (Item 1); Staff provide detailed work instructions (Item 2); Staff are willing to assist and serve customers (Item 3); Staff are not neglecting to respond to customers due to being busy (Item 4); (2) Tangible: Staff maintain neat clothing and appearance (Item 5); The interior has modern and professional equipment (Item 6); The internal facilities, traffic flow, and signage are clear (Item 7); Service facilities meet customer needs (Item 8); The facilities have a bright and clean appearance (Item 9); (3) Reliability: Staff can do their best to help customers solve problems (Item 10); Staff can fulfill their promises to customers (Item 11); Staff can do things in one go (Item 12); Staff can provide reliable service (Item 13); (4) Empathy: Staff will proactively provide individual care to customers (Item 14); Staff will prioritize the interests of customers (Item 15); Staff can understand individualized customer needs. (Item 16); Understand customer needs and provide the required services (Item 17); (5) Assurance: Have sufficient expertise to respond to customer questions (Item 18); Provide a workplace that gives customers peace of mind (Item 19); Staff can provide responsible service (Item 20); Product prices are clearly marked (Item 21).

IV. Results Analysis

The IPA analytical results are shown in Table 1. The results of this study found that: Quadrant I - Maintain Performance: Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 16. This quadrant represents areas where customers value performance and currently perceive it as good, representing a key competitive advantage for the company and should be maintained. Quadrant II - Concentrate Here: Items 4, 7, and 21. These three indicators have extremely high importance, but satisfaction levels are significantly low. This quadrant represents areas where customers value performance, but currently perceive it as below customer expectations. The company must invest significant resources in prioritizing improvement, representing a major source of weakness. Quadrant III - Low Priority: Items 8, 9, 14, and 15. Items in this quadrant can be considered secondary improvement items and should be further adjusted after the Low Priority quadrant is completed. Quadrant IV - Possible Overkill: Items include 10, 13, 17, 18, 19, and 20. Enterprises may consider allocating some resources to areas that need more improvement to enhance overall efficiency.

V. Conclusion and Suggestions

The Concentrate Here area of this study includes three indicators: Items 4, 7, and 21. These three indicators have high importance but significantly low satisfaction rates, requiring businesses to invest significant resources in prioritizing their improvement, as they represent a major source of weakness. Recommended improvement methods are:

- (1) Optimizing "Service Congestion" During Peak Hours: For Item 4, staff should not neglect responding to customers due to busyness; a "respond immediately" habit should be established. When store traffic exceeds capacity, a fast checkout process or self-checkout equipment should be provided.
- (2) Barrier-Free "Pet Movement" Design: For Item 7, clear internal facilities, movement paths, and signage are

crucial. Pets' emotional instability upon entering the store is a major cause of shopping friction; movement path optimization should be approached from the pets' perspective. Widening aisles and providing clear visual guidance (clear signage), along with anti-slip facilities and clear category labels at corners, can reduce the psychological burden on customers during busy shopping and extend their dwell time.

(3) Implement a "Smart Price Management System": For Item 21: Product prices should be clearly marked, and physical stores should promote "digital labeling." In the increasingly transparent pet market, incorrect pricing will be seen as a matter of integrity. Stores should implement electronic price tags linked to the inventory system, allowing them to spend time on warm customer service instead of manual inspections.

References

- [1]. Antony, J., Antony, F. J., Ghosh, S.,2004. Evaluating service quality in a UK hotel chain: A case study. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 16(6), 380–384.
- [2]. Chung Y.C., Chen H.C., 2015. Study on the correlation among service quality, relationship quality and customer satisfaction– A case study of H hotel. *International Journal of Latest Research in Science and Technology*, 44(4), 1-7.
- [3]. Grönroos, C.,1990. *Service management and marketing: Managing the moments of truth in service competition*. Lexington Books.
- [4]. Kasnad, Indrayani, R.,2019. Importance of the Performance Analysis (IPA) and customer satisfaction for determining the service strategies through the SERVQUAL model approach. *Journal of Management and Business*, 18(1), 29–38
- [5]. Levenburg, R., Magal, S.R. ,2005. Using importance-performance analysis to evaluate e-business strategies among small organizations. *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*,
- [6]. Haywood-Farmer, J.,1988. A conceptual model of service quality. *International. Journal of Operations and Production Management*, 8(6), 19-29.
- [7]. Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A., Berry, L.L, 1988. SERVQUAL: a multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perception of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64 (1), 12-40.
- [8]. Martilla, J. A., James, J. C. , 1977. Importance-performance analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 41(1), 77–79.
- [9]. Mohsin, A., Ryan, C. ,2005. Service quality assessment in a four-star hotel: A study in New Zealand. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 5(3), 205–213.

Table 1 Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA)

Item	Performance	Importance	Quadrant
	Average	Average	
1.	4.601	4.735	I
2.	4.582	4.812	I
3.	4.498	4.692	I
4.	4.112	4.921	II
5.	4.471	4.681	I
6.	4.553	4.701	I
7.	4.098	4.903	II
8.	4.236	4.502	III
9.	4.214	4.533	III
10.	4.548	4.442	IV
11.	4.564	4.703	I
12.	4.589	4.716	I
13.	4.521	4.431	IV
14.	4.219	4.547	III
15.	4.233	4.521	III
16.	4.571	4.688	I
17.	4.529	4.417	IV
18.	4.536	4.438	IV
19.	4.547	4.429	IV
20.	4.511	4.403	IV
21.	4.087	4.934	II
Average	4.420	4.626	