

Construction Of A Customer Perception Perspective For The Evaluation And Improvement Model Of Service Quality In Hypermarkets

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Abstract:

The current hypermarket market is gradually becoming saturated, and operators face fierce market competition. How to enhance competitiveness, improve service quality, and attract more customers to generate better revenue is the most important issue for operators today. This study used a questionnaire survey of customers of R hypermarket as the subject, and based on the SERVQUAL service quality scale proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), it assessed customers' expectations and actual feelings about service. The study first used IPA (Importance-Performance Analysis) to assess the gap between customers' emphasis on various services and their actual performance, identifying the items that need priority improvement, which serves as the basis for the order of practical improvement and resource allocation. The analysis results can help R hypermarket clearly understand customer needs and expectations, and formulate specific and feasible service quality improvement strategies.

Keywords: *Hypermarkets, IPA, service quality*

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I. Introduction

As the service market for hypermarkets gradually reaches saturation and competition intensifies, hypermarket operators need to develop their own unique services, understand customer needs, and ensure customer satisfaction in order to attract more customers and achieve better revenue. This study uses Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) to analyze the differences in customers' levels of importance and satisfaction with service quality items. The results reveal customers' levels of importance and satisfaction with R hypermarket's service quality items, identifying service areas that urgently need improvement and implementing targeted measures. This study developed service quality measurement items through literature review. It analyzed the service quality of the hypermarket using five dimensions: Responsiveness, Tangibles, Assurance, Empathy, and Assurance. The Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) method was used to explore the differences in customer attention and satisfaction with each service quality item. This helped to identify the direction and priority for service quality improvement, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of R hypermarket and allowing the company to avoid spending a lot of manpower, resources, and time on implementing inappropriate strategies, and achieve maximum results with limited resources.

II. Literature Review

Service Quality

Parasuraman et al. (1985) pointed out that service quality is the gap between the expected service (ES) and the perceived service (PS) that consumers actually receive. In measuring service quality, Parasuraman et al. (1988) believed that service quality includes five dimensions, including Reliability; (2) Responsiveness; (3) Assurance; (4) Empathy; (5) Tangibles. Haywood-Farmer (1998) proposed that service quality can be divided into three dimensions, namely (1) Equipment, process and procedures: including geographical location and store layout, venue size and decoration, coordination ability of service process, and scope of service provision; (2) Service personnel behavior: including timeliness and speed of service provision, communication ability, attitude, friendliness, thoughtfulness, cleanliness, politeness, complaint handling and problem solving; (3) Service personnel professional judgment: including diagnosis, honesty, trustworthiness, flexibility, discernment, knowledge and skills. This study, based on the five dimensions of service quality, referenced questionnaires from Mohsin & Ryan (2005), Antony et al. (2004), Chung & Chen (2015), Deng & Lee (2007), Parasuraman et al. (1988), and Haywood-Farmer (1988), and modified them to suit the operational characteristics of hypermarkets

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA)

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is an analytical method proposed by Martilla and James (1977).

Hansen and Bush (1999) pointed out that IPA analysis can help businesses identify key factors that should be prioritized for improvement based on service attributes or quality attributes. In IPA analysis, the overall average value of various service qualities is used as the dividing point of the four quadrants. The x-axis represents satisfaction and the y-axis represents importance. The IPA analysis matrix divides the plane into four quadrants: I, II, III, and IV.

Quadrant I - Priority Improvement Zone: This quadrant represents areas where customers value performance, but the current perceived performance level does not meet customer expectations. Businesses must invest more resources to prioritize improvement in this area.

Quadrant II - Maintain Zone: This quadrant represents areas where customers value performance, and the current perceived performance level is also good. This area should be maintained.

Quadrant III - Areas for Further Improvement: This quadrant represents areas where customers do not prioritize performance and the perceived level of performance is currently unsatisfactory; it is a secondary source of weakness for the company.

Quadrant IV - Area for Overperformance: Resources can be allocated to areas that require greater improvement.

III. Research Method

This study's questionnaire is mainly divided into two parts. The first part uses the Likert five-point scale as the measurement method. The first part: service quality importance and satisfaction level, mainly includes five dimensions: Reliability; (2) Responsiveness; (3) Assurance; (4) Empathy; (5) Tangibles. The second part: basic information, including gender, age, occupation, etc. The questionnaire survey of this study was conducted in March 2025. The respondents were customers of R hypermarket, and 103 valid questionnaires were collected. The IPA analysis method was used.

IV. Results Analysis

Using narrative statistical analysis, the age distribution of respondents was analyzed. There were 5 respondents under 20 years old, 43 aged 21-30, 32 aged 31-40, 9 aged 41-50, 10 aged 51-60, and 4 aged 60 and above. There were 61 males and 42 females. In terms of education level, high school/vocational school accounted for the largest group (51 respondents), followed by junior college/university (36), junior high school (or below) (13), and graduate school or above (3). Analyzing the occupational distribution of respondents, the largest group consisted of military personnel, civil servants, and teachers (27 respondents), followed by service industry (26), industry and commerce (17), students (13), other occupations (8), agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (7), retirees (3), and homemakers (2). Nunnally (1978) believes that in exploratory research, the reliability range is as long as it reaches above 0.7. In this study, the Cronbach's α values for all dimensions of the questionnaire (Responsiveness, Tangibles, Reliability, Care and Reassurance) exceeded 0.7, as shown in Table 1, indicating that the scale has an acceptable level of reliability.

The questionnaire design referenced domestic and international literature (Mohsin & Ryan, 2005; Antony et al., 2004; Chung & Chen, 2015; Deng & Lee (2007); Parasuraman et al., 1988; Haywood-Farmer, 1988), and was revised and adjusted by the researchers. Furthermore, it underwent consultation and confirmation with industry experts, ensuring good content validity. Regarding the IPA analysis, for satisfaction, 1 represents "very dissatisfied" and 5 represents "very satisfied"; for importance, 1 represents "very unimportant" and 5 represents "very important." The average scores for each service quality attribute were calculated and ranked (as shown in Table 2).

V. Conclusion and Suggestions

According to the IPA analysis, three items fall into the Priority Improvement Zone: staff are not neglecting to respond to customers due to busy schedules; internal facilities, traffic flow, and signage are clear; and staff can reliably fulfill promises to customers. These three service quality improvement items indicate that they are highly valued by customers, but there is still room for improvement, representing key service areas that urgently need enhancement. Eight items fall into the Maintain Zone. This quadrant represents the source of R hypermarket's service advantages, and service standards should be maintained to solidify customer satisfaction. Eight items fall into the Follow-up Improvement Zone. While customers do not particularly value these items, they can still be included in medium- to long-term improvement plans to enhance the overall image. Two items fall into the Over performance Zone, indicating that the business has invested heavily in these areas, but customer attention is low; resource reallocation should be considered.

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Table : The Cronbach’ s α coefficients for all variables in this study

Questionnaire Dimensions	Cronbach’s α	
	Satisfaction	Importance
Responsiveness	0.916	0.864
Tangibles	0.816	0.814
Reliability	0.860	0.817
Empathy	0.897	0.862
Assurance	0.845	0.854

Table 2: IPA Analysis

Item	Service quality item	Satisfaction	Importance
		Average	Average
1.	Able to respond quickly to customer needs	4.4466	4.6117
2.	Detailed instructions will be provided.	4.3689	4.5534
3.	Happy to assist and serve customers	4.3204	4.5146
4.	Staff will not neglect to respond to customers due to being busy.	4.1942	4.4466
5.	Maintain neat clothing and appearance	4.1553	4.2330
6.	It has modern and professional equipment.	4.2039	4.3981
7.	The internal facilities, circulation routes, and signage are clear.	4.2136	4.4369
8.	Service facilities meet customer needs	4.1942	4.3010
9.	It has a bright and clean exterior.	4.2621	4.4175
10.	Staff will do their best to assist customers in resolving problems.	4.3592	4.4369
11.	Able to fulfill promises to customers	4.2136	4.4757
12.	To get things right the first time	4.1553	4.3981
13.	Able to provide reliable service	4.2816	4.4078
14.	We will proactively provide individualized care to our clients.	4.0194	4.2524
15.	We will prioritize the interests of our clients.	4.1456	4.4175
16.	Staff can understand individualized customer needs	4.1553	4.3398
17.	Understand the customer's needs and provide the required services	4.1553	4.4175
18.	Have sufficient expertise to respond to client questions	4.2524	4.4272
19.	Workplaces provide services that give customers peace of mind	4.2621	4.4272
20.	The staff can provide responsible service	4.3107	4.4660
21.	Product prices are clearly marked.	4.3689	4.4951
Average		4.2399	4.4226