
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: THE EFFECTS AND DIMENSION

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ABSTRACT

Prioritizing customer satisfaction helps businesses financially since happy consumers are more likely to make repeat purchases and increase their spending over time. The study analyzed customer satisfaction, the effects and the dimensions. It was revealed that the success of a firm is impacted by customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is fostered by organizations that use effective systems to comprehend client needs, personalize interactions, and maintain constant communication. The study mentioned Product quality, Service quality, Customer expectation, and Customer engagement to be the dimensions of customer satisfaction. Increased customer loyalty, Positive word of mouth and referrals, reduced customer churn, increased sales and revenue and Long term business sustainability were the effects of customer satisfaction on business success. On this basis the study concluded that customer satisfaction is a multifaceted concept crucial for the long-term success of businesses. It encompasses various roles, including its impact on financial performance, customer retention, and competitive advantage. One of the recommendations made was that companies should invest in robust customer relationship management (CRM) systems to gather and analyze customer data, facilitating personalized and responsive service. This helps in understanding customer needs and customizing interactions accordingly.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction

Introduction

A company's capacity to succeed and last depends heavily on its ability to satisfy its customers. It is impacted by a number of responsibilities and

factors that companies need to comprehend and successfully manage. This paper explores the importance of customer satisfaction, its functions, and the main factors that affect its attainment. Meeting or surpassing client expectations is at the core of customer satisfaction. It is crucial for maintaining customer loyalty, which is necessary for recurring business and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Because happy customers are more likely to refer the firm to others and are less likely to switch to competitors, high levels of customer satisfaction can give a business a competitive advantage.

The influence of customer happiness on financial performance is one of its main functions. Prioritizing customer satisfaction helps businesses financially since happy consumers are more likely to make repeat purchases and increase their spending over time. Furthermore, there is a strong correlation between client retention rates and satisfaction. Retaining existing customers is generally more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, making customer satisfaction a key focus for long-term profitability (Guerola-Navarro, 2021).The functional, mechanical, and humanic cues can be used to broadly classify the characteristics of consumer happiness. The useful features of the service or product, such ease, dependability, and quality, are referred to as functional hints. The digital and physical environments in which the service is provided, such as the layout and usability of webpages or physical locations, might provide mechanical hints. Humanic cues include qualities of human interaction like responsiveness, empathy, and high-quality customer service.

Customer satisfaction in the digital age now includes the effectiveness and efficiency of digital services and interfaces. In digital banking, customer experience is shaped by factors such as the ease of use of online platforms, the availability of support, and the integration of new technologies like gamification to enhance user engagement and satisfaction (Chauhan, Akhtar, & Gupta, 2022). Customer satisfaction levels can be greatly increased by the smooth integration of technology into customer service procedures. Additionally, by giving companies the ability to track and evaluate consumer interactions and data across the course of the customer lifecycle, customer relationship management (CRM) systems significantly contribute to higher levels of customer satisfaction. Stronger customer connections and improved customer satisfaction are fostered by organizations that use effective CRM systems to comprehend client needs, personalize interactions, and maintain constant communication. Grasp and enhancing customer happiness requires a grasp of the dimensions of customer satisfaction, which include overall customer experience, service quality, and product quality. Companies can improve their client interactions and achieve long-term company success by concentrating on these areas.

Concept of customer

A customer is an individual, a collection of persons, or an organization that exchanges ideas, goods, services, or products for cash or other valuables from another person or business. Consumers are a company's most important asset since they conduct the transactions that spur development and income. According to Denomme (2023), a customer is most basically a person or business who purchases a product, good or service from another individual or organization. Customers trade goods or services for something, usually cash. Nevertheless, their brief contacts with the seller come to a stop when the buyer departs with the desired item. Furthermore, because customers are intent on receiving a good or service in return for money, they are the lifeblood of any company. Pahwa (2023) defined a customer as the recipient of an offering or offerings obtained from a seller through a financial transaction or an exchange of something of value.

Furthermore, exchanges of value, such as money, for goods or services that satisfy the requirements or preferences of the client and the business are frequently indicative of the nature of the connection between the two parties. Kenton (2024) postulated that customers are often grouped according to demographics such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, income level, and geographic location. Customers pay businesses or retailers for goods and services without establishing a formal commercial connection with them. Customers' needs and preferences play a critical role in propelling a business's operations. A customer is not dependent on a firm, instead, the firm depends on it (Kunst, 2021). Customers are vital to companies because they provide income and offer feedback, which shapes corporate strategy and product development. A variety of business structures and marketing techniques designed to draw in, keep, and please customers are built around this interaction.

Concept of customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction can be described as the proportion of total customers (or number of customers) that report having a positive experience (ratings) with an organization or business, its goods, or services, above predetermined levels of satisfaction. It is a phrase that is widely used in marketing to assess customer's experience. It also assesses how well a firm, enterprise, or organization meets or exceeds the expectations of its clients in terms of goods and services. According to Barron (2022), customer satisfaction is a metric used to quantify the degree to which a customer is happy with a product, service, or experience related to one's business. Barron further argues that the metric is calculated through customer satisfaction surveys that ask how a customer feels about their experience, with answers ranging between highly unsatisfied and highly satisfied. However,

considering the importance of managing the balance between client attitudes before and after the consuming process, firms must prioritize boosting customer happiness and cultivating customer loyalty. Another definition of customer satisfaction is a metric that expresses how content customers are with the goods, services, and abilities provided by a business or organization. Customer satisfaction is a crucial component of a business strategy as well as customer retention and product repurchase, at such, to maximize the customer satisfaction companies should sell ideas and methods after the completion with all the necessary documents (Khadka & Maharjan, 2017).

Furthermore, given a company's primary goal is customer satisfaction, data on customer satisfaction, such as surveys and ratings, can assist in determining how best to modify or improve its goods and services. The two key questions that organizations must answer in order to determine customer satisfaction are: who are the customers and what steps must they take to satisfy them. Deng, Lu & Wei (2010) stated that it is important for mobile instant message (MIM) service marketers to understand what factors impact these users' (customers) satisfaction and loyalty, and then to take measures to retain their customers as with marketing, as customer satisfaction also comes along with it which means it ascertains the expectation of the customer on how the goods and services are being facilitated by the companies. Customer satisfaction considers a number of aspects of the customer experience, including product availability, the buying process, the actions taken following a purchase, and the organization's promptness in addressing concerns. Razak (2016) postulated that customer satisfaction is a customer feedback in the form of evaluation after purchasing some goods or services compared with customer expectations. Razak further stated that the customer satisfaction is measured by using the customer expectations with the performance of the goods or services that can meet the needs and desires of the customers. When a customer is satisfied, it indicates that the items and services are performing in a way that aligns with their expectations and motivates them to make additional purchases.

Dimension of customer satisfaction

A number of dimensions can be used to calculate customer satisfaction. These dimensions assist companies, corporations, or organizations in identifying areas for improvement and recognizing different aspects of the customer experience. The many aspects of customer satisfaction are as follows:

Product quality:The ability of a product to successfully carry out its intended purpose is known as product quality. Product performance, dependability, and durability are all factors that contribute to customer satisfaction with

regard to product quality. Tjiptono et al. (2015) cited by Lone and Bhat (2023) believed that product quality involves a combination of factors such as the goods and services offered, the people involved, the processes used, and the environment in which they are provided. The customer views the product's quality, not the firm, and this is a critical distinction to make.

Service quality: One aspect of customer satisfaction is service quality, which includes an organization's professionalism, responsiveness, and client-accessibility. At such, the services that are provided to the customers must include being polite, quick serving and accuracy, having skills and reliability to provide reliable service so that customers are happy with the services offered by the business (Syahbana, 2016 cited in Noor and Amal, 2023). High-quality service, however, has a major impact on customer satisfaction because the two are intimately associated. For businesses or organizations to establish enduring and mutually beneficial connections, clients are primarily motivated by quality.

Customer expectation: Expectation is an anticipation of future consequences based on prior experience, current circumstances, or other sources of information (Oliver, 2010 cited in Gebremichael and Singh 2019). Customer expectations are typically created before a service is used, but they can also arise while a client actively participates in the service's provision. On the other hand, this aspect of customer satisfaction deals with the company upholding its promises to the consumer regarding the delivery of goods or services.

Customer engagement: In this dimension, customer happiness is influenced by the caliber and regularity of customer communications as well as the chances for customers to offer feedback and voice their ideas. Customer engagement, on the other hand, refers to the degree of interaction a customer has with the business; this includes proactive and engaging client relationships that extend beyond the acquisition and use of goods and services. The development of emotional connections between staff and customers is necessary to reach this degree of customer involvement.

Post-purchase experience: Since it encompasses all of the interactions and services a customer receives after making a purchase, the post-buy experience is a crucial component of customer happiness. It includes addressing complaints and returns, handling warranty and return policies, product performance and longevity, communication and follow-ups, loyalty and programmed incentives, and long-term relationship building.

Overall experience: The total experience is a comprehensive aspect of customer satisfaction that includes all of a customer's interactions with a business, from first awareness and purchase to ongoing involvement and post-purchase support. It is an all-encompassing indicator of how

successfully a business fulfils client expectations through all channels and touchpoints. But this aspect of customer satisfaction also covers long-term relationship building, proactive problem solving, emotional connections, customer path mapping, customer engagements, and the customer's experience.

Effects of customer satisfaction on business success

The success of a firm is impacted by customer satisfaction. One of the most important factors that positively affects a business's marketing and financial success is customer happiness. Customers that are happy with a firm are more likely to stick with it, refer others to it, and offer insightful feedback, all of which support the expansion and long-term viability of the enterprise. The impact of customer satisfaction on corporate success is as follows.

Increased customer loyalty: Oliver (1999) cited in Maharjan and Khadka (2017) defined loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuild and re-patronize a preferred product or service in the future despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviors. Higher customer retention rates result from satisfied customers' propensity to make more purchases from a business over time. Trust in the brand and a history of good experiences are common foundations for loyalty.

Positive word of mouth and referrals: Positive experiences are more likely to be shared by happy customers with friends, family, and coworkers. On the other hand, word-of-mouth advertising is an effective strategy that can have a big impact on acquiring new clients. This results in gaining new clients, developing trust, and enhancing brand recognition.

Reduced customer churn: Low churn rates are facilitated by high customer satisfaction levels. Understanding the objectives, difficulties, and expectations of the client allows them to design a personalized plan that will assist the client in achieving their goals and forge a strong bond that will boost customer loyalty and lower attrition.

Increased sales and revenue: Increased sales and revenue are strongly correlated with customer satisfaction since contented customers are more likely to buy more goods and services. This results in more revenue streams, upselling and cross-selling, and sales growth for the company. **Long term business sustainability:** This involves resilience to market change, sustainable growth, and innovation and improvement brought about by ongoing feedback from happy customers. Rathinam (2023) explained that balancing customer satisfaction, strategic growth, and environmental responsibility, companies can achieve sustainable growth and play an

important role in creating a better future for all. On the other hand, consistent client happiness plays a role in a business's long-term viability and success.

Types of customer

A person or business that buys goods or services from another person or organization is referred to as a customer. According to Denomme (2023), customers are a vital component of any business or financial exchange between parties for a product or service. Customers, on the other hand, are important to any business since they are the parties that exchange something, usually money, for products or services. The various types of customers are as follows:

Loyal customers: For a business, having loyal consumers is the ideal form of clients (customer). They keep coming back to brand for different products and services and they seem to be impressed with the business brand (Rana, 2024).The business or organization's brand should highlight these customers in order to obtain their testimonials since doing so helps them feel more unique and valued. It also allows the business or organization to connect with the customer, learn from their success story, and apply what they've learned to benefit future customers.

Confused customers:Certain consumers might have stumbled into the company's website by accident and require assistance in order to proceed, while others might have a question regarding a product they have purchased from the company. To enable them to make another purchase, these customers could require prompt resolutions and thorough explanations of the goods or services being provided.

Discount customers: Discount customers are crucial to a business's inventory turnover, but they also significantly contribute to cash flow because they rarely buy products at full price and compare prices. They are also resistant to upselling and typically the least devoted customer base because they typically purchase products elsewhere when there are better markdowns.

Impulse customers: People who make impulsive purchases are known as impulse customers. They are not always the best at reading the fine print, but they are ready to buy when something strikes their attention. Because of this, they can require more information than regular customers, but with the right help, they can be developed and kept. Nonetheless, the business or organization supports these customers by building a comprehensive help center, optimizing their website CX and providing technical support (Wren, 2024).

New customers:They are new customers who have recently become part of the customer base. Compared to earlier points in the customer relationship,

they are typically more attentive and open to the seller's message or information. Additionally, new customers offer new prospects as well as having certain special needs. The seller however plays a crucial role in welcoming the new customers properly, setting them up for success, making help available, deepening the relationship and asking them how they feel about the buying journey (Ribble, 2023).

Churned customers: Wren (2024) explained that churned customers are individuals who once had a relationship with the business or organization but have moved on. In order to properly address negative reviews and inquiries, a business or organization can assist a customer who has churned by requesting feedback to learn why they left, sending personalized emails or other messages to remind them of their prior interactions, and providing special discounts and promotions to entice them to give the business brand another chance.

Brand advocates customers: Champions of a company or organization's brand, goods, or services are known as brand advocates. These customers are more advanced than devoted ones. They are not only people with long-term relationships; they are also people who actively tell others about their interactions with the company or brand. Strong customer relationships are essential for businesses to succeed, and brands should do everything in their power to cultivate and grow these connections.

Dissatisfied customers: They are an essential component of all businesses. These are customers who, for whatever reason, are dissatisfied or unsatisfied with the company's goods or services. But their concerns are a terrific way for these customers to provide feedback. These complaints force the company to identify shortcomings in their operations or services that they might not have known about but which should be fixed to give customers a better experience.

Brand-conscious customers: When making purchases, these consumers only give consideration to companies or organizations with a strong brand reputation, image, or set of values. They might like well-known brands or brands that share their personal values.

Challenging customers: customers that pose challenges in the form of unreasonable expectations, high demands, or frequent complaints are referred to as challenging customers. However, the company or organization plays an essential role in managing their expectations and providing excellent service.

Potential customers: Potential customers are those type of customers who are interested but have not yet made a decision and are perusing the website of the company or organization. Although they may have expressed interest

by completing a contact form or signing up for the email newsletters, they most likely won't make a purchase right now..Furthermore, it is the role of the organization or business brand to convince these customersthat they are being offered the best solution to their problems (Bano, 2024).

Promotion-driven customers:These are the customers who often buy during a promotion. The desire to cut prices drives them. To maintain the relationship and keep these clients, it is necessary to educate and attract them with discount and royalty programs after their initial purchase, as well as to show them the value of the product or service.

How to satisfy a difficult customer

It takes persistence, empathy, skillful communication, and problem-solving abilities to satisfy a challenging and difficult customer. Every customer has its particular demands, expectations, desires, and qualities of character. Managing these kinds of events well can improve customer loyalty and reputation by not just fixing the current problem but also transforming a potentially bad experience into a pleasant one. Here are some strategies for handling a difficult customer:

Remain calm and listen actively:It is important to maintain composure and actively listen to the customer's problems since it demonstrates that the company respects their feelings and is eager to learn about their future. According to Darlington (2022), letting the customers explain their situation fully without any interruption is a simple strategy to deal with difficult customers as they want to feel like their problems matters and not just a number.

Apologize sincerely:Sincere apologies can help ease tension by demonstrating that one takes customer complaints seriously. But sincerely apologizing can help one win back the customer's trust and goodwill.

Clarifying and confirming the Issues: Specific and open-ended inquiries are used to urge customers to elaborate on their concerns when there is still uncertainty in order to obtain the information that is needed. Making ensuring the issue is understood and verified guarantees that the right problem is addressed and shows the consumer that the issue is being taken seriously. **Providing solutions or alternatives:**Offering alternatives or solutions gives the customer more power and shows that the organization or firm care about their happiness. Customers may occasionally have unreasonable requests or expectations that are not immediately met. Similar to these circumstances, it is critical to offer another solution or solutions that will still satisfy their needs or lessen their unhappiness.

Offering compensation if necessary:Paying or compensating these customers might be a concrete approach to express regret and make up for

their difficulty. But this procedure also aids in mending fences and conveys to the client how much their business is appreciated.

Maintaining professionalism: Sarah (2023) stated that it is crucial to maintain to maintain professionalism throughout the interaction to avoid responding with negativity or engaging in arguments. Throughout this procedure, the staff member or company providing customer service must maintain decorum, calm, and positivity. De-escalating the problem and making sure the consumer feels valued and respected are two benefits of professionalism.

How to retain the different types of customers

Maintaining a customer's intention to pay for goods or services repeatedly over an extended period of time within a business is known as customer retention. Putri & Sabri (2020) stated that customer satisfaction has a significant effect on customer retention. Customer retention is the work necessary to make a customer happy enough with a brand to keep them utilizing its goods and services. Customer retention is the propensity of the customer to stay with their service provider (Ranaweera & Neely, 2003 cited by Artha & Zahara, 2022). Nonetheless, the various approaches to hold onto the following kinds of customers are as follows.

Loyal customers: The company brand or organization should concentrate on offering great customer service, a personalized experience, and the implementation of rewarding loyalty programs in order to make these customers feel special and appreciated which aids in to retaining them. On the other hand, expressing gratitude with notes of appreciation, unique deals, and discounts keeps the loyal customers coming back and promoting a long-term business success.

Confused customers: The company or business brand plays a critical part in retaining these customers by actively listening to their grievances, comprehending their worries, and providing solutions in straightforward and understandable language. But offering comprehensive information in the form of manuals and step-by-step instructions clears up confusion and fosters customer loyalty and trust.

Discount customer: In order to retain these customers and keep them interested, the company or organization employs a variety of strategies, such as frequent promotion services, loyalty programs, personalized offers, bundle deals, excellent customer service, clear communication, quality assurance, feedback, and improvements.

Impulse customer: To retain impulse customers and promote repeat business purchases, the company provides captivating content, loyalty programs, follow-up communications, quickcheckout procedures, personalized

recommendations, a sense of urgency, simple navigation, and regular new arrivals in order to keep them engaged and loyal to the brand.

New customer: The company concentrates on giving new consumers a satisfying and interesting experience that makes them want to come back in order to keep them as customers. But providing outstanding customer service, interesting content to keep them interested, individualized welcome messages, quality control, customized offers, and follow-ups to make sure they are satisfied also help to build a solid foundation for retaining new customers and enticing them to stick around.

Churned customer: Retaining churned customers can be achieved by implementing personalized re-engagement programs and providing exclusive incentives or discounts. Rebuilding their trust and pleasure also involves addressing their previous complaints, emphasizing new features, upgrading the product or service in response to their input, and providing first-rate customer support.

Brand advocates customer: By consistently offering outstanding customer service, the company cultivates the loyalty of these customers in order to keep them as clients. However, recognizing their support with a handwritten note of appreciation and special incentives encourages them to stick with the company and its brand.

Dissatisfied customers: Making dissatisfied customers feel appreciated and respected is one way to retain them as clients by actively listening to comprehend their issues and complaints. Sincere apologies for any inconveniences caused, prompt resolutions with clear communication and follow-up to guarantee satisfaction, offering compensation or alternatives when appropriate, leads to the development of trust and a demonstration of commitment to their experience which contributes in keeping or retaining these customers and converting them into devoted ones.

Brand-conscious customers: The company or business brand should concentrate on upholding and improving the reputation of their brand and value proposition, offering premium goods and services that are consistent with their worth, in order to retain these customers.

Challenging customers: Customer service representatives need to be patient and actively listen to the challenging customers in order to completely comprehend their needs and retain them as customers. However, retaining these customers also requires continuing professionalism, providing assistance to guarantee their happiness, and sincerely apologizing for any trouble caused.

Potential customers: To keep these consumers coming back after making a purchase, the company's customer service representatives or employees

work to establish rapport and trust with them, engaging them with personalized messages, and providing incentives like discounts. Offering top-notch customer support and following up to resolve any concerns or questions they may have also helps in retaining these customers and winning their loyalty.

Promotion driven customers: Here, the company or organization consistently provides discounts, special deals, and appealing promotions to entice and retain Customers who are motivated by promotions. They remain interested, engaged, and brand loyal when these deals are communicated clearly and consistently through a variety of channels and when they receive personalized recommendations based on their past purchases.

Conclusion

Customer satisfaction is a multifaceted concept crucial for the long-term success of businesses. It encompasses various roles, including its impact on financial performance, customer retention, and competitive advantage. The dimensions of customer satisfaction; functional, mechanic, and humanic clues play a significant role in shaping the customer experience. Additionally, the integration of technology and effective customer relationship management systems enhances satisfaction by enabling personalized interactions and efficient service delivery. Overall, understanding and managing the roles and dimensions of customer satisfaction are vital for fostering customer loyalty and achieving sustainable business growth.

Recommendations

- 1. Companies should invest in robust customer relationship management (CRM) systems to gather and analyze customer data, facilitating personalized and responsive service. This helps in understanding customer needs and customizing interactions accordingly.**
- 2. They should becontinuous training for employees on effective communication and empathy can improve humanic clues, ensuring that customer service interactions are positive and supportive.**
- 3. Businesses should focus on the functional aspects of their products and services by maintaining high standards of quality, reliability, and convenience. Regularly seeking customer feedback through surveys and reviews can help identify areas for improvement and demonstrate a commitment to customer satisfaction**
- 4. Integrating new technologies like artificial intelligence and gamification can provide innovative ways to engage customers and meet their evolving expectations, thereby fostering loyalty and long-term satisfaction.**

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