

**EXPECTANCY THEORY AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR CUSTOMER –
FOCUSED SERVICE STRATEGY: A PERSPECTIVE OF SERVICE
INDUSTRIES IN ONITSHA ANAMBRA STATE**

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Abstract

This study takes an empirical inquiry into the impact of customer-focused services on managerial performance of service organization. Customer-focused service strategy is one of the key business strategies that enable organization to win and retain customers and compete effectively in the ever competing global environment. The objective of this study is to ascertain the strategy on how to provide effective customer-focused service delivery in some selected service industries in Onitsha. To achieve this objective, six research questions were formulated in questionnaires and administered on 121 customers/respondents cutting across the service unit or departments that were used as the sample population. The total population was summed up to be (173) One hundred and seventy three customers. The model for the test of hypothesis was Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Findings indicate that some retail stores and other service firms are still rendering poor quality services to customers. This resulted to some customers waiting longer hours before being attended to. Other customers are of the view that customers focused service is significantly related to patronage and this gives the firm competitive edge of winning and retaining present and future customers. This was confirmed when the test of hypothesis was operationalized. Furthermore, the study affirmed that well motivated and compensated workers is prone to exhibit actions that will spin customers focus strategy and this will generate profitable sales to the firm. In conclusion, service industry is encouraged to inculcate in their marketing programmes how well they can make their customers more satisfied through their service delivery.

Keywords; Managerial Performance, customer- focused –service, Global Environment and customer focused service delivery

Introduction

Customer service is a series of activities designed to deliver customer satisfaction. The process of providing customer satisfaction is based on an understanding of what customers want and needs as a way to gain strategic advantage over other competitors. It has become the phenomena for retailers or firms to lay emphasis on customer-focused service. This is

as a result of intensifying competition amongst the different types of retail stores or service firms spread all over the country.

The business world today lay much emphasis on how to create market for a firm's product or service, using positive marketing strategy to satisfy customers, who are always referred to as king in an exchange transaction. Though the degree of satisfaction may differ widely across customers, yet it is expected that a retail store or firm will try as much as possible to give benefiting services to its customers. This will give the retail store or firm competitive edge, repeat purchases, reasonable market share and profitable sales.

Today, the majority of employees in developed countries work in service organizations. In Australia 73 percent employees, work in service industries, while in the United States it is almost 80 percent. In the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan, the percentages are 69, 68 and 65, respectively. These service jobs include technical support representatives, call centre operators, fast-food center employees, sales clerks, teachers, waiters or waitresses, nurses, automobile repair attendants, technicians, consultants, credit representatives, flight planners. The common characteristic of these jobs requires substantial interaction with an organization's customers. An organization cannot exist without customers, management needs to motivate employees do work better and what it takes to please and satisfy its customers.

An analysis of a transport company's passenger survey confirms the role employees play in satisfying customers. Passengers were asked to rate their essential needs in road transport travel. Almost every factor listed by passengers directly influenced by the actions of these transporters employees.

Statement of the Problem

The inability of the service organizations to provide customer-focused services has adversely affected the market share and profitability of the service industry. It is expected that the needs and expectations of individual customers be understood for the organization to remain in business profitably.

Despite the benefits services firms stand to gain when adopting customers focused service; many service firms and organizations, including retail stores in Onitsha Anambra State are still lacking behind, in this new concept of service packaging for customers. Some of them keep customers waiting for more than required before attending to them. And some service firms render epileptic services that are not worth reasonable enough compared to the cost they are charged. This has affected their productivity and profitability level, especially, the new entrant in the service industry.

Robbins, et al (2008), posits that many organizations have failed because its employees failed to please the customers. In that case, management needs to create a customer-responsive culture, that is capable of addressing the customer's needs and demands.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to ascertain the strategy on how to provide effective customer-focused services in some selected service industry in Onitsha.

The Specific Objectives are:

1. To identify the factors that affects the market share and profitability of service industry.

2. To highlight the major challenges facing service Industry in providing customer-focused services in their firm.
3. To examine if there are interpersonal and techniques that can be adopted to improve customer-focused services in service industry.

Research Questions

1. What are the major factors that affect the market share and profitability of service industry?
2. Are there challenges facing service industry in providing effective customer-focused service in their firm?
3. Is there any interpersonal and other techniques that can be adopted to improve customer focused services in service industries?

The Statement of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

- Ho: There is no significant relationship between customer-focused service and customer satisfaction that might give a service firm a competitive advantage.
- H1: There is no significant relationship between customer-focused service and customer satisfaction that might give a service firm competitive advantage.

Significance of the Study

This study will be of great importance to business firms in Onitsha Anambra State, especially those that engage in services delivery. It will increase the knowledge of the management on how to create a customer responsive culture, in which employees are expected to be friendly and prompt in responding to customer needs, and satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

The increased emphasis on customer focused services requires that the needs and expectations of individual customers be understood and satisfied. But if service providers or retailers need to strive to determine the needs and expectations of customers, the exact task they must perform cannot be pre-specified. But a retail store or service firms needs to have a culture that is peculiar or associated with that particular retail store or service firm either in service delivery, or packaging of service etc. This is because retaining old and winning new customers is necessary for maintaining or improving market share and profitability.

Customer focused is more than customer service. It is an aligned whole organization approach to customer satisfaction and service, leading to customer loyalty, and advocacy. The result is a sustainable profit. In a customer-focused service firm, leadership, processes and people are customer-aligned. In broad strokes this means that; every action is shaped by relentless commitment to meeting and exceeding customer expectations regarding product and service quality. Customer touching and supporting internal processes are constantly evaluated and improved to meet or exceed those expectations. Employees are also aware of their roles in maintaining a valued relationship with their external and internal customers.

In the short-run, delivery of high quality services provides an opportunity for companies and sometimes retail stores to shield themselves from price competition. Garvin (1988),

Fornell, (1992) and Zeithan et al (1993) concluded that in the longrun, superior customer services leads to both market expansion and gains in market share.

Though, a few of these service providers complained of both internal and external factors hindering the performance profile of their service. In a recent survey, executives ranked the improvement of customer's services as the single most critical challenge facing U.S. Business (Clark, 1993), generally what makes customer-focused service sometimes more difficult to provide includes the following: **They are;**

1. **Services are intangible:** Because customer services produce performance and experiences rather than objects, precise production specification concerning uniformity in quality can rarely be set or is difficult. Moreover, the criteria customers use to evaluate customer services are complex and difficult to capture precisely.
2. **Services are Heterogeneous:** The delivery of customer services varies from customer to customer and from day to day unless a retail store or service firm decides to choose a very narrow focused market niche. The quality of interactions retail sales consultants have with customers can hardly be standardized to ensure uniformity. Understanding the special service needs of each customer is thus essential, but these tasks are not easily programmable.
3. **Production and Consumption of Service are Inseparable:** The quality of service is often determined by service delivery. Hence it becomes more difficult and ambiguous to ascertain which service is of high quality and well delivered. This situation poses more challenges on service providers or retailers apart from other competitive and environmental factors that are not constant with customers focused services. A customer focused service strategy requires the sales person to "go the extra mile" to satisfy the need of customers. Sales managers could enhance service by keeping data bases of customers and their preferences, making calls to up date or replenish them on new products or services informing them of sales and special package or events.

Gaining a competitive Advantage

According to Schlkesinger and Heskett (1991), increased competition had led many companies to emphasize customer focused services in order to enhance customer satisfaction and gain competitive advantage.

Customers focus reveals opportunities for the creation of buyer value and may also allow a retailer or seller to command price premiums through value based pricing. That is, the price that is set according to the assumed value of the services or products. This is true of service shops or firms, because in such business, product differentiation is low, customer interaction is high, and the production and consumption of services are Inseparable (Zenithal et al 1993).

In a study of customer switching behaviour, in restaurants, hotels, banking, airlines and retail industries, Keaveney (1995) identified dissatisfaction with service encounters, service mistakes, unsatisfactory employee responses to mistakes and attraction by

competitors offering superior services as some of the primary reasons for customer switching.

Customer focused strategy demands that service providers need to work harder to identify the expectations of target customers in terms of service quality. The number of influx of customers a company or organization commands is a good measure of quality. To achieve the objective of customer-focused service, the sales persons occupies a better position to deliver quality services that adds value to customers and spurs repeat purchase decision and customer retention.

Effect of Competition on Customer-focused Service

Slater and Narver (1994) said that studies in marketing identify competitor's concentration as a principal moderator of the impact of customer-oriented strategies on performance. The greater the competition, the more aggressive a business must be in discovering customers wants and creating superior customer value to satisfy them (Kohil and Jaworskl,1990). Also service industries such as retail store, banks, airline, insurance, brokerage, restaurants and hotels are characterized by monopolistic competition involving service outlets located near each other in a given geographical area, with each competing for its customers, (Kregs, 1990). Most service unit try to differentiate themselves from each other through different level of customer service.

According to Keaveney, (1995), attraction by competitors offering better services, is a potential determinant of customer switching behaviour. For example, if a retail store located in a highly competitive geographical area offer a low level of customer service, it risks customer walking away to other competitors that are prepared to give the best of services that worth the customer's money value. A retail store enhancing the level of its customer service, stand to win customers away from its competitors that have refused to improve on the quality of their services. In contrast, a service firm enjoying monopoly power or facing little competition is less likely to adopt a customer focused strategy and hence may not gain from high level services. This is because customer's behaviour is less likely to be influenced by the behaviour of the service providers.

A customer focused package means service providers need to differentiate his offer, delivery and image, distinct from that of other mere service providers. This could be in the form of innovation features, which calls for creation, development and implementation of new product, process or service with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness and competitive advantage. Since competition posses more challenges on service providers, the decision should be based on how to package new processes and maintaining customers.

Eboli and Mazzullia (2007) measured customer satisfaction in the context of bus service on various factors including availability of shelter, and benches at bus stops, cleanliness, overcrowding, information system, safety, personnel security, helpfulness of personnel, and physical conditions of the bus stops.

Determining a standard for quality service

Customers who are used to high quality goods and services tend to be much more critical of purchasing than those accustomed to lower standards. Since small companies usually cannot cater for all quality levels, they must set their sights on the level demanded by their customers. Quality involves many characteristics of a product, strength, colour, task, small,

content, weight, tone, look, capacity, accomplishment, creativity and reliability, among others. Parts of the quality of services are such factors as salesperson's smiles, attentiveness, friendly greetings, and willing assistance and standard to meet the desires of customers must be established. An entrepreneur can determine where to set the quality level by engaging methods such as market research, questionnaire administration, talking to customers, comparing with competitors' products and trial and error. Onyekwere, Chiekezie and Uzor, (2008).

Effect of Customer Profile on Customer Focused Service:

A customer is always the king and as such should be treated fine by service store in course of providing services. But the effectiveness of enhanced customer service depends on the extent to which customers value service quality relative to other factors influencing their buying behaviour. Service quality will always differ depending on the interactions between employees and customers. Sometimes problem may occur between the service provider and customer in the firm for a late delivery or poor receptions. Going "the extra mile" needs service providers with customer focus to recover fast and correct the mistake melted on the customer. Good recovery strategy can turn angry customers into loyal ones and if possible win more customers in future (Kotler and Arnstrong 2001).

Determinants of Customer –Focused Service Quality

Zenithal, Berry and Parasuraman (1993) gave a list of ten determinants of service quality to include the following:

1. **Communication:** The service can be described accurately in customer's language.
2. **Access:** The service is easy to be put into use at convenient times and in convenient location with little waiting.
3. **Competence:** The employees of the Company possess the necessary skills and knowledge.
4. **Courtesy:** The employees of the service company are friendly, respectful and considerate.
5. **Reliability:** The extent to which the service provider or the service is dependable. That is the service undertaken with consistency and accuracy.
6. **Credibility:** The Company and its employee are trust worthy, dependable and have customer's interest at heart.
7. **Responsiveness:** Attend to customers request promptly as well as solve their problems.
8. **Security:** The service is not perceived as being dangerous or risky.
9. **Tangibles:** The services that are tangible are the real or definite result of the service which must project the service quality.
10. **Understanding and Knowing the Customers:** It is necessary for service providers to cultivate the attitude of interpersonal relationship with customers. This will bring closeness and the needs of customers can easily be provided or attended to both individually or as a whole.

Employee Motivation

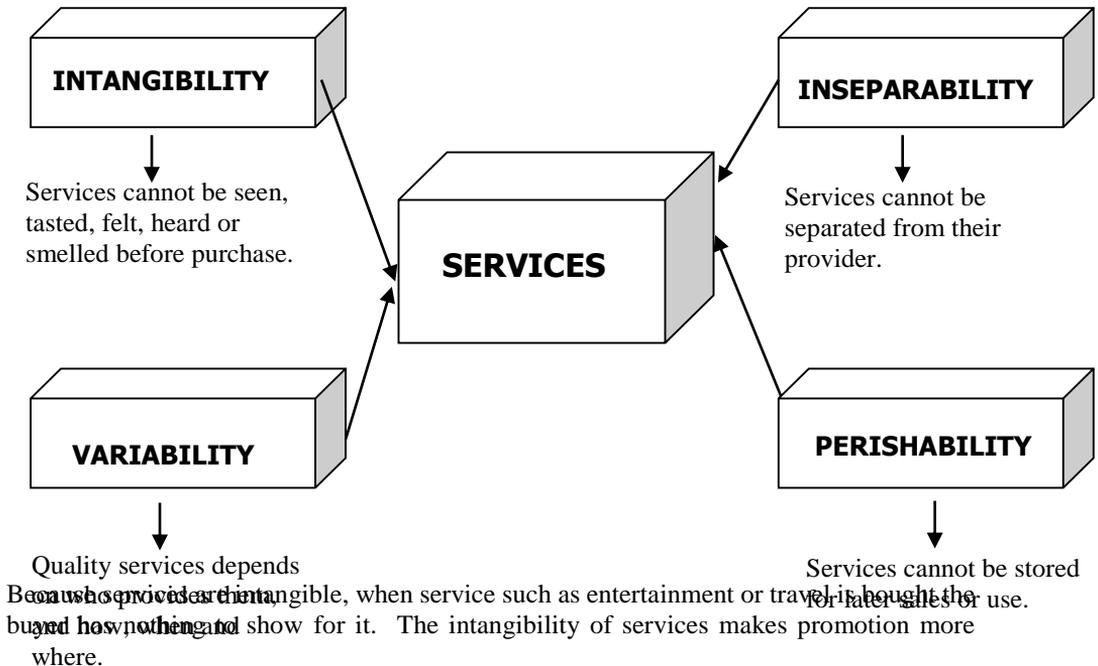
Motivation is the processes that account for an individual’s intensity, direction and persistence of efforts towards attaining a goal (Robbins et al 2008). The most widely accepted explanation of motivation is Victor Vroom’s expectancy theory. Expectancy theory argues that the strength or the tendency to act in a certain way depends on the attractiveness of the outcome to individual. In more practical terms, expectancy theory says that employees will be motivated to exert a high level of effort when they believe that effort will lead to a good performance appraisal; that a good appraisal will lead to organizational rewards such as a bonus, a salary increase, or a promotion; and that the rewards will satisfy the employee’s personal goals.

To motivate employees to enhance customer’s satisfaction, many service organizations have moved from traditional behaviour-based fixed salaries to outcome-based contingent, compensation (Burns 1992). Successful companies focus their attention on both their customers and their employees. Thus a service-profit-chain implies the chain that links service firm profit with employee and customer satisfaction. A vital ingredient of excellent service quality is hiring highly motivated employees and rewarding their superior performance (Zenithal et al, 1993).

According to Schlesinger and Hackett, (1991) many service firms are now trying to enhance customer satisfaction by focusing on the activities of front line workers and linking their compensation to performance. Thus, it is necessary to motivate employees of service firm by linking rewards to performance in order to improve customer service in the short run and increase sales and profitability in the long-run.

In conclusion, reaching service profits and growth begins with taking care of those who take care of customers to achieve desired result.

Figure 1: Characteristics of a Service



difficult, hence the service provider must communicate a concept or an idea rather than a tangible object. This can be achieved by making tangible representation of the service as well as focusing promotional efforts on the service. This is because the service provider usually possesses a level of skill and expertise that represents the service. High service variability implies that the customer faces greater uncertainty and risk in purchasing service. (Guseman, 1981). The service tends to be highly variable because they depend on the service providers. A customer in a particular hotel may observe that attendants are polite and courteous in one trip, but only to discover in the next visit that they are really rude. In order to have a customer focused service, good personnel should be selected, recruited and trained to control the quality services. It is necessary to evaluate customer satisfaction through customer survey as well as establish suggestions and complaints systems. This will help to detect and correct poor service. Services are not separated from their providers because they are sold first, then simultaneously produced and consumed. It means direct sale is the only possible channel of distribution (Stanton, 1981). Equally services cannot be stored or transported, this calls for the elimination of middlemen, hence services are provided in different locations. Since services cannot often be separated from their providers the impressions of every provider of service is an essential determinant of repeat purchase. For example in air transportation business, a consumer pays for flight ticket, the service is produced as the air craft takes off, and consumption occurs as the customer is on board. Services are highly perishable because they can not be stored and constitute waste when they are not utilized after production. For a service provider that has the philosophy of customer focused service, he will try as much as possible to attract customers using salient service packages that are unique to customers. For example, telephone companies offer lower rates at nights and employ more operations during peak periods (Adeyeye, 1998).

Theoretical framework

The argument of this work is based on the notion that service organization that tailored their services towards the needs and satisfaction of their customer is likely to remain in business and survive over those that disregard their customers' needs and satisfaction. The psychologist David McClelland introduced the concept of need for achievement and goal setting. The theory focuses on three needs: Need for achievement, Need for power and Need for affiliation that help to explain why entrepreneurs are motivated. He argues that the drive towards achievement is the basis of activity for most firms.

According to him, need for achievement refers to the drive to excel, to achieve in relation to a set standards and to strive to succeed. Need for power refers to need to make others behave in a way that they wouldn't have behaved otherwise. Need for affiliation also refers to the desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships.

By implication, McClelland's need for achievement is a learned need theory. This can be imbedded through the three phases of needs. Namely; the need for achievement, need for affiliation and need for power. Since needs are learnt, management can create a customer responsive culture in which employees are friendly and courteous, accessible, knowledgeable and prompt in responding to customer needs.

Again, entrepreneurs who take the risk to invest their capital by establishing business organizations has the drive to excel, need to achieve in relation to a set of standards and strive to succeed by providing wants satisfying products and services to the customers in a profitable manner (Ejiofor, 2008).

To achieve this goal, service firms should understand how to determine the customer's needs and then provide for it. It also required that all the activities should be well designed in line with the expectations of customers, to be able to measure their achievement and define satisfaction from it.

However, an employee's emotional state influences customer service, which influences level of repeat business and that of customer satisfaction. Providing quality customer service demands a lot on the employees because it often puts them in a state of emotional dissonance. Over time, this state can lead to job burnout, declines in job performance and lower job satisfaction.

The need for affiliation is also learnt through understanding and knowing customers. It is necessary for service providers to cultivate the attitude of interpersonal relationship with customers. This will bring closeness and the needs of the customers so as to facilitate its satisfaction. The employees needs to know the value of a given level of productivity, so shall the services rendered to customers adds value to their satisfaction.

According to Robbins et al (2008), Need for achievement is the desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationship. One of the determinants of customer-focused service quality is to understand and know the customers. It is necessary for service providers to cultivate the attitude of interpersonal relationship with customers so that the needs of the customers can be easily identified and attended to both individually or as a group.

Some people have a compelling drive to succeed. They are striving for personal achievement, rather than for the rewards of success per se. They have a desire to do something better or more efficiently than it has been done before. This drive is the achievement needs (*n Ach*). McClelland found that high achievers differentiate themselves from others by their desire to do something better. They seek situations in which they can attain personal responsibility for finding solutions to problems in which they can receive rapid feedback on their performance, so that they can determine easily whether they are improving or not and in which they can set moderately challenging goals.

The need for power (*n pow*) is the desire to have impact, to be influential and to control others. Individuals that is high in *need for power* enjoy being "in charge" strive for influence over others, prefer to be placed into competitive and status-oriented situations, and tend to be more concerned with prestige and gaining influence over others than with effective performance.

Finally, employees have been successfully trained to stimulate their achievement needs. Trainers have been effective in teaching individuals to think in terms of accomplishments, winning, successively retaining and then helping them to learn how to act in a high achievement way by preferring situations in which they have personal responsibility, feedback and moderate risks. So if the job calls for a high achiever, management can select a person with a high achievement need or develop its own candidate through achievement training to occupy the strategic position where customers are attended.

The needs for affiliation and power tend to be closely related to managerial success. The best managers are high in their power and low in their need for affiliation. In fact, a high power motive may be a requirement for managerial effectiveness.

The workers need to know the value of a given level of productivity, so shall services rendered to customers adds value to their satisfaction.

Vroom's theory advocated that value for the expected reward such as an increase in salary, promotion, recognition for customers are instrumentality for the high performance. This theory also emphasized that employee's expected returns for effort exerted. This effort could be directed towards the satisfaction of customer's needs which will yield a reward to the organization.

Methodology

The research was carried out in Onitsha Anambra State, to find out the impact of customer – focused service on the profitability of service units or firms and how customers respond to such extra services. For the study methodology, primary data were sourced through questionnaires while the data so gathered were collated, arranged for ease of understanding.

For a true representation sample of the entire service firms in Onitsha; ten major service firms were selected for this study, because of their current socio-political and economic relevance.

Population of Study

The population of the study comprises of major customers who patronize this selected service industry in Onitsha. The total was translated to an estimate of (173) one hundred and seventy three. The sampling techniques adopted in selecting these members of the sample is stratified random sampling. This is used because the population is made up of heterogeneous groups. And the peculiar attributes of the elements of the population are adequately represented.

Determination of the sample size

The sample size is determined from the population by using Yaro Yamani's statistical model. The formula for the technique is a follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where; N = The population

1 = Constant

e = selected margin of error (5%)

n = sample size

computing for n =
$$\frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

We got =
$$\frac{173}{1+173 (0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{173}{1+173 (0.05)^2}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 & 1 + 173 (0.0025) \\
 & = \frac{173}{1+1.0.4325} \\
 & = \frac{173}{1.4325} \\
 & = 120.76
 \end{aligned}$$

Approx. 121
Sample size = 121

Therefore, a total of six questions were formulated on questionnaire and was administered on 121 different customer/respondents that patronized the 10 different service units in Onitsha.

Thus simple percentage was use to analyze data that do not involve hypothesis testing and represented in one table. The model specification for test of hypothesis formulated was the Pearson Product Moment Correlations Coefficient. The statistical tool seeks to establish the strength or degree of association between the dependent and independent variable. Its value is between – 1 and + 1, that is, $- 1 \leq r < + 1$ and is given below

$$r = \frac{n \sum x Y - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2} \sqrt{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2}}$$

Where: r = correlation coefficient, Y and X are the variable of interest: n = number

Test of significance implies $t = r$

$$\sqrt{\frac{n - 2}{1 - r^2}}$$

Data Analysis and Discussion

Table 1 Companies Response to Research Questions.

S/No	Question	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
1	Are some of the retail stores or service firms still rendering poor quality service?	70	57.9	51	42.1	121	100
2	Is customer-focused service significantly related to patronage and competitive advantage?	86	71.1	35	28.9	121	100
3	Do customers have to wait for longer hours before they are attended to in some service department?	75	62	46	38	121	100
4	Does a well packed customer-focus strategy result to winning and retaining present and future customers?	90	74	31	25.6	121	100
5	Should employees of service firms be compensated and innovated to enhance customer focused service?	78	64.5	43	35.5	121	100

6	Does customer focused service result to profitability in the long-run?	80	66.1	41	33.9	121	100
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Source: Field work; 2011

Discussion of Findings

The result in question one shows that 70 (57.9%) of the customers answered in the affirmative and the remaining minority, 51 (42%) answered negatively to the research question. Based on the majority Responses, it means that some of the retail stores and service firms are still rendering poor quality services to their customers. This does not augur well with firms in the service industry, because in the nearest future such companies will lose reasonable number of clients and customers. Because other competitors are watching and hoping to capture or snatch a larger segment of the market with improve services, that are worth value of customers money.

From question two it can be noticed that 86(71.1% of the respondents said yes. 35 (28.9%) said No to the research question. The analysis shows that majority of the respondents believed that customer – focused service will translate to positive patronage and give service provider competitive advantages over other competitors while maintaining authenticated when test of hypothesis was carried out. This also confirmed the work of (Schlesinger and Heskett 1991). When they states that “increased competition had led companies to emphasis customer focused services in order to enhance customer satisfaction and gain competitive advantage”.

The study also showed in question three that 75 (62%) of the customers/respondents agreed to the fact customers have to wait for longer hours before they attend to them. The remaining 46 (38%) did not accept, and hence the negative response, it therefore means that majority of the respondents said that customers lost many hours waiting for services that are not forth-coming. This is in contrast with the desire of this study, because upscale customers value customer service. (Raynolds 1998).

Furthermore, question four indicate fiat 90 (74.4%) of the respondents had a positive response 31(25.5%) gave negative response meaning that majority of the respondent/customers accept the fact that a well package customers service result to winning new customers and repeat purchase decision will be faster than expected, thereby creating future market for the firm.

Question five clearly shows that employee of service industry should be compensated and motivated to enhance customers-focused service based on the 78(44.5%) response. Also those respondents that did not support the idea were only 43(35.5%). Going by Vroom’s view, decision on outcome based compensation should be given to employees that make customers satisfied through their offers. This is consistent with the majority response in our study.

Finally, 80(66.1%) respondents/customers supported the research question while 41(33.9%) respondents did not agree. From the above analysis, it can be observed that majority of the respondents/customers agreed that customer-focused services result to profitable sales in the long-run. This is because customers will become used to the enhance services provided by the service unit, that resulted in the firm generating present and future income.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship between – customer focused service and customer satisfaction that might give a service firm competitive advantage.

H₁: There is significant relationship between customer- focused service and customer satisfaction that might give a service firm competitive advantage.

Independent variable (X) – Satisfaction and competitive advantage.

Dependent variable (Y) – Customer-focused service.

Statistical Testing (Y) – Pearson correlation coefficient.

Model specification Y = f (x)

S/No	Different Service Units and their Customer Responses	Y	X	Y ²	X ²	XY
1	God is Good Transport Service	15	7	225	49	105
2	Unique Dressing Saloon	6	1	36	1	6
3	Law firms	7	2	49	4	14
4	Samtus Super Market	8	2	64	4	16
5	So-Close Haircut	7	2	49	4	14
6	Five Star Restaurant Awka Road	9	3	81	9	27
7	ABC Transport Service	14	8	196	64	112
8	Strategic Services	5	2	25	4	10
9	Pax Supermarket	11	7	121	49	77
10	Juicy Bridal & Confectionary Stores	4	1	16	1	4
		ΣY=86	Σx=35	ΣY ² =862	Σx ² =189	Σxy=385

Source: Field Survey 2011.

$$r = \frac{10 \times 385 - 35 \times 86}{\sqrt{10 \times 189 - (35)^2} \sqrt{10 \times 862 - (86)^2}}$$

$$= \frac{3850 - 3010}{\sqrt{1890 - 1225} \times \sqrt{8620 - 7396}}$$

$$= \frac{840}{25.79 \times 34.99} = \frac{840}{902.4} = 0.93$$

$$\therefore r = \frac{0.93 \sqrt{10 - 2}}{1 - 0.93^2} = \frac{0.93 \sqrt{8}}{0.1351}$$

t = 0.93

t = 0.93 x 2.69 = 7.15 = calculated value

Df = n – 2, = 10 – 2 = 8 at 0.05% = table value will be 2.31

Discussion = Ho, should be rejected and Hi should be accepted. This is because the calculated value 7.15 > table value 2.31.

Summary and Conclusion

A customer-focused service requires sales consultants to identify and satisfy the need of individual customers and outcome based compensation and incentive will motivate this

action. Data gathered from the study shows that most service firms are still rendering poor quality service to customers. This action is not consistent with societal marketing concept or customization. Customers are supposed to derive satisfaction from every service given to them. They are the essence of your being in business. Customer focused service gives service providers competitive advantage over close competitions and has resulted to a wide margin of patronage. It was confirmed when the test of hypothesis was operationalized. The study further showed that a well packaged customer focus strategy will result to winning and retaining present and future customer. This will increase the market share of the company. The study also encourage service units of firms to motivate their employees to improve the envisage behaviour. Finally, customer-focused service result to profitable sales in the long run, therefore being attended to should not be too long. Rather a better way of servicing customers should be the slogan. Thus “we will give you the best service you need in practical term”.

Recommendations

- To gain a competitive edge over others competing firms should strive to study the needs of the customers and satisfy these needs as at when due.
- Since needs for achievement is a learnt culture, service firms should imbibe the culture of learnt need by innovating their ideas, product or service through modern technologies in order to keep abreast of customers needs and satisfaction.
- Organizations should strive to set standards for employees who are great achievers or who strive to succeed and make sure that they are adequately rewarded in order to motivate them more.
- Competition poses a lot of challenges to service firm, it required that the decision of the management should be based on how to package new processes and maintaining customers.
- Finally, management need to create customer responsive culture, culture in which employees are friendly and prompt in responding to customer’s need and willing to do what it takes to please the customers.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the limitations of the study, I wish to suggest that this research can be better conducted in the future by taking the following measures:

- Repeating the study in a different geographical location either using another state or local government Area.
- Reframing the topic or title of the study, that is putting it in a different perspective.
- Using another sampling technique.
- Increasing the relative sample size or possibly studying the whole population if there is enough finance and time.
- Using different methods of data collection.
- Using different methods of data analysis and research design.

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