A Study on Customer Perception and Service Quality W S R to Products of SNS Industry Private Ltd. Shimoga

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Abstract—

Shimoga (also called Shivamogga in Kannada) is a city in Shimoga District in the central part of the state of Karnataka, India. It lies on the banks of the Tunga River and is the administrative headquarters of the Shivamogga district. The city is popularly called "The Gateway of Malnad". SNS manufacture quality product suitable for Ashok Leyland, Hino & TATA Telco etc successfully and leading manufacturer in Clutch Pressure Plate, Face Plate, Fly Wheel, Drive Plate, Withdrawal Plate, Engine Valve Guide, Shackle Pins, King Pins, Helper Purch Bracket, H Angle Shackle, Crank Shaft Sleeves, AS Castings (rough casting) & also semi finished castings of Cast Iron & S.G Iron. SNS has enhanced capability in machining as well as AS Castings to handle complex requirements and for special thrust is devoted on managing new developments and quality system pre-requisites, this lead to investigate on the customer perception and service quality of SNS. The research methodology adopted was the descriptive research is to describe the perception and service quality about the SNS Industry. The sampling technique followed in this study is customer sampling under non probability sampling technique. The suggestions and conclusion were presented in this paper.

Keyword: Customer preference, service quality, manufacturing company.

I. INTRODUCTION

Customer perception is defined as a marketing concept that encompasses a customer's impression, awareness and/or consciousness about a company or its offerings. Customer perception is typically affected by advertising, reviews, public relations, social media, personal experiences and other channels. Market area in India has been witnessing several changes in charter and Complexity since the last few years. These changes include a higher reach of mass media, particularly due to an increased penetration of satellite Channels, availability of a greater assortment of products and services. Higher level of consumer spending on items other than basic necessities, more discerning choice behaviour exhibited by consumers, and a clear Indication of consumer preference for better value in products and services. The passenger vehicle segment in the automobile industry plays a vital role in India .The present day market is such that the passenger vehicle is affordable by Middleclass people in urban and semi-urban areas; it is also more convenient for travelling short and long distance. Over the years the sales

figured of the four wheelers has increased to a very large extent. The sale of the automobile spare parts in 1950 was nearly 300 units whereas now the sales have shot up to millions. The Indian automobile industry is now striding inroads into the rural middle class after its inroads into the urban markets and rural rich. It is trying to bring in varying products to suit requirements of different class segments of customers

II. NEED FOR THE STUDY

It's imperative to understand the customer perception about SNS industry Pvt Limited. The study is to learn where the company needs improvement as SNS is a B to B company. The quality of delivery service plays a prime role. Hence the need arises to understand the perception of customers about SNS and the lacunae in the service quality for further improvement.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aims to contribute the research on service quality, analyzing almost 30 years of research on the gaps model proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in the 1980s. A literature review has been conducted from 1985 to 2013 with the purpose of underlining the model evolution and its criticisms. Major international academic databases have been consulted.

Service Quality Gap Models: A Review, Parasuraman (1985) proposed that service quality is a function of the differences between expectation and performance along the quality dimensions. They developed a service quality model based on gap analysis. The various gaps visualized in the model are:

Gap 1: Difference between the consumers' expectation and management's perceptions of those expectations, i.e. not knowing what consumers expect,
Gap 2: Difference between management's perceptions of consumer's expectations and service *quality specification, i.e. improper service-quality standards,*
Gap 3: Difference between service quality specification and service actually delivered i.e. the service performance gap,
Gap 4: Difference between service delivery and the communications to consumers about service *delivery, i.e. whether promises match delivery? And*
Gap 5: Difference between consumer's expectation and perceived service,

This gap depends on size and direction of the four gaps associated with the delivery of service quality on the marketer's side. Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1985) -were among the best-known researchers on service quality. They have studied customer-perceived quality in four service categories: banks, stockbrokers, credit card companies, and companies selling household machinery. They described service quality by means of ten factors: dependability, willingness, competence, availability, courtesy, communication, trust worthiness, assurance, empathy and tangibility.

Choi (2001), investigated the influence of overall service quality on customer satisfaction and member's repurchase intentions at fitness clubs in Seoul, South Korea. He also examined the influence of customer satisfaction on the level of their repurchase intentions. The questionnaire consisted of four sections: service quality scale, customer satisfaction scale, customer repurchase intentions scale and demographic information. He found that the perceived service quality factor was the most influential predictor of Customer Satisfaction and their repurchase intention. The variance of the level of overall Customer Satisfaction was explained by the following predictors in order of higher to lower: Perceived Service Quality, Contact with physical environment, Interpersonal Interaction and Program. Also the variance of the level of repurchase intentions was predicted by the following factors in order of higher to lower: Perceived Service Quality and Interpersonal Interaction.

Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1982), defined as service quality in terms of physical quality, interactive quality and corporate (image) quality. They also suggested that when compared with the other two quality dimensions, corporate quality tended to be more stable over time

Hays (2000), proposed a theoretical framework that related service guarantees to perceived service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and business performance via the intervening constructs of employee motivation/vision, learning through service failure, defensive marketing / service recovery and offensive marketing. The results of the study showed that both employee motivation/vision and learning through service failure positively influenced perceived service quality. However, employee motivation/vision mediated the relationship between learning through service failure positively influenced perceived service quality. Further, service guarantees positively impacted both employee motivation/vision and perceived service quality but no effect was found on learning through service failure.

Kerlin (2000), used the SERVQUAL survey instrument to assess student satisfaction with service quality. Student expectations and perceptions of service quality in registration, financial aid, counselling, and career centre and library services were probed. It was found that students placed less emphasis on the tangible aspects of service quality, such as appearance of facilities and brochures and more emphasis on aspects that provide them with reliable services and demonstrate attention to their personal needs.

Valarie A Zeithaml (1992), in Services Marketing: Integrating customer focus across the firm book, opines that service performances gap i.e. gap 3 is the discrepancy between developments of customer-driven service standards and actual performance by company employees. Standards must be backed by appropriate resources people, systems, and technology and also must be supported to be effective i.e. Employees must be measured and compensated on the basis of performance along these standards. Thus, even when standards accurately reflect customer expectations, if the company fails to provide support for them if it does not facilitate, encourage and require their achievement standards do no good. When the level of service delivery

performance fails short of the standards, it falls short of what customers expect as well. Narrowing gap 3, by ensuring that all the resources needed to achieve are in place reduce the gap.

Bakakus and Boller (1992) elicited that although SERVQUAL had been applied in the study of different types of service industries, there were certain limitations and criticisms. Some of the widespread concerns were the 5 dimension configuration of the scale, the appropriateness of operational zing service quality as the expectations-performances gap score, and the scale's applicability to a retail setting.

York (1993), investigated the effects of consumer evaluation of quality, satisfaction, and value on service patronage. His findings did not confirm the five dimensions of service quality/performance hypothesized; however, three dimensional structures were in conformance with the following dimensions: tangible operations, tangible communications and reliability/empathy. The dimensions of service quality were found to have a positive impact on overall quality, satisfaction and value with the exception of tangible communications which did not display a significant effect. Overall quality, satisfaction and value were in turn found to influence service patronage.

Deyong (1994) - developed a methodology to identify conceptual linkages between customer satisfaction dimensions and process performance metrics. Their methodologies indicated a link between the customer satisfaction dimensions and process performance metrics. It also identified a relationship between the dimensions of quality proposed by Garvin and service quality dimensions proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry.

Cross By, Leon B. Devito, J.Michael (2003) - If this general model of quality and the time-based product/service transaction cycle has validity, then the degree of customer satisfaction can be influenced after the transaction has occurred. A product/service's design characteristics establish most, if not all, of the embedded dimensions such as EB1- features, conformance, performance, serviceability and EB2- reliability, durability, overtime, responsiveness early in the product/service's life cycle. Moreover, these dimensions are difficult, if not impossible, to quickly modify if the customer's expectations are not being met. However, the supporting dimensions, being delivered and sometimes designed after the transaction time, are less fixed in nature.

Emma Aspfors (2010) - the purpose of this paper was to find out how the case company's existing customers perceive the store, how they experience the service they receive and the products they are offered. The research revealed a very positive result, the customer's service expectations are met and surpassed and the existing customers have in general a very positive attitude towards the atmosphere and image of the store. Nevertheless, the results also showed on aspects the case company can work on in the future in order to improve the customers'

perceptions even more. This study helped the case company to discover and learn more about their customers' opinions and perceptions. By doing so, they learn how to serve their customers even better in the future.

Nakashima, Utomo Sarjono (2010) - this study demonstrates that both exploratory and explanatory study to service quality can help an organization to understand the factors affecting service quality and customer perception of service quality. Both of them are closely related with different city situation and customer value and life style. Although the conceptual framework provides an understanding of service quality dimension and their related factors, further research can be directed to the dynamic and interaction between service quality dimensions such as tangible, reliable, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, dist fairness, interpersonal fairness, brand value.

Jayant Negi (2010) - the main aim of this research was to measure current service quality level of an automobile dealership in an Indian city. The research was focused on only one factor of dissatisfaction i.e. delays in delivery. As other factors have not been considered, the results of this study are limited. Similar kind of study could be conducted for other factors also.

Watson (1999), determined the relationship between product quality, service quality, image of the firm and customer satisfaction in a commodity industry. Product quality and certain items of service quality and image of the firm were found to be significant predictors of customer's satisfaction. In the area of service quality it was found that people intensive areas were significant, while process related service areas were not significant. More items in the area of image, or reputation of the firm were found to be significant predictors than in the area of service quality.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the customer awareness about various SNS products and service
- To know the satisfaction level of customers regarding the products, price, timely delivery and the process followed by the SNS industry
- To understand the post purchase service quality to the customers
- To understand the service gap between expected service and actual service provided by SNS industry.

V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is pertaining to SNS Pvt Ltd. Here the study is pertaining to only customer perception and service quality. The study includes survey of only 25 respondents who are the present clients of the SNS Pvt Ltd. The study is limited to only three months and for academic purposes only.

VI. RESEARCH METHODLOGY

This research article has been prepared by utilizing both types of data, that is primary data and secondary data. For the purpose of collecting primary data personal interview with closed ended questionnaire was used. The study is helpful to us in understanding the perception and service quality of the customers. Design is the arrangement of condition for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purposes with economy in procedure. Descriptive research design is followed for the study. The aim of the descriptive research is to describe the perception and service quality about the SNS Industry. The sampling technique followed in this study is customer sampling under non probability sampling.

VII. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

- The study is restricted only marketing department of automobile manufacturing industry
- The project is for three months duration only.
- The cost of collecting responses is a major limit action.
- The time factor also plays a major role.
- The perception of customers may change time to time

VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

From the research carried out, it shows that 52% of respondents had knowledge about the SNS through advertisement. In a classification, how long the customers with SNS Industry, 08 percent of customers are dealing from since a year and 24 percent of customers are dealing from past 1 to 5 years and 40 percent of customers are dealing with 5 to 10 years, where as 28 percent of customers are dealing with from 10 to 15 years above.

The researcher found that, the rank obtained after calculation 6.16, is given to order taking ability which takes the highest and lowest rank is given to the SNS agent's interaction and customer relation and timely delivery of products. The study shows that 16 percent of customers are Highly Satisfied with the after sales service of SNS, 44 percent of customers are satisfied with the after sales service only 32 Percent of Respondents were not yet declared and only 4 percent of customers are dissatisfied with the sales service and where as 4 percent of customers are Highly Dissatisfied. In a classification factors influencing to buy, the study shows that 8 percent of customers preferred to purchase the SNS products by its Brand name, 40 percent of customers preferred to purchase the SNS products by its quality and only 32 Percent of customers preferred to purchase the SNS products by its After sales service and only 20 percent of customers preferred to purchase the SNS products by its price. From the study 44 percent of customers getting discount from products of SNS and 56 percent of customers are not getting any discount.

The researcher queried about SNS Products is easily acceptable in replacement market, the data expressed that 8 percent of customers are strongly agree with acceptance in the replacement market, 28 percent of customers are agree with acceptance in the replacement market and 52

Percent of Respondents were not yet declared and only 8 percent of customers are disagree with acceptance in the replacement market and where as only 4 percent of customers are strongly disagree. In a classification on preference of advertising media, the study revealed that the direct marketing is considered to be more effective and 12 percent of magazines and 12 of trade show and 12 percent exhibitions advertising media would prefer for SNS products. The research expressed that on the basis of information available, sales staff courteous and understand our queries which take the highest, and lowest rank is given to price changed by SNS is competitive (2.08).

Respondents' preference of SNS products, it was found that the rate obtained after calculation of mean, 3.8 was to order taking activities of SNS which takes highest and lowest rank is given to timely delivery of products. From the study, it revealed 12 percent of customer's opinion is very good about the information of SNS products, 28 percent of customer's opinion is good and 40 percent of customers opinion is Average, 16 percent of customer's opinion is poor, only 4 percent of customer's opinion is very poor about the information of SNS products, 88 percent of customers are like to suggest SNS products to others only 12 percent of customers are dislike to suggest. For direct purchase, 76 percent of customers are providing positive feedback about SNS Company directly contacting them for purchase of their products and only 24 percent of customers are providing negative feedback. For the respondents believes that SNS Company will satisfy the needs of the customers that 84 percent of the customers believed that SNS Company will satisfy the needs of customers and only 16 percent of the customers are unbelievers.

IX. FINDINGS

After analyzing the data gathered in the survey, important findings can be listed out as below:
52% respondents had knowledge about SNS products through advertisement. They know about the company product very clearly. They had a very good opinion about the company products. 52% respondents are purchasing parts from other industries and 48% are having good opinion about SNS products. 8% are customers since a year and 24% of customers are from past 1 to 5 years and 40% of customers are 5 to 10 years where as 28% of customers are from 10 to 15 years. The ranks obtained after calculation is 6.16 and is given to the order taking ability which takes the highest and the lowest rank is given to the SNS agents and timely delivery. 16% of customers are highly satisfied with after sales service of SNS, 44% of customers are satisfied with the after sales service only 32% of respondents were not yet declared and only 4% of customers are dissatisfied with the sales service and where as 4% of customers are dissatisfied with the sales service and where as 4% of customers are highly dissatisfied. 8% of customers preferred to purchase SNS products by its brand name, 40% of customers preferred to purchase SNS products by its quality and only 32% of customers preferred to purchase SNS products by its after sales service. And only 20% of customers preferred to purchase SNS products by its price. 44% of customer getting discount from product of SNS and 56% of customers are not getting any discount. 8 percent of customers are strongly agree with acceptable in replacement market, 28 percent of customers are agree with acceptable in replacement market and 52 Percent

of Respondents were not yet declared and only 8 percent of customers are disagree with acceptable in replacement market and where as only 4 percent of customers are strongly disagree. 84 percent of the customers are believed that SNS Company will satisfy the needs of customers and only 16 percent of the customers are unbelievers. 76 percent of customers provided positive feedback about SNS Company directly contacting for purchasing their products and only 24 percent of customers provided negative feedback.

X. SUGGESTIONS

The company must enhance after sale service level and the cost of services should be reasonable. Periodic inspection should be carried out by the company's service person. Company's sales executives should keep in touch with customers after delivery of the products. Opportunities should be provided to the customers to express their views and ideas. Most of the respondents prefer quality and all the factors so SNS should keep the product quality the same or increase the quality as customers are satisfied with the quality of product. They have to concentrate not only on automobile shops but also on the repair station, show rooms, and auto centres. The company must analyze competitors marketing strategies, service levels, product quality, pricing strategies in order to defend from the competitors. Company must match with the competitor's technologies. Certain research should be conducted to make some innovation in existing products and to know the future demand. Personal selling is the most effective marketing tool to get orders from the local automobile outlets, therefore more sales executive should be hired. Participating in local trade shows and exhibitions are also effective promotional tools to attract the local automobile outlets. In findings it is clear that SNS has got problems with distribution; so first SNS should concentrate on improving delivery schedule. SNS should appoint technical or skilled machinery sales persons to give technical assistance to customers.

XI. CONCLUSIONS

This study is undertaken to find out the customer perception and service quality of SNS Automobile spare parts. This study helps to understand the value and demand of the SNS products. SNS Industry is a profitable product manufacturing company. This company has great future in both national and international levels. Materials constitute an important ingredient and inputs to the activities of several types of organizations. Industries require raw materials, components and equipments for their production, service organization require supplies, and spare parts are required for maintenance operations. In most of the organizations, the value of raw materials as compared to other inputs to the system is high. This study revealed that quality and service were main parts in an automobile. They should concentrate on quality, delivery schedule, and on providing technical assistance to customers. This study helps SNS to know the customer requirements.

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