

REVIEW

Customer satisfaction status. Strategies and ways to address it

Estado de satisfacción del cliente. Estrategias y formas de abordarla

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RESUMEN

Introducción: los clientes se enfocan en obtener servicios o productos donde sean tratados con cordialidad, amabilidad y cortesía; en aras de establecer un grado de empatía con el servicio prestado.

Objetivo: valorar el estado de satisfacción del cliente a partir de su enfoque de estrategias y formas de abordarla

Método: se desarrolló una investigación de revisión de la literatura científica. Para la búsqueda de información se utilizaron descriptores. La búsqueda fue realizada en la bases de datos Scielo y SCOPUS. Fueron utilizadas para el desarrollo de la investigación un total de 20 trabajos.

Desarrollo: el sistema empresarial a nivel internacional se enfrenta a un sistema económico globalizado, donde la competencia a través del libre mercado se basa en la calidad y eficacia de los productos ofertados. La retroalimentación con los clientes es un indicador importante que determina el nivel de productividad de un sector; en otras palabras, se habla del grado de satisfacción de los clientes.

Conclusiones: la satisfacción del cliente debe ser considerada como uno de las principales metas dentro de los objetivos empresariales. En dependencia del grado de satisfacción se determina las riquezas que pueden producir una empresa en cuestión. Su abordaje debe ser integral, a partir de nuevas herramientas (en su mayoría digitales) que ayuden a una comprensión en tiempo real la misma. A su vez, las estrategias de trabajo y/o ambiente laboral se actualizan y perfeccionan en aras de lograr mejores condiciones que se traduzcan en una mayor satisfacción por parte del consumidor o cliente.

Palabras clave: Calidad de Servicio; Satisfacción del Cliente; Tecnología; Plataformas Digitales; Estrategias Empresariales.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: customers focus on obtaining services or products where they are treated with cordiality, friendliness and courtesy; in order to establish a degree of empathy with the service provided.

Objective: assess the state of customer satisfaction based on their approach to strategies and ways of addressing it.

Method: a research review of the scientific literature was developed. Descriptors were used to search for information. The search was carried out in the Scielo and SCOPUS databases. A total of 20 works were used for the development of the research.

Development: the international business system faces a globalized economic system, where competition through the free market is based on the quality and effectiveness of the products offered. Feedback with customers is an important indicator that determines the level of productivity of a sector; In other words, we talk about the degree of customer satisfaction.

Conclusions: customer satisfaction should be considered one of the main goals within business objectives. Depending on the degree of satisfaction, the wealth that a company in question can produce is determined. Its approach must be comprehensive, based on new tools (mostly digital) that help to understand it in real time. In turn, work strategies and/or work environment are updated and perfected in order to achieve better conditions that translate into greater satisfaction on the part of the consumer or client.

Keywords: Service Quality; Customer Satisfaction; Technology; Digital Platforms; Business Strategies

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, companies and institutions dedicated to providing services (in different sectors) have had to update their markets and/or approaches to their portfolios of possibilities and products. One factor that has undoubtedly played an important role is the degree or level of satisfaction of the customers to whom the service is directed. For this reason, with advances in communication, digital marketing, and market updates, feedback on customer satisfaction and well-being is essential. Each service provided is part of a group of people with individual and/or collective objectives, which are related or directed based on business objectives and goals. Although the primary goal of a company (depending on its scope) is the production of wealth,⁽¹⁾ this cannot be achieved without a connection between the seller or producer of the service and the consumer (in many cases referred to as the customer, regardless of whether they are a wholesale or retail buyer). The vitality of the producer's market depends on each of them.

About the above, customers focus on obtaining services or products where they are treated with warmth, friendliness, and courtesy to establish a degree of empathy with the service provided.⁽²⁾

According to Angles Vargas et al.⁽³⁾, the degree of satisfaction is defined as "the degree of consistency between the service expected and the service actually received." In this narrow scenario, communication plays a vital role in measuring the quality of service delivery.

Service quality is considered the main alternative or way for companies to gain a competitive advantage in a globalized economy. In this case, small and medium-sized enterprises must focus on this aspect more than other companies. These companies are responsible for more than half of formal employment, representing between 50 and 60 % of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).⁽⁴⁾

The quality of a service is a variable that is difficult to measure and interpret. It depends on the subjective perception of an individual (in this case, the customer) who evaluates various aspects to determine whether the service provided or product purchased can satisfy their needs or meet their expectations. These aspects are grouped under service quality, which is proportionally linked to customer satisfaction. The latter largely determines socialization through similar customers and their confidence in repeatedly choosing the service or product provided. These ideas are collected by Saldívar Hernández et al.⁽⁵⁾ five about the analysis of improving the quality of services perceived by customers in the hotel sector.

In the healthcare sector, the quality of services perceived by the customer (in this case, the patient requiring medical assistance and their family members) encompasses a wide range of factors that are analyzed. These include patient safety during their stay in the hospital unit. Mihalache Bernal et al.⁽⁶⁾ classify this aspect as the set of strategies and measures to minimize or avoid risks and/or errors that could hinder the patient's recovery. It is one of the pillars of health administration that maintains the quality of services and patient satisfaction.

Knowing the degree of customer satisfaction is important, Mendoza Ramírez et al.⁽⁷⁾ develop and analyze a strategy plan for the business growth of Acuña Ventures SAS Company. Within this plan, they identify the expansion of new markets, with diversification towards customers, as the primary goal to guarantee the company's internal and external growth. The authors highlight the importance of the customer in the business expansion of any service.

Michelle Zea et al.⁽⁸⁾, in their research on different models for evaluating customer satisfaction levels, analyze the most relevant indices and/or variables to be taken into account. However, the authors critically assess the dynamism and variations experienced in customer satisfaction levels. They highlight the urgent need for each service and/or product to have feedback based on customer satisfaction, as this is a changing aspect that adapts to new trends, with other needs that must be known to maintain the quality of the services provided. Based on the above, this research aimed to assess customer satisfaction based on their approach to strategies and ways of addressing it.

METHOD

Based on the objective outlined, a review of the scientific literature related to customer satisfaction in different fields and sectors (economic, health, and social, among others) was conducted. The following descriptors were used to search for information: Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, technology, Digital Platforms,

and Business Strategies related to Boolean operators. The search was conducted using the Scielo and SCOPUS databases.

The study's selection criteria were articles published in high-impact journals and peer-reviewed journals. In addition, research located in institutional repositories was also considered. Narrative, original research, and theses available in full text were used. Research that did not meet the above criteria and those whose initial review of the title and/or abstract did not reflect data relevant to this study were excluded. A total of 28 studies were found. A total of 20 studies were used for the development of the research.

DEVELOPMENT

The international business system (to a greater extent) faces a globalized economic system, where competition through the free market is based on several aspects, including the quality and efficiency of the products and services offered. In this sense, customer feedback is key to evaluating the level of outreach, but above all, the acceptance of the offer. It is an important indicator that determines a sector's productivity level; in other words, it refers to the degree of customer satisfaction.

Quality in services and/or products and its relationship with customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the ultimate and primary goal of any company that bases its production on customer service. Most small, medium, and large companies work under this service condition, as a large part of their products are produced for direct consumption by the customer. It results from a process that includes several steps, such as product or service ideation, application of material resources (infrastructure, computerization, and technologies), and human resources. In addition to the application of marketing and business communication strategies.⁽⁹⁾

Research such as that carried out by Gancino Vergara et al. Nine on service quality and customer satisfaction in a registration unit of the Transport Department analyzes the factors that influence the quality of a service and its influence on the final product: customer satisfaction. The authors showed a predominance of results about a level of expectation fulfillment of "rarely," mainly in variables such as management of the company's website and the workers' professionalism, among others. These factors determined a low level of satisfaction (dissatisfaction) of 64,12 % of the customers surveyed.

This contrasts with the results shown by Vilca Horna et al.⁽¹⁰⁾, which reveal a high percentage of acceptance by the customers surveyed about the services provided by Banco de la Nación, Peru. In this regard, more than 50 % said that the bank's employees inspire confidence. In turn, between 40 % and 50 % said that the staff's response to complaints and customer service times are adequate. In addition, more than 50 % said that the staff is professionally trained to respond to their concerns. These results speak to a positive level of professionalism, which determined to be greater than 40 % among those surveyed.

Similarly, Flores Vega⁽¹¹⁾ shows similar results to the previous one in terms of high-quality service and its relationship to better results in terms of customer satisfaction. In their research, they report that more than 52 % of respondents rate service quality as "very good," which is related to a high percentage of reasonable responses (62,56 %), empathy toward the product or service (59,95 %), and greater customer satisfaction.

The authors consider that the quality of the service or products offered can determine and influence the degree of customer acceptance or satisfaction. This is based on the assumption that the customer or consumer always arrives with a preconceived idea of the product they want to find or consume. It is the job of company employees to try to adapt to the customer's needs or desires based on the particularities and qualities of the product or service being offered without being pushy. Close communication between the seller or supplier of the product and the consumer is essential, as the customer's acceptance and assessment (positive or negative) will depend on this.

In this sense, marketing strategies and social media play an essential role. They help to identify consumer needs through surveys or other means and how to relate them to the products offered for better acceptance.

Digital tools and their relationship with customer satisfaction

Linares Cazorla et al.⁽¹²⁾ analyze the impact of social media and digital marketing on customer satisfaction. In this research, the authors express a high correlation between the use of social media and the customer's acceptance of a particular product; in many locations, customers repeatedly purchase the product through the company's own digital platforms. In this sense, the authors showed that 29 % of those surveyed make purchases in the same place and that more than 50 % defend and accept a company's products.

These results speak in favor of how social media can be used to evaluate and provide feedback (on the part of the company) on the level of satisfaction with a particular product. In this sense, the internet and social media have greatly helped companies diversify and expand their markets based on the criterion that the Internet allows interaction and the exchange of ideas between people.

To achieve this objective, it is necessary to implement sales and product presentation strategies through

virtual platforms. In turn, these must be adapted to different population groups. Maldonado Noriega et al.⁽¹³⁾ recognize the importance of using social media through sales and digital marketing strategies to achieve customer loyalty to a particular product, service, or company. In this regard, sales strategies are based on products and services aimed at the end consumer, other companies, or potential buyers. In their findings, the authors state that more than 90 % of the product portfolio maintained an adequate sales strategy, resulting in more than 96 % of customers showing loyalty to the product.

Virtual platforms have changed every part of people's daily lives. They've brought friends and family closer together. They've helped markets grow by giving entrepreneurs tools to connect with people and promote their products. Similarly, they are a safe environment for health and/or natural disasters like COVID-19. These aspects allow for a close relationship between supply and demand (supplier and consumer).

The use of artificial intelligence offers innovative resources for measuring customer satisfaction. In this sense, its application has been linked to measuring job performance. It can be used to determine the best candidates with the most extraordinary abilities for the position in question, which in turn would increase productivity rates and customer satisfaction.^(1,14)

Another interactive platform that brings companies and consumers closer together is Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM). This tool establishes a method of communication between the parties involved and facilitates the exchange of information about products. According to authors such as Joudeh et al.⁽¹⁵⁾, this tool can influence consumers' or customers' decisions by highlighting key aspects of the product, such as quality and popularity.

Work environment and job satisfaction and their relationship with customer satisfaction

Job satisfaction and a good working environment among company employees can influence and determine the degree of customer acceptance. Authors such as Gonzalo Ordoñez et al.⁽¹⁶⁾ analyze the relationship between a good working environment and customer satisfaction. In this case, they show a direct relationship between both factors, as it determines a higher degree of productivity and management of the company, which results in a higher level of customer satisfaction and, consequently, higher revenues.^(17,18,19,20)

To achieve higher productivity levels, updating business management and organization systems is necessary. One of the new strategies being used is the collaborative economy, as mentioned by Recuenco Cabrera⁽²¹⁾ in his research. It is based on using undervalued products and making them available to new consumers to optimize raw materials and avoid overproduction. In today's world, with policies and actions aimed at preventing and reducing pollution, this strategy presents a promising alternative. It also employs an essential factor: the use of platforms and social networks, which has already been pointed out as positively influencing customer satisfaction.^(22,23,24,25)

Martínez Díaz⁽²⁶⁾ addresses staff turnover within companies to measure the degree of personal and job satisfaction. Regarding employee turnover, multiple factors determine these movements, including economic factors (salary, job stability, and emotional salary). On the other hand, we find competencies and skills, with the work environment playing an essential role in this scenario. However, the most important factors, in the authors' opinion, are productivity and job performance. All these factors, in one way or another, influence and determine customer satisfaction.^(27,28,29,30)

Applying work strategies is crucial for improving the work environment and influencing the development of better customer satisfaction. One of these strategies is the application of outsourcing. This strategy is based on using third parties to provide certain services within the same company or entity. This frees management from the details of the services offered and optimizes time in the focus on the primary production objectives. This strategy is discussed by Ruiz Toranzo et al.⁽³¹⁾ in their research on its application at the Hotel Comodoro. Their results showed a high level of knowledge among staff about how to approach this strategy and its results, especially those related to customer satisfaction.^(32,33,34,35)

Other strategies that increase productivity and influence customer satisfaction include those based on the Balanced ScoreCard model. This strategy is based on applying four perspectives: financial, customer, learning, and internal processes. In turn, it generates more opportunities, shareholders, and, above all, customers.⁽³⁶⁾

The authors generally consider customer satisfaction not just a variable that should be analyzed coldly for each product and service. It offers a critical assessment of the different productivity systems used by the company. At the same time, it is a clear expression of the work environment while helping to implement policies that can improve it. Furthermore, new technologies, their use, and interpretation are essential for a better customer approach.

CONCLUSIONS

Customer satisfaction is one of the main goals within business objectives. Depending on the degree of satisfaction (personal or collective), the level of wealth that a product, service, or company can produce is determined. Its approach must be comprehensive and based on new tools (primarily digital) that help to understand

it in real-time. In turn, work strategies and/or the work environment are updated and refined to achieve better conditions that translate into greater satisfaction on the part of the consumer or customer.

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