

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN SERVICE ENCOUNTERS: II

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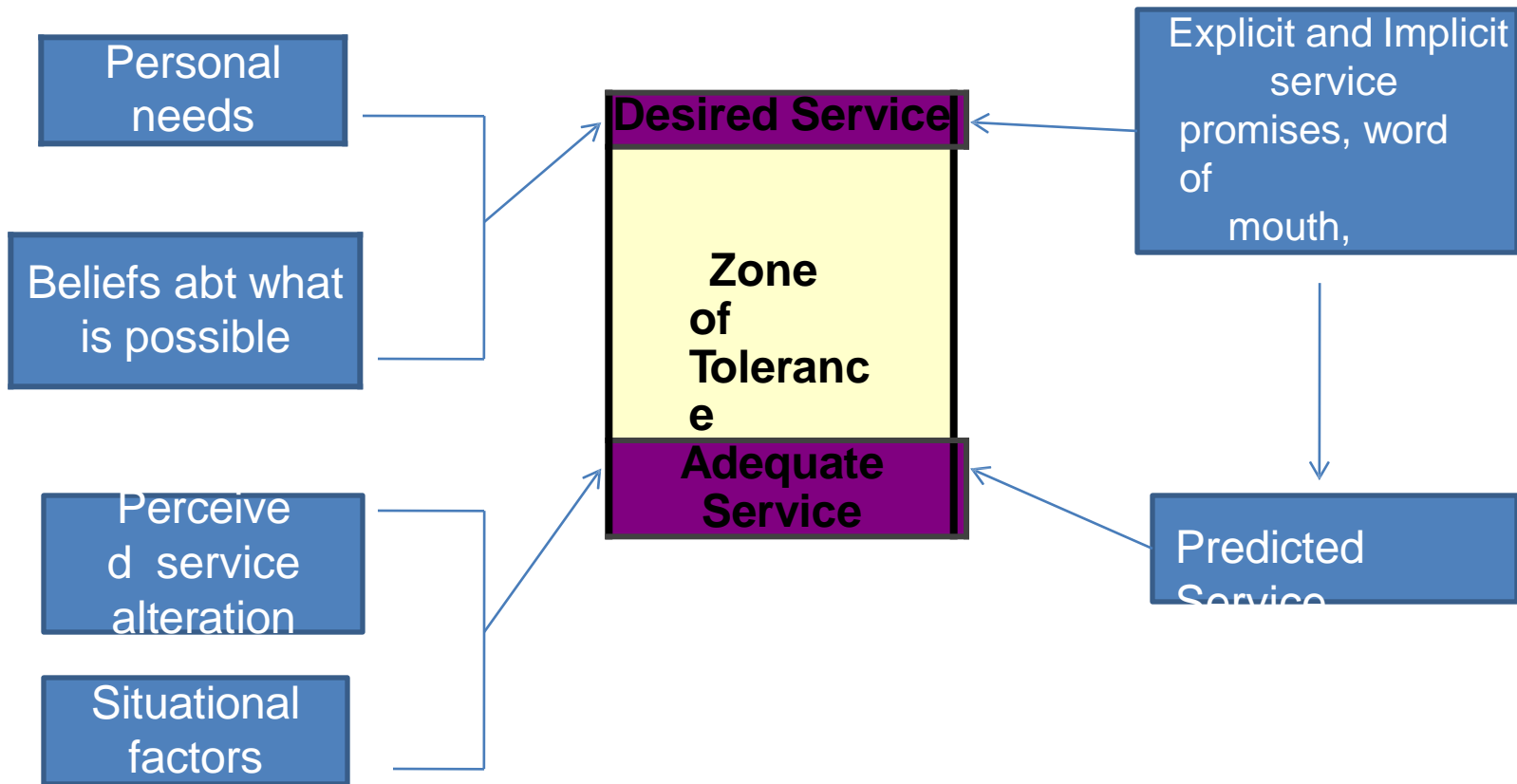
Components of service expectations

- Desired service
- Adequate service
- Predicted service
- Zone of tolerance

Desired and adequate service levels

- Desired service: Type of service which customers hope to receive
- ‘Wished for level’: - a combination of what customers believe can and should be delivered in the context of personal needs
- A blend of what customers believes “can be” and “should be”
- Adequate Service : Minimum level of service which customers will accept without being dissatisfied.
- Customers are realistic- they have threshold level of expectations Eg fast food service restaurant vs an expensive gourmet meal restaurant

Factors influencing Customers expectation about service



Predicted service level

- The level of service which customers actually anticipate receiving
- Directly affects how they define adequate service at that level
- Customer prediction will be situation specific
- Eg long queues for tickets for amusement park on a holiday

Zone of tolerance

- Diff for firms to achieve consistent delivery by all employees in same company and even by same service employee from one time of day to another.
- The extent to which customers are willing to accept this variation is called as zone of tolerance
- Too low performance: frustration and dissatisfaction amongst customers, exceeding: pleases and delights customers
- Other words: The range of service within which customers don't pay explicit attention to service performance. When service falls outside this range customers either react positively/negatively

Zone of tolerance

- Size of ZOT will be large or small depending upon factors such as competition, price, importance of specific service attributes which can influence the level of adequate service Eg waiting time at checkout at grocery store 9 eg 2-3 m vs 15 mins)
- Diff customers possess diff zones of tolerance. Eg customers who work/vs at home for repairing
- Also varies for service dimensions: less tolerant for unreliable service than for service

Consumer choice

- Need recognition: Begins with the recognition that a need or want exists.
- Maslow's hierarchy to characterize needs.
- Physiological needs: Biological needs such as food, water and sleep. Recognition of needs is fairly easy.
- Safety and security needs: incl shelter, protection and security. Consumers seek to provide for their own and their loved ones shelter, safety and security through many types of services. For eg parents looking for child care, education etc
- Social needs: need for affection, friendship and acceptance Eg internet services – social connections
- Ego needs: for prestige, success, accomplishment and self esteem
eg spa services, plastic surgery etc
- Self actualization needs: self fulfillment and enriching experiences. Eg sky diving etc

**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE
CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS OF
SERVICE**

Sources of desired service expectation

- Personal needs: Needs which are essential to physical/psychological well being of customer are pivotal to customers desire in service. Eg physical, social, functional and psychological . Eg sports fan.
- Lasting service intensifiers: individual, stable factors which lead the customer to a heightened sensitivity to service- one most imp factors is “derived service expectation”- occur when customer expectation is driven by another person or group. Eg birthday party organized by mother for her kid
- Personal service philosophy : the customers underlying generic attitude about meaning of service and proper conduct of service providers. Eg delivery within 30 mins

Sources of adequate service expectation

Temporary service intensification

- short term individual factors that make customer more aware for service need.
- Eg personal emergency situations- accidents
- Problems with initial service also leads to heightened expectations eg auto repair

Perceived service alternatives

- Are other providers from whom the customer can obtain service. Eg salons, airline customer from a smaller town
- Marketers should fully understand the complete set of options that customers view as perceived alternatives. Eg small town customers view rail as an another option

Self perceived service role

- Customer perceptions of the degree to which customers exert an influence on the level of service they receive
- Eg meal ordering in an restaurant

Sources of adequate service expectation

Situational factors

- Service performance conditions that customers view as beyond the control of service provider.
- Eg natural disasters
Hurricane Sandy

Predicted service

- Level of service that customers believe they are likely to get
- Its an estimate or calculation of service that a customer will receive in an individual transaction rather than in an overall relationship with a service provider

Sources of both desired and predicted service expectations

- Interested consumers- likely to seek or take in information from various sources. Eg call a store, ask a friend, track ads in newspapers. They may also receive service info by watching TV, surf-thus search actively as well as passively.
- Factors which influence both desired as well as predicted service expectations are
 1. Explicit service promises
 2. Implicit service promises
 3. Word of mouth communications
 4. past experience

Factors which influence both desired and predicted service expectations

Explicit service promise

- Are personal/non personal statements about service made by the organization to the customers
- Personal- salespeople, service personnel, non personal: webpage, advt, brochures etc
- Completely within the control of the service provider
- Sometimes companies deliberately overpromise by stating best estimates about service delivery in the future
- Direct effect on service expectation. Eg total solution, 24 hrs service

Implicit service promise

- are service related cues other than explicit promises that lead to inferences about what the service should and will be like
- Quality cues are dominated by price and other tangible components.
- Higher the price, more impressive the tangibles, more the customer will expect from the service

Word of mouth communication

- personal/non personal statements made by customers other than the organization
- Carry more weight – unbiased
- imp for services which are difficult to purchase/evaluate

Factors which influence both desired and predicted service expectations

Past experience

- Customers previous exposure to service that is relevant to focal service. Eg hotel visits