

SERVICE QUALITY GAP ANALYSIS IN KAKKARGOLLA, VILLAGE PANCHAYATH, DAVANAGERE TALUQ - A VILLAGERS PERSPECTIVE.

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ABSTRACT

The adoption of Service Quality Gap Analysis for the Village Panchayath system to identify the gaps exists in the services delivered by PRI's to rural folks is significant at contemporary time. The central and state governments in India are taking pro-steps for decentralization, in order to provide the services to rural households at their door level. But the existence of service gaps is affecting on resource mobilization capacity of village Panchayaths. Survey Method with two sets of structured questionnaire has been administered for 100 samples in the selected area, followed by statistical tools are used to computing the data.

Keywords: SERVQUAL, Village Panchayath, Service Gaps, Revenue Generation, PRI's.

INTRODUCTION

Service is a qualitative attribute which is intangible in Nature. This concept has attracted the attention of researchers for many reasons like it involves difficulty in quantifying the service outcomes and satisfaction of consumers. So to solve this difficulty, the marketing researchers adopted the Gap Model. The goal of the business is moved from Goods driven to service driven. Every entrepreneur is focusing on improving the delivery of Service Quality to maximize the satisfaction of their consumers. Therefore to maximize the satisfaction, business firms are addressing the Service Gap. Service Gap is the difference between Consumer Expectation and the actual service delivered to its consumers. Hence all the business entities are focusing to address this gap to attract new customers and retain existing consumers. If degree of the gap is at higher level then it impacts negatively on the performance of Business entities. It may also lead such entities for loss.

Dimensions of Service Quality

The SERVQUAL method is used to assess the gap between consumers' expectation and the actual delivery of the service. Parasuraman et al., (1988) have conceptualized a six dimensional model of service quality. Their measurement instrument is known as SERVQUAL, which has become almost the standard way of measuring service quality. Further, each item of SERVQUAL has been used twice: to measure expectations and perceptions of service quality. Six dimensions of SERVQUAL includes:

1. **Tangibility:** Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.
2. **Reliability:** Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
3. **Responsiveness:** Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
4. **Assurance:** Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
5. **Empathy:** Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.
6. **Acceptability:** Location of its office and Availability of employees to its customers

Originality

This SERVQUAL method which is developed in the school of Business studies, has been adopted in the study to assess the expectation and perception of Villagers on service delivered by the Village Panchayath. The idea behind this study is to analysis if any service gap exists may be one of the reasons for low revenue generation in the Panchayat system.

Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs)

The Panchayat Raj Institution is one of the oldest local governance institutions in rural India. This traditional system of governance at the local level is reinvented to ensure local governance. There is increasing recognition that local communities should be given the opportunity to decide on the priorities and strategic plans for the implementation. In the light of this perception, the role of the Village Panchayat, the lowest tier of the Panchayath Raj Institutions (PRIs), has become the focal point. In order to give a constitutional status to these PRIs and enable them to act as atrue local self-government, TheGovernment of India has passed the73rd amendment to the Indian Constitution. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment envisages significant responsibilities on the part of Panchayati Raj institutions to provide public services. Followed by the Government of Karnataka in 1993 enacted the Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, 1993 to achieve democratic decentralization in the governance of the State's rural areas and devolve more authority and responsibilities to its local institutions. The act outlines services likes' drinking water, sanitation, street lights should be provided by the Panchayats.

Kakkaragolla Village Panchayath.

Kakkaragolla Village Panchayath is located around 15 km from Davanagere. It has two villages with a population of 5589. The reason for selecting this Village Panchayath for the study is, its localtax collection capacity is the least in Davanagare Taluq. Its total tax demand is Rs 12,32,873, in that just Rs 3,29,770 is collected. Thus 9, 03,103 is theoutstandingamount. In this situation, the Village Panchayatcannot performs as true local self-government. to analysis if any service gap exists is one of the reasons for low revenue generation in the Panchayat system.

OBJECTIVES

1. To Evaluate the Quality of Service delivered by the Village Panchayath.
2. To identify the service gap between Villagers expectation and perception on Village Panchayath.
3. To analyze the relationship between service quality with revenue generation
4. To identify the areas that needs to be improved by Village Panchayath to deliver superior quality of service.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design adopted for the study is descriptive and empirical in nature, leading to quantitative research.

Methodology

Study Area

The area of the present study is limited to Davanagere Taluq. However, the outcome of the research would be applicable broadly for any other part of the Karnataka.

Sources of Data

The present study mainly depends on Primary data. To mobilize primary data: survey, structured questionnaire method was employed. Along with this, extensive literature review was done. This includes previous work, related books, official sources and other publications.

Survey Method

The structured SURVQUAL questionnaire with two sets of questionnaires viz first set of questionnairescontains questions related to Expectation or the Ideal Village Panchayat System and second sets represents Reality i.e how the Panchayath is delivering services to rural folks was used. Each set of questionnaire consistssix parameters with 18 indicators.

Sample Design

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) has been considered for the study.

Sample Unit

The sample unit for the study is Villagers from the Kakkaragolla Village Panchayath.

Sampling Technique.

Multi-Stage sampling method is employed. For instance, at the initial stage, the state of Karnataka has purposely been chosen. Thereafter, at the second stage, Davanagere Taluq was selected considering the convenience. In the third stage, a Village Panchayath was selected based on the Revenue generation capacity. Then finally at the fourth stage, 100 samples were drawn randomly from the limits of Panchayath for the administration of SERVQUAL questionnaire which contains two sections: villagers’ expectations and Villagers’ perception. Each section consists of 18 questions from 6 dimensions. The respondents were asked to rate their expectations and perceptions of service offered/delivered by the Panchayat. A five-point Likert scale was used.

Data Analysis Techniques

Information gathered from the respondents was processed and examined by employing simple percentage method, Mean, and Chi Square test. Statistical software: Ms. Excel Package was used for tabulating and computing the data.

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame for the proposed study is List of Village Panchayats and List of elected representatives from Zilla Panchayath, Davanagere, and List of electors from the Village Panchayath. Respondents for the study were general public.

Criteria for the Samples

1. The lowest Revenue Generated Village Panchayath in Davanagere Taluq.
2. Respondents who are 18 years and above.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Basic Information/Profile of the Respondent				
Sl.No	Indicators	Response	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage
1.	Gender	a) Male	75	75
		b) Female	25	100
2.	Occupation	a) Government Employee	5	5
		b) Farmer	53	58
		c) Non-Government Employee	14	72
		d) Entrepreneur	5	77
		e) Unemployed	23	100
3.	Education	Primary and Secondary Education	18	18
		PUC and Diploma	13	31
		c) Degree and above	25	56
		d) No formal schooling	44	100

Analysis

Table 1 indicates the profile of the respondents which indicates 75% of the total respondents belongs to the male category. As per the occupation is concerned 53% of the respondents depends on agriculture for their livelihood. So the perception of the Farmers towards the Panchayath will differ from other segmented population. Usually, farmer expects on time delivery of government services related to aiding for their agricultural activities, health or providing seasonal employment opportunities through schemes like NAREGA. As per the education is concerned 44% of the population does not have formal schooling facilities. However due to the telecommunication and d2h revolution every subject is having minimum expectation from the village administrative office.

Table 2: GAP ANALYSIS SCORE

Sl.No	Statements	(E)	(P)	Service Gap (E-P)	Remarks
I.Tangibility					
	Buildings	4.83	3.23	1.6	
	Dress code	4.22	2.73	1.49	
	Maintenance of cleanliness and hygienity in the villages	4.47	2.93	1.54	
Average Score					1.54
II.Reliability					
	Maintenance of error free records	4.60	2.58	2.02	High
	Delivery of the services promptly to the rural folks	4.13	2.95	1.18	
	Village Panchayath ensures that benefits reaches right beneficiaries	4.52	3.33	1.19	
Average Score					1.46
III.Responsiveness					
	Educate the Villagers regarding the services and benefits of the Government schemes	4.35	2.4	1.95	High
	Responsiveness to the quarries of the public patiently	4.33	2.95	1.38	
	Helping attitude towards the public	4.38	2.53	1.85	High
Average Score					1.73
IV.Assurance					
	Good knowledge regarding the rules, benefits and schemes of the govt	4.33	2.65	1.68	
	Village Panchayath team ensures confidence in the public for upliftment of the village	4.43	2.9	1.53	
	Assurance to Villagers with the good service delivery	4.38	2.45	1.93	High
Average Score					1.71
V.Empathy					
	Individual attention to the public who visits the office with queries.	4.28	3.2	1.08	
	Officials are available in the office hours for the convenience of the public.	4.3	2.38	1.92	High
	The concern to understand the needs of the public.	4.5	2.48	2.02	High
Average Score					1.67
VI. Accessibility					
	Location of the Village Panchayath is at convenient distance to public	4.83	4.80	0.03	Low
	Village Panchayath team is available to the public whenever problem occurs in the village for public interest	4.25	3.33	0.92	Low
	Higher authorities are available to the public to discuss unaddressed queries/pending problems in the Village Panchayath.	4.23	3.23	1	Low
Average Score					0.65
Grand Total		79.36	53.05	26.31	8.76
Average Score(total/18)		4.41	2.95	1.46	1.46

Note:

Table 2 represents the actual gap in the delivery of services by taking the consideration of Expectation and Reality. This table exhibits the actual gap exists in the eyes of the ultimate evaluators of the Panchayath. It analyses each parameter individually.

Tangibility (Ref: Table 2.I)

It involves services which could touch, perceive and experience. Thus it includes buildings, dress code and maintenance of hygienity in the office of the Village Panchayat. As per the Buildings is concerned the gapscore is 1.6 with the reality of 3.23 which is highest in this segment (Table 2.I.1). Villagers expectation on this segment is very high and the reality is not very poor. Dress Code is concerned villagers expectation mean score is 4.22 with the reality score is 2.73 (Table 2.I.2). This indicates the dress code of the members and staff of the Village Panchayat is not up to the mark and Maintenance of cleanliness and hygienity in the village panchayath office is also not satisfactory.

Reliability (Ref: Table 2.II).

This is one of the important factors in assessing the delivery of service. It reveals the ability to perform the promised services effectively to the rural folks. This parameter measures the promptness and reliability of the Village Panchayat in the eyes of the Public. If this score is high then one can conclude that this office is functioning effectively. As per the Panchayath is concerned Gap between maintenance of error free records in the Panchayath is high in this segment with gap score 2.02. So this indicates that villagers perceived that the Panchayat is not maintaining error-free records. The actual perceived mean score 2.95 indicates that prompt delivery of the service is at an average rate. The gap on this indicator is slightly less (Table 2.II.5) but this deduces that still, the villagers expect a high degree of promptness in delivery of

services. The accessibility of benefits is concerned the actual perceived mean score is 3.33. Hence this indicates that office is ensuring that benefits reaches to right beneficiaries. But the gap of 1.19 (Table 2.II.6) shows that still, the Village Panchayat has a far way to go on the same.

Responsiveness (Table 2.III.)

This dimension in the SERVQUAL expresses the attitude of the service providers to their targeted audiences. Here this parameter explains the nature and behavior of Panchayat members towards the villagers in addressing the quarries or during the delivery of services. This is significant because if the response of the service providers is not satisfactory then it leads to dissatisfaction among the public. Villagers level of satisfaction on educating the Villagers by the village panchayath on services and benefits of the Government schemes is poor (Actual perceived mean 2.4.) and the gap is also high with gap score of 1.95 (Table 2.III.7). This may be because the elected members/officials of panchayat is not providing adequate information to the public regarding the schemes. But comparatively in the same segment the actual gap score 1.38, indicates on attending the quarries of the public with patiently is satisfactory. The gap score on the attitude of the Panchayat members and staff on helping the public is not satisfactory. This may be because the members and staff are voluntarily not taking the initiative to help the public unless the public approaches.

Assurance (Table 2.IV.)

This dimension explains the knowledge and courtesy of Panchayat Members and staff and their ability to build the trust and confidence among the villagers. The gap score of 1.68 (Table 2.IV.10) indicates that the villagers perceive that the Panchayath team is not possessing adequate knowledge regarding the rules, benefits and schemes of the Government. Further, the gap score of 1.53 (Table 2.IV.11) reveals that the village panchayat team should try to build the confidence in the public for the upliftment of the Village. In addition, the village Panchayath team failed to assure the public for good service delivery can be observed from the gap score of 1.93 which is highest in this segment.

Empathy (Table.2.V)

Empathy is fundamental to any relationship which projects to have a caring and affectionate relationship with individuals. This dimension plays a role in assessing the service gap because if one is empathetic towards his stakeholders then automatically he/she delivers prompt service to them. In the Panchayath, officials or members care the villagers if they visit the premises with queries, this can be inferred from the gap score of 1.08 which is least in this segment. Further, the gap score of 1.92 indicates that officials may not be available always during office hours for the convenience of the public. Further, the gap score of 2.02 reveals which is highest in this segment shows that the team is not showing much concern to understand the needs of the public.

Accessibility (Table.2.VI)

Accessibility means availability, in other words, it discusses on the location of the office is at a convenient distance to its stakeholders and employees of the system is available to rural folks. If the office or its team available to the folks then they can deliver timely service. In Addition, if the office is not at a convenient distance then it leads to dissatisfaction among the public for the inconvenience they face. As of the Kakkaragolla Panchayath is concerned this factor is highly positive compare to other factors in the study. Here the Gap score is very minimum. It indicates. Village Panchayath office is located at the center of the village at a convenient place. Further, whenever the problem occurs in the village either members of the Village Panchayath (VP) or staff is available to address the same. The gap score 1 explains the higher officers must be available to the public when they need them (Table.2.VI.18.)

Table 3 AVERAGE GAP SCORE OF SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS

S.No	Dimensions	Average Gap Score	Remarks
	Tangibility	1.54	
	Reliability	1.46	
	Responsiveness	1.73	High 1
	Assurance	1.71	High 2
	Empathy	1.67	
	Accessibility	0.65	Low
	TOTAL	8.76	
	Average (total/6)	1.46	

Analysis

The table 3 refers that there is a high degree of gap exists under the dimension of responsiveness with the average of mean score of 1.73 which is highest compared to another dimension. Followed by Assurance with 1.71 average gap score and the least gap exists in the category of Accessibility(0.65). The grand total average gap score i.e 1.46 reveals that there is a gap between the expectation and the reality.

Major Findings:

- The majority of the Population depends on Agriculture for their livelihood. Thus their expectation of the services differ.
- Villagers are satisfied with Buildings but not with Dress Code of the members and staff and Maintenance of cleanliness and hygienity in the village panchayath is not satisfactory.
- The villagers expect a high degree of promptness in delivery of services.
- Village Panchayath must improve its system and bring more transparency in ensuring right benefits to the right beneficiary at right time.
- The team members of the panchayat is not providing adequate information to the public regarding the schemes.
- The villagers perceive that the Panchayath team is not possessing adequate knowledge regarding the rules, benefits, and schemes of the Government.
- The members of the village panchayat is failed to assure the public for good service delivery.
- Villagers are satisfied under the dimension of accessibility of the Village Panchayat.

Major Suggestions:

- Customization of Service delivery must be introduced by the Government in Village Panchayat Offices.
- The Village Panchayath must take up the voluntary initiative in bringing the dress code for their team.
- The Government must ensure prompt delivery of services to rural folks through constituting a Wiesel bowlers team to bring up corrupt practices.
- Proper training should be provided for the officials of the Village Panchayat for delivery of the information and also Village Panchayath must conduct awareness programmes in every village regarding the schemes and benefits of the Government.

CONCLUSION

Service quality plays a significant role in revenue maximization. If the end users get satisfied for the service they receive then they are happy to involve in the process of administration. Here the Service Gap analyses have been adopted for the Village Panchayat to find the gap in various dimensions. The report is concluded with a suitable suggestion which can be implemented by the Government or Village Panchayat for effective good governance.

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