Study of Demographic Influence on Customer Satisfaction towards Banking Services among Residents of Gwalior City

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Abstract: With a population of over 1 billion, today India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The Indian banking sector has been playing a significant and vital role in the growth of economy. Growing consumer base as well as strong fundamentals of banking practices has been able to stimulate the contribution of banks in country’s economy. The growth in banking sector is largely dependent upon the trust that customers put in banks and is highly derived by the satisfaction that the banks provide to these customers. Therefore a constant assessment of customer satisfaction is essential for the banks, which many a time, in turn, is influenced by various external factors, especially the demographic factors related to the consumer population. This research paper attempts to study the demographic factors and their influence on the customer satisfaction towards banking services in Gwalior city. The outcome of this study will provide insight into the differences in customer satisfaction that may be brought about by the demographic background of customers and will help the stakeholders to comprehend the underlying importance of demographic variables in the process of assessing customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Banking, Customer satisfaction, Demographic factors, Demographic influence

1. Introduction

Understanding the needs of the consumer towards the product or service is crucial for assessing the level of consumer satisfaction. As is understood that the demographic background dictates a person’s needs and preferences, getting insights into demographical differences among consumers and their impact on consumer choices paves the way for a better understanding of consumer needs and preferences and thereby enhances the ability of the firm towards delivering superior customer satisfaction. The amount of satisfaction realized by the consumers is highly dependent upon the degree to which their needs and preferences are fulfilled, which due to being shaped by the different demographical setup of their background, vary from person to person and therefore result into different degrees of satisfaction for the same product offering by different consumers.

In case of financial service firms, like banks, fulfillment of customer satisfaction becomes even more complex and intriguing due to intangible nature of the service offering, where the amount of satisfaction derived from a banking transaction varies greatly depending upon how the outcome of an intangible transaction is interpreted by customers belonging to different demographic backgrounds.

This research paper attempts to study the influence of various demographic factors on the satisfaction that the consumers derive from banking services, in order to find out the relative importance of factors that construct the demographic background of consumers, while assessing customer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

Every business organization has the objective to satisfy its customers to greatest possible extent, as the customer satisfaction provides foundation for the success of the business. Fornell (1992) noted that although customer satisfaction and quality seems to be important for all firms, satisfaction is more important for loyalty in industries such as banks, insurance and automobiles. His observation was further supported by (Almossawi, 2001), who stated that customer satisfaction is particularly essential in the banking services context because it becomes a key to competitive advantage. There have been different studies underlining the significance of customer retention in banking industry (Dawkins and Reichheld, 1990; Zimmerman, 1999; Page, Pitt and Berthon, 1996; Reichheld and Kenny, 1990; Fisher, 2001). Abratt and Russell (1999) suggested the key factors influencing customers’ selection of a bank that includes the range of services, rates, fees and prices charged.

McQuitty et al., (2000:1) assumed that a customer will learn from experience and then the decreasing levels of expectations-disconfirmation against goods and services would affect customer satisfaction. This is supported by Alhemoud (2010:333) in the case of banking service that the customer satisfaction is resulted from any dimension whether or not it is quality related and its judgment may arise from non-quality issues.

Grönroos (1984) previously emphasized that how good the quality of the service was perceived to be by customers, was expected to be measured using customer satisfaction approaches. Banking service provides financial service that accepts deposits and channels those deposit into lending activities, either directly or through capital markets. (Shelton et al., 1995).

Customer satisfaction in banking service is a measure of how services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectation. Faraz (2005) stated that customer satisfaction is the situation when customer expectations have been fulfilled to the fullest capacity when using the product.
or service. The capacity to fulfill customer expectation consequently brings about strong loyalty to the product or services of a company.

On the other hand, Murthy (2010) stipulated that banks have to be efficient in dealing with individual customers, traders and companies. It is also necessary for banks to strive hard to retain the existing customers in the face attracting new customers. Ghosh and kailash (2010) has strongly argued that customer’s knowledge is also one of the most important factors which can affect satisfaction. Uma Sankar et al. (2010) conducted a study on identifying the major reasons for dissatisfaction with public sector banks. Ushad Subadar Agathee (2010) advocated that there are increasing urgent needs for bankers to meet customer expectations for faster and better service with the number of branches. Their study revealed that the high income group customers are more likely to be dissatisfied with banks services and it is highlighted in the study that to improve the customer service and quality improvement, the bankers has to gear upon two components i.e., reliability and responsiveness. Prema Dawar (2013) on her study found factors affecting satisfaction are staff knowledge, support system, amount charges, and behaviour and language information of the customer.

3. Objectives

1) To study the demographic background of banking customers in the city of Gwalior.
2) To assess the customer satisfaction towards banking services in the region.
3) To examine the difference in customer satisfaction among the customers on basis of their different demographic background.

4. Research Methodology

The nature of the research study conducted is Descriptive. For purpose of primary data collection the Non Probability Judgment sampling method is used. A self administered questionnaire is used to take responses from the customers of different banks. Out of 50 questionnaires distributed, 34 were received with complete and proper information. Our further analysis is based on these completely filled questionnaires obtained.

Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant difference in satisfaction towards banking services between male and female customers.
Ho2: There is no significant difference in satisfaction towards banking services among customers from different age groups.
Ho3: There is no significant difference in satisfaction towards banking services among customers from different educational background.
Ho4: There is no significant difference in satisfaction towards banking services among customers from different occupations.

Data analysis and discussion:
The responses of customers in the sample were viewed in the light of their demographic background. The scale items used to measure responses were checked for Reliability using Cronbach’s Alpha, with following scores obtained:

The value obtained of Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.760, which is more than 0.70, hence the scale is reliable. On the basis of customer satisfaction scores obtained, we now attempt to examine our Hypotheses regarding influence of various demographic factors on the customer satisfaction.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in satisfaction towards banking services among male and female customers.
The Null hypothesis assumes that there is no influence of gender variable over customer satisfaction. We will use t-test to verify the hypothesis.

We intend to use one way ANOVA for testing the hypothesis.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total satisfaction</th>
<th>Levene Statistic</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The test shows no significant difference in satisfaction scores for male and female customers. Hence the Null hypothesis is accepted.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in satisfaction towards banking services among customers from different age groups.
The study showed that the customer satisfaction level is significantly different among customers from different age backgrounds. Therefore it can be said that the age factor is shown to have an impact on customer satisfaction, it is imperative for the banks to show sincere concerns towards the needs of the people belonging to higher age brackets. The proper accomplishment as well as time taken for banking transaction should be given prime importance.

2) The study showed that the customer satisfaction level is different among people from different educational background. This clearly indicates the importance of education and knowledge gained thereon by the customers while assessing their satisfaction towards banking services. To make customers feel easy while using banking services which are increasingly becoming technology dependent, it is imperative to make the customers aware and trained on how to better use modern banking services.

3) The test results show that the satisfaction level is different among customers from different educational background. Therefore it can be said that the educational level of customers does have an impact on their level of satisfaction. This strengthens the observation of Ghosh and Kailash (2010), who emphasized upon influence of customer knowledge customer satisfaction.

4) The study shows that there is no significant difference in customer satisfaction levels among customers belonging to different occupations. Hence it can be said that customers’ occupation does not hold any impact on their satisfaction towards banking services.

5. Findings and Conclusions

The test shows that there is no significant difference in customer satisfaction levels among customers belonging to different occupations. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

6. Recommendations

Some specific recommendations suggested by the researcher are:

1) As the age factor is shown to have an impact on customer satisfaction, it is imperative for the banks to show sincere concerns towards the needs of the people belonging to higher age brackets. The proper accomplishment as well as time taken for banking transaction should be given prime importance.

References


