Evaluation of Quality of the e-Commerce Service

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ABSTRACT

E-commerce market continues to grow. It is so popular because more and more people are connected to the Internet. Nevertheless, not all online e-shops can be so proud of its conversion rates. The customers' satisfaction with the services of different types of e-shops are affected by many different factors. The authors can say that a satisfied customer is the one who maintains a good reputation of the sellers’ despite of the disadvantages which he had to face, such as damage of product during its transport, the need to make a warranty repair. To evaluate the customers’ satisfaction in the chosen e-shop, the authors decided to use two methods which according to them can be complementary in this case, these methods are following: the Servqual method and the Importance/Performance analysis (IPA). Then, advantages and disadvantages of e-commerce were described. Next, the research methods were characterized. Later, the survey and its results were shown. The research had the form of an online questionnaire. It was addressed to customers of the chosen e-shop. The Servqual method was used to evaluate the quality level of offered services in general and analyze the Servqual index (perceptions of the real services minus customers’ expectations). The Importance/Performance analysis was used to indicate which areas of the service really need the intervention of the research e-shop.

KEYWORDS
Customer’s Preferences, Customer’s Satisfaction, E-commerce, IPA, Quality, Service, Servqual

INTRODUCTION

People every day have to deal with different types of services. They do not often realize how big and varied the sector of this economy is, and how fast it develops. There are many definitions of the service among which the one of Daszkowska can be mentioned. According to this author the service is a useful product, which had immaterial form, which is produced by human labor (like material product) in the production process, by affecting the structure of a specific resources (human or material object) in order to satisfy human needs (Daszkowska, 1998).

It should be mentioned that the service quality and its analysis is more complicated and time-consuming than in case of products quality. During quality analysis of the material product we have tangible evidence in form of these product, and its features which can be measure. It is possible to examine it dimensions, weight, the chemical, physical and mechanical properties etc. When evaluating the quality level of any service, we should could in mind many things such as: subjective and objective factors, all requirements asked by a customer, mood of the customer and the references point (Stoma, 2012). On the basis of these elements, special tools and method to evaluate the service, were created.

When evaluating products, we have to check if their features meet the customers’ requirements. In case of services we don’t have clear evidence to do it because of their immateriality and

DOI: 10.4018/IJACI.2018040105

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impermanence. So, when evaluating the service quality, we need to as for customers’ feedback. We need to meet importance of all services expectations, importance and how customers evaluate the same characteristics according to their experience gained from received services. There are many methods which can be used for evaluation of the services. The Servqual method is most commonly used, but there are other, between which following methods should be mentioned: Servperf, Mystery Shopper, CIT, IPA.

E-commerce is big business which is getting bigger every day. It is a methodology of up-to-date business, including also requirements for organizations. Such business can be defined as a process of buying or selling any type of goods or services in electronic way, for example via Internet (https://www.tutorialspoint.com/e_commerce/e_commerce_tutorial.pdf).

We can find many characteristics which are typical only for this king of business, among which we can mention (https://www.oecd.org/sti/consumer/ECommerce-Recommendation-2016.pdf):

- Non-monetary way of payment
- Good payment protection
- Digital content products
- Big participation of consumers
- Mobile devices
- Privacy and security risks
- Product safety

In Poland there are about 25.8 million Internet users. In 2014 it was noticed that 65% of Polish people used it in regular way. 48% of them once or more made purchase online, 47% in Polish e-shops, and 10% in foreign e-shops (https://ecommercepolska.pl/files/9414/6718/9485/E-commerce_w_polsce_2016.pdf). Product which the most often are bought online are footwear, books, clothes, cosmetics and electronics. It should be emphasis that this type of shopping is especially popular in town with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants due to the fact that the offer of traditional shops is rather limited.

Young people who are open to new technologies and like to spend time online are the one who the most often decides to make purchase online. As a result of online shopping, they have higher possibility of choice, can quickly compare prices at different stores. More and more people decide to buy online not only industrial things, but also food.

Legal provisions relating to online shopping differ from the provisions relating to the traditional one due to the fact that the customer is unable, watching product only online, to evaluate its quality, and the quality of the sales service. Therefore, the customer of the e-shop has e.g. an extended deadline for return of the product in the case if it does not fit or does not meet his requirements. Customers often seek for information, comments on shopping in a specific e-shop before buying. A satisfied customer can share his opinion about shopping, but also can again buy something from the same e-shop. Therefore, for the sellers of the e-shop it is important quality of the services he provides. To see how customers react to a specific e-shop, the quality analysis of these services with use of appropriate tools can be conducted (Jelonek 2015; Nowicki & Jelonek 2002).

The authors decided to analyze the quality of the services which are offered by chosen e-shop from the area of Częstochowa. For this purpose, the authors decided to use two methods which according to them can be complementary in this case, these methods are following: the Servqual method and the Importance/Performance analysis (IPA). Advantages and disadvantages of e-commerce were described. Next, the research methods were characterized. Later the survey and its results were shown. The research had the form of an online questionnaire. It was addressed to customers of the chosen e-shop. The Servqual method was used to evaluate the quality level of offered services in general and analyze the Servqual index (perceptions of the real services minus customers’ expectations). The Importance/Performance analysis was used to indicate which areas of the service really need the intervention of the research e-shop.
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