

# Employee behavior and customer satisfaction

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In the paper The Impact of employee behaviour on customer's service quality perceptions and overall satisfaction by authors Kattara, Weheba and El-Said (2008) report that customer satisfaction relies heavily on their interactions with employees and perceptions associated with reactions to employee behavior. According to this report, customer service quality perceptions are directly related to the behavior of employees during occasions of contact whereas positive employee behavior generates positive customer quality perception. Kattara, Weheba and El-Said expand this concept further by qualifying that these quality perceptions generating from employee-customer interactions also affected loyalty to the company, and competitive advantage.

While this study identifies key areas of interaction where positive employee behavior can greatly affect overall customer perceptions it does so in the context of the hospitality industry. Thereby it qualifies the name of the industry itself. From its namesake the hospitality industry does speak of an assurance and expectation of service. In relation, the sample selected for this study primarily consisted of respondents staying at the surveyed hotel for luxury and tourism purposes.

The indices where customer profiles may not have influenced their perceptions of good service, may have also related to the fact that customers expect a modicum of good service from companies within the hospitality industry. In situations where the customer stays at a hotel for their vacation or for luxury, it can be assumed that there is an expectation of quality service to promote the luxury associated with the trip. Although the results of this research does significantly provide information on the areas of

customer service that hotel establishments should focus on, there should have been an increased focus on specific areas of customer service rather than a generalization of all service points, since quality service is a broad expectation in the service industry.

The authors also explain that positive service experiences should be encouraged in all employee positions where contact with customers occur, including low level positions, as maid service, house keeping, the survey form created did not seem to include specific questions relating to customer reaction to interactions with employees at these low level position.

Similarly, the authors suggest that further long-term study should be conducted in relation to determining the relationship between employee behavior and customer satisfaction, a study should also be conducted specific to the interactions of customers with low level employee positions and how these relate to customer perceptions and satisfaction. Similarly, the authors also indicated that positive specific employee-customer relationships at times foster customer loyalty. As such, determining the specific factors of such a relationship that create loyalty may be helpful for firms in the long run.

In a broader sense, this study is indicative of the powerful role that employee behavior plays in the influence of customer perceptions and reactions. As the study indicates, employee-customer interactions affect the customer's experience and assessment of the company. While good service may be anticipated in the hospitality industry, moving beyond this industry there should also be a awareness that employee-customer interactions even when

brief can affect overall perception. Read also Research Proposal sample on customer satisfaction

As the survey results indicated, the dimension of responsiveness qualified as “(1) Refers to customers by their names, (2) Responds to your phones in a helpful tone of voice, (3) Meet the special needs of the handicapped customer,” rank high as areas by which the customer evaluates service. As such, in other industries where customer service constitutes the first contact the customer has with the company, there should be an increased awareness that small indices such as a smiling face may greatly affect customer’s positive perception.

#### Reference List

Kattara, H. S., Weheba, D., and El-Said, O. A. (2008). “ The Impact of employee behaviour on customer’s service quality perceptions and overall satisfaction.” *Tourism and Hospitality Research* 8 (4), p 309-323.