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RESEARCH ARTICLE

SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF AFTER-SALES SERVICE OF A CAR DEALER IN SAN PABLO CITY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction with after-sales service of a car dealer in San Pablo City. The dimensions of SERVQUAL, such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, were analyzed simultaneously to customer satisfaction. This study employed a descriptive and explanatory design, complemented by a quantitative approach. The study utilized an adopted survey questionnaire, and the survey was conducted on 302 customers, utilizing a convenience sampling approach. The data gathered were analyzed through weighted mean, Pearson (r) correlation, and regression analysis. The findings showed that there is a significant relationship between service quality dimensions such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy and customer satisfaction. In addition, assurance and empathy have the highest influence on customer satisfaction, emphasizing their importance in shaping overall service experiences. The findings of this study suggest to prioritize investments and improvements in the assurance and empathy aspects of service delivery to enhance customer satisfaction effectively. The study contributes insights into understanding the importance of service quality to customer satisfaction in the after-sales service of car dealership industry to achieve a stronger competitive position and sustainable business growth.

KEYWORDS

Assurance, empathy, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most essential aspects of the operation of the automotive industry is after-sales service. It encompasses various activities and support provided to customers after purchasing a vehicle from an automotive dealer. As explained by researchers, after-sales service encompasses technical assistance, repair of spare components, maintenance, and customer information (Purwati et al., 2020). Its purpose is to effectively address customer complaints and fulfill their demands in order to ensure customer satisfaction. Car dealers compete with one another to see whose services are dependable and reassure customers about the care they receive. In a world of intense competition, it must provide a high-quality service that meets customers' needs to increase their satisfaction (Moksin et al., 2023).

The vehicle owner's satisfaction declined due to service center challenges based on the 2019 J.D. Power Philippines research on the Customer Service Index (CSI). It is because the servicing procedure took longer; it took three or more hours to finish, and the paperwork took longer than ten minutes to complete during the car pickup. Service quality, service initiation, service facility, vehicle pickup, and service adviser are essential components in the provision of services. Standard service is an issue specific to the dealership, rather than a problem inherent to the brand, as it originates from the dealership's service department (Gencer and Akkucuk, 2017).

American marketing specialist A. Parasuraman, V. Zeithaml, and L. Berry devised the SERVQUAL model scale, the most widely used instrument for evaluating service quality. This method measures the client's expectations and opinions about the given service. Researchers identifies five components of service quality: tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and reliability (Mulder, 2023). The five service quality

dimensions was used to determine which aspects of the after-sales service influence customer satisfaction.

Customers are looking for value, comfort, and assurance but need more attention. Unfortunately, long wait times for car repairs, a lack of assistance from service staff, and a long billing process are just some of the issues that affect customer satisfaction. The uncomfortable chairs and lack of refreshments in the lounge area while waiting for their car to be fixed. These were typical problems that a car dealer in San Pablo City had to handle. Additionally, the researcher observed that there were few local empirical studies examining service quality and customer satisfaction in car after-sales service using the SERVQUAL model.

This study utilized this model to investigate the relationship of service quality and customer satisfaction of after-sales service provided by a car dealer in San Pablo City. The study described the SERVQUAL dimensions in terms of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. It also helps understand the level of customer satisfaction as perceived by the customers, as well as the significant relationship between each dimension in customer satisfaction and identify the dimension that influences customer satisfaction the most. In this way, the organization is able to implement an approach or method that will improve the quality of service they provide, thus increasing customer satisfaction and attaining competitive position and sustainable business growth.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Service Quality

The SERVQUAL model was developed in 1988 by American writers A Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry with the goal of assessing and enhancing quality in the retail and service sectors. The fundamental components of service quality are identified by the

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SERVQUAL model. As stated by Gurus in 2023, responsiveness, tangibility, empathy, assurance, and reliability are the essential qualities of a high-quality service (Gurus, 2023). Businesses can continuously enhance their procedures, goods, and services by focusing on service quality. Customers are more satisfied when a company offers high-quality services, and vice versa (Marnovita, 2020). A company's reputation and profitability are heavily impacted by the caliber of services it provides. The SERVQUAL approach assesses service quality based on five dimensions:

2.1.1 Tangibility

It is one of the elements of SERVQUAL that refers to how a company demonstrates the excellence of its service to clients. It refers to the visual aspect of the physical infrastructure, machinery, and staff. The quality of the physical aspects that an organization offers directly impacts the level of service delivered to consumers (Man et al., 2019). In addition, the tangibility aspect plays a crucial role in delivering services (Ramya et al., 2019).

2.1.2 Reliability

This aspect examines the methods for addressing customer issues, ensuring punctual delivery, and providing error-free service (Jalagat et al., 2017). As defined in some studies, reliability is the ability to deliver the required assistance accurately and constantly (Akhlaghi et al., 2012, in De Silva et al., 2022). Furthermore, the capability of a business to carry out services precisely and consistently as anticipated is a key component of reliability (Famiyeh et al., 2018). Customer happiness is impacted by the reliability component of service quality (Yousuf, 2017). The capacity to deliver committed services promptly, precisely, and adequately can impact customer satisfaction.

2.1.3 Responsiveness

The employees' attitude and conduct, characterized by amiable service towards clients, play a crucial role in a service-oriented firm (Narteh, 2018 in De Silva et al., 2022). A study in 2019 found a favorable correlation between timely and enthusiastic staff replies to support requests and customer satisfaction (Man et al., 2019). As described by researchers, responsiveness relates to the quality and quick response of service personnel on the customer interest (Ramya et al., 2019). This dimension emphasizes the need of being responsive and promptly addressing customer inquiries to prevent issues and demonstrates to the customer that the service staff is attentive and actively engaged in resolving their worries and problems.

2.1.4 Assurance

The expertise, demeanor, and capacity of staff to inspire clients' trust and confidence are all part of the SERVQUAL model's assurance component (Akhlaghi et al., 2012 in De Silva et al., 2022). Customers anticipate that firms have expertise in the service they provide. Put simply, assurance in customer service refers to the act of guaranteeing that clients obtain the desired service without any negative consequences (Fida et al., 2020). Furthermore, in the research that was conducted, assurance is defined as the employees' capacity to instill trust and confidence in consumers by demonstrating their knowledge and experience, which greatly influences customer happiness (Pakurár et al., 2019).

2.1.5 Empathy

It refers to the compassionate and personalized care that the company offers to its clients (Ramya et al., 2019). The empathy component focuses on showcasing to customers that they are highly regarded and comprehended through the services given. When service professionals focus customers' wants, provide good service, and express appreciation, consumers are more likely to be extremely satisfied (Sajanga et al., 2022). As explained by researchers, it involves providing clients with individualized attention and ensuring that they feel appreciated during their contacts with service providers (Bahadur et al., 2018). By engaging in this practice, service providers can not only fulfill consumers' requirements but also provide favorable experiences that have a long-lasting impact.

2.2 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is determined by how happy consumers are with the quality of the services they received, which influences their likelihood of using the service once more (Raza et al., 2020). A customer's satisfaction can be evaluated using the SERVQUAL dimensions. A business's ability to maintain a long-term connection with a customer depends on its ability to satisfy its current customers. Customer satisfaction increases the likelihood that a business will receive repeat business, refer business, and persuade others to choose its offerings (Urge, 2017). Furthermore, customers must be treated with the greatest concern to achieve high

customer satisfaction because the company's image, reputation, sales, service, and profitability rely on its customers (Tevetkova, 2017).

Additionally, customer satisfaction can be attained by employing motivated and dedicated employees that provide exceptional customer service, hence enhancing corporate success through increased productivity (Mitchell, 2017). Customers' evaluation of how well a product or service has satisfied their wants and expectations is known as customer satisfaction (Alan et al., 2012 in Ok et al., 2018). They argue that a number of elements, including pricing, human factors (including the buyer's mindset or emotional state), other customers, and perceptions of value or fairness, are all known to affect consumer satisfaction. A study in 2020, in the automotive industry, it is crucial to prioritize delivering exceptional service to customers in order to create a positive reputation and attract potential clients (Villegas and Maynes-Blanco, 2022). Word-of-mouth recommendations play a significant role in promoting the services offered by a company and enticing prospective customers to avail of them.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Research design

This study utilized a descriptive and explanatory methodology, augmented by a quantitative approach, to investigate the connections between variables utilizing numerical data and statistical methods.

3.2 Respondents of the study

The respondents are the customers who brought their vehicle to the service center of a car dealer in San Pablo City for maintenance.

3.3 Sampling technique

The samples for this study were chosen using a convenience sampling technique, which involved choosing participants based on who was present when the questionnaires were given out.

3.4 Research instrument

In gathering information, the primary data was gathered using a survey questionnaire and the secondary information such as the total number of customers from January to December 2022 was gathered from the car dealers' service department. The study utilized an adopted survey questionnaire of Chaichinarat et al., in 2018 and Balinado et al., in 2021 used in their study.

The initial segment encompasses the five characteristics of SERVQUAL, namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Respondents score each of these dimensions using a 5-point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The second section pertains to customer satisfaction and employs a 5-point Likert scale that spans from 1 (indicating a very likely) to 5 (indicating a very unlikely).

3.5 Data gathering procedure

The data gathering procedure for this study began with a formal request letter addressed to the Service Manager of the car dealer asking permission to administer the survey questionnaire to customers of after-sales service. This crucial step seeks permission to conduct the research and distribute the survey questionnaires within the premises of the car dealer.

Upon obtaining the necessary authorization, the researcher gets the total number of service incoming units from January to December 2022 to get the population and identify the sample size needed in the study. After obtaining approval, the researcher gave the respondents the questionnaire in person, allowing them ample time to complete it. Once completed, the researcher collects the questionnaire, organizes them, and tallies the received forms to ensure the sample size requirements are met. Subsequently, the compiled data, along with the tallied responses, is sent to a statistician. The statistician undertakes the task tabulating and processing the results, employing appropriate statistical analyses to organize the data for meaningful interpretation and findings.

3.6 Statistical treatment of data

The mean was utilized to assess the service quality in the after-sales service of a car dealer in San Pablo City. The purpose of this assessment was to gauge customers' evaluation of service quality based on tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, as well as their evaluation of customer satisfaction.

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to assess the statistical significance of the link between the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) and the independent variable (tangibility, reliability,

assurance, responsiveness, and empathy). The researcher determined if there is a significant correlation between the evaluated service quality and customer satisfaction.

Likewise, the regression analysis was also utilized to evaluate and identify the major service quality dimension or dimensions that influence customer satisfaction the most.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Service quality in the After-sales service of a car dealer in San Pablo City in terms of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

The data from Table 1 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with the customer assessment of service quality in terms of tangibility with a mean value of 4.57. Likewise, respondents strongly agreed that the waiting area at the service center is comfortable and allows them to view vehicles; the equipment and tools used are industry standards; the service center staff are professionally dressed to a high standard; the service center is very attractive and well decorated; and it provides product information and brochures with a mean value of 4.65, 4.63, 4.60, 4.53, and 4.45, respectively.

Table 1: Customer assessment on service quality in terms of tangibility		
Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1.The service center provides product information and brochures.	4.45	Strongly Agree
2.Equipment and tools used are industry standards.	4.63	Strongly Agree
3.The service center waiting area is comfortable and allows to view vehicle's maintenance.	4.65	Strongly Agree
4.The service center staff are professionally dressed to a high standard.	4.60	Strongly Agree
5.The service center is very attractive and well decorated.	4.53	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.57	Strongly Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 Slightly Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 Agree; 3.40 – 4.19 Slightly Agree; 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

These results have significant implications for the automotive after-sales service of the car dealer. They highlight the importance of tangibility factors in shaping customer perceptions of service quality. Addressing and maintaining high standards in areas such as providing product information, equipment quality, facility comfort, staff professionalism, and service center aesthetics can contribute significantly to enhancing customer satisfaction. As revealed by researchers, tangibles such as real buildings, machinery, and communication systems, together with supplies utilized by businesses and staff appearance during customer service, all have an impact on customer satisfaction (Melia, 2016 in Man et al., 2019).

Table 2: Customer assessment on service quality in terms of reliability		
Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Service staff can tell the customer approximately when they are done and how much.	4.57	Strongly Agree
2.Service is completed on time.	4.56	Strongly Agree
3.Service staff are capable of providing customers the service required.	4.61	Strongly Agree
4.Customer service maintenance checklists are accurately followed.	4.66	Strongly Agree
5.Customer billing is accurate and reasonable.	4.54	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.59	Strongly Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 Slightly Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 Agree; 3.40 – 4.19 Slightly Agree; 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

The data from Table 2 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with the customer assessment of service quality in terms of reliability, with a mean value of 4.59. Likewise, respondents strongly agreed that the customer service maintenance checklists are accurately followed; the service staff is capable of providing customers the service required; the service staff can tell the customer approximately when they are done and how much; the service is completed on time; and the customer billing is accurate and reasonable with a mean value of 4.66, 4.61, 4.57, 4.56, and 4.54, respectively.

The findings highlight the significance of reliability elements in influencing consumers' opinions on the standard of the dealer's vehicle after-sales service. This means that service staff are reliable, deliver dependable service, and are able to provide quality service that meets their customer expectations. Ensuring effective communication, timely service delivery, competent staff, adherence to procedures, and fair billing practices are crucial for maintaining customer trust and satisfaction. And all these reliability attributes were perceived as good service quality by the customers as the service provider was able to meet their needs. This matters because a reliable service builds trust if customers experience consistent and dependable service (Kobiruzzaman, 2024). Customer happiness is impacted by the reliability component of service quality (Yousuf, 2017).

Table 3: Customer assessment on service quality in terms of responsiveness		
Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1.Customer service staff are quick to greet the customer and verify what needs to be done.	4.63	Strongly Agree
2.Service staff are enthusiastic about their jobs and helping customers.	4.69	Strongly Agree
3.Service staff can provide clear and accurate information about vehicle maintenance.	4.66	Strongly Agree
4.Service staff can quickly resolve problems.	4.72	Strongly Agree
5.Service staff immediately response to the requests of customers.	4.75	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.69	Strongly Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 Slightly Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 Agree; 3.40 – 4.19 Slightly Agree; 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

The data from Table 3 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with the customer assessment of service quality in terms of responsiveness, with a mean value of 4.69. Likewise, respondents strongly agreed that the service staff immediately response to the requests of customers; the service staff can quickly resolve problems; the service staff is enthusiastic about their jobs and helping customers; the service staff can provide clear and accurate information about vehicle maintenance; and the customer service staff is quick to greet the customer and verify what needs to be done with a mean value of 4.75, 4.72, 4.69, 4.66, and 4.63, respectively.

These findings highlight the significance of responsiveness variables in influencing consumers' opinions on the caliber of the dealer's vehicle after-sales service. Prompt greeting, enthusiastic engagement, clear communication, efficient problem resolution, and quick response to customer requests are crucial for fostering positive customer experiences and satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is higher when staff members are quick to respond to requests for assistance and are eager to do so (Man et al., 2019). This implies that being aware of and responsive to customer inquiries, assisting customer concerns, and resolving issues is a proactive approach to customer interaction and fosters a positive service atmosphere. Additionally, effective communication and expertise among the service personnel and a sense of urgency in addressing customer needs contribute to customer satisfaction.

Table 4: Customer assessment on service quality in terms of assurance

Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1.The service staff are knowledgeable and professional about the advice they give.	4.65	Strongly Agree
2.Service staff explain in detail the work that needs to be done.	4.71	Strongly Agree
3.Service staff pay attention to detail and follow-up work carefully.	4.63	Strongly Agree
4.Service staff give accurate information to customers.	4.62	Strongly Agree
5.There is a clear warranty on customer service maintenance.	4.66	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.65	Strongly Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 Slightly Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 Agree; 3.40 – 4.19 Slightly Agree; 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

The data from Table 4 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with the customer assessment of service quality in terms of assurance, with a mean value of 4.65. Likewise, respondents strongly agreed that the service staff explains in detail the work that need to be done; there is a clear warranty on customer service maintenance; the service staff is knowledgeable and professional about the advice they give; the service staff pays attention to detail and follow-up work carefully; and the service staff gives accurate information to customers with a mean value of 4.71, 4.66, 4.65, 4.63, and 4.62, respectively.

These results underscore the relevance of assurance factors in shaping customer perceptions of service quality within the automotive after-sales service of the car dealer. Knowledgeable and professional service staff, clear communication, attention to detail, accuracy, and transparent warranty policies are crucial for instilling confidence and trust in customers. As stated in a study, competencies and staff skills have a role in building trust and confidence in consumers (Wu et al., 2015). This sense of trust and confidence generates a feeling of safety and comfort for customers during the service delivery process. When customers have trust in the employee's competence, they are more inclined to revisit in the future. Assurance is defined as the employees' capacity to instill trust and confidence in consumers by demonstrating their knowledge and experience (Pakurár et al., 2019). This has a notable influence on customer satisfaction.

Table 5: Customer assessment on service quality in terms of empathy

Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1.Service staff take care of all customers equally.	4.68	Strongly Agree
2.Customer service is individualized.	4.60	Strongly Agree
3.Service staff are understanding and sympathetic to each customer.	4.65	Strongly Agree
4. Service staff keep track of maintenance and perform it according to customer's desire.	4.67	Strongly Agree
5.Customer service staff act like a friend or family member.	4.60	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	4.64	Strongly Agree

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 Slightly Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 Agree; 3.40 – 4.19 Slightly Agree; 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

The data from Table 5 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with the customer assessment of service quality in terms of empathy, with a mean value of 4.64. Likewise, respondents strongly agreed that the service staff take care of all customers equally; the service staff keeps track of maintenance and perform it according to customer's desire; the service staff is understanding and sympathetic to each customer; the customer service is individualized; and the customer service staff acts like a friend or family member with a mean value of 4.68, 4.67, 4.65, 4.60, and 4.60,

respectively.

These findings highlight how important empathy characteristics are in influencing how customers in the car after-sales service industry perceive the quality of the services they receive. Equal treatment, individualized service, understanding, attentiveness, and friendliness are crucial for fostering positive emotional connections and enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. Having consideration for their needs and preferences creates a friendly and inviting service environment. Personalized attention and making customers feel valued during service interactions can not only meet customers' needs but also create positive experiences that leave a lasting impression (Bahadur et al., 2018). Additionally, the empathy dimension is all about demonstrating to customers that they are valued and understood through the services provided. When service staff prioritize the needs of customers, serve them well, and show appreciation, customers tend to be highly satisfied (Sajanga et al., 2022).

4.1 Customer satisfaction

Table 6: Customer assessment based on customer satisfaction

Statement	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1.Recommend the after-sales service to a friend or peer.	4.69	Very Likely
2.Re-availment of the after-sales service of the service provider.	4.63	Very Likely
3.Recommend the service staff or advisor to a friend or peer.	4.68	Very Likely
4.Continue to patronize the after-sales service even if your vehicle is out of warranty.	4.65	Very Likely
5.Overall satisfaction with the after-sales service performance.	4.66	Very Likely
Composite Mean	4.66	Very Likely

Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Strongly Disagree; 1.80 – 2.59 Slightly Disagree; 2.60 – 3.39 Agree; 3.40 – 4.19 Slightly Agree; 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

The data from Table 6 revealed a very high level of satisfaction among respondents with the customer assessment based on customer satisfaction, with a mean value of 4.66. Likewise, respondents are very likely to recommend the after-sales service to a friend or peer; recommend the service staff or advisor to a friend or peer; overall satisfaction with the after-sales service performance; continue to patronize the after-sales service even if the vehicle is out of warranty; and re-availment of the after-sales service of the service provider with a mean value of 4.69, 4.68, 4.66, 4.65, and 4.63, respectively.

These findings highlight the role that customer satisfaction plays in fostering word-of-mouth referrals and loyalty in the automotive after-sales service industry. It indicates that customers perceived a high level of satisfaction with service quality, staff interactions, and overall experience contribute to customer retention and advocacy. In the automobile business they should focus in the entire as aspect of providing excellent service to delight or satisfy clients, as word-of mouth is important in promoting services that will encourage potential customers to patronize the services that a company can provide (Villegas and Maynes-Blanco, 2022). Moreover, Nicolas in 2018 stated that in the automotive industry, it is vital to put a strong emphasis on customer service and look into the good services that it provides to satisfy customers because recommendations from customers indicate that they are satisfied with the services they've experienced.

4.2 Significant relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction

Table 7: Correlation Analysis of the relationship between SERVQUAL Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

Variables	Customer Satisfaction
Tangibility	.485**
Reliability	.533**
Responsiveness	.532**
Assurance	.613**
Empathy	.670**

**Correlation is significant at $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

In the context of an automobile dealer in San Pablo City, the correlation

analysis shown in Table 7 indicates a strong association between customer satisfaction and service quality, demonstrating the importance and strength of the links between various aspects of service quality and total customer satisfaction. First, tangibility aspects of service quality and customer satisfaction have a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.485, \rho < 0.01$), meaning that tangible factors like the physical environment, equipment standards, and service center appearance play a major role in overall customer satisfaction. The findings seem to support the findings of Famiyeh et al., in 2018), who found a significant positive association between customer happiness and tangibility (Famiyeh et al., 2018).

Likewise, there is a large positive connection ($r = 0.533, \rho < 0.01$) between the reliability components of service quality and customer satisfaction, suggesting that timeliness, accuracy, consistency, and reliability in service delivery have a major impact on total customer satisfaction. This is consistent with the research by researchers, which found a strong correlation between customer satisfaction and reliability (Jain et al., 2019; Balinado et al., 2021). Ensuring reliable and consistent service experiences can foster trust, confidence, and loyalty among customers.

Additionally, there is a noteworthy and affirmative correlation between customer satisfaction and the responsiveness-related aspects of service quality ($r = 0.532, \rho < 0.01$). This indicates that being prompt, attentive, and effectively communicating with customers to address their needs and requests greatly contributes to overall satisfaction levels.

The outcome aligned with the conclusions of Famiyeh et al., and Jain et al., who identified a robust and statistically significant correlation between responsiveness and customer happiness (Famiyeh et al., 2018; Jain et al., 2019). Prompt servicing is expected by customers, necessitating a high level of responsiveness (Jain et al., 2019).

Also, there is a strong and favorable correlation between customer happiness and the assurance components of service quality ($r = 0.613, \rho < 0.01$). This suggests that factors like competence, credibility, and transparency in service interactions greatly influence overall customer satisfaction. This aligns with previous studies conducted by previous researchers, which have shown a significant correlation between assurance and customer happiness (Famiyeh et al., 2018; Mohamed, 2022). In addition, customers highly prioritize the consistent communication, integrity, and openness of service center staff. Furthermore, the aspects of empathy in service quality demonstrate the strongest link with customer satisfaction ($r = 0.670, \rho < 0.01$), emphasizing the significance of comprehension, attentiveness, and individualized attention in improving overall levels of satisfaction. This is consistent with the findings of researcher showing a strong positive relationship between empathy and customer satisfaction (Balinado et al., 2021; Mohamed, 2022). In general, the respondents have a positive perception of the service quality and believed that the car dealer is capable of offering attentive customer service with a strong emphasis on empathy.

4.3 Dimension of service quality that influence/s the customer satisfaction

Table 8: Dimension of service quality that influence the customer satisfaction

Model Summary						
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard error of the estimate		
1	.707 ^a	.500	.492	.3166		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Composite Mean - Empathy, Composite Mean - Tangibility, Composite Mean - Responsiveness, Composite Mean - Assurance, Composite Mean - Reliability						
Coefficients ^a						
	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized coefficients		
Model	B	Standard Error	Beta	t	Significance	
1						
(Constant)	.871	.243		3.582	.000	
Tangibility	.09	.06	.081	1.505	.134	
Reliability	-.054	.068	-.057	-7.88	.431	
Responsiveness	.127	.071	.117	1.781	.076	
Assurance	.221	.072	.218	3.088	.002	
Empathy	.431	.061	.440	7.07	.000	
a. Dependent Variable: Composite Mean - Customer Satisfaction						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Composite Mean - Empathy, Composite Mean - Tangibility, Composite Mean - Responsiveness, Composite Mean - Assurance, Composite Mean - Reliability						

The regression analysis model summary for table 8 indicates $r = .707$ and $r^2 = .500$, with a standard error of .3166. This demonstrates the r-square of 50.0%, indicating that at this proportion, independent factors may account for the variation in the dependent variable, or customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the regression demonstrates that, among the five service quality aspects, responsiveness, tangibility, and reliability do not substantially affect customer satisfaction, with p-values of 0.076, 0.431, and 0.134, respectively, all above the .01 threshold of significance. Surprisingly, only assurance and empathy have a substantial impact on customer satisfaction out of all the service quality elements. With a p-value of .000, empathy is the most significant, followed by assurance with a p-value of .002, in priority order.

The greatest positive impact on customer satisfaction is demonstrated by empathy. Empathy has the most positive impact on customer satisfaction

(Jalagat et al., 2017; Fida et al., 2020). This highlights the importance of understanding, attentiveness, and personalized care in enhancing overall satisfaction levels. Customers appreciate service staff who demonstrate empathy, connect with them on an emotional level, and provide individualized attention, which significantly impacts their satisfaction and loyalty towards the service provider.

Customer satisfaction is positively and significantly impacted by assurance. This shows that a major factor influencing overall customer satisfaction is the competence, credibility, and professionalism of service encounters. Customers value assurance elements such as knowledgeable and professional service staff, clear communication, attention to detail, and accurate information, which contribute significantly to their satisfaction levels. The outcome is in line with a study conducted by Jalagat et al., in 2017, which found that assurance significantly affects customer happiness (Jalagat et al., 2017). However, it runs counter to Fida et al., in

2020 findings, which show that assurance has little bearing on customer satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

The SERVQUAL dimensions, including tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, significantly influence customer perceptions of service quality. These dimensions, along with physical means, attention to detail, handling customer concerns efficiently, attitudes, skills, individualized attention, and treatment, contribute to customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is high, fostering loyalty and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. High-quality service fosters positive relationships, trust, and confidence, leading to long-term loyalty and continued patronage. The study reveals that assurance and empathy influence most customer satisfaction. Empathy increases customer happiness and loyalty. Consumers value assurance components like competent service, clear communication, attention to detail, and correct information, indicating competence, trustworthiness, and professionalism.

The management of car dealer's after-sales service may establish good emotional connections, loyalty, and advocacy among consumers by emphasizing trust, honesty, dependability, transparency, understanding, attention, and customized care. Continuous monitoring of service quality dimensions, particularly assurance and empathy, may help discover opportunities for improvement and ensure compliance with customer demands and expectations. Car dealerships may differentiate themselves in a competitive market context by constantly offering high levels of assurance and empathy, resulting in long-term competitive advantages built on customer satisfaction. Ensure that customer-facing staff members are kind, pleasant, and compassionate, instilling trust and confidence in consumers.

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