

The impact of Service Qualities on Customer Satisfaction in Myanmar Heavy Equipment Machinery Industry

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Abstract

Myanmar Heavy Equipment Machinery Industry (Myanmar HEMI) businesses are working on providing superior service to compete within the industry in today's hyper-competitive environment. Due to severe rivalry between local and international suppliers, providing great service quality is critical to building and maintaining a competitive advantage in the Myanmar HEMI business. The paper examines the impact of the five Service Qualities (SQ) Dimensions (tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) five factors on customer satisfaction in Myanmar HEMI by using the SERVQUAL model. Since this paper has a descriptive and empirical analysis research design, a random sample of 448 Myanmar HEMI customers were chosen, survey data were collected by the quantitative method with five Likert scale questionnaires, and the data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. Customer satisfaction in Myanmar HEMI's business was highly influenced by all five service quality variables except the assurance variable, according to the findings. A regression analysis was also performed, revealing that among the five service quality dimensions, empathy is a strong predictor of customer satisfaction.

Keywords: Myanmar; Heavy Equipment Machinery Industry; Customer Satisfaction; Service Quality; SERVQUAL Model

Introduction

The world is evolving and changing at a rapid speed. Infrastructure, working conditions, and human needs have all altered dramatically. To keep up with global progress, fundamental social standards must evolve and grow. Infrastructures, buildings, constructions, transportation, working firms, and processes must all adapt quickly to keep up with the developing world. Heavy Equipment Machines have been necessary to develop infrastructure and other projects in recent years, and their demand has quickly spread around the globe, resulting in a highly competitive industry.

Heavy Equipment manufacturing, product sales, and spare parts markets are highly competitive in terms of availability, pricing, cost per working hour, and customer convenience, including innovation with modern technology, durability and ability, after-sale service quality and cost,

payment terms, and warranty for more cost-effective use. Heavy Equipment sales opportunities, on the other hand, are constantly and widely expanding in the global market as well as in Myanmar. Heavy equipment machines, generators, engines, and spare parts are unable to be manufactured in Myanmar due to a lack of raw materials, resources, manufacturing machines, and technology. And similar things are imported from other countries, primarily China, Singapore, Thailand, Japan, and India (Soe *et al.*, 2022). Myanmar HEMI organizations are highly competitive in order to increase market share and customers, and have discovered the best approach to pursuing new customers and retaining existing customers by satisfying customer requirements, needs, and wants. Recognized that customer satisfaction is very important and plays a critical role in any organization to be successful.

The customer will not be satisfied when the perceived value of the delivery services is less than their expectations. Customers would not buy again if they are dissatisfied, regardless of how creative a product is or how competitive the pricing is. Customer satisfaction is data that indicates how consumers feel about your business when they get involved with it. (Patel, 2021). On the other hand, Customer satisfaction is crucial in any company's or service provider's attempts to establish and retain a competitive advantage (Ramlawati, 2018). Customer demand is a fundamental component of any organization. There is no business if there is no demand from customers. As a result, customer satisfaction plays a key role in every business, particularly in sales and service businesses, in order to increase customer demand and retention. If the goal is to improve customer satisfaction over time, frequent feedback is the best way to do so. In order to improve customer satisfaction, businesses must measure it. Customer satisfaction may be measured in a variety of ways, but the simplest and most effective option is to just ask the customer for feedback (Chambers, 2022). There are many models and theories to measure customer satisfaction in a variety of fields (Gunning, 2000). Many researchers have used the SERVQUAL model to measure the level of service quality provided to customers in the fields of retail, restaurants, banks, telecommunications, airlines, catering services, hotels, hospitals, and education services (Buttle 1996; Chingang & Lukong 2010). The SERVQUAL model is a well-known and most reliance to measure the customer satisfaction in the field of retail sales and service providing Myanmar HEMI organizations.

Objective of the Research

The primary objective of this study is to determine the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction in Myanmar HEMI. The sub-objectives are to determine which service quality gives customer satisfaction by Myanmar HEMI organizations, as well as which service qualities are most significant and should be prioritized in order to improve customer satisfaction.

Literature Review

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction plays a critical role in the success of businesses. Customers will not remain loyal or repurchase if they are dissatisfied, regardless of the quality of the product and competitive

pricing (Patel, 2021). On the other hand, Ramlawati (2018) and Murdifi *et al.* (2019) stated that customer retention and loyalty are based on satisfaction. Customers who are satisfied are likely to be less price sensitive and less persuaded by the competition. In fact, numerous studies have shown evidence that customer satisfaction is an important part of customer loyalty (Gillani & Awan, 2014; Hall, 2011). Increasing customer satisfaction is not as simple as pressing a button; it may be the most difficult thing. So many aspects of it are changing, and it is being recreated in a variety of ways (Kestenbaum, 2018). Customer satisfaction is not simply a "nice to have", it is a "need". It provides distinct, measurable advantages if it is achieved properly. Actually, it is not enough to wish for an increase in customer satisfaction. To move it forward, it must have real strategies backed by real facts. To do this, individuals need to gather customer feedback through polls, surveys, and feedback sessions.

Customer satisfaction can be improved by using customer response survey data. However, statistics alone will not turn your customers from dissatisfied to loyal. A surveyor must concentrate on effectively acquiring data and then using those insights to take action. Because surveys are so important to enhance customer satisfaction, the data are also valuable. On the other hand, there are no assurances for customers always tell the truth about how they feel, even if the survey is great. Furthermore, customers may make mistakes when filling out the survey. May not getting a genuine picture of client happiness in either instance. (Patel, 2021)

SERVQUAL Model

Numerous previous studies showing SERVQUAL model elements that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty have been undertaken by Cronin & Taylor (1992) and Ali *et al.* (2015). The SERVQUAL technique, established by Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1985), indicated that measuring the level of customer satisfaction with service quality implementation is still important today. One of the references to service quality provided by Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1988) and Zeithaml and Berry (1988) established the SERVQUAL, or service quality model, which has long been recognized and is being used today. SERVQUAL Instruments are built on five main aspects, as previously stated: tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

Tangibles: The external and internal appearances of building, equipment, staff, and communication resources. This aspect refers to everything tangible that has an effect on the quality of customer service. This study considers tangible variables such as consumer physical contact points with the service provider, product quality, availability, affordability, and customer's facilities.

Reliability: The ability to accurately and dependably carry out the offered service. This criterion has to do with a business' capacity to offer accurate services to the customers. Customers may now access the products and services from any location and at any time. Customers are invited to contact the service provider at any time. In this study, dependability variables such as delivery lead time, repurchase, and recommendation to others are examined.

Responsiveness: Commitment to assist customers and deliver prompt service. This factor refers to the organization's response time to consumer inquiries. In this study, responsiveness is examined in terms such as customer feedback satisfaction, organization responds to consumer suggestions and complaints, prompt feedback scenarios involving staff, etc.

Assurance: Knowledge, professionalism, and the capacity to inspire confidence in others among employees. This criterion pertains to the service team's friendliness and proficiency in establishing consumer trust. In this study, assurance variables such as on-time delivery, correctness, staff performance, assurance feedback, and customer satisfaction with product and service warranty processes and procedures are examined.

Empathy: The Company's considerate, customized attention to each consumer. This element relates to the company's customer-centric orientation. Listening to customers, supporting customers in seeking solutions, understanding what causes customers' worries, demonstrating sympathy with customers, and not abandoning consumers are all essential customer service practices. In this study, empathy variables such as customer satisfaction with customer care seminar services, promotion and discount programs, problem resolution, and customer relationship management systems are examined.

Myanmar Heavy Equipment Machinery Industry

Myanmar is now one of the developing nations in Southeast Asia, and there is a significant demand for robust infrastructure. Despite this, Myanmar faces a shortage of infrastructure, demanding substantial investment (Myanmar rolls out large-scale infrastructure projects; Myanmar 2017). According to the Asia Development Bank (ADB), the majority of Myanmar's infrastructure deficit between 2018 and 2030 is made up of projects for roads, bridges, railroads, stations, seaports, airports, energy and power industrial parks, economic zones, and logistics. In order to optimize economic growth and merge with the ASEAN Economic Community, Myanmar must thus address its infrastructure deficit as soon as feasible (AEC) (Myanmar Economy, Economic Overview of Myanmar, 2018).

One of the most critical needs for infrastructure building is heavy equipment machines. Consequently, the heavy equipment and machinery industry must expand in order to fulfil the worldwide needs for growing infrastructure as well as in Myanmar. Myanmar HEMI is now highly competitive and has a high degree of infrastructure and project development preparedness (Soe *et al.*, 2022).

Improving customer service quality is one of the most essential components of competing with other suppliers. Service quality may also attract new consumers, retain existing ones, and determine the degree of customer satisfaction within its industry. In this paper, The SERVQUAL model will be used by Myanmar HEMI organizations to measure the level of customer satisfaction within the industry and the initiatives needed to achieve customer satisfaction, bring in new customers, keep existing customers, and getting more market share.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The model accurately covers the characteristics that a customer considers when assessing a service provider's quality of service, and SERVQUAL is a well-known research tool for measuring service quality in the sales and services sector. The gap for this research is there is no study has yet examined the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in the Myanmar HEMI. In this paper, the conceptual framework and hypotheses were created for the five dimensions of service qualities to assess the impact of each of the service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in Myanmar HEMI as indicated in below figure 1.

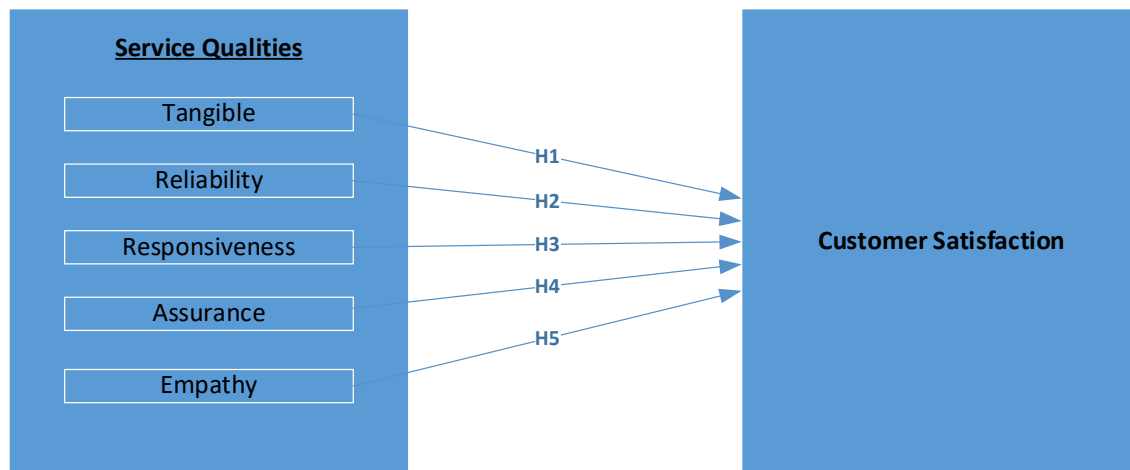


Figure 1: Research Framework of Each of Service Qualities Impact On Customer Satisfaction in Myanmar HEMI

Research Methodology

The paper uses a descriptive and empirical research design. To correspond with the current study, a two-part questionnaire was developed, with Part I asking about demographic factors and Part II asking about the study variables. The questionnaire's items were created and modified using data from a comprehensive literature analysis as well as consumer experiences with Myanmar HEMI. In this study, a quantitative method is used to measure how satisfied customers were with Myanmar HEMI's level of service quality, from the lowest satisfied score of 1 as strongly disagreeing to the highest satisfied score of 5 as strongly agreeing, on a five-point Likert scale. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 is used for data analysis. Regression analysis was mainly utilized in the current study to examine and evaluate the research conceptual framework.

Sample Size

600 customers were chosen at random, with a selection of the top 10 well-known heavy equipment brands in international markets that are functioning in Myanmar. Questionnaires were delivered to targeted customers via the branch and head offices of the top ten Heavy Equipment brand providers in Myanmar HEMI organizations. When customers arrived to purchase or inquire about items,

receptionists from branch and head offices were randomly assigned to them. A few customers were using multiple brands. After editing and coding the surveys, only 448 replies were usable and loaded into SPSS for analysis, yielding a 75% effective response rate. According to W. G. Cochran (1977), a sample size of at least 384 for an unknown population is appropriate, and 448 respondents in this research is a sufficient response rate when customers in Myanmar's HEMI population are unknown. Executives (Owners, CEOs, and representatives), Managers, Supervisors, and Operators were among those who took part in the survey as a customer. In demographic questionnaires, the present worksite location is also provided.

Internal Consistency

Cronbach's alpha for all questionnaire responses was 0.95, showing that the questionnaire is extremely dependable for researcher to continue the research. According to Cronbach's alpha, the whole questionnaire has a high level of reliability for researchers to utilize. In a reliability value of 0.95 or higher is desirable, the minimal coefficient is 0.70, with 0.60 being fairly reliable and 0.80 and above being extremely reliable (Nunnally & Bernstein; Bonett & Wright 2015).

Results and Discussion

Empirical finding on Part I- Demographic Profile

A profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1.2, customer locations, where the majority of respondents being customers from Mandalay representing 32.8%, from Yangon 32.6% and from others such as Myeik, Dawai, Malamyng, Bayint Naung, Naypyitaw, Loikaw, Taunggyi, Magwe, Myitkyeena and Tachileik all together customer respondents is 27.2%, and from Pharkant 7.4%. For the positions of respondents, the executive level representing 8%. A majority of 41.1% are supervisors, followed by 35.5% of managers. Operator level is also participated in this surveyed on behalf of customers and response rate is 15.4%. Respondents are owned many brand name and some of the response customers are owned multiple brand as well. In this survey, respondents were represented for mostly uses brand name only. In Table 1.3, using machine brand name, a big majority of respondents rated is Caterpillar brand 50.2% and it is most preferred brand name. And followed with Volvo 8.9%, Daewoo 7.6%, Kobelco 6.5%, Komatsu 5.6%, Hitachi 4.2%, Hyundai 3.8%, Liebherr 1.6% and others which are Sany, Doosan, John Deere and JCB representing 11.6%. And for the unit of machine owned by respondent customers, majority 59.8% owned 2 units to 10 unit of machines, followed by only 1-unit owned customers and 6% were owned 11 to 20 Units and 21 and above owned customers representing the 5.1%. Respondents rate of customers purchased frequency of heavy equipment machines, engines, generating sets, rental and parts from correspondent brand name supply company is majority 67.0% are 4 and above times purchased, followed by 19.2 % is only 1-time customers, 8.5% of respondents purchased frequency is 3-times and 5.4% are 2-times purchased experience.

Table 1: Demographic information analysis on survey respondents**Table 1.1: Total Respondents**

Valid	448
Missing	0

Table 1.2: Customer Locations

Customer Locations	Frequency	Percent
Yangon	146	32.6
Mandalay	147	32.8
Pharkant	33	7.4
Others	122	27.2
Total	448	100.0

Table 1.3: Using Machine Brand Name

Machine Brand Name	Frequency	Percent
Caterpillar	225	50.2
Daewoo	34	7.6
Hitachi	19	4.2
Hyundai	17	3.8
Kobelco	29	6.5
Komatsu	25	5.6
Liebherr	7	1.6
Volvo	40	8.9
Others	52	11.6
Total	448	100.0

Table 1.4: Position of Respondents

Position of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Executive	36	8.0
Manager	159	35.5
Supervisor	184	41.1
Operator	69	15.4
Total	448	100.0

Table 1.5: Owned Unit of Machines

Unit of Machines	Frequency	Percent
1	130	29.0
2 to 10	268	59.8
11 to 20	27	6.0
21 And Above	23	5.1
Total	448	100.0

Table 1.6: Purchase Frequency

Purchase Frequency	Frequency	Percent
1	86	19.2
2	24	5.4
3	38	8.5
4 And Above	300	67.0
Total	448	100.0

Empirical Finding On Survey Questionnaires

Descriptive, Correlations, Regression analysis were done for the second path of data analysis, and below are the empirical findings of this research.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis for each SQ dimensions and Customer Satisfaction responses:

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
TANGIBLE	3.8979	0.95992	448
RELIABLE	3.6713	0.99696	448
RESPONSIBLE	3.8287	0.79486	448
ASSURANCE	3.7701	0.78034	448
EMPATHY	3.8114	0.93504	448
CSATISFACTION	4.0116	0.83645	448

The mean data of responses of all questionnaires are between 3.67 and 4.01. It means the research questionnaires are most likely agreed upon by respondents. For standard deviation, all are below the 1.0 which mean mostly fair and served SQ 5 dimensions and customer satisfaction to respondents.

Correlation:

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of The SQ Five Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction:

Correlations							
		Tangible	Reliable	Responsible	Assurance	Empathy	C Satisfaction
TANGIBLE	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
RELIABLE	Pearson Correlation	0.634**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000					
RESPONSIBLE	Pearson Correlation	0.609**	0.535**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000				
ASSURANCE	Pearson Correlation	0.676**	0.565**	0.670**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000			

EMPATHY	Pearson Correlation	0.711**	0.561**	0.703**	0.737**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
CSATISFACTION	Pearson Correlation	0.750**	0.726**	0.688**	0.708**	0.797**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	448	448	448	448	448	448

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The survey responses for each of the variables are correlated with each other and significant at the 0.01 level ($P < 0.01$). Thus, it was explained that the questionnaire responded results are correlated and significant, and trust to proceed with the data analysis for further steps.

Regression Analysis:

Regression analysis was primarily created to explore the key factors and important criteria that customers evaluate while doing business with Myanmar HEMI.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Between SQ Five Dimensions and Customer Satisfaction

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.881 ^a	0.776	0.774	0.39798

a. Predictors: (Constant), EMPATHY, RELIABLE, RESPONSIBLE, TANGIBLE, ASSURANCE

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	242.734	5	48.547	306.512	0.000 ^b
	Residual	70.006	442	0.158		
	Total	312.740	447			

a. Dependent Variable: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

b. Predictors: (Constant), EMPATHY, RELIABLE, RESPONSIBLE, TANGIBLE, ASSURANCE

Model		Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Hypothesis
		Unstandardized Coefficients					
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	0.482	0.102		4.717	0.000	
	TANGIBLE	0.156	0.031	0.179	4.947	0.000	H1
	RELIABLE	0.259	0.025	0.309	10.155	0.000	H2
	RESPONSIBLE	0.114	0.036	0.108	3.181	0.002	H3
	ASSURANCE	0.071	0.039	0.066	1.794	0.073	H4
	EMPATHY	0.333	0.035	0.372	9.495	0.000	H5

a. Dependent Variable: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Correlation and Regression Analysis:

SQ's five dimensions and customer satisfaction, hypothesis assumptions H1 to H5 were examined using statistical methods, including correlation and regression analysis, in this research. The correlation coefficient (r), which ranges from +1 to -1, referred to the strength of the relationship between two variables (Rumsey, 2010; Jalagat *et al.*, 2017 and Fida, *et al.*, 2020). Although, a 95 percent minimum level of significance is needed for regression analysis.

There are five SQ dimensions and customer satisfaction factors that are correlated with each other in Table 3. At a $p < .01$ level of significance, the results clearly reveal a positive correlation between all five SQ variables and customer satisfaction. Customers are most likely satisfied on service variable tangible, with an r value of 0.750 ($p < .01$). $P < 0.01$ only reveals the lowest positive correlation between being responsible and customer satisfaction ($r = .688$). In the end, all five hypotheses (H1 to H5) were found to have significant positive correlations. This means that Myanmar HEMI groups should continue to emphasize all five SQ dimensions because of its importance to customer satisfaction in Myanmar HEMI. These findings were also in line with earlier research that found a link between the five dimensions of SQ and customer satisfaction.

In this research revealed that $R = .881$ and $R^2 = .776$ respectively, the standard error was estimated to be 0.39978 in Table 4, the model summary for the regression study. Customer satisfaction is the dependent variable, and this means that $R^2 77.6\%$ of the independent SQ characteristics explain the variation in the R^2 value.

Customer satisfaction is greatly influenced and impacted by these SQ dimensions. Despite this, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) yields a value $F = 306.512$ and a significance level of 0.01 when analyzing the model's adequacy. Customer satisfaction was significantly impacted by all other service quality dimensions, except for assurance, when applied to the participant Myanmar HEMI organizations.

Several studies have found that empathy has the lowest importance for customer satisfaction (Fida *et al.*, 2020). This conclusion contradicts such studies. In contrast, the results of the Bangladeshi banking industry study by Islam (2013) support the notion that empathy and responsiveness have the strongest correlations. As per Vencataya *et al.*, (2019), research was found that empathy has the greatest influence on the banking business in Mauritius, followed by reliability. According to this, empathy and responsiveness are particularly critical in service industries. Empathy was shown to have the greatest impact on customer satisfaction in a study of the Malaysian banking industry (Kheng, Mahamad & Ramayah, 2010 and Fida, *et al.*, 2020). Mengi (2009) found that customer satisfaction is more closely linked to responsiveness. As a result, even if service quality had a strong correlation to customer satisfaction, this study found that just four variables aside from assurance were truly significant.

Service Quality Dimensions, Table 4, describes in detail a statistical method called regression analysis. Unstandardized beta values (B) suggest that Empathy (H5) is the best predictor of Satisfaction with 33.3%, followed by Reliability (H2) with 25.9%, Tangible (H1) with 15.6%, and

Responsibility (H3) with 11.4%. According to Hypothesis H5, Empathy, customer satisfaction is more accurately predicted by the way the Myanmar HEMI interacts with and cares for its customers at ($P < 0.01$). The stronger statistically significant positive link between the three hypotheses (H1, H2, and H5) than the hypotheses (H3) is shown in Table 4. Only limited support has been given to Hypothesis H4, which focuses on the assurance service quality provided by Myanmar HEMI organizations, their transparency and warmth, and the guarantee or assurance provided. As a result of these hypotheses, the equation that follows may be constructed:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4$$

Overall satisfaction = $0.482 + 0.156(\text{TAN}) + 0.259(\text{REL}) + 0.114(\text{RES}) + 0.333(\text{EMP})$

Where Y = Overall customer Satisfaction, b_0 = Constant Beta value

TAN = Tangibility, REL = Reliability, RES = Responsiveness, and EMP = Empathy

Customers' overall satisfaction will rise by 0.156 (15.6%), 0.256 (25.6%), 0.114 (11.4%), and 0.333 (33.3%) for each unit improvement in the tangibility, reliability, responsibility, and empathy dimensions of service quality in Myanmar HEMI organizations, respectively.

Recommendation

In terms of research and application, the five SQ Dimensions' impact on customer satisfaction is still far from being completely comprehended. Participating organizations should make every effort to improve the quality of their present providing product and service to at least a very good level in light of a significant amount of customer feedback. Given the strong relationship between consumer satisfaction and service quality, efforts should be concentrated on raising service quality. In this article, the Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, and Empathy aspects of service quality of the concerned HEMI firms are clearly demonstrated. In order to improve customer satisfaction, business leaders must put more effort into these areas. Empirical data may be a useful and practical tool for managers and policymakers in the highly competitive Myanmar HEMI business to refocus their strategies and adopt a customer-focused strategy.

Future Research:

Research in the future can examine the individual organization of Myanmar HEMI in greater depth and produce more specific results, and researchers can do comparable studies at a cross-industry level in the future as well. Additionally, SQ dimensions might be investigated in relation to customer retention and loyalty, which would be advantageous given that customer satisfaction acts as a mediating factor, making future research more comprehensive and effective.

Conclusion:

This empirical study investigated to most well-known brands in Myanmar HEMI businesses by using SERVQUAL model and analyzed the data by SPSS version 25.0. Study has found that the five keys of service qualities strongly impact to customer satisfaction except the assurance. Thus, Myanmar HEMI organizations should more emphasize to improve the service qualities for

achieving customer satisfaction. Studies done in the past have shown that customer satisfaction grew as service quality improved, which is consistent with earlier findings. There was a large majority of respondents who answered "agree" when surveyed about the quality of service they received from the participating organizations in the study. On the other hand, regression analysis reveals that the service provider organizations should prioritize empathic, tangible, reliable, and responsive factors, whilst assurance variables are given lowest priority. Since many other research have verified the value of assurance factors, even though it is shown as insignificant in this study, concerned organizations should not disregard them. This research can contribute to management teams and policy makers of Myanmar HEMI organizations for setting up the customer satisfaction strategy and service quality to be improved, and which will lead to achieve the more customers, larger market share, and higher profitability.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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