

CUSTOMER SERVICE OF CONVENIENCE STORES

by

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ABSTRACT

This study researches the topic customer service of convenience stores. Two objectives are set, namely to measure the customer service levels of convenience stores, and then to determine if any differences exist between customer perceptions and customer expectations.

The literature review covers two models of service quality, namely the Kano model and the SERVQUAL model. Both the Kano model and the SERVQUAL model are client service models that currently exist in practice. The Kano model provides insights into the dynamics of customer preferences and their needs, which ensures the delivery of successful products and services. The SERVQUAL method is a technique that can be used for performing a gap analysis of an organisation's service quality performance against customer service quality needs. Because of SERVQUAL's strong empirically based methodology and popularity amongst services organisations who aims to improve their service quality, SERVQUAL is the research methodology of choice.

The empirical research was done by collecting primary data from a selected group, using the SERVQUAL questionnaire to measure customer expectation and customer perception. The sample size is 65 respondents, and they all responded by completing the structured SERVQUAL questionnaires. A seven-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire. A "1" was labelled as "*strongly disagree*" while a "7" was labelled as "*strongly agree*".

The reliability of the data was confirmed by means of Cronbach alpha and α -values of 0.879 (customers' perceptions) and 0.906 (customers' expectations) showed satisfactory reliability. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to calculate mean values of the criteria while principle factor analyses were employed to extract factors from both groups of data. The factors pertaining to the perceived service has been identified as *Employee Mind-Set* (explaining the variance of 29.72%), *Excellent Service* (19.14%) and *Display* (8.92%).

Regarding the factor analysis of the expected levels of service, the factors identified are: *Employee Mind-set* (35.78%), *Service Reputation* (25.22%) and *Transactions* (5.90%).

From the research it became evident that the three major recommendations to managers of convenience stores who aims to improve their service quality are managerial actions focussed at:

- *Internal training.*
- *Induction programmes*
- *Surveys (further research and monitoring).*

List of key terms: Service quality, convenience stores, Kano, Servqual, factor analysis

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

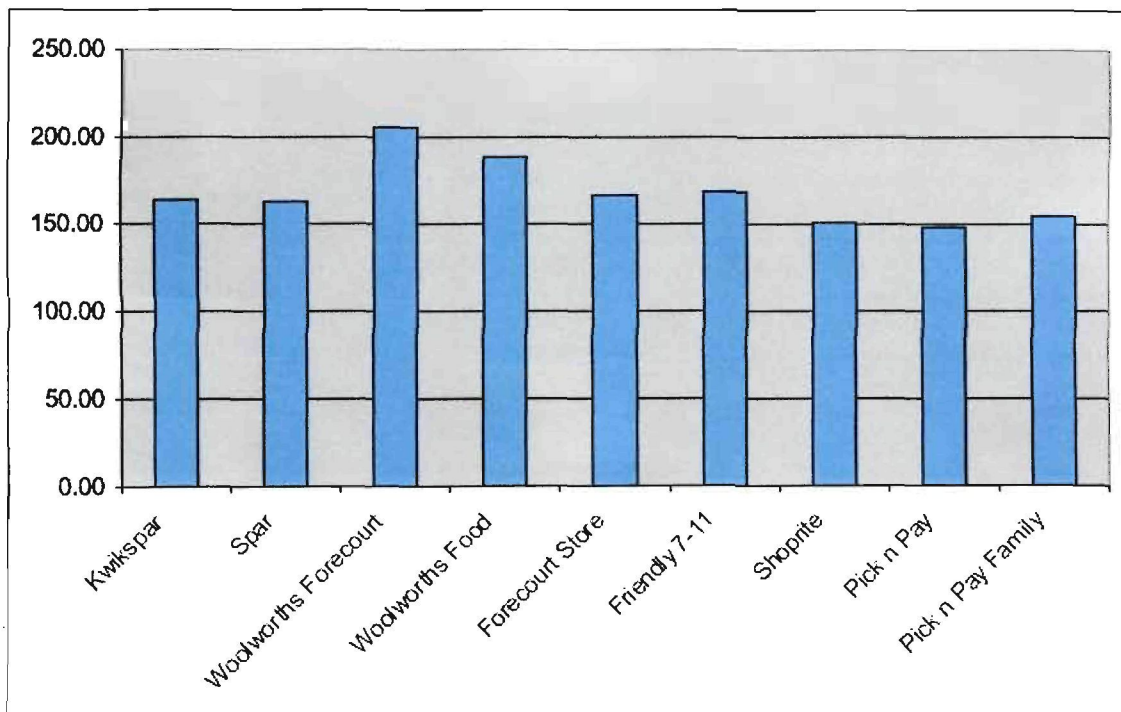
1.1 INTRODUCTION

In today's time pressured world, convenience has become increasingly important to South African consumers. There has been a steep increase in the amount of convenience stores established in the last few years, and the main reason for this increase is the rapid rate of urban housing development. Modern living standards almost always incorporate a convenience store in the vicinity. Usually these stores are fairly busy at any given time, so it is clear that the convenience aspect has huge consumer appeal. Although the organised trade comprising hyper- and supermarkets continues to grow locally, even more dramatic, is the recent increase in convenience stores. Since 1993, more than 280 branded superettes have been established (Witherspoon & Thomas, 2003; Anon, 2007a).

Research shows that there is a definite trend towards convenience amongst middle- to upper-class South African consumers (Anon, 2007a). Now that there are more, but smaller shops, around, the old tradition of large monthly shopping trips are dying out. Shoppers are also becoming more demanding as they have more choice about where to shop. Convenience stores compete on convenience, not price. In this regard, research by Anon (2007a) showed in a price survey of convenience retailers and supermarkets in a cross-section of areas in Cape Town, that the convenience centre stores and late-night cafés are far more expensive than a supermarket. A survey with approximately R150.00 for a basket of the same or similar items were selected, and the results show that:

- Pick n Pay Family, Spar and Kwikspar store patrons usually have quite a few items on their list but want to avoid the hustle and bustle of a large supermarket or mall environment.
- The Woolworths Food store is a lifestyle and quality choice food destination with an aspect of convenience.
- The Forecourt store is pure convenience and patrons of these stores purchase much fewer items, either while filling up with petrol, or as a quick last-minute purchase en-route.
- The Woolworths Forecourt store is a hybrid of the Food and Forecourt concepts for customers looking for both quality and optimal convenience.

FIGURE 1.1: COST OF A SIMILAR R150 CONSUMER PRODUCT BASKET



Source: Anon (2007a).

As consumers accept higher prices at convenience stores, the competition is fierce on convenience and customer service. Management of convenience stores needs to highlight the convenience of their shops, including trading hours, product ranges, location, parking and service at their counters.

The main reason why convenience stores succeed is the easy access that customers have. They do not have to park in huge car parks and walk long distances into large shopping centres. It is also imperative that convenience stores gain insight into their customer base to ensure that they are meeting the bulk of their requirements. Convenience is more than just location and operating hours, service delivery is very important to consumers. Consumers are becoming more discerning, seeking an efficient, friendly and personalized shopping experience (Anon, 2007a).

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The first objective of the study is to measure service levels. The intangibility of services presents a number of problems for the measurement of quality and customer satisfaction (Ennew, Reeds & Brinks, 1993).

The second objective of this study is to determine if any differences exist between customer perceptions and customer expectations. The experience of waiting for service is often the first direct interaction between customers and most service delivery processes. More specifically, for customers who are concerned about time, the perception of the time spent waiting is a better predictor of satisfaction than the actual waiting time (Davis, & Heineke 1998).

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

The research of this study is based on the assumed relationship between customer expectation and customer perception. Service quality originated on a comparison between what the customer wants or expects to get or offered, and their perception of the way the service has been performed. If their expectations and perceptions have been met the company providing the service will be perceived as offering higher service quality. On the other hand,

if the expectations of the customer is not met, the company stands to lose the customer to its competition.

The hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis of the research are as follows:

H₀

A service gap exists between customer expectation and customer perception.

H_a

A service gap does not exist between customer expectation and customer perception.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study consisted of empirical and theoretical research regarding service delivery. The research was conducted by means of a questionnaire where a 7-point Likert scale was used to capture the views of the respondents. The sample population consisted of 65 second year MBA-students in a controlled environment. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to ensure validity, whereafter the data was subjected to descriptive statistics and then to factor analyses.

The data was processed statistically by the *Bureau for Statistics* (Du Plessis, 2008) based at the North-West University's Department of Statistics. Descriptive and multi-variant statistics were established and a comparative analysis was done.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

In chapter 1 the background, objective of the study, hypothesis and research methodology are discussed. There is a definite trend amongst middle- and

upper-class consumers for convenience shopping. Convenience stores' trading hours, product ranges, locations and service delivery play an important role in this regard.

In chapter 2 the literature review covers two models of service quality, namely the Kano model and the SERVQUAL model. Both the Kano model and the SERVQUAL model are client service models that currently exist in practice. The Kano model provides insights into the dynamics of customer preferences and their needs, which ensures the delivery of successful products and services. It is a quality management and marketing technique that can be used for measuring client happiness. The SERVQUAL method is a technique that can be used for performing a gap analysis of an organisation's service quality performance against customer service quality needs. This is an empirically derived method that may be used by services organisations to improve their service quality.

Chapter 3 consists of the research methodology as well as the empirical testing of the model used. Measuring service quality is as difficult as defining it. This is normally done on an assumption that the customers' attitude towards the service will have an effect on their future behaviour, such as repeat of their purchase behaviour, or recommending the company to others. Ideally, market research should measure the effectiveness of a company's selling channels and customers' evaluation of the service they received.

Chapter 4 consists of the conclusions, recommendations and areas for future research identified in the study. The study shows that employee mind-set plays a crucial role as they facilitate the interface between the company and the customer. This study has extracted several recommendations that excellent convenient stores could implement to improve their service delivery. Improvement is highly probable if they focus on the identified factors. This study should be repeated in the future to enable management of convenience stores to compare the results and to see if there have been any significant differences between customers' expectations and perceptions now and then.

It would also serve as an indicator to determine which of their managerial interventions were successful and which ones were not.

1.6 SUMMARY

The first chapter sets the table for the research. It covers the background to the study, states the objectives pertaining to the study and also formulates the hypothesis. Customers are becoming more and more demanding and management of convenience stores must ensure that service delivery is up to par if they want to retain their customers in this competitive market. Therefore, measuring service delivery is a must if they want to stay ahead of their competitors. The next chapter focuses on the literature review in order to identify a suitable model for service quality measurement in this application setting.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As a business term, customer satisfaction is the measurement of how products and services supplied by a company meet the customers' expectations. In the competitive marketplace where businesses compete for customers it is seen as a key differentiator and has become a key element of business strategies.

Good businesses focus on retaining their existing customers as well as obtaining new customers in order to grow and increase profits. Measuring customer satisfaction provides businesses with an indication of how successful they are in providing a service to the marketplace.

The Kano model of customer satisfaction can determine attractive or must-be requirements, and can be used in a matrix to assure that the most critical needs are translated into the next phases of product development and/or service delivery. The Kano method can be used to determine the degree that an attribute is considered attractive or must-be by the customers (Kano, Seraku, Takahashi & Tsuji, 1984:41-44).

Work done by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988a & 1988b) between 1985 and 1988 provides a scientific basis for the measurement of customer satisfaction with a service by using the gap between the customers' expectation of performance and their perceived experience of performance.

The concept of service quality is not universally understood and is often used as an umbrella term to cover a range of impressions gathered by customers

when dealing with vendors. These impressions are important factors that influence buying behaviour and firms are very conscious of the need to improve this aspect, either through employee training or direct investment in facilities. If these training programmes aimed at improving service quality are to be effective, there is a need to identify the specific constructs underlying the generic term.

An ideal service quality scale is one that is psychometrically sound and robust enough to provide insights to managers for corrective actions in the event of quality shortfalls. The psychometric properties of the SERVQUAL scale have been the subject of considerable research. Researchers have been known to question the validity of the five-factor structure of SERVQUAL (Federoff, 2008).

Cronin and Taylor (1992:57-59) were amongst the first researchers who made an attack on the SERVQUAL scale. They questioned the conceptual basis of the SERVQUAL scale and found it confusing with service satisfaction. They proposed what is referred to as the SERVPERF scale. Cronin and Taylor (1992) provided empirical evidence across four industries, namely banks, pest control, dry cleaning and fast food to corroborate the superiority of their performance-only instrument over the disconfirmation-based SERVQUAL scale.

Being a variant of the SERVQUAL scale and containing a perceived performance component alone, the performance-only scale comprised only 22 items. A higher perceived performance implies higher service quality.

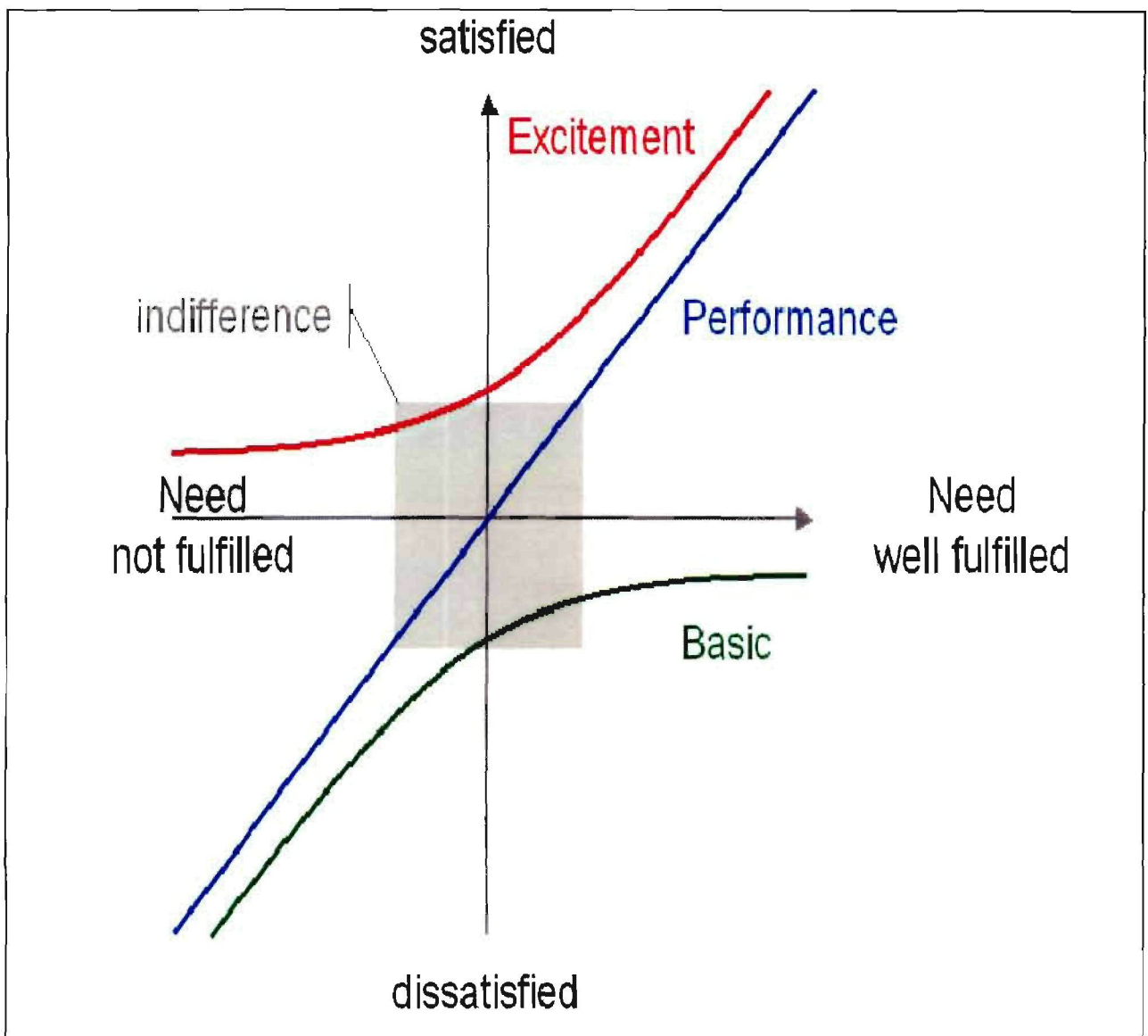
Empirical studies evaluating validity, reliability and methodological soundness of service quality scales clearly point to the superiority of the Servperf scale. Though still lagging behind the SERVQUAL scale in application, researchers have increasingly started making use of the performance-only measure of quality. The significance of various quality attributes used in the service quality scales can considerably differ across different types of services and service customers.

Work done by Cronin and Taylor propose the “conformation/disconformation” theory of combining the “gap” described by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988a) as two different measures, perception and expectation of performance into a single measurement of performance according to expectation.

2.2 MEASURING SERVICE QUALITY USING THE KANO MODEL

The Kano model was originally developed by Professor Noriaki Kano to classify and recognize the importance of different "types" of customer needs (Hand, 2004). It provides insights into the dynamics of customer preferences and the thoroughness of their needs in order to ensure successful products and services. It is a quality management and marketing technique that can be used for measuring client happiness (Kano 1984:39; Hand 2004).

FIGURE 2.1: KANO'S MODEL OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



Source: Berger (1993)

The Kano model is a theory of product development and customer satisfaction where customers' preferences are classified into six categories (Berger 1993), namely:

1. Attractive;
2. One-dimensional;
3. Must-be;
4. Indifferent;
5. Questionable; and
6. Reverse.

This model offers some insight into the product attributes which are perceived to be important to customers. The purpose of the model is to support product specification and discussion through better development team understanding. Kano's model focuses on differentiating product features, as opposed to focusing initially on customer needs. Kano also produced a methodology for mapping consumer responses to questionnaires onto his model (Anon, 2007a; Kano et al., 1984: 41).

Kano's model of customer satisfaction distinguishes six categories of quality attributes, from which the first three actually influence customer satisfaction (Jane & Dominiquez 2003:73-76):

- **Basic Factors.** (*Dissatisfiers. Must haves.*) – The minimum requirements which will cause dissatisfaction if they are not fulfilled but do not cause customer satisfaction if they are fulfilled or exceeded. The customer regards these as prerequisites, and takes these for granted. Basic factors establish a market entry “threshold”.
- **Excitement Factors.** (*Satisfiers. Attractive.*) – The factors that increase customer satisfaction if delivered but do not cause dissatisfaction if they are not delivered. These factors really distinguish itself from its competitors in a positive way.
- **Performance Factors.** The factors that cause satisfaction if the performance is high and they cause dissatisfaction if the performance is low. Here, the attribute performance-overall satisfaction is linear and symmetric. Typically, these factors are directly connected to customers' explicit needs and desires and a company should try to be competitive here.
- **Indifferent attributes.** The customer does not care about this feature.
- **Questionable attributes.** It is unclear whether this attribute is expected by the customer.
- **Reverse attributes.** The reverse of this product feature was expected by the customer.

2.2.1 Application of the Kano model - analysis

The starting point for constructing the Kano questionnaire is the product requirements which have been determined in surveys. Griffen and Hauser (1996:193-195) found that only 20 to 30 customer interviews in homogenous segments are adequate to determine approximately 90-95% of all product requirements. Many market researchers use focus group interviews to determine product requirements, assuming that group dynamic effects enable a greater number of more diversified customer needs to be discovered. Compared with the expense, individual interviews seem to be more favourable. Customer interviews are useful for registering visible product requirements and customer problems, but when investigating potential new and latent product requirements they usually are not adequate. Especially attractive requirements are not expressed by the customer, as these are the features he does not expect (Scott, 1991:13).

According to Zultner and Mazur (2006), the Kano model begins with a survey of customers. They are asked about product features, and how they feel if the product has the feature sufficiently, and not (has the feature insufficiently).

TABLE 2.1: THE KANO CATEGORIES RESULT FROM ASKING PAIRED QUESTIONS

Physical State		Sufficient		
Insufficient	User Perception	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>
	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	Skeptical	Must-Be	One-Dimensional
	<i>Neutral</i>	Reverse	Indifferent	Attractive
	<i>Satisfied</i>	Reverse	Reverse	Skeptical

Source: Zultner and Mazur (2006)

A Kano survey asks the following two questions for each product attribute (Zultner & Mazur 2006; Anon 2007b):

- The first is, “If the car has <good [**sufficient**] visibility>, how do you feel? <*neutral*>. So the physical state is sufficient, and the user perception is neutral.
- The second is, “If the car does **not** have <good [i.e., **insufficient**] visibility>, how do you feel? <*dissatisfied*>. So the physical state is insufficient, and the user perception is dissatisfied. So <good visibility> in this kind of car is a “must-be” [expected] for this customer (or customer segment).

In this way you can survey customers and determine which Kano category a requirement belongs in for that product and that customer.

2.2.2 Relating Kano categories to customer needs

How can customers relate Kano categories, which apply to features of the solution, and have either a stated or implied level of performance to customer needs (Zultner & Mazur, 2006)? To answer these questions, one needs to explore why customers react as they do to the various categories. Customers react positively to exciting features because exciting features represent new benefits (if this is a new feature), or a new level of performance (if this is a feature they are familiar with). These satisfy customers, but in this case they are simply receiving more benefits they are familiar with (Hand, 2004). It is possible that an existing feature can jump to an exciting feature in some cases if the level of performance is raised high enough, and if new benefits, or new levels of benefits result to the customer. So the key is to find new benefits that are new to the customer (Sauerwein, Bailom, Matzler & Hinterhuber, 1996).

According to Zultner and Mazur (2006), understanding the goals of the customers allow us to explore what new benefits the customer would appreciate. From the new benefits, one can look for product features that would contribute to those benefits. These features should be exiting to the customer. Similar analysis can be done to explore if substantially higher levels of performance for existing features would provide any new benefits to customers, and these are also candidates for exciting quality.

Methods for analyzing the context, the problems and the process of the customer, segment by segment, give one the means to systemically uncover candidate requirements in every Kano category (Zultner & Mazur, 2006). A Kano survey can then confirm the analysis.

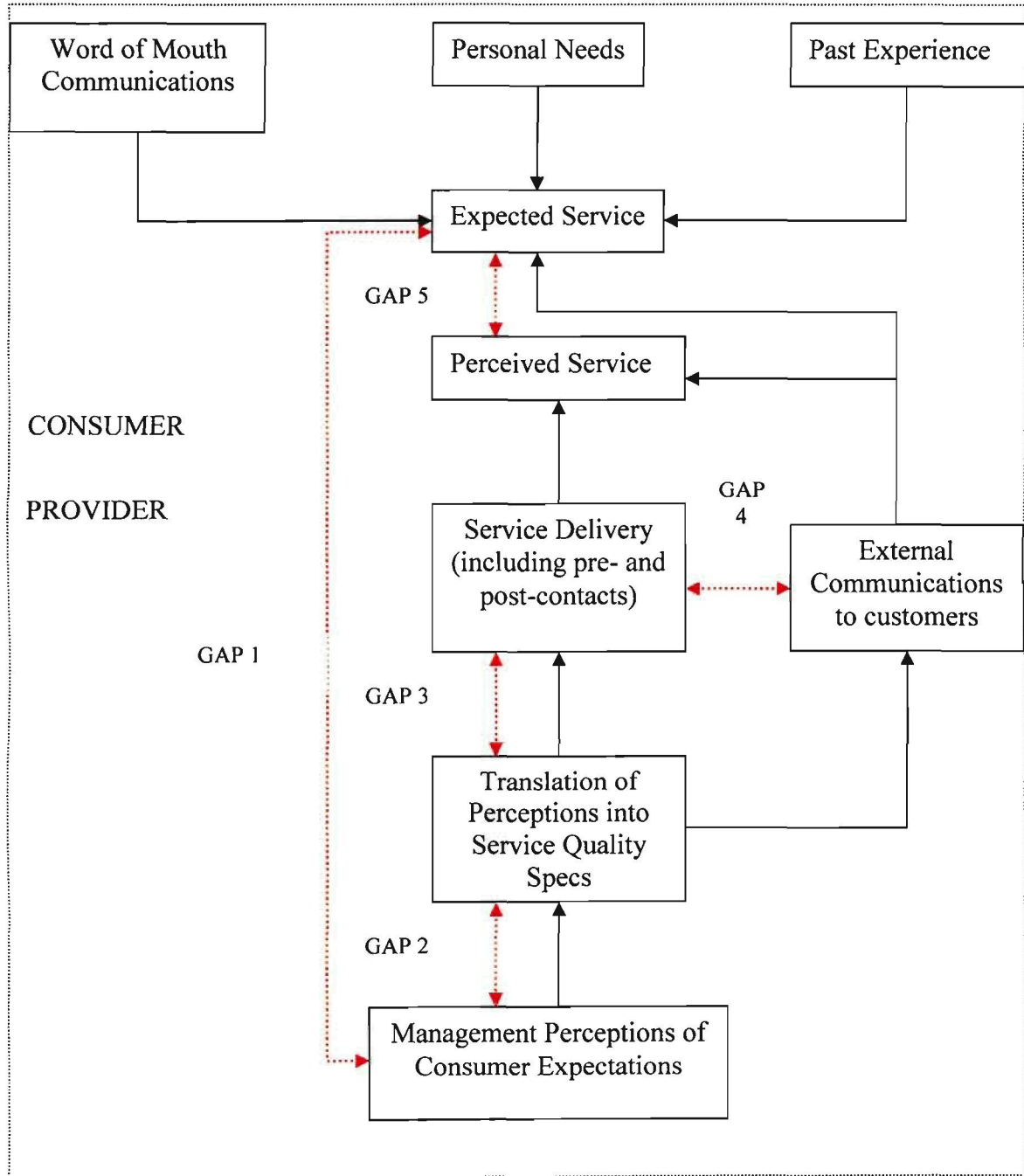
2.3 MEASURING SERVICE QUALITY USING THE SERVQUAL MODEL

The SERVQUAL method from Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) is a technique that can be used for performing a gap analysis of an organisation's service quality performance against customer service quality needs.

SERVQUAL is an empirically derived method that may be used by a services organisation to improve service quality. The method involves the development of an understanding of the perceived service needs of target customers. These measured perceptions of service quality for the organisation in question, are then compared against an organisation that is "excellent". The resulting gap analysis may then be used as a driver for service quality improvement (Van Dyke, Prybutok & Kappelman, 1999).

SERVQUAL takes into account the perceptions of customers of relative importance of service attributes. This allows an organisation to prioritize and to use its resources to improve the most critical service attributes. The SEVQUAL model is shown in Figure 2.2.

FIGURE 2.2: THE SERVQUAL OR GAPS MODEL



Source: Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990)

The data is collected via surveys of a sample of customers, in these surveys. Customers respond to a series of questions based on a number of key service dimensions.

The methodology was originally based around **five key dimensions** (Parasuraman, 1988a):

- **Tangibles.** Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials.
- **Reliability.** Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- **Responsiveness.** Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
- **Assurance.** Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence.
- **Empathy.** The firm provides care and individualized attention to its customers.

This has been adapted and refined by the authors to cover (Zeithaml, 1990):

- **Tangibles.** Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials.
- **Reliability.** Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- **Responsiveness.** Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.
- **Competence.** Possession of required skill and knowledge to perform service.
- **Courtesy.** Politeness, respect, consideration and friendliness of contact personnel.
- **Credibility.** Trustworthiness, believability, honesty of service provider.
- **Feel secure.** Freedom from danger, risk or doubt.
- **Access.** Approachable and easy contact

- **Communication.** Listens to its customers and acknowledges their comments. Keeps customers informed. In a language which they can understand.
- **Understanding the customer.** Making the effort to know customers and their needs.

2.3.1 Service quality dimensions

The authors conducted a qualitative study, from which they concluded that customers ranked the importance of two SERVQUAL dimensions consistently regardless of the service industry. Reliability is the most important contributing factor to service quality and tangibles is the least important.

Service quality dimensions are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Based on an extensive number of audits, dimensions are claimed to be universal, i.e. applicable to any service. They can be measured with 21 or 22 items. However, authors agree that modifications to items may be necessary when using the method to evaluate different services (Barton, 1992:520).

TABLE 2.2: SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS

DIMENSION	ITEMS	DESCRIPTION
Tangibles	4	Appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and other materials
Reliability	5	Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
Responsiveness	4	Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
Assurance	4	Employees' knowledge and courtesy and their ability to inspire trust and confidence
Empathy	5	Caring, individualized attention given to customers

Source: Parasuraman (1988b)

Items are statements, such as "service is fast". Customers rate how well their expectations of this kind of service meet their perceptions of this particular service.

2.3.2 Usage of SERVQUAL – applications

SERVQUAL is widely used within service industries to understand the perceptions of target customers regarding their service needs, and to provide a measurement of the service quality of the organisation. SERVQUAL may also be applied internally to understand employees' perceptions of service quality. This is being done with the objective of achieving service improvement.

2.3.3 Steps in SERVQUAL - process

The method essentially involves conducting a simple survey of customers so that their perceived service needs are understood, as well as measuring their perceptions of service quality for the organisation in question.

Customers are asked to answer numerous questions within each dimension that determines:

- The relative importance of each attribute.
- A measurement of performance expectations that would relate to an "excellent" company.
- A measurement of performance for the company in question.

This provides an assessment of the gap between the desired and actual performance, together with a ranking of the importance of service criteria. This allows an organisation to focus its resources and maximizing the quality of the service while controlling the costs.

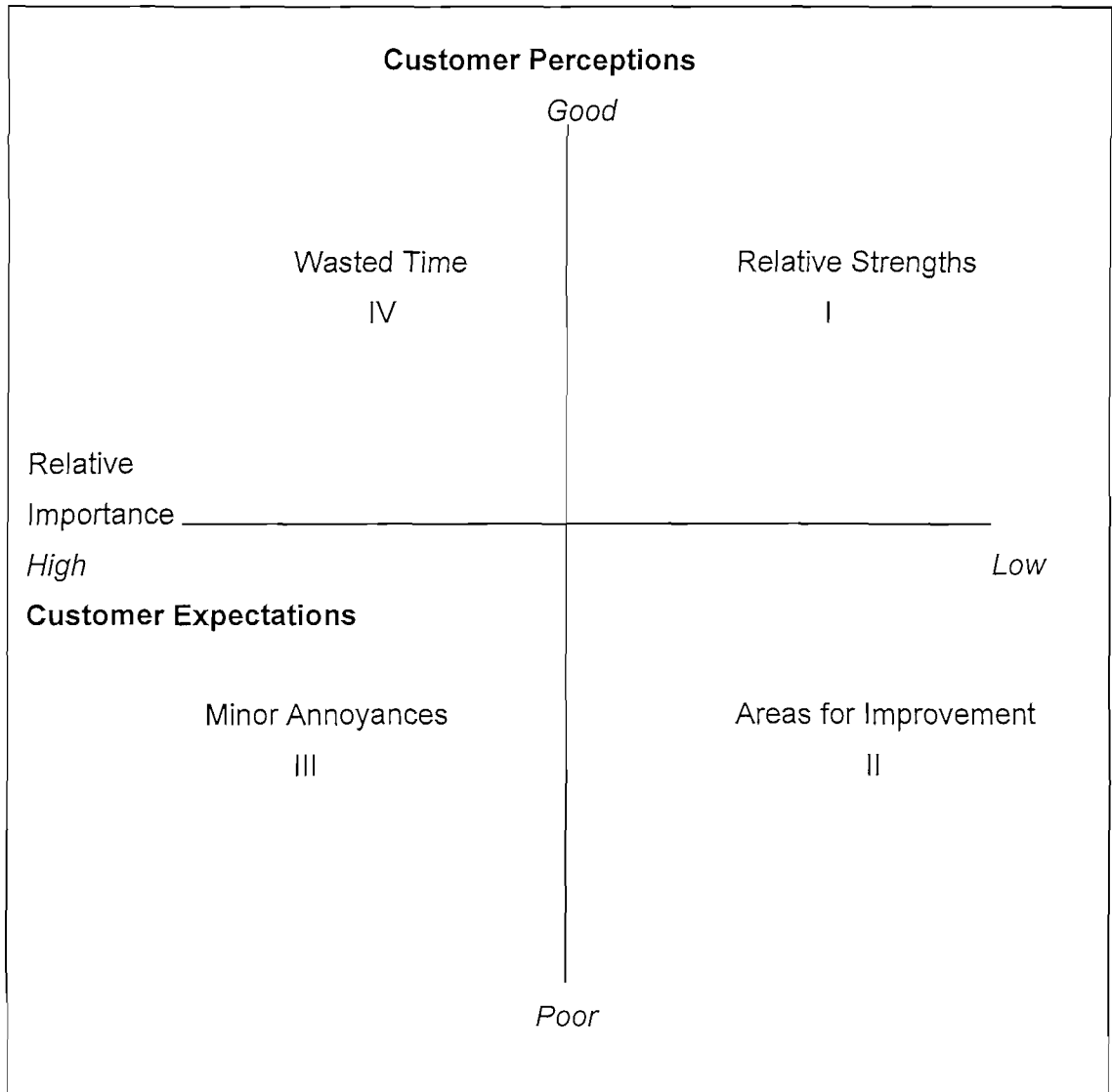
2.3.4 The SERVQUAL gaps

SERVQUAL helps to identify customer perceptions of service quality. A gap analysis takes this further and helps to identify the causes of service quality shortfalls in each or all of the dimensions. Customers build an expectation of the service to be received depending on four factors. These are:

- Word of mouth communications obtained from friends and acquaintances;
- Personal needs;
- Past experiences; and
- Communications which sets standards by the service company and as such to create their own expectations.

The customer expectations and customer perceptions are shown in Figure 2.3.

FIGURE 2.3: GAPS MODEL



The model suggests that perception of service quality is the difference between the customer's perceptions and expectations of service delivery. This difference is the result of four gaps. The gaps are the following:

- *Gap 1:* The difference between actual customer expectations and management's idea or perception of customer expectations. This can occur as a result of insufficient research or communication failures.
- *Gap 2:* The difference between management's perceptions of what customers expect and service quality specifications drawn up, detailing the service quality actions required – the standards gap.
- *Gap 3:* The difference between service quality specifications and the actual service that is being delivered.
- *Gap 4:* The difference between the actual service being delivered and external communication – are promises made, consistently fulfilled?
- *Gap 5:* The difference between what customers expect of a service and what they actually receive. Gap 5 results from the combination of Gaps 1 to 4.

2.3.4.1 The knowledge gap

A critical step in the delivery of quality service is to know what the customer wants. Management does not always understand what is important to customers or what characteristics a service must have to satisfy customer needs or the performance levels needed to ensure high quality service delivery. *"When senior executives with the authority and responsibility for setting priorities do not fully understand customers' service expectations, they may trigger a chain of bad decisions that result in perceptions of poor service quality."* (Parasuraman et al., 1990:38.) Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that management knows what the customers' expectations of service are for them to be able to use these expectations as quality standards.

Although the reasons for quality gaps may vary slightly according to the nature of the service being delivered, the following could be probable reasons for the gaps. Gap 1 could be the result of the following:

Management does not know exactly what the customers' expectations are.

This could be due to too many levels of management and inadequate upward communication.

Factors pertaining to Gap 1 are:

- Insufficient marketing research
- Inadequate use of marketing research
- Lack of interaction between management and customers
- Insufficient communication between contact employees and managers

2.3.4.2 The standard gap

When management identifies customers' service expectations, the next step should be to have service standards implemented. A system should be developed to ensure high quality service. The standard gap will expand if management implements standards which are based on internal services and not on customers' expectations. Factors pertaining to Gap 2 are:

- Inadequate management commitment to service quality
- Absence of formal process for setting of service quality goals
- Inadequate standardization of tasks
- Perception of infeasibility that customer expectations cannot be met

Levy and Barton (2004:614) said for companies to narrow the gap they have to commit to rendering high quality service, establish innovating solutions to problems and service delivery goals. Quality service can only happen when there is buy-in from management.

2.3.4.3 The performance gap

From management's point of view Gap 3 is the most critical. Gap 3 can be referred to as the service performance gap. This refers to the level of service delivery that is expected from management. This happens when employees are incapable or not willing to perform the service on the desired level. Gap 3 can be easily identified, rectified and managed.

Factors pertaining to Gap 3 are:

- Lack of teamwork
- Poor employee - job fit
- Poor technology - job fit
- Lack of perceived control of contact personnel
- Inappropriate evaluation and/or compensation system
- Role conflict and/or ambiguity among contact employees

2.3.4.4 The communication gap

Advertisements and other external communication can influence customer expectations. These expectations can be influenced through the differences between service delivery and external communication such as over-promise and/or absence of information regarding certain aspects of good service delivery. The factors pertaining to Gap 4 are:

- Lack of horizontal communication due to inadequate communication between the different departments/functional areas of the company.
- The tendency to promise more than can actually be delivered. Gap 4 refers specifically to the lack of coordination between the employees responsible for service delivery and the ones doing the marketing.

2.3.4.5 The service delivery gap

Gap 5 can be identified as the overall difference between the expected service and the perceived service experienced. Service quality is determined

by the overall gap between what was expected and what was delivered. This means that:

- Service quality is relative not absolute
- Different customers may perceive the level of service quality differently
- Quality is determined by the customer who has “all the votes”, not by the service provider
- Service quality can be achieved by either meeting or exceeding expectations, or by changing expectations

2.3.4.6 The zone of tolerance

Some authors describe the gap between expectations and perceptions as follows, one produces disconfirmation measures and others produce graphical presentations, such as the zone of tolerance.

Disconfirmation measures are the Measure of Service Superiority (MSS) and the Measure of Service Adequacy (MSA). The measures are computed by simple extraction formulas as presented below.

$\text{MSS} = \text{Perceived Level} - \text{Desired Level}$ $\text{MSA} = \text{Perceived Level} - \text{Accepted Level}$
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The zone of tolerance presents perceptions relating to a zone, based on expectations.

2.3.5 Strengths of SERVQUAL – benefits

One can assess how useful SERVQUAL data (Hand, 2004) is by means of:

- Assessing service quality from the customer’s perspective;
- Tracking customer expectations and perceptions over time and the discrepancies between them;
- Comparing a set of SERVQUAL scores against those of competitors or best practice examples;

- Comparing expectations and perceptions of different customer groups; and
- Assessing expectations and perceptions of internal customers – other departments and/or services dealt with.

What one can do with SERVQUAL data is to:

- Use it on customer priorities to feed into our quality standards;
- Customer priorities and their ranked order of importance can become the so-called “*Whats*”;
- These “*whats*” can be compared with the “*hows*” (which should be the key business processes) and relationships matched to check service design and provision according to key requirements; and
- It can help to identify which processes need to be fixed.

Most users would agree that a comprehensive and thorough examination of service needs and service quality provides an invaluable approach to improving service quality. SERVQUAL provides detailed information about:

- Customer perceptions of service. (a benchmark established by your own customers)
- Performance levels perceived by customers.
- Customer comments and suggestions.
- Impressions from employees with respect to customers’ expectations and satisfaction.

2.3.5 Limitations of SERVQUAL – disadvantages

There have been a number of studies that doubt the validity of the five dimensions and of the uniform applicability of the method for all service sectors. According to an analysis by Van Dyke *et al.* (1999), it appears that the use of difference scores in calculating SERVQUAL contributes to problems with the reliability, discriminant validity, convergent validity and predictive validity for the measurement. These findings suggest that caution should be exercised in the use of SERVQUAL scores and that further work is

needed in the development of measures for assessing the quality of information services.

2.3.7 Assumptions of SERVQUAL

The results of market surveys are accurate. The validity of the model is based around the results of empirical studies. A number of academics have since performed further empirical studies that appear to contradict some of the original findings.

Customer needs can be documented and captured, and they remain stable during the whole process.

2.4 SUMMARY

In Chapter 2 of the study, the two selected service quality models, namely the Kano model and the SERVQUAL model, were discussed. These two models have been selected from the various client models that currently exist in the literature. They have also been evaluated. The SERVQUAL model has been chosen as the analytical tool and will be applied to the collection of empirical data. The research methodology and results are discussed in the next chapter of the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology and the results of the study. As such, this chapter forms an integral part of the study, and reports with statistical correctness on the findings. Tables as well as figures are employed to increase the readability and presentation of the results.

Measuring service quality is as difficult as defining it. This is normally done on an assumption that the customers' attitude towards the service will have an effect on their future behaviour, such as repeat of their purchase behaviour or recommending the company to others. This attitudinal behaviour is very complicated as it does not focus on service delivery, because it measures the customers' attitude and makes inferences from this to both service delivery and to buyer behaviour. The purpose of service quality research is not to actually determine whether or not the customers give positive or negative evaluations because most of the time they will give positive feedback although they are not satisfied with the service they received. What we would actually like to know is what kind of service is really being delivered by the company and how does this really impact on the customers' behaviour towards the company.

This kind of evaluation does not actually give a manager something to work on, due to the fact that it does not tell him what is actually wrong with the service delivery of the company, it does not provide any relevant information on which a manager can take action to improve on the company's service delivery.

Therefore, it seems that basing service quality research on attitudes is not very useful. This is also applicable when measuring customer satisfaction, because this is also based on attitudes. Exceptions to this would be companies that are in a monopoly position, they do not have to worry about customer loyalty because their customers have to be loyal, but they do need to keep their customers satisfied. Ideally, market research should measure the effectiveness of a company's selling channels and customers' evaluation of the service they received.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The empirical research was done by collecting primary data from a selected group, using the SERVQUAL questionnaire to measure customer expectation and customer perception. The sample size is 65 respondents, and they all responded by completing the structured questionnaires.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part measured customer expectations and the second part measured customer perceptions. A seven-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire. A "1" was labelled as "*strongly disagree*" while a "7" was labelled as "*strongly agree*".

All the primary data collected through the SERVQUAL questionnaire were established in the form of descriptive statistical analysis. The descriptive statistical analysis was used to transform the raw data into a form that made it easy to understand and interpret, as well as to provide descriptive information.

Through the SERVQUAL questionnaire customers' expectation and perception scores were computed. If the score is positive, it means satisfaction in that corresponding service feature. If the score is negative, it means dissatisfaction in that corresponding service feature. This means that there may be a need to improve those features. If the score is zero, it can be interpreted as having a fair satisfaction in the performance of that particular service.

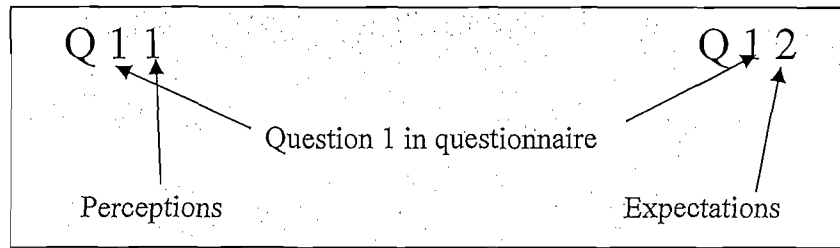
The data analysis was performed by NWU Statistical Consultation Services. As such, the reliability was confirmed by means of the Cronbach alpha test. Descriptive statistics complies and ultimately, comparative factor analysis was performed to identify underlying constructs in both the “perceived service” and the “expectations of service” data sets (Du Plessis, 2008).

3.3 ANALYSIS OF MEAN VALUE

Statistical significance tests are used to show that the result, which is the difference between two means, is significant. The p-value is a criterion of this, giving the probability that the obtained value could be obtained under the assumption that the null hypothesis is true. A small p-value (e.g. smaller than 0.05) is considered as sufficient evidence that the result is statistically significant.

A natural way to comment on practical significance is to use the standardized difference between the means of customer expectations and customer perceptions, i.e. the difference between the two means divided by the estimate for standard deviation. A measure that is called the **effect size** is introduced, which not only makes the difference independent of units and sample size, but relates it also with the spread of the data according to Ellis & Steyn (2003).

The results of the mean values are shown in Table 3.1 below, where pair 1 refers to question 1 of the questionnaire attached hereto as Annexure 1. The item labelled as Q11 measures customer perception and Q12 measures customer expectation. As such, numbering of the items contain intelligence within the number itself.



The same principle relates to the other paired questions..

TABLE 3.1: PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Q11	4.85	65	1.149	.142
	Q12	6.18	65	.788	.098
Pair 2	Q21	4.83	65	1.140	.141
	Q22	6.06	65	.933	.116
Pair 3	Q31	4.65	65	1.340	.166
	Q32	6.22	65	.960	.119
Pair 4	Q41	4.71	65	1.155	.143
	Q42	6.18	65	.748	.093
Pair 5	Q50	4.00	63	1.270	.160
	Q52	6.02	63	1.276	.161
Pair 6	Q61	4.02	64	1.386	.173
	Q62	6.33	64	1.099	.137
Pair 7	Q71	4.26	65	1.350	.167
	Q72	6.03	65	1.212	.150
Pair 8	Q81	4.44	63	1.241	.156
	Q82	6.08	63	1.248	.157
Pair 9	Q91	4.28	64	1.119	.140
	Q92	5.86	64	1.052	.132
Pair 10	Q101	4.06	64	1.271	.159
	Q102	5.77	64	1.294	.162
Pair 11	Q111	4.11	65	1.427	.177
	Q112	6.15	65	1.176	.146
Pair 12	Q121	4.25	65	1.469	.182
	Q122	6.32	65	1.200	.149
Pair 13	Q131	4.00	64	1.309	.164

TABLE 3.1: PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS (Continued)

	Q132	6.13	64	1.175	.147
Pair 14	Q141	4.31	65	1.224	.152
	Q142	6.03	65	1.089	.135
Pair 15	Q151	4.78	65	1.244	.154
	Q152	6.15	65	1.162	.144
Pair 16	Q161	4.34	65	1.406	.174
	Q162	6.12	65	1.139	.141
Pair 17	Q171	4.42	64	1.270	.159
	Q172	6.34	64	.930	.116
Pair 18	Q181	3.94	65	1.356	.168
	Q182	5.71	65	1.308	.162
Pair 19	Q191	4.72	65	1.231	.153
	Q192	6.00	65	1.212	.150
Pair 20	Q201	3.97	64	1.247	.156
	Q202	5.77	64	1.244	.155
Pair 21	Q211	4.20	65	1.313	.163
	Q212	6.15	65	1.149	.142
Pair 22	Q221	4.09	65	1.455	.180
	Q222	6.15	65	1.034	.128

3.4 RELIABILITY

The initial data set, consisting of 22 paired variables, was subjected to Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (α) reliability test and none of the variables were rejected as all of them had α values $>0,70$ (Boshoff & Hoole, 1998:77). An overall α -value of 0.879 for customers' perceptions and an overall α -value of 0.906 for customers' expectations, furthermore, showed that the data set maintained acceptable internal stability levels and is suitable for use in a factor analyses procedure. Reliability refers to an indicator's dependability. A reliable indicator or measure will give the same results each time a subject is measured (Neuman, 1997). Therefore, for the purposes of determining reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, as determinant of how well a set of items measures a specific construct, was used.

3.5 FACTOR ANALYSIS

The factor analysis revealed that three factors could be identified from the data for both customers' perceptions and customers' expectations. The factor analysis explains a cumulative variance of 57.80% for customers' perceptions and 66.90% for customers' expectations. The identified factors have been labelled and interpreted accordingly. The number of each factor corresponds with the factor numbers in tables 3.2 and 3.3. The tables also show the percentage of variance explained by each of the factors, as well as the cumulative variance.

3.5.1 Perceived service

The factors pertaining to the perceived service have been identified and appear below. The factor table appears in Table 3.2. The factors have been labelled accordingly.

- **FACTOR 1: EMPLOYEE MIND-SET**

Factor 1 is one of the more important factors regarding customers' perceptions and has been identified as *Employee Mind-Set*, explaining the variance of 29.72%. All of the items loading onto factor 1 point to employee mind-set as one of the more important elements being considered by customers when deciding which convenient store to shop at. Elements such as being helpful, instilling confidence, being courteous, giving individual attention and personal service, as well as understanding their customers' specific needs form part of Factor 1. Both the clear identification as well as the substantial variance explained makes this a clear indicator that management should pay special attention to their customers' needs.

- **FACTOR 2: EXCELLENT SERVICE**

Factor 2 is labelled *Excellent Service*, since its factors point to the fact that customers want excellent service from the employees of the convenient stores where they shop. Customers do not want any uncertainty when they need information regarding their purchases or when they need to return a purchased item. Therefore, it is important for customers to know that the employees of the convenient store where they shop are knowledgeable about the items they sell, as well as the procedures they need to follow. Customers prefer that the employees are neat and tidy as this indicates to them (the customer) that appearance is important to management and the employees of the convenient store where they shop. Being timeous is also an important element for customers. Factor 2 explains a variance of 19.14% making this the most important factor when analyzing customers' perceptions.

- **FACTOR 3: DISPLAY**

Customers prefer to shop at physical facilities, which is visually appealing to them; therefore, Factor 3 is labelled *Display*. Customers associate products, which are neatly and appealingly displayed with good or excellent service. The factor explains an 8.92% variance.

3.5.2 Expected service

- The factors pertaining to the expected levels of service have been identified and appear below. The factor table appears in Table 3.3. The factors have been labelled accordingly.

- **FACTOR 1: EMPLOYEE MIND-SET**

Factor 1 of customers' expectations is also labelled *Employee Mind-set* due to the fact that there is a fine line between what customers expect and

what they perceive. All of the items loading onto factor 1 for both customer perception and customer expectation point to employee mind-set as one of the more important elements being considered by customers when deciding which convenient store to shop at. Customers will perceive that high quality products are offered, but their expectation of certain products may be that the quality offered is not as high as they expected it to be. Elements such as being helpful, instilling confidence, being courteous, giving individual attention and personal service, as well as showing sincere interest in solving a customer's problem timeously form part of Factor 1. Thus Factor 1 explains a very favourable variance of 35.78%. Both the clear identification as well as the substantial variance explained makes this a clear indicator that management should pay special attention to their customers' needs by ensuring that their employees are adequately trained and informed to this regard.

- **FACTOR 2: SERVICE REPUTATION**

Factor 2 is labelled *Service Reputation*, since its factors point to the fact that customers expect excellent service from the employees of convenient stores. By word of mouth customers will express frustration and/or annoyance with the employees of convenient stores, because they do not want any uncertainty when they need information regarding their purchases or when they need to return a purchased item. Therefore, it is important for customers to know that the employees of the convenient store where they shop are knowledgeable about the items they sell, as well as the procedures they need to follow. Customers do not like to wait on service; therefore, it is important that service should be prompt and that the employees of the convenient store have the customers' best interest at heart. Being timeous is also an important element for customers. Factor 2 explains a variance of 25.22%.

TABLE 3.2: FACTOR LOADINGS - PERCEPTIONS

Variable	Customers' Perceptions	Factor Loading per Factor		
		1	2	3
Q101	Employees of excellent convenient stores will tell customers exactly when services will be performed.	0.762		
Q121	Employees of excellent convenient stores will always be willing to help customers.	0.801		
Q141	The behaviour of employees in excellent convenient stores will instill confidence in customers.	0.801		
Q161	Employees of excellent convenient stores will be consistently courteous with customers.	0.806		
Q181	Excellent convenient stores will give customers individual attention.	0.740		
Q201	Excellent convenient stores will have employees who give customers personal service.	0.811		
Q221	The employees of excellent convenient stores will understand the specific needs of their customers.	0.861		
Q31	Employees at excellent convenient stores will be neat in their appearance.		0.612	
Q51	When excellent convenient stores promise to do something by a certain time, they do. e.g. money-back Guarantee.		0.523	
Q71	Excellent convenient stores will perform the service right the first time.		0.689	
Q91	Excellent convenient stores will insist on error-free records.		0.670	
Q111	Employees of excellent convenient stores will give prompt service to customers.		0.690	
Q131	Employees of excellent convenient stores will never be too busy to respond to customers' requests.		0.735	
Q151	Customers of excellent convenient stores will feel safe in transactions.		0.777	
Q171	Employees of excellent convenient stores will have the knowledge to answer customers' questions.		0.783	
Q191	Excellent convenient stores will have operating hours convenient to all their customers.		0.735	
Q211	Excellent convenient stores will have their customers' best interest at heart.		0.801	
Q21	The physical facilities at excellent convenient stores will be visually appealing.			0.691
Q41	Products associated with the service (food, drinks, etc) will be neatly and appealingly displayed at an excellent convenient store.			0.806
Q61	When a customer has a problem, excellent convenient stores will show a sincere interest in solving it.			0.788
Q81	Excellent convenient stores will perform the service at the time they promised to do so.			0.745
Variance Explained (%)		29.727	19.149	8.924
Cumulative Variance Explained (%)		29.727	48.877	57.801

TABLE 3.3: FACTOR LOADINGS - EXPECTATIONS

Variable	Customers' Expectations	Factor Loading per Factor		
		1	2	3
Q22	The physical facilities at excellent convenient stores will be visually appealing.	-0.752		
Q42	Products associated with the service (food, drinks, etc) will be neatly and appealingly displayed at an excellent convenient store.	-0.675		
Q62	When a customer has a problem, excellent convenient stores will show a sincere interest in solving it.	-0.689		
Q82	Excellent convenient stores will perform the service at the time they promised to do so.	-0.757		
Q102	Employees at excellent convenient stores will tell customers exactly when services will be performed.	-0.765		
Q122	Employees of excellent convenient stores will always be willing to help customers.	-0.720		
Q142	The behaviour of employees in excellent convenient stores will instil confidence in customers.	-0.693		
Q162	Employees of excellent convenient stores will be consistently courteous with customers.	-0.716		
Q172	Employees of excellent convenient stores will have the knowledge to answer customers' questions.	-0.584		
Q182	Excellent convenient stores will give customers individual attention.	-0.757		
Q202	Excellent convenient stores will have employees who give customers personal service.	-0.704		
Q222	The employees of excellent convenient stores will understand the specific needs of their customers.	-0.728		
Q12	Excellent convenient stores will have modern looking equipment.		-0.646	
Q32	Employees at excellent convenient stores will be neat in their appearance.		-0.664	
Q52	When excellent convenient stores promise to do something by a certain time, they do. e.g. money-back Guarantee.		-0.619	
Q72	Excellent convenient stores will perform the service right the first time.		-0.534	
Q92	Excellent convenient stores will insist on error free records.		-0.749	
Q112	Employees of excellent convenient stores will give prompt service to customers.		-0.847	
Q132	Employees of excellent convenient stores will never be too busy to respond to customers' requests.		-0.557	
Q192	Excellent convenient stores will have operating hours convenient to all their customers.		-0.571	
Q212	Excellent convenient stores will have their customers' best interest at heart.		-0.626	
Q152	Customers of excellent convenient stores will feel safe in transactions.			0.538
Variance Explained (%)		35.782	25.222	5.904
Cumulative Variance Explained (%)		35.782	61.004	66.908

▪ **FACTOR 3: TRANSACTIONS**

Factor 3 is labelled *Transactions*, and only one item loaded significantly onto this factor. Customers want to feel safe and secure when they enter into transactions. Employees should be honest with customers, provide excellent service and treat them correctly. When employees make numerous mistakes and treat customers poorly, especially in communications they (the customer) will no longer want to enter into any transactions with the store. This factor explains a variance of 5.90%.

3.5.3 Factor comparison

The factors of both the perceived service and expected service appear in the table below. Although fairly similar in nature, it is clear that customers have a higher expectation from the convenience stores. (They are currently not receiving the expected service levels. This is also evident from the descriptive statistics.)

TABLE 3.4: FACTOR COMPARISON

FACTOR NUMBER	FACTOR LABEL	FACTOR LABEL
	PERCEIVED SERVICE (Variance Explained %)	EXPECTED SERVICE (Variance Explained %)
1	Employee mind-set (29.7%)	Employee mind-set (35.8%)
2	Excellent service (19.1%)	Service reputation (25.2%)
3	Display (8.9%)	Transaction (5.9%)
TOTAL VARIANCE (%)	57.8%	66.9%

Almost 10% more variance is explained by the expectations and the perceptions of actual service. Most of these additional variance is within factor 1, namely

Employee mind-set. This is also a common factor belonging to both data sets. Factor 2 relates to service, but there has a different angle as the expectations data set relates more to the *reputation* of the service delivery.

3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the methodology of the empirical research as well as the results obtained from the statistical analysis. The results consist of descriptive statistics, reliability testing as well as principal factor analysis for both the perceptions and expectations. Each of the data-groups identified three factors.

The next chapter, being the final chapter of the study, draws conclusions and offers recommendations.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 presents the conclusions and recommendations on the data collected through the SERVQUAL questionnaire. A descriptive statistical analysis was used to transform the raw data into a form that made it easy to understand and interpret. This chapter also serves as the final chapter of the research, hence areas for future research as well as a summary of the research concludes the study.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

The study demonstrated the use of a qualitative methodological approach regarding customer perception and customer expectation. It shows that employee mind-set plays a crucial role as it facilitates the interface between the company and the customer. The employees' responsiveness, attitudes, habits, skills and knowledge are all very important elements. Employees need to be committed to service if a company wants to retain its customers.

Excellent service is the foundation for excellent convenient stores. When their service is excellent, customers will perceive value in the service. The benefits from the reinforcement of positive word-of-mouth communications are maximized when the reality of service delivery matches the customers' expectations.

The factors identified correspond well to existing literature on the subject. The correlation between employee mind-set and customers' perception and customer expectation proves that customers do have certain criteria when they decide where to shop. Customers definitely expect a certain level of quality service from excellent convenient stores.

Furthermore, it seems that customers associate the physical facilities with excellent service. Products must be neatly and appealingly displayed. Customers' perceive employees' ability to show interest in and solve their problems as good service delivery.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has extracted several recommendations to excellent convenient stores to improve their service delivery. Improvement is certain if they focus on the identified factors. The following recommendations are made:

- *Employee empowerment.* Employee empowerment helps employees serve customers at the level of the company where the customer interface exists. Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing an employee to think, behave, take action, and control work and decision making. The company should focus on giving employees the tools they need to be effective and efficient in their service delivery, such as customer information files that contact employees can use to better understand the customers' needs. Systems can be created that speed up routine transactions. Internal training and communication services should be established so that employees can be more competent and feel more confident when dealing with customers.

- *Internal training.* Management often proclaims that their employees are the company's biggest assets; however, developing their employees are rarely their primary focus. Management must focus on the benefits of internal training; not only is it cost effective, but it will also increase the way customers perceive your company. In addition, training will synergistically enhance empowerment (as discussed above). There will surely be an increase in repeat sales. For example, if you do a customer service program for frontline employees, one feature could be resolving client problems.

- *Induction programmes.* The purpose of induction programmes is to ensure the effective integration of staff into the company. Without an effective induction programme employees will never really understand the company, where they fit into the vision and mission and what the goals of the company are. This may lead to poor integration, low morale, loss of productivity and failure to work to their full potential and ultimately it will impact on the customers' perception of the company.

- *Customer service surveys.* By doing surveys, companies can learn more about their customers' perceptions, expectations and needs. They can enhance their service delivery methods and improve customer satisfaction through direct feedback to the organisation. Companies can help their employees to service their customers better by understanding the business environment and increase the level of customer service they offer, thus gaining competitive advantage.

Surveys can enhance employee performance. By including employees in the improvement process, giving training on purpose and process provides insight into company goals and offers employees opportunity to voice concerns and make suggestions. Rewards and recognition for

positive ratings on surveys can be a strong incentive to improve service delivery.

4.4 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study should be repeated in future to check if the differences between customer expectation and customer perceptions still exist and/or whether there is a significant change in customer expectation and customer perception.

4.5 SUMMARY

This study focused on customer perceptions and customer expectations. Factors that are deemed important to the success of service delivery when it comes to convenience stores were identified. This study demonstrates that customer expectations and customer perceptions are related to satisfaction with the service delivery.

These factors include employee mind-set, excellent service, display, service reputation and feeling safe in transactions. A definite correlation exists between customer expectations and customer perceptions when it comes to service delivery. The purpose of the study is therefore to focus the attention of the management of convenience stores on the factors of real importance in the growth and profitability of their stores. It is imperative that they align their employees with the vision and mission of the business.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

The Survey.

The questionnaire measures perceptions and expectation of customers at convenience stores. It is divided into two sections:

- The first section **requires you to rank all convenient stores according to your expectations** i.e. **what you expect from the store on a shopping experience** at a SPAR, Pick & Pay, Shoprite Checkers, etc.
- The second section asks you **to rank the convenient** store you chose to report on according to your perception of the shopping experience.

1. Expectations.

This section of the survey deals with your opinions of convenient stores. Please show the extent to which you think convenient stores should possess the following features. What we are interested in here is a number that best shows your expectations of convenient stores.

2. Perceptions.

The following statements relate to your feelings about the particular convenient store you have chosen. Please show the extent to which you believe this convenient store has the feature described in the statement. Here, we are interested in a number from 1 to 7 that shows your perceptions about the convenient store.

You should rank each statement as follows:

Strongly Disagree							Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

NB: Each statement in the questionnaire below would thus have TWO ANSWERS – one for the PERCEPTIONS and the other for your EXPECTATION

Item	Statement	Perceptions	Expectations
1	Excellent convenient stores will have modern looking equipment.		
2	The physical facilities at excellent convenient stores will be visually appealing.		
3	Employees at excellent convenient stores will be neat in their appearance.		
4	Products associated with the service (food, drinks, etc) will be neatly and appealingly displayed at an excellent convenient store.		
5	When excellent convenient stores promise to do something by a certain time, they do. E.g. Money-back Guarantee.		
6	When a customer has a problem, excellent convenient stores will show a sincere interest in solving it.		
7	Excellent convenient stores will perform the service right the first time.		
8	Excellent convenient stores will perform the service at the time they promised to do so.		
9	Excellent convenient stores will insist on error free records.		
10	Employees of excellent convenient stores will tell customers exactly when services will be performed.		
11	Employees of excellent convenient stores will give prompt service to customers.		
12	Employees of excellent convenient stores will		

	always be willing to help customers.		
13	Employees of excellent convenient stores will never be too busy to respond to customers' requests.		
14	The behaviour of employees in excellent convenient stores will instil confidence in customers.		
15	Customers of excellent convenient stores will feel safe in transactions.		
16	Employees of excellent convenient stores will be consistently courteous with customers.		
17	Employees of excellent convenient stores will have the knowledge to answer customers' questions.		
18	Excellent convenient stores will give customers individual attention.		
19	Excellent convenient stores will have operating hours convenient to all their customers.		
20	Excellent convenient stores will have employees who give customers personal service.		
21	Excellent convenient stores will have their customers' best interest at heart.		
22	The employees of excellent convenient stores will understand the specific needs of their customers.		

23. Please indicate which convenience store you evaluated (For example Pick & Pay, Friendly Grocer, etc).

24. Will you shop at this convenience store again?

YES	NO
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

APPENDIX B: STATISTICS

Output Created	2008-10-07T13:50:22.625	
Comments		
Input	Data	Q:\SKD\K\Kleynhans_Karin\Karin1.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	66
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each analysis are based on the cases with no missing or out-of-range data for any variable in the analysis.
Syntax	<pre>T-TEST PAIRS=Q11 Q21 Q31 Q41 Q50 Q61 Q71 Q81 Q91 Q101 Q111 Q121 Q131 Q141 Q151 Q161 Q171 Q181 Q191 Q201 Q211 Q221 WITH Q12 Q22 Q32 Q42 Q52 Q62 Q72 Q82 Q92 Q102 Q112 Q122 Q132 Q142 Q152 Q162 Q172 Q182 Q192 Q202 Q212 Q222 (PAIRED) /CRITERIA=CI(.9500) /MISSING=ANALYSIS.</pre>	
Resources	Processor Time	0:00:00.016
	Elapsed Time	0:00:00.046

[DataSet1] Q:\SKD\K\Kleynhans_Karin\Karin1.sav

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	4.85	65	1.149	.142
	6.18	65	.788	.098
Pair 2	4.83	65	1.140	.141
	6.06	65	.933	.116
Pair 3	4.65	65	1.340	.166
	6.22	65	.960	.119
Pair 4	4.71	65	1.155	.143
	6.18	65	.748	.093
Pair 5	4.00	63	1.270	.160
	6.02	63	1.276	.161
Pair 6	4.02	64	1.386	.173
	6.33	64	1.099	.137
Pair 7	4.26	65	1.350	.167
	6.03	65	1.212	.150
Pair 8	4.44	63	1.241	.156
	6.08	63	1.248	.157
Pair 9	4.28	64	1.119	.140
	5.86	64	1.052	.132
Pair 10	4.06	64	1.271	.159
	5.77	64	1.294	.162
Pair 11	4.11	65	1.427	.177
	6.15	65	1.176	.146
Pair 12	4.25	65	1.469	.182

Pair 13	Q122	6.32	65	1.200	.149
	Q131	4.00	64	1.309	.164
Pair 14	Q132	6.13	64	1.175	.147
	Q141	4.31	65	1.224	.152
Pair 15	Q142	6.03	65	1.089	.135
	Q151	4.78	65	1.244	.154
Pair 16	Q152	6.15	65	1.162	.144
	Q161	4.34	65	1.406	.174
Pair 17	Q162	6.12	65	1.139	.141
	Q171	4.42	64	1.270	.159
Pair 18	Q172	6.34	64	.930	.116
	Q181	3.94	65	1.356	.168
Pair 19	Q182	5.71	65	1.308	.162
	Q191	4.72	65	1.231	.153
Pair 20	Q192	6.00	65	1.212	.150
	Q201	3.97	64	1.247	.156
Pair 21	Q202	5.77	64	1.244	.155
	Q211	4.20	65	1.313	.163
Pair 22	Q212	6.15	65	1.149	.142
	Q221	4.09	65	1.455	.180
	Q222	6.15	65	1.034	.128

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	65	.049	.698
Pair 2	65	-.005	.970
Pair 3	65	.048	.704
Pair 4	65	.208	.096
Pair 5	63	.299	.017
Pair 6	64	.111	.382
Pair 7	65	.224	.072
Pair 8	63	.206	.106
Pair 9	64	.304	.015
Pair 10	64	.347	.005
Pair 11	65	-.178	.157
Pair 12	65	.256	.040
Pair 13	64	.134	.291
Pair 14	65	.251	.044
Pair 15	65	.261	.036
Pair 16	65	.032	.799
Pair 17	64	-.031	.810
Pair 18	65	.245	.049
Pair 19	65	.084	.507
Pair 20	64	.312	.012
Pair 21	65	.300	.015
Pair 22	65	.271	.029

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences								Practical Sig. >.8
		Mean of gap (P-E)	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Statistical Sig. (2-tailed) p<0.05	
					Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Q11 - Q12	-1.338	1.361	.169	-1.676	-1.001	-7.929	64	4.30812E-11	0.98
Pair 2	Q21 - Q22	-1.231	1.477	.183	-1.597	-.865	-6.720	64	5.74999E-09	0.83
Pair 3	Q31 - Q32	-1.569	1.610	.200	-1.968	-1.170	-7.857	64	5.75945E-11	0.97
Pair 4	Q41 - Q42	-1.477	1.239	.154	-1.784	-1.170	-9.612	64	4.89758E-14	1.19
Pair 5	Q50 - Q52	-2.016	1.508	.190	-2.396	-1.636	-10.611	62	1.43669E-15	1.34
Pair 6	Q61 - Q62	-2.313	1.670	.209	-2.730	-1.895	-11.076	63	1.9952E-16	1.38
Pair 7	Q71 - Q72	-1.769	1.599	.198	-2.165	-1.373	-8.923	64	7.70241E-13	1.11
Pair 8	Q81 - Q82	-1.635	1.569	.198	-2.030	-1.240	-8.271	62	1.33949E-11	1.04
Pair 9	Q91 - Q92	-1.578	1.282	.160	-1.898	-1.258	-9.845	63	2.29887E-14	1.23
Pair 10	Q101 - Q102	-1.703	1.466	.183	-2.069	-1.337	-9.295	63	2.00304E-13	1.16
Pair 11	Q111 - Q112	-2.046	2.003	.248	-2.543	-1.550	-8.234	64	1.24528E-11	1.02
Pair 12	Q121 - Q122	-2.077	1.642	.204	-2.484	-1.670	-10.196	64	4.88386E-15	1.26
Pair 13	Q131 - Q132	-2.125	1.638	.205	-2.534	-1.716	-10.379	63	2.86994E-15	1.30
Pair 14	Q141 - Q142	-1.723	1.420	.176	-2.075	-1.371	-9.784	64	2.47266E-14	1.21
Pair 15	Q151 - Q152	-1.369	1.464	.182	-1.732	-1.007	-7.541	64	2.07612E-10	0.94
Pair 16	Q161 - Q162	-1.785	1.781	.221	-2.226	-1.343	-8.079	64	2.33908E-11	1.00
Pair 17	Q171 - Q172	-1.922	1.597	.200	-2.321	-1.523	-9.629	63	5.35277E-14	1.20

Pair 18	Q181 - Q182	-1.769	1.637	.203	-2.175	-1.364	-8.713	64	1.79933E-12	1.08
Pair 19	Q191 - Q192	-1.277	1.654	.205	-1.687	-.867	-6.225	64	4.15381E-08	0.77
Pair 20	Q201 - Q202	-1.797	1.460	.183	-2.162	-1.432	-9.843	63	2.31073E-14	1.23
Pair 21	Q211 - Q212	-1.954	1.462	.181	-2.316	-1.591	-10.772	64	5.19087E-16	1.34
Pair 22	Q221 - Q222	-2.062	1.540	.191	-2.443	-1.680	-10.794	64	4.77477E-16	1.34