Assessment of the Quality of Banking Services Perceived by Rural Customers

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The role played by banks in the economy of a country is of great importance. Growth of banking industry is directly related to economic growth of the country. New technologies are being introduced to increase quality of banking services. Present study was conducted in Dantiwada taluka of Banaskantha district of Gujarat and aimed at assessing perceived service quality of banking services by rural customers. A representative sample of 300 rural customers was selected randomly from six villages. Personal and socio-economic characteristics were studied as independent variables, whereas, quality of banking services as dependent variables. An interview schedule was formed which comprised questions related to background information, personal and socio economic variables and type and extent of services utilized by rural customers along with a teacher made scale to measure the service quality of banking services perceived by rural customers. Data were collected by personal interview technique. Descriptive type statistical tools,

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correlation and ANOVA were used for data analysis and Cronbach's alpha test was applied to check the reliability of scale. All the dimensions of scale were found highly reliable. Assurance dimensions of service quality was perceived at the highest rank with 45.20 score by customers followed empathy, security and responsiveness. The reliability dimension was perceived at the lowest rank with 29.28 score.

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer service is a dynamic interactive process which needs continuous improvement. During the past two decades or so, regulatory, structural and technological factors have significantly changed the banking environment in India. In a milieu which becomes increasingly competitive, service quality as a critical measure of organization performance continues to compel the attention of banking institutions. The interest is largely driven by the realization that higher service quality results in customer's satisfaction and loyalty, greater willingness to recommend to someone else, reduction in complaints and improved customer retention rates.

Lewis and Booms [1] had suggested that service quality resulted from a comparison of what customers expected from a service-provider with the provider's actual performance. According to them, "service quality is a measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations. Delivering quality service means conforming to customers' expectations on a consistent basis."

Customer satisfaction facilitates the measure of how services and products provided by company meet customer expectation [2]

Parasuraman et al. [3] stated three things about service quality:

1. Difficult and complicated to evaluate as compared to tangible goods quality
2. Service quality perception results from actual service performance Vs consumer expectations
3. Quality evaluation not solely focuses on outcome of service but also involves the evaluation of service delivery process.

1.1 Dimensions of Service Quality

While evaluating service quality, consumers examine the following aspects: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, security and user friendliness [4].

Dimensions of service quality can be described as given below-

1.2 Tangibility

Tangibility of service quality refers to the things which can be observed physically including ATM network, physical facilities, materials and appearance. Tangibles are represented by skilled personnel, the banking quality of products and service, brochures and cards.

1.3 Reliability

Reliability indicates the trust held by the customers in the ability of banks for performing service in a proper way, like doing according to promises and declarations. A reliable service refers to a condition where the bankers ability to provide internet connection with desirable level of working and without significant failures, upcoming technologies need to be frequently updated and there should not be any malpractice from the side of the banker like misuse of the cardholder information.

1.4 Responsiveness

Responsiveness of service quality indicates the willingness of banker in customer support and providing prompt service. It can be evaluated by the time required to clarify customer reported problems and the duration of response.

1.5 Assurance

Assurance refers to the courtesy of employees, their knowledge and their ability to imbibe confidence and trust. Assurance can be achieved by acting courteously and by providing essential knowledge that help in guiding the problems of customers.

1.6 Empathy

Empathy refers to the individualized attention the customer receives from the service provider. As the customers are from various social backgrounds, attention should be given to

identify the specific needs of customers based on their requirements.

1.7 Need for Service Quality in Banks

The competitive climate in the Indian financial market has changed dramatically over the last few years. Almost all Indian banks have started experimenting with new services by offering the Automated Teller Machine (ATM) that provides 24 hours services. The expectations of the customers have also changed nowadays. Many consumers expect a variety of services from the banks. Many household consumers, now, prefer to take consumer durable loans or buy an instant credit rather than save for a few years to buy the intended consumer durable [4].

Service quality is considered as the most critical determinant of competitiveness for establishing and sustaining satisfying relationship with customers [5]. Advance technology, customer oriented corporate culture, a well-designed service-system and excellent information system are major factors that decide the superior quality of service of an organization. Providing excellent service quality and maintaining high customer satisfaction are the challenges faced by contemporary service industry [6]. Thus, Service Quality is an important subject in both public and private sectors business firms and service industries. Banking sector is not an exception to this.

1.8 Justification of Study

Banks are constantly searching for ways to improve their service quality and to attract customers due to highly competitive environment. Rural customers are very important clientele for Indian financial sector. The rural banking system is clearly more inclusive of low income families than those provided by the commercial banks. Banks in rural areas have introduced electronic banking also. Various studies have been conducted to know utilization of e-banking services by customers and their perception about banking service quality in urban areas. There is a dearth of researches on assessment of perceived banking service quality by rural customers. The present study sought to investigate perceived service quality of banking services by rural customers in Dantiwada taluka of Gujarat. The outcomes of study will help in making policies by the government and banks to

improve their service quality and to satisfy and retain their customer clientele.

Considering these points present research work was planned with the following objectives:

1.9 Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the quality of banking services on various dimension perceived by rural customers
2. To find out correlation between personal and socio-economic characteristics of rural customers and their perception about quality of banking services

1.10 Null Hypothesis

H_{01}: There is no difference between various dimensions of service quality.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sheetal et al. [7] attempted to examine the order of importance of service quality dimensions and found out that tangibility was the least important and empathy was the second least important quality feature in banking services.

Sharma [8] aimed to assess satisfaction among the consumers of private bank. The study examined that the perception level of customers towards the service quality by the private bank sector with the instrument SERVQUAL consisting of five dimensions of service quality. The study suggested that the service quality parameters were linearly related to each other and they were interdependent and inter connected. Hence, each dimension should be focused individually as well as in totality.

Machhar and Dave [9] studied usage pattern and satisfaction level of banking services in selected rural areas of Dahod district. The study found that rural consumers were more concerned about the responsiveness dimension and reliability dimension of the services and also found that bank failed to fulfill their expectations and consumers were not satisfied with their services.

Reddy and Shaik [10] investigated that the use of SERVQUAL as a technique is necessary to explore the most important strength and weaknesses of a service provider and it is also necessary to analyze the relationship between service quality and satisfaction. The levels of services were found below the expectations of

customers and their satisfaction towards service quality was average.

Ganesanand Sadhanandan [11] analyzed in their research that the income has a strong affect on the extent to use of banking services among the rural customers.

Jacob *et al.* (2015) indicated in their study that the behavior of staff in urban banks were very attentive towards its customers as compared to rural banks.

Prasad and Prasad [12] emphasized in the results that the customers rated three banks between good and very good on all the five dimensions of service quality. He further stated that three banks needed to improve their service quality especially responsiveness, empathy, reliability and tangibility which were the major responsible factors for customer satisfaction regarding the services provided by SBH and HDFC banks. The overall service quality perception showed that, although the customers were satisfied with the three banks (State Bank of Hyderabad, HDFC bank, Deccan Gramin Bank) still proper attention was required to improve the service quality to retain the existing customers and to attract new customers.

Al-Queed et al. [13] explored the relationship between service quality and customer relationship management of Jordan banking sector. The study found a strong correlation between customer relation management, customer satisfaction, loyalty and the service quality of banking sector operated in Jordan. Customer knowledge, customer retention and customer culture were found the most influential dimensions in the service quality of Jordan bank sector.

Ali and Bisht [14] conducted a study and found that customers from urban and rural areas in banking industry were satisfied. Further, it was concluded that behaviour of public sector banks' employees was not supportive in comparison to private sector banks. There were also some infrastructural, tangibles and ATMs related problems in public sector banks.

Asharaf et al. [15] reported that a great amount of customers were contented with the tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and reliability of the services provided by the SBI. In this study it was concluded that high customer perception of service quality could create

improvement in the operational efficiency and service quality provided by the bank.

Mubarak [16] analyzed that 'empathy' had maximum average score of 3.240 among all five dimensions of service quality in banks. This research also indicated that among five dimensions 'Reliability', 'Responsiveness', 'Empathy' and 'Tangibility' were the major factors responsible for customer satisfaction.

Ramanjaneyalu et al. [17] stated that overall service of the banks including various dimensions such as tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy and responsiveness was required to improvise due to high perception level of customers.

Saxena and Jindal [18] reported that the customer satisfaction level of customers was found 74% for rural public banks in Uttarakhand State. Amongst public sector banks, the satisfaction level customers of Punjab National Bank was 76.20%, for State Bank of India it was 72.75% and for Uttarakhand Gramin bank the satisfaction level was reported 73.75%.

Tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, employee behaviour were identified as service quality dimensions by various researchers. High perception of service quality had an impact on customer satisfaction in banking services.

3. METHODOLOGY

Present study was carried out to assess quality of banking services perceived by rural customers in Dantiwada taluka of Banaskantha district. Multistage random sampling was used for sample selection. Dantiwada taluka has 57 villages. Six villages were randomly selected. From each village, fifty respondents using banking services were selected randomly. Hence, total sample size comprised of three hundred rural respondents using various banking services. Pre structured interview schedule was used for collecting baseline data. Teacher made scale was used to assess perceived quality of banking services by rural customers.

Cronbach's alpha test was used to check reliability of the scale. The teacher made scale to measure perceived service quality of banking services by rural customers had five continuum response pattern i.e., fully agreed, partially agreed, neutral, partially disagreed and fully disagreed.

Table 1. Reliability testing of dimensions of service quality

Sr.No	Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha value	Number of items
	Tangibility	0.865	8
	Reliability	0.857	8
	Responsiveness	0.852	9
	Assurance	0.915	4
	Empathy	0.928	5
	Security and accessibility	0.877	13
	Customer service	0.620	6

A reliability test (Cronbach's alpha) was conducted to assess the internal consistency of each construct. According to the values in the Table 1, all variables are adequate and reliable. SAS 9.3 software was used for testing reliability through Cronbach alpha coefficient. Alpha value of 0.6 was used as minimal accepted level as suggested by Nunnally (1978). Internal reliabilities were computed for 8 items of tangibility and reliability, 9 items of responsiveness, 4 items of assurance, 5 items of empathy, 13 items of security and accessibility and 6 items of customer service. Cronbach Alpha value obtained for empathy was the highest, i.e., 0.928 followed by assurance (0.915), security and accessibility (0.877), tangibility (0.865), reliability (0.857) and customer service (0.620). The research instrument appears to be highly reliable for measuring impact of service quality on empathy, assurance, security, tangibility, reliability and customer service as per the test.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of data illustrates the perception of rural customers regarding various service quality dimensions of banking services. Almost 98.0 per cent respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed with the statement that the bank had modern looking equipment; bank had up - to - date equipment and technology, proper guide signs, neat appearance of bank's employees. Almost 31.0 per cent respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed that the website of the bank was visually appealing, products and services were displayed properly on the website and information on the website was available in respondents' language. Thirty two per cent respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed about the fact that the website was easy to navigate.

The results regarding reliability revealed that almost 99.0 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed with the statement that wide range of products and services were provided to the respondents, when bank promised to do something by a certain time, it did so and no one was partially or fully disagreed. About ninety seven per cent respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed that the bank delivered error free records while no one was partially disagreed. Majority of the respondents (94.7%) were fully agreed and partially agreed that their bank had shown sincere interest in solving the problem while 3.0 per cent of the respondents were partially disagreed and fully disagreed. Nearly sixty eight per cent respondents could not give response due to the reason that they did not see or use website services while almost thirty per cent respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed with the fact that bank website did not freeze after respondents put in all the information, information provided on the website was accurate, website was regularly updated and online problems were resolved while no one was partially or fully disagreed.

Little more than half of the respondents were fully agreed and less than half of the customers were partially agreed that the bank performed services right the first time. Almost ninety eight per cent of the respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed with the fact that employees provided prompt services while 0.3 per cent of the respondents each were partially disagreed and fully disagreed. Majority of the respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed that the employees were always willing to help them. Though 2.3 per cent of respondents were partially disagreed and fully disagreed. Majority of the respondents (97.4%) were fully agreed and partially agreed that employees in the bank informed exactly when the services were performed and very few (0.6 %) respondents were partially disagreed and fully disagreed. 91.7 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed with the statement that customer service representatives were available

on customer care number and no one was partially disagreed and fully disagreed.

Thirty one per cent respondents were fully agreed and partially agreed that they used to get quick information about their online transactions and online request. Nearly similar number of respondents approved that website used to open quickly and speed of transaction was good, direct link was available for other related services on the website according to 30.6 per cent respondents.

The data related to assurance shows that 53.3 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed while 44.3 per cent were partially agreed with the fact that employees of the bank had the knowledge to answer customer questions. 54.3 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed while 41.3 per cent respondents were partially agreed with polite and friendly behavior of employees. 57.7 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed while 40.3 per cent were partially agreed that the management team was experienced.Maximum (58.0 %) respondents were fully agreed while 41.0 per cent were partially agreed that transactions were safe in the bank.

Statements regarding empathy dimension of service quality depicts that majority of the respondents were fully agreed or partially agreedwith the time bound work of bank employees. Almost 46 per cent respondents were fully agreed and fifty one per cent respondents were partially agreedwith efficient work of help desks and call centers of the banks. Nearly forty six per cent respondents were fully agreed that their specific needs were understood by the bank. 44.0 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed that they had the provisions of financial advice while 51.3 per cent of the respondents were partially agreed. Nearly forty one per cent respondents were fully agreed with the statement that employees used to give individual attention to the respondents and 56.0 per cent respondents were partially agreed.

Little less than half (48.7%) of the respondents were fully agreed while 23.0 per cent respondents were partially agreedabout appropriate security of ATMs. Fifty eight per cent respondents were fully agreed while 41.0 per cent respondents were partially agreedabout safe transactions in their bank. About fifty six per cent respondents were fully agreed while 43.3 per cent of respondents were partially agreedthat

privacy of clients was taken care by bank. Likewise, 48.3 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed while 49.0 per cent were partially agreedthat customer authentication was necessary. 46.3 per cent of the respondents were fully agreed while 49.3 per cent were partially agreedthat bank takes care in the collection of personal information. Similarly, majority of the respondents were fully agreed and partially agreedthat their respective banks had convenient hours of operation, 24 hours customer representative help, easily approachable managers and sufficient number of branches.

Almost 54.7 per cent respondents were fully agreed while 41.0 per cent of the respondents were partially agreedwith customer friendly environment at bank. 50.7 per cent of respondents were fully agreed with solving complaints adequately while 44.0 per cent of the respondents were partially agreed. 50.3 per cent of respondents were fully agreed with customer feedback services while 46.3 per cent of the respondents were partially agreed. Almost 32.0 percent of the respondents were fully agreed and partially agreedthat the website was easy to operate and user friendly and browsed in local language while 68.3 per cent of the respondents were not using the website services. 79.0 per cent of the respondents were fully disagreed and partially disagreed with special services for the elders and disabled while 6.0 per cent of the respondents were partially agreedand fully agreed.

4.1 Testing of Hypothesis

Data in Table 3 shows that the age was negatively but significantly correlated with tangibility, reliability, responsiveness and user friendliness while positively significantly correlated with assurance and empathy. Gender was positively and significantly correlated with all the dimensions except user friendliness which was found negatively but significant correlated. These findings are pointer to the fact that service quality perception was high amongst male rural respondents and female rural respondent's perception was high for user friendly dimension. More educated respondents perceived service quality high on various dimensions like tangibility, reliability, responsiveness and user friendly while assurance was negatively but significantly correlated with the education of rural respondents. Religion was negatively but significantly correlated with assurance and empathy. Caste had negative but significance

correlation with reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, security and accessibility and user friendly and family size was negatively correlated with all the dimensions. Marital status and family structure were found positively and significantly correlated with assurance, empathy and security. The occupation was positively correlated with all the dimensions that means the more occupation a customer had, the high perception of the quality in banking services.

Income was positively significant with the all dimensions that means the services quality perception was high for the respondents who had high money income. The findings of present study are in tune with the findings of Roy and Saha (2020) which revealed the significant association between the demographic variables and the service quality factors.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents on the basis of perception regarding services quality dimensions of banking services

n=300

Sr.No.	Services Quality Dimensions	Level of agreement										
		Fully agreed		Partially agreed		Neutral		Partially disagreed		Fully disagreed		No response	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Tangibility												
1	The bank has modern looking equipment.	165	55.0	129	43.0	005	01.7	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0
2	Bank has up - to - date equipment & technology	161	53.7	132	44.0	006	02.0	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0
3	Guide signs indicating as to which counters are offering which services	158	52.7	136	45.3	005	01.7	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0
4	My bank's employees are neat appearing.	165	55.0	131	43.7	004	01.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	000	00.0
5	Website of bank is visually appealing.	052	17.3	040	13.3	003	01.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
6	Products and services are displayed properly on the website.	052	17.3	039	13.0	004	01.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
7	Information on website is available in my language.	052	17.3	039	13.0	004	01.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
8	Website is easy to navigate.	058	19.3	038	12.7	006	02.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	198	66.0
	Reliability											
9	Wide range of products and services are provided	141	47.0	156	52.0	002	00.7	000	00.0	000	00.0	001	00.3
10	When my bank promises to do something by a certain time, it does so.	153	51.0	145	48.3	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	001	00.3
11	When I have problem, my bank shows sincere interest in solving it.	155	51.7	129	43.0	005	01.7	008	02.7	001	0.3	002	00.7
12	My bank delivers error free records.	155	51.7	135	45.0	008	02.7	000	00.0	000	00.0	002	00.7
13	The bank website does not freeze after customer puts in all the information.	046	15.3	043	14.3	006	02.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
14	Information provided on website is accurate.	046	15.3	045	15.0	004	01.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
15	Website is regularly updated.	046	15.3	044	14.7	005	01.7	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
16	Online problems are resolved.	046	15.3	043	14.3	006	02.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
	Responsiveness											
17	Bank performs the services right the first time	156	52.0	135	45.0	004	01.3	003	01.0	001	00.3	001	00.3
18	Employee in my bank gives prompt service.	154	51.3	141	47.0	003	01.0	000	00.0	001	00.3	001	00.3
19	Employees in my banks are always willing to help me.	157	52.3	127	42.3	008	02.7	006	02.0	001	00.3	001	00.3
20	Employees in my bank tell me exactly when the service will be performed	155	51.7	137	45.7	004	01.3	001	00.3	001	00.3	002	00.7
21	Customer service representatives are available on customer care number	129	43.0	146	48.7	022	07.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	003	01.0

Sr.No.	Services Quality Dimensions	Level of agreement											
		Fully agreed		Partially agreed		Neutral		Partially disagreed		Fully disagreed		No response	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
22	Quick confirmation of online transactions	038	12.7	055	18.3	002	00.7	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
23	Bank site takes action quickly on online request.	040	13.3	053	17.7	002	00.7	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
24	Website opens quickly and speed of transaction is good.	041	13.7	051	17.0	003	01.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
25	Direct link is available	043	14.3	049	16.3	003	01.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
Assurance													
26	Employees of bank have the knowledge to answer customer questions	160	53.3	133	44.3	002	00.7	003	01.0	000	00.0	002	00.7
27	Employee behavior is polite and friendly to customers	163	54.3	124	41.3	009	03.0	003	01.0	001	00.3	000	00.0
28	Experienced management team	173	57.7	121	40.3	004	01.3	002	00.7	000	00.0	000	00.0
29	I feel safe in my transaction with my bank	174	58.0	123	41.0	002	00.7	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0
Empathy													
30	Time bound work of employee	131	43.7	163	54.3	003	01.0	002	00.7	000	00.0	001	00.3
31	Help desks, call centers of bank work efficiently	137	45.7	154	51.3	006	02.0	002	00.7	000	00.0	001	00.3
32	Specific needs understood	137	45.7	156	52.0	004	01.3	001	00.3	001	00.3	001	00.3
33	There are provisions of financial advices in the nak.	132	44.0	154	51.3	008	02.7	004	01.3	001	00.3	001	00.3
34	My bank gives me individual attention.	124	41.3	168	56.0	006	02.0	001	00.3	000	00.0	001	00.3
	Security and accessibility												
35	Proper security at ATMs	146	48.7	067	22.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	087	29.0
36	Transactions in my bank are totally safe	174	58.0	123	41.0	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	002	00.7
37	Privacy / Confidentiality of the clients is supreme for my bank.	167	55.7	130	43.3	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	002	00.7
38	Customer authentication is necessary.	145	48.3	147	49.0	006	02.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	002	00.7
39	I feel secure on my online transactions.	041	13.7	051	17.0	003	01.0	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
40	Bank takes care in collection of personal information	139	46.3	148	49.3	005	01.7	000	00.0	000	00.0	008	02.7
41	More number of branches	127	42.3	152	50.7	013	04.3	001	00.3	000	00.0	007	02.3
42	24 hours customer representative help	115	38.3	152	50.7	022	07.3	000	00.0	005	01.7	006	02.0
43	Managers and employees are easily approachable	131	43.7	138	46.0	025	08.3	001	00.3	000	00.0	005	01.7
44	Convenient hours of operation	139	46.3	142	47.3	009	03.0	001	00.3	004	01.3	005	01.7
	User friendly(Customer service)												
45	Customer friendly environment at Bank	164	54.7	123	41.0	008	02.7	004	01.3	000	00.0	001	00.3
46	Customer feedback services	151	50.3	139	46.3	009	03.0	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0
47	Capable of solving complaints adequately	152	50.7	132	44.0	012	04.0	001	00.3	002	00.7	001	00.3
48	Special services for the elders and disabled	003	01.0	015	05.0	041	13.7	056	18.7	181	60.3	004	01.3
49	Website is easy to operate and user friendly	047	15.7	047	15.7	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3
50	Website can be browsed in my local language	047	15.7	047	15.7	001	00.3	000	00.0	000	00.0	205	68.3

F= Frequency; % = Percentage; N = Sample size

Table 3. Association between personal and socio-economic characteristics with perception about quality of banking services

Sr.No	Dimension	Age	Gender	Education	Religion	Caste	Marital status	Family structure	Family size	Occupation	Monthly income
	Tangibility	-0.216**	0.127*	0.458**	0.034	-0.110	-0.011	-0.012	-0.170**	0.365**	0.351**
	Reliability	-0.231**	0.132*	0.459**	0.051	-0.128*	0.012	-0.029	-0.158**	0.371**	0.359**
	Responsiveness	-0.222**	0.138*	0.446**	0.036	-0.149**	0.031	-0.002	-0.165**	0.373**	0.376**
	Assurance	0.207**	0.323**	-0.149**	-0.139*	-0.164**	0.381**	0.404**	-0.159**	0.170**	0.268**
	Empathy	0.180**	0.178**	-0.062	-0.155**	-0.243**	0.277**	0.293**	-0.184**	0.238**	0.339**
	Security and Accessibility	0.109	0.298**	0.128*	-0.026	-0.157**	0.274**	0.234**	-0.119*	0.258**	0.379**
	User friendly	-0.151**	-0.151**	0.382**	0.003	-0.140*	0.089	0.095	-0.161**	0.367**	0.370**

*** - Significant at 1%, * - Significant at 5%*

Table 4. Anova analysis

Source		DF	Type III SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	Significant
Service quality Dimensions		6	95295.4293	15882.5715	214.8305	<.0001	**
Error		2E3	154736.9921	73.9307	.	.	-
Corrected Total		2E3	250032.4214	.	.	.	-
** - Significant at 1%, * - Significant at 5%							

Table 5. Anova analysis of service quality dimensions

Sr.No.	Dimensions	Dimensions of 'score'	Rank of Dimension
	Tangibility	29.87	5
	Reliability	29.28	7
	Responsiveness	30.81	4
	Assurance	45.20	1
	Empathy	43.92	2
	Security and Accessibility	40.78	3
	User friendly	29.79	6

*** - Significant at 1%, * - Significant at 5%*

Hence, hypothesis H_{01} was partially rejected. There exists a relationship between personal and socio-economic factors of rural customers with their perception of quality of banking services.

4.2 Difference between Various Dimensions of Service Quality

The researcher tried to know whether rural customers perceived all the dimensions of quality of banking services similar or any difference exists between all the dimensions. ANOVA analysis was done to test the hypothesis.

There was a significant difference between all dimensions of service quality.

Table 5 elucidates that all the seven dimensions of service quality were significantly different from each other as per service quality perception of respondents. Assurance was given highest score i.e. 45.20 by respondents followed by empathy (43.92). 3rd rank was given to security and accessibility (40.78) followed by the responsiveness (30.81), tangibility (29.87), user friendly (29.79) and lowest score to the reliability (29.28).

Assurance dimension of service quality was perceived at the highest rank by respondents followed by empathy, security & accessibility and responsiveness. The reliability dimension was perceived at the lowest rank. It can be inferred from the analysis that respondents were feeling satisfied with assurance. Banks need to pay attention on their reliability aspect.

Hence, H_{02} was partially rejected. There exists a difference between the perception of rural customers regarding all dimensions of quality of banking services.

5. CONCLUSION

Rural customers are important and mass clientele base for banks. It is utmost needed to satisfy customers on all service quality dimensions. It is evident from results that perception of customers regarding all service quality dimensions is different. Banks should care and improve performance on all dimensions to retain customers. The outcome of study can be used to formulate policies for increasing adoption of electronic banking service by rural customers. Banks need to improve on reliability dimension of service quality.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Banks and financial institutions existed in rural areas need to improve on certain dimensions such as reliability, tangibility and user friendly. The bank employees should focus more on resolving problems of customers. Error free transactions and records should be there. As far as internet banking is concerned, website should be more user friendly and self explanatory.

7. SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

A study can be conducted to compare customers' satisfaction with different banks.

The same study can be replicated on different products and services offered by banks and financial institutions such as insurance, mutual funds, saving schemes etc.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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