LANGUAGE USE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG SERVICE COUNTER STAFFS; MODERN LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION FACULTY, UPM

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This first chapter introduces about the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, definition of terms, and also the significance of this study. The information provided is essential in order to give the overall overview about what this research is all about.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Language and communication skills are very essential in the service encounter since this service involve face-to-face interaction. Terms like ‘customer-employee’, ‘front-line employees’, and ‘reservationist’ also being familiar among societies other than service counter staff. However, in this study, ‘service counter staff’ is the common term used. The service counter staff roles in one organization are very important as their service quality reflects the image of the organization itself. In general, service counter staffs are the people seated in the front table in the organization where the first place customers entered and referred to. Different customers will have different behaviors, for example, some of them are likely want fast, seek more attention, prefer recognition and intimacy and some of them want strict specific information as they expected but, no matter what behaviors they exhibited, communication plays an integral part between the service counter staffs and customers.

This study was conducted in Modern Language and Communication faculty, UPM consists of several service counters which majority dealing with students 8 hours every working day. Here, majority of the customers are students and lecturers who come to seek helping to find lecturer’s room, to register subjects, get the forms, book the room, and make an appointment also printing service. The service counter staffs have to entertain the customers in a very well manner and give fair services to all the customers.
During the transaction encounters between the customers and service counter staffs, the communication skills are already take its place in order to make sure the conversation or communication is successful. Therefore, communication skills among the service counter staffs are very important as they show their ability and skills in using the language to convey the accurate information needed by the customers (Sparks and Callan, 1992). Many studies of service encounters (Avedon, 1996; James, 1992; Kalaja, 1989; Lamoureux, 1988; Ventola, 1987) have provided ample evidence that interactions in service encounters do have a dynamic and complex aspect in that the needs of the customers must be satisfied by and balanced with the abilities of the service provider or seller.

It is also belief that service counter is the most appropriate place to see the real communication; therefore, the language used in the service encounter was very interesting to be discovered. Study about on how the service counter staffs communicate with the customers and how the language they used exhibit the service encounter as the real, spontaneous face-to-face interaction is really exciting to be explored. All in all, this study is best for them to understand about the functions of communication skills and language in the service encounter. Furthermore, it is not only restricted to the internally purpose; to examine about the services provided, yet, it also looked into the customers’ perception towards the quality of the services.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are numbers of comments from customers and even public subjected to their dissatisfaction towards the service given by these service counter staffs. We often experienced whenever feeling unsatisfied with the feedback received from the service counter staffs. Slogan “Customer is always right” becomes faded from day to day and these irresponsible service counter staffs do not longer put the customers always at ease and act customer-friendly likes smiling, and greeting. The bad reputation or failure of an organization
sometimes related to the poor services provided from the service counters where the organization did not attract many customers due to the poor quality of service encounter.

To be best service counter staffs who give better services also at the same time contribute to the quality services is not easy. Customers’ opinions towards the quality of the services are different depending to the individual. But, the basic aspects of service encounters still have to do with the communication and language. The service counter staffs must have excellent communication skills and know how to adapt wisely the language they used in the service encounter according to the situation and the customers.

Why the service encounter remains the same level of performance without making any improvement is also one of the questions that we would like to know. The service providers sometimes think that they have given the best services to the customer but the customers do feel the other way around. All in all, the issue of the service encounter is complicated; however, the discussion about the language and communication being discussed in this study, together with the involvement of the customers regarding the quality services provided will help the service counters of the faculty to make improvement in the future.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The focus of the study is the communication skills and language use by the service counter staffs in Modern Language and Communication faculty, UPM. Three objectives were determined in this research include:

a) To observe the use of communication skills among service counter staff
b) To discover the interactional language of the service encounter
c) To measure the service quality of the service encounter
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

There are three research questions investigated in this research which are related to the language and communication skills used by the service counter staff:

a) How do the service counter staffs practice their communication skills in the service counter?

b) What is the interactional language used in the service encounter?

c) What are the service counter expectation and customer opinion in the service encounter?

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The key words need to be explained include service encounter, conversational, and service quality.

Service encounter

“a period of time during which a consumer directly interacts with a service. It encompasses all aspects of the service firm with which the consumer may interact-including its personnel, its physical facilities, and other tangible elements- during a given period of time.”

Shostack’s (1985, p.243)

“service encounter is a face engagement in which participants with specific goals conduct a mutual activity through the use of various communicative means.”

Goffman (1963)

“an instance of face-to-face interaction between a server who is "officially posted" in some service area and a customer who is present in that service area, that interaction being oriented to the satisfaction of the customer's presumed desire for some service and the server's
obligation to provide that service. A typical service encounter is one in which a customer buys something at a store ...”

Merritt (1976:321)

Conversational (Interactive)

“fundamental concerns regarding manner in which a message is constructed. They tend to affect the general character of everyday conversation one engages in, and an individual’s conversation style in general”

Kim and Kim (1997)

Service Quality

The extent to which a service meets customers’ needs or expectations

(Lewis and Mitchell, 1990)

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is very relevant and convenient to be conducted as the study setting itself involved all service counters at Modern language and Communication faculty, UPM. Being well known as the faculty of language, an expertise in language study, this study is unique and important to be conducted. People from outside and even the lecturers or the students themselves are likely visit the service counters for their own purpose every day. So, this study which focused on the language and communication skills used within the service encounters are vital to be discovered. The aspects being covered in this study include interpersonal skills, interactional language and service quality which will be very useful to all levels of people. For instance, the service provider, students, lectures and public people can used the information in this study to enhance their communication skills, modify their communication
style and even improve the quality of the services in the organization. Furthermore, this study is not only useful for now, but it is looking for the improvement in the future for the faculty benefits. The customer’s opinion and the expectation of the service counter staff about the services will help a lot in generating the idea to improve the quality of the services in the future. It is hopefully that at the end of this study, the reader will get better understanding to what and how to be successful service counter staff and put faculty in a very excellent service on the eyes of people.
1.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

**Title**

LANGUAGE USE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG SERVICE COUNTER STAFFS; MODERN LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION FACULTY, UPM

**Objectives**

a) To observe the use of communication skills among service counter staff
b) To discover the interactional language of the service encounter
c) To measure the service quality of the service encounter

**Location**

Modern Language and Communication faculty, UPM

**Sample**

Service Counter Staffs from;
- Dean Office
- External Education Unit
- ICT Unit
- Industrial Training and Academic Advisor Unit
- General Staff
- Labs Assistant

**Instruments**

- Questionnaire
- Observational List

**Methodology**

- Respondents have to complete a set of questionnaire
- The counter staffs at the main counter of building being observed

**Data Analysis**

- Mix method
- The data reported in the numerical and forms of words

**Theoretical Framework**

- Cooperative Principle
- Communication Accommodation Theory
- SERVQUAL Methodology
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will explain some of the theories and literature review related from the previous research. The major subtopics which are reviewed in this chapter include the components of the communication skills, the interactional language in the service encounter and also the quality of the services.

2.1 Components of Communication skills in Service Encounter

Communication in the service encounter is inevitable, where communication used to be the process of interaction between the service counter staff and the customers. Communication is not simply use the language to speak with other people, but it is actually more than that. There are still several components in the communication need to be aware of, in order to have the effective or successful communication.

The components of communication here can be summarized as the communication skills. Communication skills are generally understood as the set of skills that enables person to convey information so that it is received and understood. It is effective when the receiver gives the expected actions or responses. Basically, communication is like a two-way street where it is a process of encoding and decoding messages. There are many communication skills that one should be aware of in order to better their ability to convey their messages, for instances, preparing to listen, addressing people by their name, ability to be concise and clear, ability to convey thoughts in a focused and concrete manner and many more.

According to MA Nikolich and BA Sparks (1995), two prime areas of communication can be identified as influencing service satisfaction are the ability of the service counter staffs to communicate clearly so that customers will understand easily and
secondly, they can improve their interpersonal strategies to enhance the development of the relationship with the customers. Furthermore, Ds Sundram (2000) in his research paper entitled “The Role of Nonverbal Communication in Service Encounter” stated that non verbal communication is also a part of communication skills. Therefore, in this research, it will be focused on three aspects which each play important roles in order to examine the communication skills of these service counter staffs; Cooperative Principle, interpersonal skills and non verbal communication.

2.1.1 Clear Communication

Referring to the meaning of communication skills in general, it is a set of skills which the service counter staffs employed in order to convey the message clearly and being understood by the customers. Most of the time, service encounter involves the verbal interaction. Customers are expecting that the service counter staff to give them accurate, enough and informative, relevance information and being honest. Therefore, the service counter staffs themselves should be aware of their behavior in the interaction. Besides, they have to make sure that their language in the conversation during service encountering fulfills the purpose of the conversation, which is helping the customers to get adequate information. As phrased by Paul Grice, “Make your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.”

In communication literature, one principle that can be described how people interact with one another is using the Cooperative Principles. The British philosopher H. Paul Grice was first introduced the “Maxims of Conversation”, sometimes called Gricean Maxims. The four Maxims introduced include; Maxims of Quantity, Maxims of Quality, Maxims of Manner and Maxims of Relevance. In a word, the principle requires the conversation to be
precisely informative, truthful, relevant and explicit. “Grice’s principle assumes that people cooperate in the process of communication in order to reduce misunderstanding.” (Finch 2000).

However, there were many researches done opposed to the used of Gricean Maxims as can be best applied in the natural context of interaction. The Maxims likely lead to the goal-oriented process of the interaction. The conversation participants do not always observe these maxims strictly. According to the journal by Robert Dale and Ehud Reiter (1996) “The Role of the Gricean Maxims in the Generation of Referring Expressions”, Grice’s Maxims of conversation [Grice 1975] are framed as directives to be followed by a speaker of the language. This journal argued that, when considered from the point of view of natural language generation, such a characterisation is rather misleading, and that the desired behaviour falls out quite naturally if we view language generation as a goal-oriented process. For instance, the Maxim of Quality demand one should make contribution that is true. It was argued that no natural language generation systems deliberately say things that are false. It can be happened accidently or not intentional. The conclusion made in this journal, Grice’s Maxims do not need to be explicitly enforced or modelled in a natural language generation system.

Gricean’s Maxims are also likely being violated. A study of Cooperative Principles in Indonesian Political Language by Norwanto suggested that these maxims are not universal. they are not applicable to all society because the natures of human and culture are heterogeneous. The object of this research was Indonesian political language where the words, phrases, clauses and sentences collected from Indonesian newspapers – Kompas and Republika – published on June and July 2001 were analyzed. From the result showed, politicians often exploit conversational maxim regularly for some reasons.
2.1.2 Interpersonal skills

The term “interpersonal” indicates a “personal communication” between two people or in a small group of people. In this context, a service encounter is an interpersonal communication activity. On the other hand, interpersonal skills are direct, face-to-face communication that occurs between two persons (service counter staff-customer). Heskett (1986) suggested these skills should include “flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, the ability to monitor and change behaviour during the service encounter and empathy for the customers” (p.123).

The service counter staff’s interpersonal skills are one of the important aspects in delivering quality service. Employers do not seek only knowledgeable and good personality of employees, but they are seeking for the interpersonal skills one candidate have during interviewing. Interpersonal skills have been recognized as critical to professional success in hundred of studies (Morreale, Osborn, &Pearson, 2000). In fact, interpersonal skills are regarded as so important that the U.S Department of Labor, in its report “What Work Requires of Schools”- a report based on interviews with managers, employees, and workers who described the skills needed to function effectively in their jobs-identified interpersonal skills as one of five sets of skills essential for a nation and an individual to be economically competitive in the world marketplace (New York Times, July 3, 1991,p.A17). In addition, the importance of interpersonal skills in successful service encounters is shown in a National Association survey that found that customers expected employees; to smile in greeting, to put customers at ease, to ask whether customers want additional items or services, and so on.

A research conducted by William H.Samenfink (1994) in his research, “A Quantitative Analysis of certain interpersonal skills required in the service encounter”, the finding was to be expected. The research examined the self-monitoring and job performance
tendencies of hospitality employees to help identify and compare service attentiveness and suggestive selling skills between the high and low self-monitor. The high self-monitor is an individual particularly skilled at controlling and modifying his social behavior and emotional expression to suit his surroundings. Result showed that the high self-monitoring employee may be a better employee to serve the customers.

However, there was a few testing procedures to identify interpersonal skills identified in the hospitality industry. Yet, interpersonal skills still have to be examined because it is very important quality a service counter staff must have. Bitner (1990) supported which it is very important to be able to quantify the interpersonal skills required by the service employees since employee (service counter staffs) are an integral part of how the consumer rates service quality.

2.1.3 Non verbal Communication

One of the types of communication skills is non verbal communication such as kinesics (body language), paralanguage (pitch, volume, intonation of speech), proxemics (set measurable distances between people as they interact), and physical appearance and etc. This kind of communication skills are important to be applied especially among the service counter staffs as it reflects the professionalism in service encounter. They are not only expected to provide the directions if the customer is asking entrance door, but they also need to attach with a smile, hand direction, and a very polite tone. All these cues will give effect towards the customers’ emotional and satisfaction. Customers will feel easy, comfort and happy for the services and unconsciously they will evaluate the overall organization services provided.

Research on the previous has been proved on this. According to Mattila (2001), customers evaluate service encounters on three dimensions: outcome, the benefits customers receive as a result of the encounter; procedure, the organization's policies and methods that
guide the encounter, and interaction, the quality of the interpersonal treatment and communication during the encounter. Chaney and Green (2006) also supported this in his statement where dress and appearance, body language, and vocal characteristics when speaking to a customer determine whether service personnel and their organization are perceived credible.

Non verbal also has power on controlling customers’ perception not only towards the organization as holistic, but also in shaping their perceptions towards the service counter staff as individual. It is stated in the research done by Sundaram and Webster(2000), nonverbal cues influence the customer’s perception on communicator (service counter staff) in term of their credibility, persuasive power, courtesy, and interpersonal warmth. Besides, in his research paper “The Role of Non Verbal Communication in Service Encounter”, he summarized that nonverbal cues are effective in reducing psychological distance and in enhancing the pleasant affect between the interactants besides customers' interpretation of service providers' nonverbal aspects of communication is likely to significantly affect their ensuing marketplace behavior.
2.2 Language Used in the Service Encounter

Languages used in the service encounters are varied. Language used in this context means the interaction or the conversation between the service counter staff and their customers. Basically, when two people meet, they apparently do not pay much attention about the content, the choice of words, and many more. Another aspect of the language used within the service encounter is the communication style. The communication style is how the service counter staff is delivering his or her services to the customers. Formally, it could be seen that there are two types of communication style in service encounter. These communication styles are highly depend on the service counter staffs themselves. It is very easy to determine whether the service counter staffs are focusing on the transactional or interactional in their interaction. A transactional encounter, the conversation is more to matter-of-fact and the service counter staff made no effort to adapt the customer’s need. The conversation is just focusing to what the customer’s needs, going so strict, seems the service counter staffs themselves show less interested and have no time to entertain much the customers.

Contrast to the interaction style of communication, the service counter staffs give full commitment and participation in the conversation process. They will show how friendly they are and authentic interest towards their customers. As a customer, to be engaged in this kind of interaction is very exciting and they do acknowledge for that kind of service encounters. Several researches related to communication style in the service counter, for instance Laver (1974) and others have shown that interactional communication is most appropriate within the service encounter.

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) provides a sound theoretical base for the investigation of the service encounter. (Gallois et al., 1988; Giles et al., 1987)
expected that interactional strategies used by the speakers which more convergent will be perceived more positively. For instance, the service counter staffs is applying convergence (personalized) in his/her service by using the customer’s name, seeking the opinion of the customer, and repeating back details. These convergent strategies is widely received as the best style of communication since it can be used to bring the service provider and customer closer, making the interaction procedurally smoother and of equal status, or to maintain social distance with lower levels of solidarity and greater differences of status (Gallois et al., 1988).

In the research done by Beverly Sparks (1994) entitled “Communicative Aspects of the service encounter”, the findings showed a convergent style of communication was rated more highly. The research used ninety-six subjects who have to listen to the audio tapes of hotel reservationists taking a telephone inquiry using different communication styles and different levels of role competence. MANOVA was used to analyze the ratings on the 18 dimensions of the reservationist’s performance and it showed on each dimension, ratings were significantly more positive with a convergent style of interaction, compared with a maintenance style of interaction. In the research’s discussion, the writer suggested that the service counter staff could be trained in the effective use of communication styles such as convergence. Using the customer’s name, seeking customer preferences, and making suggestions to the customer based upon those preferences becomes more important when the reservationist is less certain about the product or service offered.

In a cross-culture service encounter interaction, the service counter staff must pay more attention to, in order to maintain good relationship. Research done by Benjamin Bailey, “Communication of Respect in Interethnic Service Encounter” explained has elaborated about the communication style within the interethnic interaction. As the goal of the study, to determine the communicative processes that can lead to tensions between groups in service encountered, it was examining the kind of talk between these two ethnics. The result showed
that the divergent practices for displaying respect in service encounter interaction are an ongoing cause of tension between immigrant Korean retailers and their African American customers. The two groups have different understanding of the speech activities which more appropriate in service encounters. Immigrant Korean focused on the business transactional interaction while for American customers, they preferred more toward sociable (interactional) interaction.

2.3 Service Quality

It is important to the service encounter to examine what features that the quality service encounters have. Edvardsen et al. (1994) stated that, in their experience, the starting point in developing quality in services is analysis and measurement. In a context of service encounter, the customers may expecting the counter staffs especially to be very polite, a good listener, and always show their willingness to help the customers, use the appropriate language, and so on. The evaluation made by the customers not just essential for the service counter staff individually, furthermore, it is important for the good image of one organization. Therefore, the service provided must be due to what the customers are expecting and if expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occurs (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Lewis and Mitchell, 1990).

Research field is still looking how to measure the service quality as Robinson (1999) stated that there are still arguments about how to measure the service quality. However, the SERVQUAL methodology or known as Gaps Model by Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988) can be best used to compare the customers’ expectations and service provider’s perceptions of their actual performance. Asubonteng et al. (1996) conclude that: "Until a better but equally simple model emerges, SERVQUAL will predominate as a service quality measure". The gap model is one of the best received and most heuristically valuable contributions to the services literature (Brown and Bond,1995). In addition, some
modification can be made to this method in order to measure the service quality within the service encounter. As Parasuraman et al., (1988) argue that, with minor modification, SERVQUAL can be adapted to any service organization.

SERVQUAL methodology has been used as the framework to Dr Arash Shahin’s study entitled “SERVQUAL and Model of Service Quality Gaps: A Framework for Determining and Prioritizing Critical Factors in Delivering Quality Services”. One of the aims of the study was to ascertain any actual or perceived gaps between customer expectations and perceptions of the service offered. In one example of study by Bryslan and Curry (2001) in a catering company, a total of 140 questionnaires were distributed to all of the previous year’s customers. The highest gap scores were for Reliability and Responsiveness; Customers allocated to Assurance the lowest weighting, indicating it to be of least importance.

SERVQUAL also has been used in many fields. “A study on the applicability of SERVQUAL dimensions for web site” by Jos van Iwaarden and Ton van der Wiele (2002) has been conducted to study what quality factors are perceived as important in relation to their use of web sites. From the result being discussed, the five factors on the importance of web quality aspects (expectations) are very similar to the five factors of the SERVQUAL scale. Similarly, the five factors on the satisfaction with web quality aspects (experiences) are also very similar to the five factors of the SERVQUAL scale. It can be concluded that the majority of the variables in each of the factors resemble the items of the SERVQUAL scale in the corresponding factor.
2.4 Theoretical Framework

In this section, it clarifies what theoretical resources this study will be drawing on and why. Furthermore, the theoretical and research issues are related to the research question and their relevance and usefulness to this study.

Cooperative Principles

The cooperative principle is a principle of conversation that was proposed by Grice 1975, stating that participants expect that each will make a “conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange.” The cooperative principle can be divided into four maxims, called the Gricean maxims, describing specific rational principles observed by people who obey the cooperative principle; these principles enable effective communication. The Maxims included:

1) Maxim of Quantity

The maxim of Quantity concerns with the amount of information for the current purposes of the interaction. Grice (1975) (in Leech, 1984: 8) defines this maxim as follows:

Quantity: Give the right amount of information: i.e.

a) Make your contribution as informative as is required.

b) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2) Maxim of Quality

The maxim of quality requires high standard of morality and honesty; to give only true information. In his quotation, Leech says that this maxim has the following rules:

a) Do not say what you believe to be false

b) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

Honesty is a mandate and lie is the violation of this maxim. The regulations express someone’s generosity and responsibility not to plunge someone with false news
3) Maxim of Relevance

The maxim of relevance states that conversational participants have to give relevant contributions, which are germane to the topic under discussion. This maxim ensures that the conversation be coherent (Foley, 2001: 276-77).

4) Maxim of Manner

The maxim regulates the effectiveness of the conversation: the contributions should not be ambiguous or obscure, long winded, or incoherent. It should be brief and clear in expressing one’s ideas (Foley, 2001: 276-77). Grice gives the following rules:

a) Avoid obscurity of expression
b) Avoid ambiguity
c) Be brief
d) Be orderly

Yet, these Maxims do not usually practical all the times. Many researchers have proved this. Jef Verschueren (2000: 33) thinks, “…on many occasions, the maxims will be breached or ‘flouted’. But since speakers are expected to be co-operative by using language in accordance with the maxims, any clear breaching or flouting will be interpreted by a co-operative interlocutor as a conscious act signaling special (implicit) meaning.”

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT)

The Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) was developed by Howard Giles, professor of communication, at the University of California, Santa Barbara. CAT explains some of the cognitive reasons for code-switching and other changes in speech as individuals seek to emphasize or minimize the social differences between themselves and their interlocutors.
CAT also has introduced about convergence and divergence in a language used. Convergence describes "the processes whereby individuals shift their speech styles to become more like that of those with whom they are interacting." In other words, convergence describes how an individual shifts his speech patterns in various interactions so that they more closely resemble the speech patterns of his interlocutor(s). Giles states "...it is probably safe to assume that these shifts resulted in a favourable appraisal of the speaker that is, they have created an impression that the speaker is trying to accommodate to his or her listener(s)." "For example, we are aware how often our speech becomes grammatically less complex with our children...” These language shifts include features such as phonetic changes (e.g. changing pitch and prolonging pauses).

Divergence is a linguistic strategy whereby a member of a speech community accentuates the linguistic differences between his ingroup and the respective outgroup of his interlocutor in order to preserve his positive ingroup identity, rather than accentuating ingroup similarities as in convergence. The speaker from the ingroup will emphasize ingroup speech characteristics in order to index his ingroup status to his interlocutor(s). "Given that speech style is, for many people, an important subjective and objective clue to social group membership...it can be argued that in situations when group membership is a salient issue, speech divergence may be an important strategy for making oneself psychologically and favourably distinct from outgroup members."

The differences between the transactional language and interactional language based on Brown and Yule (1983: 1), transactional language expresses “content”, the task in hand, while interactional language has the function of “expressing social relations and personal attitudes”. I take it that this very broad definition of interactional talk includes ritualised
politeness, and other forms of attention to the face needs of others, as well as more directly relational language such as small talk or gossip.

**SERVQUAL (Service Quality) or RATER Methodology**

SERVQUAL or RATER is a service quality framework. SERVQUAL was developed in the mid eighties by Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry. SERVQUAL was originally measured on 10 aspects of service quality: reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding or knowing the customer and tangibles. Berry is a technique that can be used for performing a gap analysis of an organization’s service performance against customer service quality needs.

By the early nineties the authors had refined the model to the useful acronym RATER. Five generic dimensions or factors and are stated as follows (van Iwaarden et al., 2003):

(1) **Tangibles**. Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.

(2) **Reliability**. Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.

(3) **Responsiveness**. Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

   (including competence, courtesy, credibility and security).

(4) **Assurance**  Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence

(5) **Empathy** (including access, communication, understanding the customer). Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.

In the SERVQUAL instrument, 22 statements measure the performance across these five dimensions, using a seven point likert scale measuring both customer expectations and perceptions (Gabbie and O'Neill, 1996). Customers are asked to answer several questions related to the 5 dimensions that determines i) the relative importance of each attribute ii) a
measurement of performance expectations and iii) a measurement of performance for the company in question. Then, the gap between service provider’s expectation and customer’s expectation ready to be assessed, together with a ranking of the importance of service criteria. The Gap score is a reliable indication of each of the five dimensions of service quality. By using this method, we will get information regarding the largest negative gaps and assessment of where expectations are highest by which the organization can make improvements.

SERVQUAL is widely used within the service industries to understand the perceptions of customers regarding to the service quality. Furthermore, it may also applied internally (within the service provider’) perception of the service quality to contribute the service improvement. The main benefit to the SERVQUAL measuring tool is the ability of researchers to examine numerous service industries such as healthcare, banking, financial services, and education.

This questionnaire was being used widely by the many researchers to measure the quality services of the organizations. (Nyeck, Morales, Ladhari, & Pons, 2002 Nyeck, Morales, Ladhari, and Pons (2002) stated the SERVQUAL measuring tool “remains the most complete attempt to conceptualize and measure service quality” (p. 101).
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains on how the study was being conducted includes the research design, research setting, research participants, how the data was collected, the instruments used during the study and how the data was analyzed.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was designed in mix method. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used which the observation and questionnaire were reported in a form of elaboration of words and numerical forms.

3.2 RESEARCH SETTING

This study was conducted within the context of higher education institution. Faculty of Modern Language and Communication, UPM has been the focused in this study and specifically involved all the service counters.

3.2 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Research participants involved in this study include the service customer staffs and the customers of the service counters. All the service counter staffs are non academic staffs from seven different units; Dean Office, External Education Unit, ICT Unit, Industrial Training and Academic Advisor Unit, general staff, labs and lecture rooms. 50 service counter staffs out of 76 were randomly selected in this study. Their work as a secretarial, clerical/operation, laboratories assistant or general staff need them to interact with the customer everyday which soon will help this study reach into the final conclusion. Majority
of them are Malays and they participated in this study according to their willingness. While the customers were selected randomly when they were doing business at the service counters.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

In this study, three main aspects need to be discovered include the language used in the service encounter, the communication skills and the service quality. The data was collected from the observation, recording and questionnaire.

3.3.1 Language Used in the Service Encounter

In order to determine the communication style of the service counter, an observation was done to the participants (service counter staffs and customers). The observation conducted was only specific to the main service counter of the faculty. The reasons why the main service counter of the faculty was chosen for the observation because it is the main counter of the faculty where the high-customer interaction occur every day. In addition, it is more convenience and appropriate to conduct an observation at the counter compared to the labs or dean office. Observational list would be the basic guidance to observe the interactional behavior display by the participants. No recording was made during the observation and it was more to observation and made some notes.

3.3.2 Communication skills

The objective of the observation was to observe the conversation of the service counter staffs in order to examine the participants’ communication skills. The observation was done to observe the participants (service counter staffs) both interpersonal skills and nonverbal skills while the voice recording was used to examine the aspect of conversation rules (Gricean Maxims).
Components in the communication skills include the clear and concise communication, interpersonal skills, and non verbal communication. The observation was conducted to the three participants from the service counter at the main building of the faculty. Interpersonal skills and non verbal communication were observed on the different days. So, the observer would pay full concentration at only one aspect at one time and the data would be more accurate. The time allocated for the observation was started from 9 am until 4.30 pm (office hour). The participants also did not aware the details about the observation, but they were informed generally that they will be observed on their interpersonal skills. No recording was made during observation.

On the other day, all the three participants’ conversation with the customers was being recorded one by one. This voice recording is used to see how they interact with the customers, whether they follow the Gricean Maxims. This method was being conducted with only the permission of the participants (service counter staffs and customers). There was no limitation for the recording duration.

3.3.3 Quality Service

A set of questionnaire will be used in this study. SERVQUAL methodology by Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988) was adapted in this study to measure the service quality of the service encounter. The set of questionnaire will be distributed to all the service counter staffs with the permission from supervisor. The respondents only be given the questionnaire according to their willingness and during their free time. They were given instruction before completing the questionnaire and no time limit was given for them to finish the questions. Lastly, the completed questionnaire was collected immediately and a small token was given to appreciate their participation.
3.4 INSTRUMENTS

In order to collect the findings, three instruments will be used in this study. They include observational lists, two sets of questionnaires and voice recorder. The structure of the observational lists and the questionnaires and that has been prepared are being explained as below.

3.4.1 Observational lists

An observational checklist used as guidance what should be observed to the service counter staffs during their interaction with the customers. There will be three observational lists which have been prepared to observe about the communication skills of the service counter staffs and the communication style within the service encounter at the main counter of the faculty.

Communication skills

The observational lists were prepared specially to observe about the communication skills of the service counter staffs, as the first objective in this study; to observe the use of the communication skills of the service counter staffs (See Appendix I). By using these observational lists, the participants will be observed specifically about their interpersonal and non-verbal skills while communicating with the customers.

For the interpersonal skills observational list, this study was likely to use the survey instrument used by William H. Samenfink (1994) in his research paper entitled “A Quantitative Analysis of Certain Interpersonal Skills Required in the Service Encounter”. The 19-item employee evaluation filled out by the employee’s immediate supervisor in his research was being modified to fit into appropriate interpersonal skills observational list for this study. Samenfink used this supervisor’s evaluation as the dependent measure as to
support the Synder’s self-monitoring concept (1974) which was the theoretical groundwork for his study.

While for the second observational list, it is about the non-verbal communication. Generally, non-verbal communication includes paralanguage, kinesics, proxemics, and physical appearance will be observed towards the participants.

Language Used in the Service Encounter

The observational list was prepared as for the basic framework to observe about the style of the service encounter at the main service counter. The table built in two major columns, convergence and divergence style of communications (see Appendix II). The convergence is also known as interactional have more positive and supportive characteristics of the communication style compared to the divergence. The observation will not only restricted to the items, yet, all the interaction behaviors between the service counter staffs and their customers will be noted.

3.4.2 Questionnaire

First of all, the service counter staffs will be distributed the questionnaire regarding on their demographic details likes their level of education, their unit, and etc. Then, the SERVQUAL questionnaire by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1988) (See Appendix III) was used to measure the service quality provided by the service counter staffs. The questionnaire survey was being distributed among the participants (service counter staffs and customers) made it relatively easy to study the perception and opinions of a group of people in a limited time and low costs. The questionnaire was prepared in two sections. The first section asked about the service counter staffs expectation about what they expect the service encounter to provide. The second section asked the customer to rank the features according to
their perception and experience about service encounter. SERVQUAL examines five dimensions and for every dimension, four questions were being asked. The arrangement of the questions were according to RATER dimensions; Reliability, assurance, tangible, empathy and responsiveness.

SERVQUAL questionnaire was being modified to meet with aim of this study; to measure the quality service of the service encounter. As Parasuraman et al., (1988) have been argued that minor modification of SERVQUAL can be made to adapt with the service organization. Therefore, the questions asked were purposely related to the language and communication skills of the service counter staffs which are the conversational maxims, interpersonal skills, non verbal communication and the communication style. This is important because SERVQUAL will enhance or support the findings at the end of the study. The dimensions and the modification of the questions are being explained as below;

- **Reliability**

  Reliability according to the SERVQUAL Method means, ability to perform service dependably and accurately. In the service counter, it may focus on how the service counter staffs do their job. All four questions developed show whether they are doing their job efficiently and fulfill the needs of their customer.

- **Assurance**

  Assurance means the ability of the staff to inspire confidence and trust. In the service encounter, the service counter staffs must be confident and have ability to gain the customer’s trust. To be confident and be trusted by the customers, the service counter staff must give an image of honesty, always be confident with the information given and etc.

- **Tangible**


Tangible refers to the physical facilities, equipment, staff appearance, etc. So, the areas of the questions were focusing only on these items.

- Empathy

Empathy here means to what extent the service counter staff is giving the caring individualized service. Showing interest to talk more with the customers, giving personal attention were some of the characteristics of empathy.

- Responsiveness

As the service counter staffs, they must always have the willingness to help and respond to customer need immediately. By this questionnaire, it will show to what extent the service counter staffs show their responsiveness in the service encounter.

3.4.3 Voice Recorder

This instrument will be used only to the service counter staffs selected at the main service counter of the faculty. The voice recorder was used to record the conversation between the service counter staff and the customers to see whether their conversations are following the maxim of conversation.
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In this research, the data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The data was reported in the way of elaboration of the words and also in a form of numbers and table.

3.5.1 Language Used in the Service Encounter

The data from the observation conducted to observe the participants (service counter staffs and customers) were being analyzed qualitatively. The data was reported in details using ‘storytelling’ approach. From the data, the language used in the counter service was being analyzed.

3.5.2 Communication Skills

Since all the participants involved in the observation and recording to collect the data, the data was analyzed in a form of qualitative. In qualitative analyzing, only selected participants and a small number of participants were involved in this study. All the participants’ behaviors that being observed and recorded were reported separately. The reports covered all the components of the communication skills; clear and brief communication, interpersonal skills and non-verbal communication.

3.6 Service Quality

Contrast to the other two aspects which being studied in this research, service quality used quantitative method. Service quality was measured using SERVQUAL methodology and would be presented in a form of numerical and tables. In order to analyze the data, SERVQUAL questionnaire was analyzed using the steps as below;
a) The score for each of the 20 Expectation statements (Section A) and the perception statements (Section B) were obtained.

Sum of the scores ranked by the participants
Numbers of participants, N

b) The Gap score of each statements were being calculated (See table 1 below)

Gap Score = Perception – Expectation

c) An average Gap Score for each dimension of service quality was obtained by assessing the Gap Scores for each of the statements that constitute the dimension and dividing the sum by the number of statements making up the dimension

d) Sum the averages calculated in step (c) above and divide by 5 to obtain an average SERVQUAL score. This core is the unweighted measure of service quality for the area being measured.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Expectation Score</th>
<th>Perception Score</th>
<th>Gap Score</th>
<th>Average for Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangibles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 - Calculation of SERVQUAL Scores

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted Average SERVQUAL score:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I

OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLISTS

- Communication Skills
**Interpersonal skills** applied by the service counter staffs being observed during their communication with customers include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>√</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the SCS greet the guest by recognizing his/her presence?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does the SCS adjust his/her service style depending on the individual guest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does the SCS make efforts that result in the guest feeling comfortable?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Does the SCS recognize and deal effectively with the special needs of each guest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does the SCS have the ability to handle guest problems and complaints in a tactful and calm manner?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Does the SCS make an effort to recognize and welcome regular guests?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Does the SCS control his/her emotions while at work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Does the SCS have the ability to interact with a wide range of different people?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Is the SCS positive and caring about guests and co-workers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Does the SCS show his/her professionalism in his job?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Modified from: Supervisor’s Evaluation by Snyder’s and Gangestand (1986)
**Non verbal skills** applied by the service counter staffs being observed during their communication with customers include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>√</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Paralanguage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the SCS practice stress, rate, volume, and rhythm while communicating with the guest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kinesics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS use body gestures? Eg two thumbs up, ok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS use head and general body movements? Eg turn his head/entire body to the left</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS displays his/her movements of the face? Eg smile, frowning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS use <em>regulators</em>? Eg nodding to tell the guest to keep on speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS touch directly the guest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Proxemics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS keep intimate/ personal/ social/ public distance with the guest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Physical appearance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS wear jewelleries?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS shows his/her professionalism by their clothes?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does the SCS put priority on their appearance?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II

OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLIST

- Language Used in the Service Encounter
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CONVERGENCE STYLE</strong></th>
<th><strong>DIVERGENCE STYLE</strong></th>
<th><strong>COMMENTS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The service counter staffs;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show authentic interest to the customers</td>
<td>Not interested to the customer’s problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Listener</td>
<td>Passive listener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the needs of the customers</td>
<td>Did not understand the customer’s needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking customers preferences</td>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledgeable</td>
<td>Do not show interest when customers ask about the service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making suggestions to the customers upon those preferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring and respect a person feeling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More friendly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good communicator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick respond</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making jokes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greets the customers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The interaction between the service counter staff and customers is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covering wide range of topics</td>
<td>Standard dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing personal experience</td>
<td>More to give information needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More to intimate talk</td>
<td>Less intimate talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having small talk</td>
<td>Flowchart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less certain about the product</td>
<td>Certain only about the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long interaction</td>
<td>Short interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactionally reactive (one finish turns then re-initiate talk when no reply is forthcoming from the other one)</td>
<td>Interactionally proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The interaction more sociable</td>
<td>Matter-of-fact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the customer’s name</td>
<td>Using ‘you, mdm, mr, dr”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use jargon</td>
<td>Jargon free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code-switching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloquial words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRES

- Participants’ Demographic Information

-SERVQUAL Questionnaire

Section A: Expectations

Section B: Perceptions
Tick ( / ) in the right box

1) Gender: Female ☐ Male ☐

2) Race: Malay ☐ Indian ☐ Chinese ☐

3) What is your highest level of education qualification?
   SPM ☐ Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Master ☐

4) How long you have been working as service counter staff?
   5 years above ☐ 3-5 years ☐ 1-3 years ☐ one year and below ☐

4) What unit do you belong to?

   Dean office (Secretarial) ☐ Clerical/operations ☐
   External Education Unit ☐ ICT Unit ☐
   Industrial Training and Academic Advisor Unit ☐ General Staff ☐
   Laboratories assistant ☐
Section A: Expectation

The following statements deal with your opinions of service counter quality. Please show the extent to which you think service counter should posses the following features. Please put the number in the score column to show your expectation about the quality the service encounter. You should rank each statement as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Excellent service counter staffs will have the knowledge to answer customers' questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When a customer has a problem, excellent banks will show a sincere interest in solving it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Excellent service counter staffs will do their job efficiently.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Excellent service counter staffs will put the customer’s problem as their priority.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Excellent service counter staffs will give an image of honesty and trust.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Excellent service counter staffs will have knowledge about the services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Excellent service counter staffs will be confident in the information delivered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Excellent service counter staffs will give only relevant information to the customers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Excellent service counter will have a neat reception desk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Excellent service counter will have adequate technologies for the service counter staffs do their job.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Excellent service counter staff will maintain a good appearance all the time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Excellent service counter will visually appealing the materials associated with the service (eg forms) at the counter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Excellent service counter staffs will show interest to have a long conversation with the customers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. **Excellent service counter staffs will be consistently courteous with customers.**

15. **Excellent banks will give customers individual attention.**

16. **Employees of excellent banks will be very pleasant to their customers.**

17. **Excellent service counter staffs will inform customers clearly and understandably.**

18. **Excellent service counter staffs will never be too busy to respond to customers' requests.**

19. **Excellent service counter staffs are ready to adjust their service style depending on the individual customer.**

20. **Excellent service counter staffs will serve the fair service to all customers.**

---

Thank you for the time you have spent in completing this questionnaire.
### Section B: Perception

The following statements relate to the service encounter quality of service. Please show the extent you believe that the service encounter has the features described in the statement. You should rank each statement as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The service counter staffs have sufficient knowledge and adequately trained to cover customer's need.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When you have a problem, the service counter staffs show a sincere interest in solving it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The service counter staffs do their job efficiently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The customer's problem is priority to the service counter staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The service counter staffs give an image of honesty and trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The service counter staffs have knowledge about the services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The service counter staffs are confident in giving the information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The service counter staffs give relevant information as customer's need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The reception desk of the service counter is neat appearing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The staff has adequate technology to do their job (e.g., computer, telephone) The service counter staff is easy to understand your problem and solve it quickly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The service counter staff maintain a good appearance all the time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Materials associated with the service (e.g., forms) are visually appealing at the counter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The service counter staffs show their interest to have long conversation with the customers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The service counter staffs are consistently courteous with the customers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The service counter staffs give individual attention.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The service counter staffs are very pleasant.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The service counter staffs inform clearly and understandably.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The service counter staffs are never too busy to respond to the customer request.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The service counter staffs adjust their service style depending on the individual customers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. The service counter staffs give fair services to all the customers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for the time you have spent in completing this questionnaire.
References


