

Evaluating Chinese Generation Y'S Expectation of E-Service Quality from on-line Tourism Products

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine and identify Chinese generation Y's perception towards e-service quality from online tourism products and provide recommendations for enhancing the e-service quality at managerial level. The study adopts the e-service quality framework and data collected through in-depth interviews with 30 interviewees from China. The target group generation Y provided their expectation of e-service quality in on-line tourism products via different website. Their expectation of e-service quality from online tourism products is identified. With the results as basis, recommendations are generated to provide insights for industry practitioners. Besides, the traditional expectation of e-service quality, the research had identified a significant result to the marketers. The results are valuable in assisting online tourism managers and marketers to better understand Chinese generation Y's expectation and formulate strategies for effective management of customer complaints.

Keywords: e-service quality, Chinese generation Y, online tourism product, expectation

INTRODUCTION

Background

In 2017, China has the world's largest population which is estimated at 1.39 billion people, and India closely follows with 1.35 billion people. The two countries approximately account for more than 36% of the world population with nearly 18% each⁽¹⁾

Upon the enactment of the reform and opening-up policy, the rapid development of the tourism industry leads to apparent competitive advantages for China's economy⁽²⁾. According to a sample survey on domestic tourism⁽³⁾, the number of domestic tourists reached 50.01 billion in 2017,

marking a 12.8% increase from last year. The number of urban and rural residents reached 3.677 billion (15.1% increase) and 1.324 billion (6.8% increase), respectively. Domestic tourism revenue reached 4.57 trillion Yuan, indicating a trend of 15.9% increase annually. Urban and rural residents spent 3.77 trillion Yuan (16.8% increases) and 0.80 trillion Yuan (11.8% increase), respectively.

In 2017, 13.51 million Chinese citizens travelled abroad, showing a 7% increase from the previous year⁽³⁾. Table 1 illustrates the number of Chinese people who have travelled around the world over the last 22 years. Domestic and international travels were common in China.

Table 1 China's Outbound Tourism (1995–2016)⁽¹⁾

Year	China's Outbound Tourism (Number of International Departures)	Year	China's Outbound Tourism (Number of International Departures)
1995	4,520,000	2006	34,524,000
1996	5,061,000	2007	40,954,000
1997	5,324,000	2008	45,844,000
1998	8,426,000	2009	47,656,000
1999	9,232,000	2010	57,386,000
2000	10,473,000	2011	70,250,000
2001	12,133,000	2012	83,183,000

2002	16, 602, 000	2013	98, 185, 000
2003	20, 222, 000	2014	116, 593, 000
2004	28, 853, 000	2015	127, 860, 000
2005	31, 026, 000	2016	135, 130, 000

Source: World Bank, 2016

Generation Y

Goldgehn⁽⁵⁾ defined ‘generations’ by dividing the birth dates as follows: silent generation (1925 to 1945), baby boomers (1946 to 1960), generation X (1961 to 1981) and generation Y (1981 to 2000).

Generation Y or ‘millennials’ were privileged unlike any generation before them. Generation Y was considered to be bigger and more affluent than any previous generations. Millennials also possess better education than the older generations, driving them to pursue their special choices (5).

The tourism industry continues to boom not only because of consumption but also of the lifestyle and concept of people. Millennials frequently travel around the world and demonstrate a more adventurous spirit than those from older generations. Purchasing behaviours of Generation Y reveal that the group is extremely brand conscious as well as brand loyal. Consumers in this group are willing to pay the price for brand name goods as long as they find value and quality in the product and they have more money to spend than the other generations. Therefore, generation Y is a significant and interesting age group for industry practitioners to target and understand.

Chinese millennials are dubbed ‘little emperors’ because they tend to be the only child in the family due to the 1979 One-Child Policy. A generation Y child is the center of his/her parents’ and grandparents’ universe and is instilled with strong Confucian ideas. This generation holds on to the Confucian ideas of past generations, such as hierarchy according to Confucian doctrines, importance of personal relationships and use of indirect communication ⁽⁶⁾.

Generation Y shows high acceptance in using the Internet as an increasingly valuable travel tool as tourism and hospitality businesses are taking a critical look at their business-to-customer online environments ⁽⁷⁾. Generation Y often makes use of e-shopping. E-shopping enhances the price value of products and provides not only time or place convenience but also hedonic consumption possibilities as shopping experience can also be rich in consumer value ⁽⁸⁾. Christou and Evangelos (9)

found that the advantages and disadvantages of physical feeling and time pressure related to shopping in traditional travel agencies positively influence consumers’ perception of the characteristics of e-shopping. Consumers’ conception of the relative advantage and compatibility of electronic travel shopping positively influences their intention to adopt e-shopping. Therefore, it’s worthwhile to examine their expectation for on-line tourism product and understand their perception towards to e-service quality. The outcomes expected provided recommendation for tourism marketer in facilitating their promotion strategies.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Overwhelming Scope of Online Tourism Products

As people’s life standards improve, the number of people who select travel products using online service providers during their free time increases. The People’s Daily (10) reported that tourism has topped the list of spending intentions for the fourth consecutive year. A large number of tourism organizations provide e-platforms for selling tourism products. What types of attractions can draw the attention of customers to use their products online instead of offline shopping? Most tourism products are sold online; however, the invisible nature of the products generates a large number of complaints resulting to low service quality.

Complaints Related to Online Tourism Products

Internet access has made pricing transparent to customers who can use supplier’s websites to search for information and compare different products. Initially, this capturing strategy was directed at price-sensitive customers and involved offering low fares online ^(11, 12).

Price transparency exerts a positive effect on consumers as it provides them several options. However, customers often complain about tourism organizations using various pricing strategies because doing so is unfair to loyal customers.

Security is another issue raised by consumers which includes availability, confidentiality and integrity. Availability may be threatened by factors such as denial-of-service attacks,

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bandwidth issues, power failures and other problems. Confidentiality refers to limited access of data and requires the implementation of access control measures. Integrity refers to protection of data against accidental or malicious modification. Customers' perception of service quality and their expectation of e-service quality should be investigated ⁽¹³⁾. Previous studies fail to raise the problems concerning generation Y in relate to their expectation of e-service quality. Although this group represents high-spending customers in e-tourism products, research examining the related problems is scant. This study aims to identify these problems for further investigation. The research objectives as follows

- To examine Chinese generation Y's perception towards e-service quality from online tourism products.
- To identify generation Y's expectation of e-service quality from online tourism products and
- To provide recommendations for enhancing the e-service quality from online tourism products at managerial level

This study attempts to assist industry practitioners by providing insights that can improve service quality and satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional Service Quality (SQ)

Traditional service quality (SQ) refers to the quality of all non-Internet-based customer interactions and experiences with companies.

Early scholarly writings on SQ ^(14, 15, 16, and 17) suggest that SQ stems from a comparison between what customers feel a company should offer (i.e. their expectations) and the actual service performance of the company. Figure 1 summarises the key insights gained about the concept of service quality and factors affecting it.

Gap1

Difference between consumer expectation and management perception of the expectations will affect consumers' evaluation of service quality.

Gap 2

Difference between management perceptions of consumer expectations and the service quality specifications of a firm will affect service quality from a consumer perspective.

Gap 3

Difference between service quality specifications and actual service delivery will affect service quality from a consumer perspective.

Gap 4

Difference between actual service delivery and external communication about the service will affect service quality from a consumer perspective.

Gap 5

The quality that a consumer perceives in a service is a function of the magnitude and direction of the gap between expected service and perceived service.

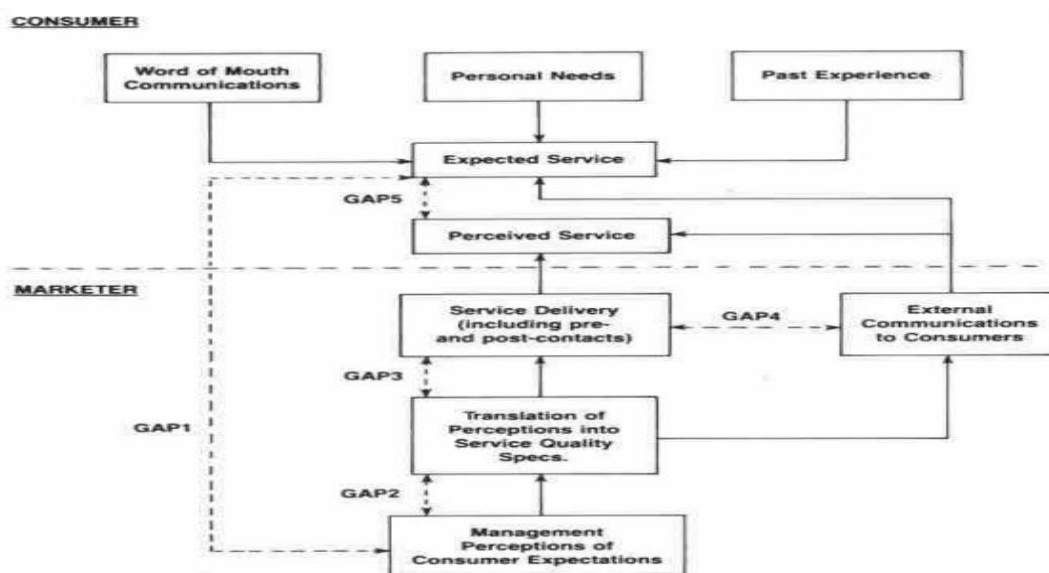


Figure1. Service quality model ⁽¹⁶⁾

Driven by the original work of Parasuraman(16), SQ has been a subject of considerable interest to practitioners and researchers in the past. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (16) argued that when a consumer purchased a product in the traditional way, he/she would evaluate the purchase according to several factors, including its style, texture, colour, label and packaging. Purchasing services, however, were often intangible.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Malhotra (18) argued that the term traditional service quality includes the quality of every interaction customers experience outside the Internet as well as their personal experience with the company.

When a citizen turns to an organisation to provide a service, whether in a traditional or electronic format, the quality of that interaction must be evaluated constantly.

Hien⁽¹⁹⁾ argued that quality of service can be defined as the extent to which the services provided meet the expectations of customers.

Therefore, the quality of service provided has become a decisive success factor in every field of business activity⁽²⁰⁾. Khawaja and Bokhar⁽²¹⁾ reported that customers' views on the service quality provided were the basis for measuring their satisfaction.

Rational of SERVQUAL

Service quality is one of the important attributes of service providers because they measure the quality of service from the consumer's perspective as a high-priority construct.

Service quality is a key factor in cost reduction, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, customer relationship, customer retention rate and profitability.

Many people have argued that quality was the result of comparing perceived performance with expected performance based on the so-called 'disconfirmation theory.'

This concept is the foundation of the SERVQUAL model, which treats quality of service as the gap between the expected level of service and the perceived level of reception⁽²²⁾.

Parasuraman et al.⁽²³⁾ used a multi-item scale called the SERVQUAL model to conceptualise service quality as the relative perceived distance among customer expectations, service experience evaluation and service quality. SERVQUAL

developers believe this tool could be used to determine the quality of service provided by any company, thereby leading to the widespread adoption of SERVQUAL⁽²⁴⁾.

The SERVQUAL scale has been used widely in recent years to measure the service quality of information systems^(25, 26, 27, 28).

It has also been employed to measure the service quality of e-commerce systems^(29, 30).

Related studies on e-service quality test the SERVQUAL scale and use it to measure service in various contexts, including web-based service^(31,32), online retail^(33,34) and electronic banking⁽³⁵⁾.

Most studies on the measurement of e-service quality focus on rewording the items on the SERVQUAL scale. However, challenges in measuring web-based service quality exist because of the differences between web-based and traditional customer service⁽³⁶⁾.

Parasuraman et al. (16) described service quality as the ability of an organisation to meet or exceed customer expectations.

They listed 10 determinants of service quality that can be generalised to any type of service: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security and understanding.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (16) improved their previous service quality evaluation model (16) and created SERVQUAL.

In short, they believed true service quality perception stems from the gap between consumer expectations and actual service performance delivered.

Therefore, they scaled up through new research with novel data collection and analysis, and consequently reduced the initial 10 dimensions to 7: 1) Tangibles; 2) Reliability; 3) Responsiveness; 4) Communication, Credibility, Safety, Competence; 5) Courtesy; 6) Knowing the customer; and 7) Access. in 1990, Parasuraman et al.

Developed a multiple-attribute model called SERVQUAL for measuring service quality. This model measures service quality using five distinct dimensions that can be considered as indicators of the construct of perceived service quality.

The five dimensions of SERVQUAL are tangibles; reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (see Table 2).

Table2. *SERVQUAL Dimensions*

Dimension	Description
Tangibles	The appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials
Reliability	The ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
Responsiveness	The willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
Assurance	The knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence
Empathy	The caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customers

Source: *Akhlaghi, Amini & Akhlaghi, 2012*

SERVQUAL is a benchmark in the academia. Many surveys and studies have adopted it in its original format or as a basis for developing different tools⁽³⁷⁾.

Store service performance and consumer expectations are measured explicitly in SERVQUAL to assess gaps. Some researchers have found that performance perception is more sufficient for assessing the quality of service in comparison to gap⁽³⁸⁾.

E-Service Quality

The concept of ‘electronic services’ emerged with the development of the Internet. Initially, companies developed online business because automation could reduce costs⁽³⁹⁾.

The Internet population has been exploding in recent years. The World Wide Web (WWW) user growth happened so fast and had been spread widely to all walks of life⁽⁴⁰⁾. At the onset of e-commerce, success was thought to be guaranteed merely by being present on the Internet and offering low prices. Currently however, customer service is confirmed to be a key element for achieving good results online⁽⁴¹⁾. Consumers expect to complete transactions correctly, be given personalised attention, receive the product on time, have their emails answered quickly and gain access to information. Hence, website management should ensure that these expectations are met in the best way possible⁽⁴²⁾.

The concept of service seems to be linked inextricably to e-commerce. The number of queries regarding the information and support on purchased products made through the Internet and e-mail is expanding rapidly⁽⁴³⁾.

This phenomenon’s shows an increasing number of customers want to access companies and seek customer support through the Internet. In addition to peripheral services, such as customer support, a growing number of service providers are using electronic distribution of their core

services. Customers have increasingly high requirements for do-it-yourself services, which supplement and spill into the existing service delivery format.

With the advent of the Internet and its massive spread, numerous electronic services are produced globally. Li and Suomi⁽⁴⁴⁾ believe enterprises have accepted and adopted new information technologies and communities in the face of the Internet’s rapid development and market globalisation.

The availability of such services has been increasing technically and economically, with its effects and dissemination reaching an increasingly diverse and demanding global market. Vu and Aberer⁽⁴⁵⁾ hold the same view; they find that an increasing number of traditional services are provided electronically through the Internet. As a result, banks, airlines, car rental companies, management consulting firms and educational institutions are increasingly choosing online services to meet the needs of their e-customers⁽⁴⁶⁾. Although companies have increased efficiency through online sales (e-commerce), they have failed to pay attention to customers’ needs and desires, thereby resulting in poor online service performance⁽⁴⁷⁾.

Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Malhotra(41) defined the concept of e-service quality extended from the pre purchase (ease of use, product information, order information and personal information protection) to the post purchase phase (delivery, customer support, fulfilment and return policies). Some researchers recognise the differences and challenges in website quality of service. Offline store services depend on the interaction between customers and service providers.

However, online services do not involve direct interaction between customers and service providers. As such, some of the traditional quality-of-service dimensions that determine customer satisfaction, such as the tangibility of

facilities, employees and equipment, as well as the responsiveness and empathy of employees, are not observable. Because the services provided on the Internet are impersonal, the quality of service characteristics of WebPages differs from those of traditional stores. Service quality is affected by four factors: product perceptions, shopping experience, consumer risk and customer service⁽⁴⁸⁾. The level of electronic services is an important part of the customer-centric strategy⁽⁴⁹⁾.

E-service quality is the overall evaluation and judgement of customers regarding the excellence and quality of e-service delivery in the virtual marketplace⁽⁵⁰⁾. Alanezi, Mahmood and Basri⁽⁵¹⁾ argued that the concept of e-service quality originates from the quality of traditional services. This new type of service is a fundamental success factor for any organisation in the online marketplace and should be considered to avoid any failure in this field.

The relationship between Internet service users and providers should be effective and reciprocal. Loyalty between e-service customers and providers should also be guaranteed based on service quality as previously required in the relationship established between customers and traditional service providers (37).

Customers are unlikely to evaluate each sub process in detail during a single visit to an online store but rather perceive the service as an overall process and outcome⁽⁵²⁾. For online customers, high standard e-service quality is the means by which the potential benefits of the Internet can be realised⁽⁵³⁾.

Although low prices and the presence of networks are initially seen as drivers of success, service quality issues have suddenly become critical⁽⁴⁷⁾. Some people argue the catalyst for the development of electronic services is the symbiosis, self-adjustment and self-optimisation between the content of electronic services and their potential users.

With regard to this client–supplier relationship, Splatter⁽⁵⁴⁾ argued that ‘when users interact with content in the market space, a successful cycle can be created in which content attracts users, users create more content, and new content enhances prices.’

E-service is an interactive, content-centric, internet-based customer service driven by customers and combined with relevant organisational customer support processes and technologies designed to strengthen relationships with customer service providers

(54) E-service quality is distinct from service quality in the brick-and-mortar retail setting (18). It is generally defined as the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivery⁽⁵⁵⁾. The current conceptualisation of web-based service quality is based on the adaptation of traditional service quality models such as SERVQUAL and the e-recovery service quality scale (41).

Online shopping is a complex process that can be divided into various sub processes, such as navigation, searching for information, online transactions or customer interaction. Customers are unlikely to evaluate each sub process in detail on a single visit to the online store; instead, they view the service as a whole process and result⁽⁵⁶⁾.

In addition, high standards of e-service quality were a means for online customers to realise the potential benefits of the Internet⁽⁵⁷⁾. Comparing the technical features and prices of products through the Internet is much easier than via traditional methods.

The Internet environment differs from the traditional retail environment in many ways. These differences can be summarised as follows

- Convenience and efficiency: Consumers can save time and effort by comparing prices (and technical features) effectively when using the Internet⁽⁵⁰⁾.
- Security and confidentiality: Participating in an Internet environment involves unique issues of user privacy, security and confidentiality⁽⁵⁸⁾.
- Lack of face-to-face contact: Customers interact with technical interfaces in an online environment. Due to the lack of person-to-person interaction, the traditional concept and method of service quality emphasise the person-to-person interaction in traditional service, which is not enough when applied to e-service quality⁽⁵⁹⁾.
- Coproduction of service quality: Customers in Internet environments play a more prominent role in the coproduction and delivery of services than in traditional retail environments⁽⁵⁴⁾.
- Therefore, e-service quality would be a key factor for customers⁽⁵⁰⁾. As a result, online customers have the same or higher expectations for service quality as traditional channel customers⁽⁵⁶⁾.
- E-service quality is the overall evaluations

and judgments of customers regarding the excellence and quality of e-service delivery in a virtual marketplace (56).

E-service quality is distinct from service quality in the brick-and-mortar retail setting (18) and is generally defined as the extent to which a website facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivery (53). The current conceptualization of web-based service quality is based on the adaptation of the traditional service quality models such as SERVQUAL and the e-recovery service quality scale⁽⁴¹⁾.

The SERVQUAL scale items (see Figure 2) were revised to represent website design, reliability, responsiveness, trust and personalization as e-service quality dimensions. Figure 2 depicts the relationship among the e-service quality dimensions, overall service quality and customer satisfaction. The study propose the one involves a e-service quality dimensions from Lee and Lin⁽⁵⁶⁾, the argued the level of Chinese generation Y may have different expectation in relate to eservice quality in on-line tourism product, therefore, study attempt to fill this gap for further investigations.

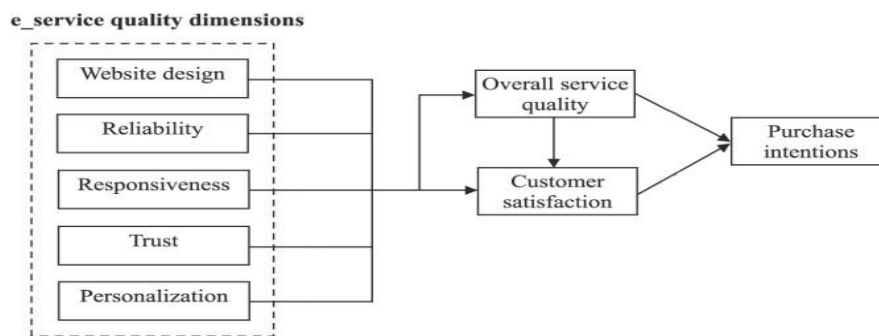


Figure2. E-service dimensions⁽²²⁾

Source: Lee & Lin, 2005

- Website design. Website design is crucial for online stores⁽⁶⁰⁾. It is described as the appeal that user interface design presents to customers (29). The influence of website design on e-service performance has been studied extensively. Cho and Park (61) conducted an empirical research among 435 internet users to examine the e-commerce user–consumer satisfaction index for online shopping and found that customer satisfaction assesses the website via the quality of design. A recent empirical study has also found that website design factors are strong predictors of customers’ quality judgment, satisfaction and loyalty⁽⁶²⁾.
- Reliability. Reliability represents the ability of a website to fulfill orders correctly, deliver promptly and keep personal information secure^(16, 63, 29). The importance of reliability has been emphasized by information technology-based service. Zhu et al. (35) argued that reliability has a direct positive effect on perceived service quality and customer satisfaction towards electronic banking systems. Online stores must provide error-free services and secure online transactions to make customers feel comfortable when shopping online.
- Responsiveness. Customers expect online stores to respond to inquiries promptly (93). Responsiveness describes how often an online store voluntarily provides services (e.g. customer inquiries, information retrieval and navigation speed) important to customers (16, 53, 30). Researchers examining the responsiveness of web-based services highlighted the importance of perceived service quality and customer satisfaction (57,35).
- Trust. Online shopping context comprises the interaction between customers and online stores⁽⁶⁴⁾. Numerous studies emphasize the importance of online trust between customers and online stores^(65, 66). Trust is a significant antecedent of participation in commerce, especially in online settings because of the increased ease with which online stores can behave opportunistically⁽⁶⁷⁾. Trust is also defined as customers’ willingness to accept vulnerability in an online transaction based on their positive expectations regarding future online store behaviors’⁽⁶⁸⁾. It encourages customers’ online purchasing activity and affects their attitudes towards purchasing from an online store^(69, 70).

- Personalization. The lack of real-time interaction tends to prevent potential customers from purchasing online (57). Personalization involves individualized attention, personal thank-you notes from online stores and availability of a message area for customers' questions or comments (53). Previous studies have examined the influence of the customer service provided by online retailers on customer perceptions of service quality and satisfaction (62).

Overall service quality is refers to delivery of high service quality to customers offers businesses an opportunity to distinguish themselves in competitive markets ⁽⁷¹⁾. Service quality leads to positive word of mouth, lessened complaint tendencies and continuous bank–customer relationship ⁽⁷²⁾. McDougall et al ⁽⁷³⁾.stated that high service quality results in customer satisfaction and loyalty, greater willingness to recommend, reduced complaints and improved customer retention rates. Cronin and Taylor ⁽⁷⁴⁾ studied four service industries (banking, pest control, dry-cleaning and fast food) to investigate the relation of service quality to consumer satisfaction and found that service quality is the antecedent of consumer.

Customer satisfaction which is one of the crucial elements in e-service quality in the absence of any information, prior service satisfaction is diffused. In reality, however, customers have many sources of information that lead to satisfaction on the upcoming service encounters with a particular company. These sources include prior exposure to the service, word of mouth, expectations, publicity and communication controlled by the company (e.g. advertising, personal selling and price), as well as prior exposure to competitive services ⁽⁷⁵⁾.

In the repurchase stage, satisfaction influences consumer decisions on which brand or type of product or service to buy. During consumption, satisfaction can be affected by the attitude of service personnel, other customers and equipment. In the post purchase stage, expectations can be the basis for evaluating satisfaction ⁽⁷⁶⁾. As for long run, it will affect consumer their future purchase intention.

The Internet has become a popular marketing channel (61). Analyzing customer evaluations of online shopping is interesting for academics and practitioners, especially in the field of e-commerce ⁽⁷⁷⁾. Previous studies have revealed that service provider perceptions of customer satisfaction are a function of perceived service

quality of technological services ^(78, 35).

On-Line Tourism Product

The link between information and communication technologies (ICTs) and tourism is possible and desirable due to the expanding information requirements of tourism activities and tools provided by ICTs to satisfy such requirements and promote competitiveness in tourism supply ⁽⁷⁹⁾.

Technological developments impact consumer behaviour. A new type of tourist is defined, that is, an independent tourist who manages information about the products and services of tourist destinations by himself/herself and chooses the destination that fully responds to his/her expectations. The Internet is presently an important distribution channel for travel ⁽⁸⁰⁾.

Manchanda, Packard and Pattabhiramaiah ⁽⁸¹⁾ revealed that after joining an online community, millennials increase their online purchases by 37%. Online communities are huge virtual spaces open to visitors and users where they can share experiences, information, comments and create content through articles, pictures and videos.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive research design is adopted using a qualitative approach to investigate e-service quality from online tourism products. The approach collects evidence that helps the decision makers understand Chinese generation Y's expectation of e-service quality from online tourism products. Flexible research design and iterative, circular sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation are clearly required ⁽⁸²⁾.This study adopts an in-depth interview approach to understand the expectation changes among Chinese generation Y.

The value of qualitative research lies in its exploratory and explanatory power ⁽⁸³⁾. Qualitative research provides an overview of the broad range of non-numerical measurement approaches ⁽⁸⁴⁾. Therefore, qualitative methods are suitable for the nature of the research questions and the complexities involved in Chinese generation Y's expectation of e-service quality from online tourism products at present.

Research Process

30 In-depth interviews had arranged from Chinese generation Y in China. Study adopted primary data and secondary data such as gathering of reports and government formulation of

the research questions and investigation and verification of the results from in-depth interviews.

Primary analysis is the original analysis of data, while secondary analysis is the re-analysis of data with the aim of using better statistical techniques to answer original research questions or using old data to answer new questions in a research study ⁽⁸⁵⁾.

A qualitative in-depth interview method is adopted in this study to investigate Chinese generation Y's expectation of e-service quality from online tourism products.

Two tourism experts in online tourism product are asked to view these questions to avoid ambiguity, thus allowing the researcher to determine whether the schedule is clear and understandable, research questions are answerable, and whether any changes to the interview schedule are required ⁽⁸⁶⁾. The entire process using the interview and approach includes an individual interview of approximately 40 minutes, and recording is also required during this period. The interview generally seeks to understand the details of different people belonging to generation Y. The interviews with audio recording are conducted in universities and offices.

Using secondary data sources are advantageous because they already exist; therefore, the time spent on these sources may be much less than the time spent on research using primary data collection ⁽⁸⁷⁾. The various documents used for analysis usually include textbooks, journal articles, business publications and company documents. These sources often used corroborate and supplement evidences because they cover a long span of time and provide exact topics, references and event details ⁽⁸⁸⁾.

Yin ⁽⁸⁹⁾ indicated that data analysis consists of a number of sections, i. e. examining, categorising and tabulating or otherwise recombining the evidence, to address the initial target of a study. An hour of recorded interview takes five–six hours to transcribe, leading to 30–40 pages of transcripts.

Therefore, the central aim of data analysis is to reduce the data ⁽⁹⁰⁾. The important step in establishing evidence leads is to develop a clear data analysis process to record and understand the process. Krueger ⁽⁹¹⁾ indicate that the analysis should be systematic, continuous, verifiable and continuous. As such, analysis can provide clues to the evidence and increase the degree of reliability, consistency and conformability

⁽⁹²⁾. Those interviewees browsed around tourism website included “Ctrip”; “Qunar”; “Alitrip” or “Tuniu” in China. In total of 88 % of interviewees their frequency of browsed and checked the tourism information at least 6 times to 10 times per a month. And total spending from interviewees which purchased tourism product at least USD1000.00 per a year. Most of the respondents earned between USD500.00 and USD1000.00 per a month.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Most of the respondents expressed that they wanted to have service guaranteed, product diversity, payment security, prices comparison and platform reputation to make them feel satisfied. They focus more on after-sales service, such as compensation because they want additional consumer rights. Product personalization was also one of their expectations. Respondents wanted platforms to go through the data analysis, such as analysis their historical references and browsing their records to understand which product was suitable for them. Because of the development of the Internet, the quantity of users could focus on other user comments on online tourism product easily. This situation led to an intuitive understanding of product quality.

Therefore, the online tourism platform should provide professional services and products to attract new customers and keep loyal customers.

Chinese Generation Y's Perception towards E-Service Quality from Online Tourism Products

Most of the interviewees considered clear design in total of 20 respondents ⁽²⁰⁾ and authentic information ⁽¹⁵⁾ as significant for website design. Some respondents expected security payment ⁽⁶⁾, user friendliness ⁽⁵⁾ and avoid unwanted information ⁽⁴⁾. Good website design could give users a perfect first impression. Users did not want to see too many ads in the website which would make them feel bored and reduce their interest in continuing with their browsing. Authentic information on the website was an important factor that can make consumers feel assured to purchase. Payment security was also a concern among some respondents.

In terms of reliability, the majority of viewpoints considered online tourism platforms capable of handling problems ⁽²⁷⁾ through online customer service staff. The majority of viewpoints thought service guaranteed ⁽¹⁹⁾ can make them feel the website was reliable. However, 20 interviewees

thought platforms have errors at WebPages. According to the interviewees, despite the variety of products on the market, some errors continue to exist. However, most interviewees thought the online platform could address these problems.

The majority of viewpoints thought that service providers respond to users' online requests through communication platforms according customer needs⁽²³⁾ positive attitude and feedback⁽⁶⁾ can make customer feel the responsiveness of service providers, causing them to believe the platform can solve their problems. Interviewee believed the platform's ability to solve users' problems was the most important reflection of the platform's responsibility. Hence, e-platforms should analyse big data from their customers' historical records and provide recommendation to users⁽⁵⁾. Because consumers usually browse the products they are interested in, the products pushed by the online tourism platform will be likely popular with consumers based on the user's historical browsing records.

Numerous viewpoints mentioned that professional staff⁽²¹⁾ can cause them to trust the service provider. Some comments thought providing security information⁽¹³⁾ was important. Strategic alliance with the tourism sector, such as payment method and link to different mobile apps⁽³⁾ and user positive comments can make users trust the service provider. Professional staff was the main factor for winning customer trust according the interviewees.

Quality service⁽²³⁾, protection of personal privacy issue⁽¹⁵⁾ and personal care⁽¹³⁾ were the three most important viewpoints of personalisation. Whilst providing personalised products, platforms need to ensure the quality of service and protect the privacy of users.

When purchasing from online tourism platforms, consumers often want to have a good purchasing experience. Some of important aspects, such as clear website design, problem solving and professional staff assistance and good service quality can bring good image for consumers.

Chinese Generation Y's Expectation of E-Service Quality from Online Tourism Products

The crucial elements of e-service quality have many viewpoints. Improving user experience⁽¹¹⁾, such as professional webpage design and highlighting keywords, can help users find what they want as soon as possible. Product diversity⁽¹⁰⁾ could provide different options and professional services⁽¹¹⁾ such as prompt, speedy and good

after-sales services to users. From pre to after-sales, it gives users good rights and interest's protection. Others thought effective information⁽⁶⁾ and safety⁽⁵⁾, such as personal data protection, improve satisfaction⁽²⁾.

According the results, in addition to providing numerous products in the market for users to choose, friendly use experience and service guaranteed largely determine subsequent purchase. Almost all interviewees thought the above-mentioned situations would affect their purchase intention and argue that good user experience can enhance user's pleasure and comfort. Various product choices can meet the user's individual needs and high-quality products can improve the user's consumption level. Professional service personnel can guarantee the user's legal rights and interests, which can enhance user experiences. Online tourism platforms need to perform this step for users if they want to retain loyal customers.

Recommendations for Enhancing the E-Service Quality from Online Tourism Products at Managerial Level

Online tourism products can still be improved. Interviewees prefer to focus on the professional service⁽²⁴⁾, such as follow up service⁽¹⁵⁾, prompt service⁽⁶⁾, compensation for failure service⁽¹⁰⁾, customisation product service⁽¹⁾, security clear website design⁽¹⁴⁾, fair treatment⁽²⁾, good user experience⁽⁷⁾ and product diversity⁽⁶⁾

The requirements of the expectations on online tourism products increase as the living standards improve. Based on user's recommendations for e-service quality from online tourism products, online tourism platforms can still be improved. Consumers were concerned not only about the price of the product, but also about the experience of purchasing the product and the quality of the service. Some interviewees stated they were willing to pay more for services that would improve their purchase and use experience.

When unforeseen circumstances such as delay problems, occur, customer wanted to receive compensation in time. Such compensation would make them feel that their personal rights and interests are protected. Thus, they would have a sense of trust in the platform.

To attract new customers, some platforms often offer attractive preferential policies for new customers. Of course, these policies have a positive effect on new customers. However, if online tourism platforms ignore loyal customers,

then the latter are likely to be driven away and switch to other online tourism platforms because they cannot obtain those benefits.

Therefore, the platform should focus not only on the quality of the product itself but also on after-sales service and the entire purchasing experience. Some interviewees indicated they were willing to pay more to buy service or value-added products.

New E-Service Quality Dimensions

Figure 3 shows the new e-service quality dimensions that add functionality to the new sector; these dimensions were based on the e-service dimensions (21) and in-depth interviews. These new e-service quality dimensions include price comparison, provide local feature and elements in their website, align different mobile payment methods and provide incentives and compensation for user. The e-service dimension (21) was extended upon the completion of the research. The details are as follows.

With the development of the Internet and online tourism products, consumers have various choices when selecting products. To improve the attractiveness of the products, WebPages should provide local features and user elements. Based on product diversity, consumers expected that

similar products should have limited differences in pricing upon price comparison. The growth of mobile payment services was driven by the availability of a growing number of financial services applications and mobile devices. As one of the mobile payment services, e-wallet provides a very convenient way for customers to pay via mobile devices at any time ⁽¹⁾. However, payment security problem has always been a concern of users. Hence, payment security method must be improved to align different mobile payment methods (e. g. Alipay, Apple pay and Union pay).

The development of the online tourism platform is inseparable from user feedback. According to in-depth interviews, platforms requiring feedback with incentive functions could increase user motivation, such as questionnaire with rewards and products discount.

After-sales service is also an important link to consumer expectations. A good after-sales service affects future purchase consumption behaviour. Users also expect website owners to provide incentives for users and stimulate them to visit the website or webpage. Some interviewees claimed that the owners should provide compensation if the website provided wrong information or misleading content.

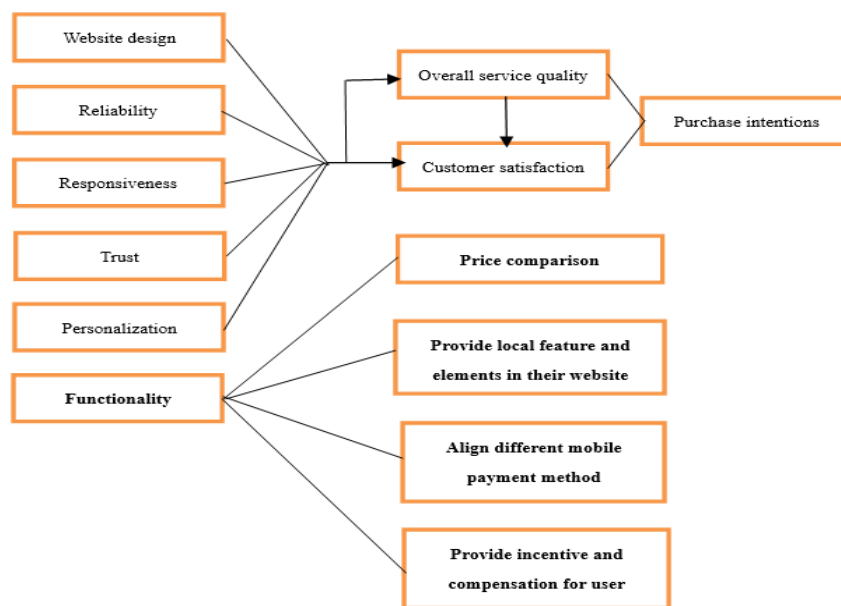


Figure3. *New e-service quality dimensions*

Besides, the study identified a new e-service quality dimension, result highlighted the males and females had different expectation in the e-service quality. Table 2 shows new finding of similarities and differences in the expectations

of e-service quality for different genders. Although male and female respondents had similar requirements of online tourism products, they had differences in expectations in other demands. Males were not interested in ads,

whereas females wanted to see more ads. The latter thought the platform should provide more advertisements for information and offline publicity. Males preferred targeted products and did not want to have too many choices, whereas females preferred a diversity of products and select the most appropriate one. Males were willing to pay more for good services on the

online tourism platform, whereas females prefer affordable products. In terms of rewards and compensations, males wanted online tourism platform provide incentives for them, such as receiving a reward after completing the platform questionnaire. By contrast, females wanted online tourism platform to provide compensation for mistakes, such as delays.

Table2. Similarities and differences expectations of e-service quality for different genders

Gender	Similarities in the expectation of e-service quality	Differences in the expectation of e-service quality
Male	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal benefits for loyal and new customers • Clear web page layout • Follow up service • Effective payment method • Professional image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid unwanted ads • Difficult to choose the right one from many products • Willing to pay more for service • Provide incentives for users
Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable product • Authentic information • Service guaranteed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advertisements for information and offline publicity • Product types need to be diversified • Product prices to be affordable • Provide compensation for mistaken

Implications for Tourism Marketers

With the development of society, consumer’s consumption level and product diversification in the market have improved. Hence, to obtain a leading position in the fierce competition, online tourism marketers should know that consumers are no longer focused solely on the price option of products.

The high mobility of modern travel customers and the flexibility of their expectations force online tourism platforms to adapt quickly to these changes and achieve real-time levels of response time.

In addition to price, most respondents expressed that they care about aspects of service, such as prompt, one-step, follow up, guaranteed, professional and compensation for the failure of service; aspects of products, such as quality, diversity, customisation, pricing comparison and local feature; and aspects of usage experience, such as clean website design, other users’ comments, security payment methods and effective information.

For a specific product, marketers can conduct surveys with incentives such as questionnaire survey to get the feedback. The respondents also focused on security payment method. Marketers should align security payment companies to protect consumers’ interests. They must pay attention to functionality, such as price and product comparison and added value to their service via on-line platform.

The study also identified the similarities and differences in the expectations of e-service quality for different genders. Males focus on their choice of product.

They think excessive choices will lead to confusion. By contrast, females prefer the diversity of products and more choices would be more appropriate for their selection. Therefore, marketers should understand the genders’ different needs for selling their tourism products.

Implication for Tourism Academicians

The study identified new findings of e-service quality dimensions. It was not limited only to website design, responsiveness, trust, personalization as well as functionality including price comparison, provide local feature, align different mobile payment method and provide incentive and compensation for user. This study discovered new factors that modern consumers consider when choosing a product.

To provide good shopping experience, many aspects of the product must be considered. Previous scholars have provided a limited discussion according to e-service quality expectation. Therefore, this research provided contributions to improve the tourism academician’s understanding of e-service quality expectation from Chinese generation Y.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is based on pertinent literature, including secondary data analysis and in-depth

interviews. Due to the limitations of time, the research was conducted in two months. Therefore, primary research had been used. The sample size was small, with only 30 interviewees.

Hence, the findings may not be representative of Chinese generation Y's expectations, such as excluded Macau, Hong Kong or Taiwan in China.

In the future, sample size should be increased to make the results representative. Additional in-depth interviews on the expectation of online tourism product must be conducted. The results were applicable only to China rather than other countries. Generation Y from across countries may have different results. Therefore, these limitations should be considered in the analysis. Furthermore, the future study can adopt mixed method including qualitative and quantitative approaches to enrich the findings.

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