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Factors that Affect Customers Satisfaction: An Empirical Study of Export-Import Service Consultant Companies in Vietnam*

Thai Thanh Dat LE¹, Thi Thanh Ngan HO², Nguyen Truc Quyen LE³, Thi Khanh Tuyen HUYNH⁴,
Minh Tri NGUYEN⁵, Thi Mai Anh LUU⁶, Thi Phuong Thao HOANG⁷, Trong Luan NGUYEN⁸

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to analyze the significant impacts of expectations, performance, complaints, and fairness that affect consumer satisfaction. The methodology involves reviewing and referencing relevant literature carefully, then proposing a model for customer satisfaction. This study is empirically based on a survey with 50 respondents who work in the field of import and export in the region stretching from the north to the south of Vietnam. The sampling method used in this study is the in-depth interview method. The results show that: (1) expectation has a specific impact on customer satisfaction, (2) performance has a positive impact on customer satisfaction, and (3) complaint which is an intermediary factor between customer expectation, performance, and fairness has an impact on satisfaction, (4) fairness has a positive effect on satisfaction, in addition, fairness is an extremely important feature when customers choose an import-export service. Research implies that increasing expectations, performance, and fairness results in an improved customer experience and satisfaction when they use the service. It is suggested that the complaint factor continue to be studied and looked into because it still has some effect on satisfaction and is an intermediate variable that changes how the other factors relate to each other.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Service Performance, Expectation, Company Reputation, Client Factors, Hard Skills, Soft Skills

JEL Classification Code: A10, L90, O10

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¹First Author. Department of International Business, FPT Can Tho University, Can Tho City, Vietnam. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8195-1486. [Postal Address: 600 Nguyen Van Cu Street, An Binh Ward, Ninh Kieu District, Can Tho City, 94100, Vietnam]
Email: DatLTCS140047@fpt.edu.vn

²Department of International Business, FPT Can Tho University, Can Tho City, Vietnam. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3685-0520.
Email: NganHTCS140275@fpt.edu.vn

³Department of International Business, FPT Can Tho University, Can Tho City, Vietnam. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9553-9177.
Email: QuyenLNTCS140458@fpt.edu.vn

⁴Department of International Business, FPT Can Tho University, Can Tho City, Vietnam. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1672-4620.
Email: TuyenHTKCS140551@fpt.edu.vn

⁵Department of International Business, FPT Can Tho University, Can Tho City, Vietnam. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1921-5442.
Email: TriNMCS140299@fpt.edu.vn

1. Introduction

Today, with the continuous development of science and technology as well as outstanding developments in the economy, Vietnam's imports and export are increasingly developing. They have a clear differentiation with the participation of commercial individuals, most of whom are engaged in the production of a variety of goods (Abbott et al., 2009). Diversification in customers has also led to the formation of a variety of import and export service

⁶Department of International Business, FPT Can Tho University, Can Tho City, Vietnam. Email: AnhLTMCS140438@fpt.edu.vn

⁷Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, FPT University, Can Tho Campus, Vietnam. Email: ThaoHTP18@fpt.edu.vn

⁸Corresponding Author. Lecturer, Faculty of Business Administration, FPT University, Can Tho Campus, Vietnam. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3489-1628. Email: LuanNT73@fe.edu.vn

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providers (forwarders), which help customers carry out import and export transactions (Sheffi, 2013) as well as companies providing consulting services (Sheffi, 2013). However, these companies are still facing many difficulties in operation and development such as problems arising from subjective reasons (the business itself), in addition, there are objective reasons from customers. This causes headaches for import-export consulting companies when they have to screen and make choices that meet customers' expectations to bring satisfaction to them (Hiebeler, 2012). In this research, we focus on figuring out "Factors that affect the customer's satisfaction of export & import service consultant companies", then suggesting the best and most reasonable solutions to enhance these issues and make them better. We applied all our relative knowledge and reliable information on internet websites: Mendeley, Google Scholar, and KoreaScience to complete this research. We also use quantitative analysis and detailed survey questions to make our research more objective and make it easier to convince people.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Customer Satisfaction and Influencing Factors

Philip Kotler defines customer satisfaction as a "person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment, which results from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome against his/her expectations". This paper uses Philip Kotler's definition of the term "customer satisfaction". From here, the research team develops more about other factors affecting customer satisfaction when using an import-export consulting service. Based on this definition, it can be determined that two main factors affect customer satisfaction: service performance (which in this paper can also be called service quality) and customer expectation (also as known expectation).

A study carried out by Hallencreutz and Parmler (2021) finds that there has been a paradigm shift over the last decade—product quality has been replaced by service quality. Other studies in several different industries (Aluko et al., 2021) in construction consultancy; Kuswibowo (2022) in a bank; Pribadi. et al. (2020) in-hospital services; Lee and Seong (2020) in private university service) also, show that service quality is an important factor affecting customer satisfaction.

According to Karcz and Lusarczyk (2021), the evolution of logistics operators in terms of quality expectations is linked to logistics processes established by service recipients. It strengthens their market position and allows for the building of long-term relationships with customers. According to studies by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988 & 1993), consumers have more and more expectations about the services and products they have purchased. Companies

in the market are increasing the customer experience to meet their expectations in using the service. Since then, customer satisfaction has also increased. According to Stanforth and Lennon (1997), customer satisfaction with service will depend on the attitude and qualifications of the staff with whom they come in contact. So, customer satisfaction is one of the most important things that makes a business successful (Kristiawan et al., 2021).

2.2. Service Performance and Influencing Factors

Performance is a person's result or overall success rate in carrying out a task over a period of time in comparison to numerous alternatives, such as work standards, targets, or criteria (Robbin & Judge, 2006). Employee performance is the result of performance by a person or a group of people both qualitatively and quantitatively, in accordance with their authority, duties, and responsibilities, with the goal of achieving the organization's goals without breaching the law and in accordance with ethics (Moeheriono, 2012). According to Bernadin and Russell (2006), achievement or performance is a record of results obtained over a while from certain job tasks or activities. Hidayat et al. (2018) stated that employee performance is measured by the quantity and quality of work or tasks that employees perform, as well as their consistency in executing the job. In addition, employee performance can also be utilized for human resource planning, recruitment and selection, training, career planning, and employee development, as well as determining remuneration, employee assignment, and estimating employee competency (Mondy & Noe, 2008; Hidayat et al., 2018). However, the company that offers employee rewards also cannot directly improve their performance (Siswanto, Maulidiyah & Masyhuri, 2021).

Employee performance can be improved or damaged by a range of aspects. In this study, it will be shown that there are two types of characteristics that influence employee performance: hard skills and soft skills. According to Kemboi et al., (2013) and Ahmed et al. (2018), employment success is influenced not only by hard skills like academic achievement, technical abilities, and general academic potential but also by soft skills like social skills and emotional skills. Employees can perform successfully when they have a blend of hard and soft skills. Different skills will keep employees from getting bored at work, which will make them happier and more motivated at work.

Effects of hard skills on employee performance: Hard skills are considered to have a major impact on employee performance (Anggiani, 2017), whereas Sitompul et al. (2017) also accept that hard skills have a considerable impact on job quality. Hard skills include knowledge of the import-export industry, cross-departmental workflows, customer consulting processes, problem-solving processes, and so on.

Hard skills focus on the systems, techniques, and processes used to deliver products or services to customers.

Effects of soft skills on employee performance: Soft skills are activities that have a direct impact on customers' impressions and feelings and can result in positive, negative, or neutral reactions when interacting with them. Communication styles (both verbal and nonverbal), attitudes, collaboration, awareness, sincerity, empathy, and even leadership are all examples of this behavior. Soft skills have a larger coefficient value than hard skills variables, and they have a greater impact on employee performance (Anggiani, 2017). People who have a high level of emotional intelligence perform better. This is especially true when it comes to consulting firms. Sitompul et al. (2017) say that soft skills have a big effect on how well someone does their job.

2.3. Expectation and Influencing Factors

Expectations can be defined as “the predictions made by customers on what probably will occur during an imminent transaction” (Berry et al., 1988). “People may have an expectation as a forecast of what might happen in the future, which is formed when they consider different sources of information such as past experiences or current incidents,” proved by Oliver (1980). They claim that even when technology is novel to its users, certain assumptions shape their experiences. Everyone, including customers, may be aware of the problem, but in some way they can still do the opposite of their own perception. Similar to the study of Nguyen, Nguyen & Hoang (2021), they reported that the majority of respondents (92.3%) are environmentally aware but they still use plastic bags every day. Since plastic bags are often provided for free, customers tend to overuse them. Advertisements, branding, word of mouth, product reviews, and exposure to related products all contribute to these product expectations. Unmet expectations can lead to client complaints and dissatisfaction (Bly et al., 2006; den Ouden et al., 2006; Olsson & Salo, 2012). This article breaks down the things that affect consumer expectations into two groups: client factors and company factors. This article breaks down the things that affect consumer expectations into two groups: client factors and company factors.

Client factors can relate to a person's traits (hobbies, personality), individuals create descriptive beliefs by direct observation or personal experience. An inferential belief draws a connection between an object and an attribute based on a prior belief. These beliefs are sensitive to human influences such as personality characteristics because they are dependent on perceived relationships between beliefs (Hill, Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Additionally, external variables can alter expectations based on previous experiences with a similar stimulus and knowledge of how others responded to a stimulus, or cultural standards about how people should

feel in a particular scenario (Wilson et al., 1989). As a result, one's expectations may be influenced not just by habit and personal experiences, but also by those of ‘intermediate’ individuals.

Company factor: the reputation of the organization seems to be, the most important factor influencing consumer expectations. Various studies have indicated that a firm reputation influences many customer responses, including product and service choice, overall attitudes, purchase intentions, and trust. Customers certainly maintain very different expectations about the level of service provided by firms with excellent reputations for service versus those with average reputations (Nikbin et al., 2011). In today's fiercely competitive market, it is important to maintain standards of service quality that fulfill customer expectations and turn them into repeat users (Merkert & Assaf, 2015; Pantouvakis & Renzi, 2016). According to The Journal of Asian Finance (Critical Factors Affecting the Choice of Logistics Service Provider: An Empirical Study in Vietnam, 2021), along with reputation, there are other 2 critical factors affecting the choice of the logistics service provider. Those factors are service capabilities and customer services. Service capabilities are defined as the ability of logistics service providers to create and deploy resources to satisfy the needs of their customers (Lai, 2004).

2.4. Service Fairness

In service marketing or consultant activities, fairness has been discussed widely to let us have an essential role in creating lots of things that are valuable for business. One of them is customer loyalty with a consultant service company. Service fairness has been known as the status of the perception of consumers regarding the evaluations of something called “rightness” or equity that we can see in the value exchange process with service providers (Kwortnik & Han, 2011). Moreover, it emphasized the notion that service providers should consider the process of service delivery as well as their relationships with customers rather than only focusing on the consequences. To explain the perception of customers regarding justice or fairness in a service organization's behavior, researchers and experts have based on the application of organizational justice (Bahri-Ammari & Bilgihan, 2017). While this research showed the direct effect of service fairness on customer loyalty, some other studies have shown insignificant direct effects of service fairness on customer loyalty (Namkung & Jang, 2010; Su & Hsu, 2013). Thus, there is a need to figure out the effect of service fairness to customers under a middle point.

Customers always expect service companies to treat them fairly, and they are willing to become resentful and mistrustful when they perceive otherwise about how they will be treated by service providers. Fairness relies mainly

on all the customers' expectations of a product or service. Customers always expect service companies to keep their promises, called reliability; to offer honest and good communication materials and facilities, comfortable spaces (tangibles); and to provide prompt and effective service, called responsiveness. They also need a services company that is competent and courteous, which is called assurance and to provide caring and individualized attention, which is called empathy. Fairness is not a separate aspect of service but touches the very essence of what customers need and expect. Oliver and Swan (1989) explained that the original focus of service fairness was the effects of distributive fare on the satisfaction of customers. Besides that, further research has shown that in in-service transactions, customers will evaluate the service process and encounters with employees (Hapsari et al., 2020).

Service fairness was also seen by customers who relied on the same aspects in the setting of the enterprise, namely, procedural, delivery, and interactional fare, contended that distributive fare is based on the perceived fairness of consequences received by an individual (Shin et al., 2018). Furthermore, procedural fairness focuses on the procedures and steps taken to reach the consequences of an exchange. Distributive fairness concerns resource allocation and exchange outcomes, whereas interactional fairness concerns the communication process between the service provider and customer (Ampong et al., 2020).

3. Research Model and Hypothesis

After consulting a number of research articles related to the fields of import and export, consulting services, points of interest in supplier selection, etc. research team proposed influencing factors in this research as follows (Figure 1).

According to research by Kuswibowo (2022), service performance has a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction. Statistical analysis by Aluko et al. (2021), showed a significant positive relationship between perceived service quality and all indicators of satisfaction of the customer. Along with that, the positive correlation values show that as perceived service quality increases, both technical and managerial indicators of customer satisfaction increase equally. So the first hypothesis of this study is proposed as follows:

H1: The working performance of the consulting firm has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Customers who are unhappy and believe the supplier will not cooperate tend to quietly leave and buy elsewhere, as well as retaliate (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008) by warning relatives and friends not to patronize businesses and write adverse online reviews (Pfeffer et al., 2014). According to Stephens and Gwinner (1998) and Blodgett and Anderson (2000), customers after receiving false service from the company will choose to leave or believe the spread of

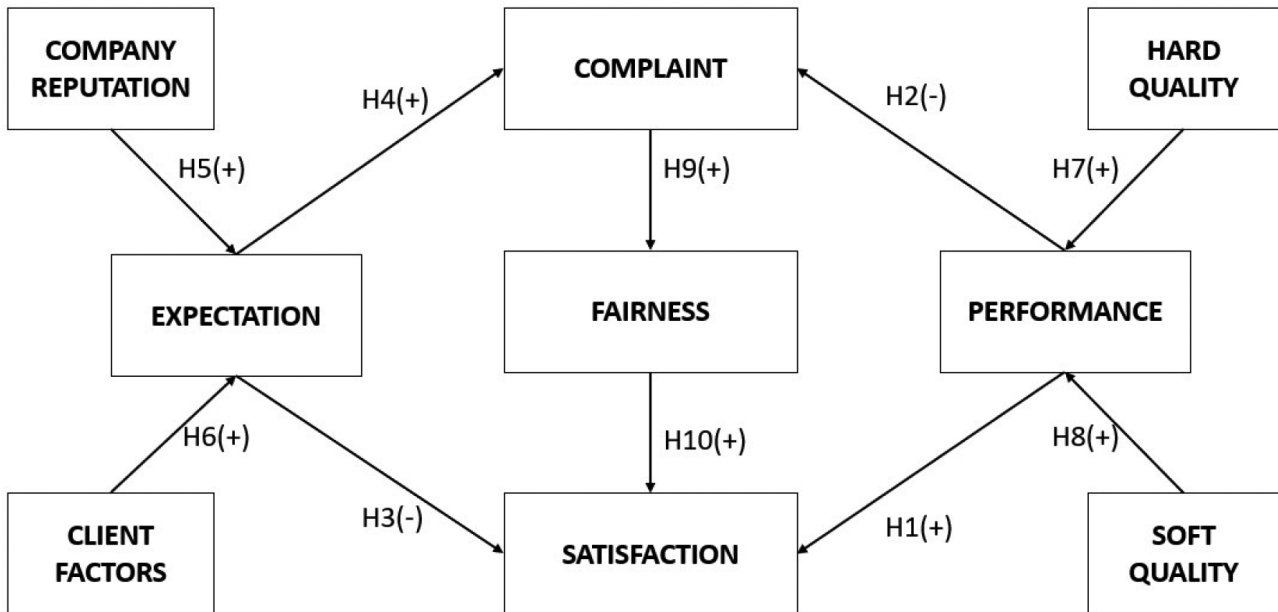


Figure 1: Hypothesized Research Mode

negative information. This is very important for retailers and service providers as frustrated and complaining customers provide an opportunity for merchants to correct their quality and performance issues. Therefore, the second hypothesis of this study is proposed as follows:

H2: *The working performance of the consulting firm has a negative impact on customer complaints.*

According to Stanforth and Lennon. (1997), customer expectations will negatively affect customer satisfaction with the service they experience in some situations. Satisfaction occurs when customers' expectations match their perceptions of the service and vice versa (Blackwell et al., 2012). Along with that, the level of customer expectations must be lower than the results they experience (Kristiawan et al., 2021). According to research by Siagian (2019), the gap between customer expectations and the service they receive is widening. So we propose the third hypothesis of this study as follows:

H3: *Customers' initial expectations have a negative impact on their satisfaction.*

Unmet expectations can lead to customer complaints and dissatisfaction (Bly et al., 2006; Ouden et al., 2006; Olsson & Salo, 2012). Customers inevitably maintain very different expectations about the level of service provided by companies with excellent service reputations compared to those with average reputations (Nikbin et al., 2011). Expectations are socially constructed, collectively created, and "transmitted and conveyed to descendants, who see little evidence to contradict them" (Crossely, 2001). So we propose the fourth hypothesis as follows:

H4: *Customers' initial expectations positively affect their complaints.*

According to Olson and Dover (1979), argued that one needs to investigate the theoretical underpinnings of belief development to understand the formation and change of expectations. Advertising, branding, word of mouth, product reviews, and exposure to related products all contribute to product/service expectations (Raita & Oulasvirta, 2011). Various studies have shown that a company's reputation influences many customer responses, including product and service choice, overall attitude, purchase intention, and trust (Nikbin et al., 2011). The following are the proposed fifth hypothesis for this study:

H5: *The company's reputation has a positive impact on customer expectations.*

Client factors can relate to a person's traits (hobbies, personality), individuals create descriptive beliefs by direct observation or personal experience. An inferential belief is one that draws a connection between an object and an attribute based on a prior belief. These beliefs are sensitive to human influences such as personality characteristics because they are dependent on perceived relationships between beliefs (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Additionally, external variables can alter expectations based on previous experiences with a similar stimulus and knowledge of how others responded to a stimulus, or cultural standards about how people should feel in a particular scenario (Wilson et al., 1989). "There are no expectations without experience; no experience without expectation," (Koselleck, 2004). Based on these above studies, the sixth hypothesis was established:

H6: *Client factors positively affect their expectations.*

Service is a more or less intangible activity or sequence of acts that frequently, but not always, occurs through exchanges between customers and service employees and/or the sources of physical forces or products. products and/or service delivery platforms marketed as answers to client issues" (Gronroos, 1990, Paul Lawrence Miner, 1998). According to Tran and Do (2021), competition is not only based on price but also has to improve the capacity of enterprises. Invisibility, indivisibility, and inseparability are three qualities of services that are frequently Service production and consumption occur simultaneously, and the relationship between service providers and service users can have an impact on service quality. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H7: *Hard skills positively affect the performance of consulting firms.*

Soft services, while not deemed necessary, are vital in fostering a well-run company. They have a direct impact on factors such as productivity and job happiness. It's critical to think of them as investments in a more productive, effective workplace, rather than as extra costs. For example, landscaping has no direct effect on your company's cash flow or revenue. However, its impact on staff morale is valuable. Giving employees a space to eat their lunch or have a conversation outside enhances their morale when they return to work. So we propose the eighth hypothesis as follows:

H8: *Soft skills have a positive impact on the performance of consulting firms.*

Once a dissatisfied customer complains, the seller's recovery effort is the key determinant of perceived justice, overall satisfaction, word-of-mouth, and patronage behavior. Importantly, complainants who subsequently perceive high levels of justice (interactional, distributive, and procedural), satisfied with the seller's recovery efforts, oftentimes become more loyal and profitable customers (Smith & Bolton 1998). Others have discovered that cultural values interact with a company's recovery tactics to influence customers' perceptions of fairness (Patterson et al., 2006); and that the effects of justice and recovery satisfaction on post-complaint intentions and behavior are moderated by uncertainty avoidance and power distance (Patterson et al., 2006). So we propose the ninth hypothesis as follows:

H9: *Customer complaints have a positive impact on fairness.*

As regards the dimensions of service fairness, some studies indicated that procedural, distributive, and interaction fairness have a meaningful direct effect on customer loyalty (Arqawi et al., 2018; Bahri-Ammari & Bilgihan, 2017). Teo and Lim (2001) depicted that these three variables significantly affect customer patronage intention. In the perspective of the hotel industry, interactional justice, distributive justice, and procedural justice were seen to have significant effects on customer loyalty (Karatepe, 2006). A study in the restaurant industry showed that interactional fairness significantly affects customers' behavioral intentions (Namkung & Jang, 2010). The effect of distributive fairness on customer loyalty was also found by Kuo and Wu (2012) in a research on online shopping websites. Based on the above information, the final hypothesis was established:

H10: *Fairness positively affects customer satisfaction.*

4. Research Method

The objective of this research was to explore how expectations, performance, complaints, and fairness affect consumer satisfaction. The findings are expected to be a constructive input for import-export service companies in advising their clients to give them the best experience when working or collaborating with the companies. More importantly, it adds value based on the requirements, wants, and expectations of customers. Furthermore, this research is predicted to be a breakthrough for the economic sector, particularly in the fields of import and export.

4.1. Respondents

Samples were collected from managers, employees of freight forwarding companies, small businesses, and

commercial individuals engaged in import and export activities through online interviews using in-depth interview techniques. The goal of in-depth interviews is to organize data into categories and then examine links between categories while paying attention to how research participants' lived experiences might be interpreted (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The total number of samples collected was 50 within 17 days from March 12 to March 28, 2022. A humongous number of publications, articles, book chapters, and guidebooks have demonstrated that 5 to 50 participants are sufficient. Furthermore, Mason (2010) has suggested that saturation is the most important factor when considering sample size decisions in qualitative research. Saturation is defined as when the collection of new data on the conceptual categories in a research project no longer generates new theoretical insights nor reveals new properties of the core theoretical categories (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, the study met several baseline requirements.

4.2. Instrument

There are a total of two questionnaires. The first questionnaire for the customer group (small businesses and commercial individuals) has a total of 8 questions. Questions (1) and (2) collect general information about fields, methods, and difficulties when participating in import-export activities. Question (3) is about how and how to find freight forwarding. Questions (4), (5), and (6) mention the factors that customers care about when choosing companies providing import and export services. Questions (7) and (8) discuss unsatisfactory issues affecting the customer experience. Whereas, the second questionnaire for the forwarder group (managers and employees of freight forwarding companies) had a total of 9 questions. Questions (1) and (2) collect information related to the performance of companies. Questions (3) and (4) find out more about the customer consultation process. Questions (5) and (6) are about the customer service process. Question (7) is interested in factors that directly affect customer satisfaction. The last two questions are about what commonly received negative feedback and how to deal with it.

5. Results

5.1. Sample Description

The in-depth interview had a total of 50 respondents. Of whom, 32 people (64%) belong to the group of service providers and 18 people (36%) belong to the group of customers (Figure 2). The customer group includes companies, small and medium-sized enterprises, and micro and commercial individuals who have experience or need to participate in the import and export process. Of the 18 people in the customer group, 10 people (57%) belong to the group

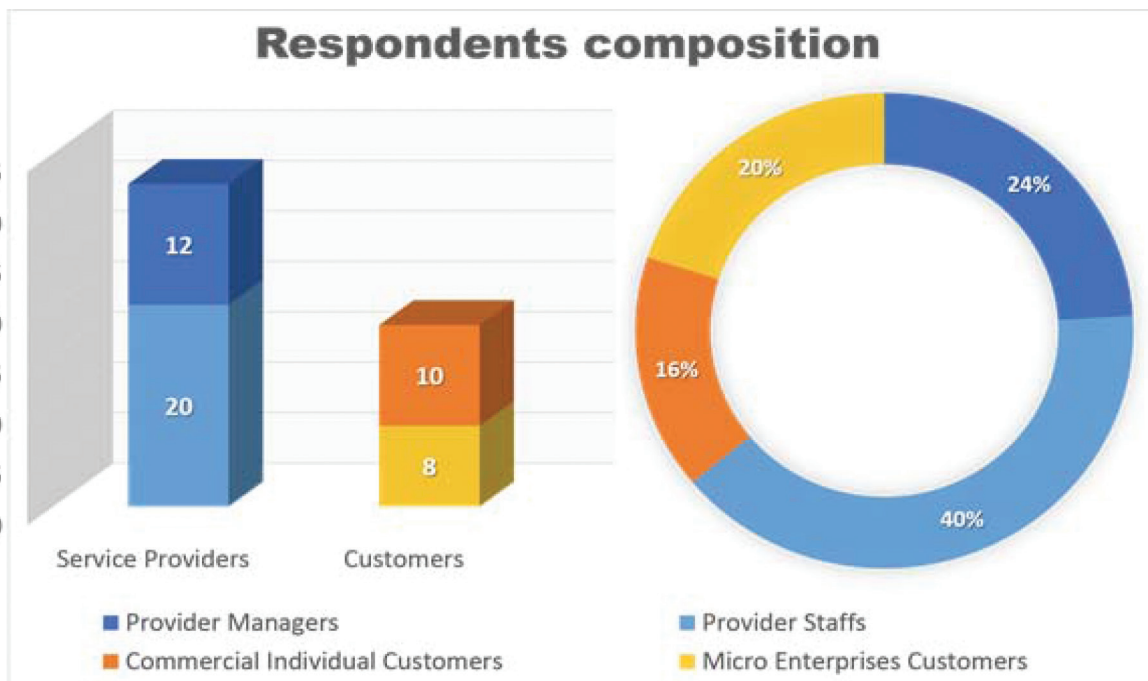


Figure 2: Respondents' Composition Graph

of micro-enterprises or small and medium enterprises. The rest (43%) are commercial individuals. Companies or firms that provide consultancy services, international forwarding, logistics, and other services are included in the group of service providers. Of the 32 people in the target group of service providers, 12 (37.5%) are from the management level or higher, and the rest (62.5%) are employees (with more than 3 years of working experience) of the two departments: sales or customer services.

5.2. Definition of Subcomponents

Transaction history is a physical or electronic statement containing transaction information for all previous transactions between the parties to the transaction.

Cargo flow optimization entails a high level of visibility into ongoing cargo operations and data flows to ensure the most efficient use of resources and create actionable insights for upcoming events.

Time-to-market refers to the period of time between when a corporation first comes up with a product or service idea and when the actual product or service is available to market purchasers (Afonso et al., 2008).

The previous partnership is a limited partnership that was previously formed and listed in the prospectus

and substantially has a similar investment strategy to the partnership.

Referral information from acquaintances is information provided by acquaintances of customers (friends, partners, etc), including both negative and positive information about reputation, price, working process, safety, etc.

Customer attention is what customers care about or pay attention to when they use a product or service. Before they decide to purchase a product or service, the customer collects and interprets information about the product/service, which affects how they perceive the product and its quality.

Service accuracy is the quality of performing or adjusting transactions to achieve what is considered right.

Actual work experience is the professional experience that employees encounter and acquire during their actual employment. This is important for long-term job success because these are very broad and different from the hypothetical experiences discussed in the classroom.

Expertise is a term that refers to people with specialized training, actual work experience, in-depth thinking on a certain topic, or better understanding relative to other parts of general knowledge.

Dedication is trying to the best of your ability, energy, and enthusiasm, to do a certain job to reach the result and dare to take responsibility.

A working attitude is a set of judgments about a person’s work that shape one’s feelings, beliefs, and attachment to one’s job.

Communication skills are the act of contact or double interaction with individuals in transferring information, meanings, and understanding (Fisher & Maguire, 1980). Several experts have voiced conflicting views on the use of communication ability as a predictor of employee performance (Ryan & Sackett, 1987). The importance of communication for firms in terms of their potential to influence the bottom line cannot be overstated, as seen by rising data linking work productivity to communication (Camden & Witt, 1983; Papa & Tracy, 1987; Snyder & Morris, 1984).

5.3. Statistical Results

When asked about which specific elements in the company’s reputation and client factors can have an impact on customer satisfaction, a lot of different responses were collected from the respondents, but the research team combined the opinions with significant overlap into the following chart (Figure 3).

Figure 3 shows the number of opinions that respondents confirmed that would affect their expectations of an import-export consulting service. From the chart, it is easy to read the following figures as follows:

39 opinions agree that their satisfaction is influenced by company reputation but more specifically by transaction history; 34 others give their opinion on cargo flow optimization; the other 27 opinions have their agreement on operation time (referred to as time-to-market).

30 opinions agree that their satisfaction is influenced by client factors but more specifically by the previous partnership; 28 others give their opinion about acquaintance introduction (referred to as referral information from acquaintances); other 27 opinions have their agreement for customer interest (referred to as customer attention).

From the question about which specific elements in the hard and soft skills can have an impact on customer satisfaction, we obtain the following summary graph (Figure 4).

Figure 4 shows the number of opinions that respondents confirmed that would affect their perceived performance of an import-export consulting service. From the chart, it is easy to read the following figures as follows:

44 opinions agree that their satisfaction is influenced by perceived performance through soft skills but more specifically by dedication; 41 others give their opinion about working attitude; the other 27 opinions have their agreement with communication skills.

46 opinions agree that their satisfaction is influenced by perceived performance through hard skills but more specifically by service accuracy; 39 others give their opinion about actual work experience; the other 33 opinions have their agreement with expertise.

However, when consulting the respondents about the stronger impact of one factor compared to another factor (company reputation compared to client factors; hard skills compared to soft skills; performance compared to expectation), the answers obtained have a very high consistency. Specific statistics are shown below (Figure 5).

41 interviewees agreed that client factors have more impact than company reputation, the rest agreed with the other opinion. Most people (47) in the interview agree that

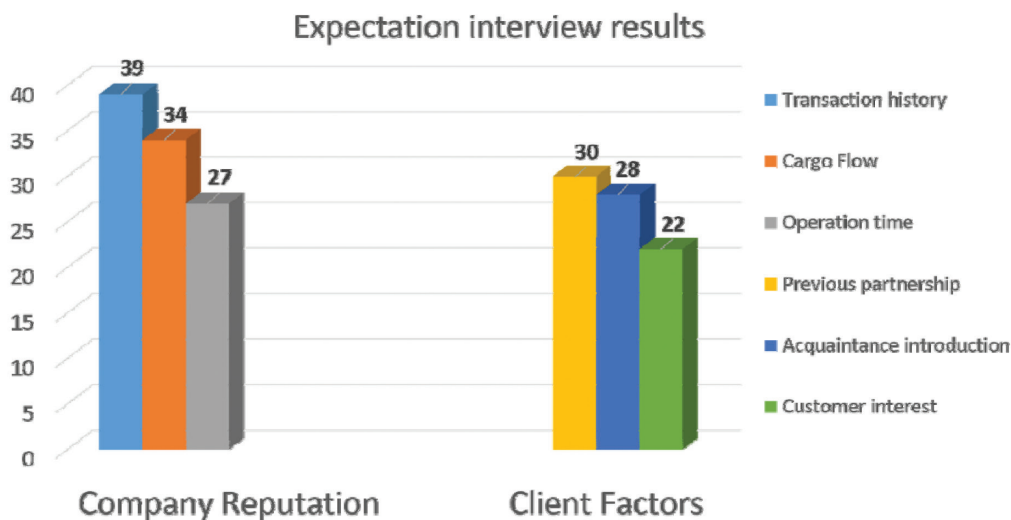


Figure 3: Expectation Interview Result Statistical Graph

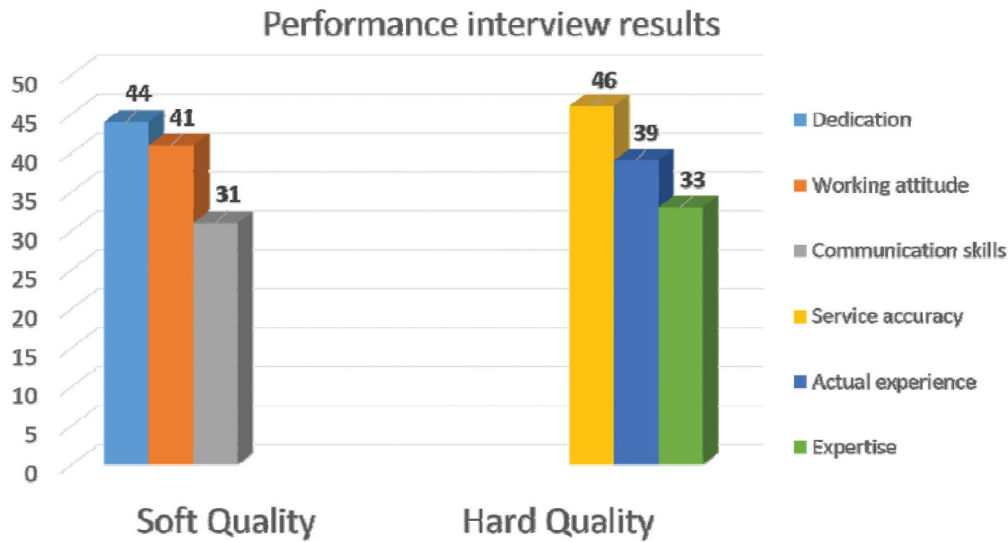


Figure 4: Performance Interview Result Statistical Graph

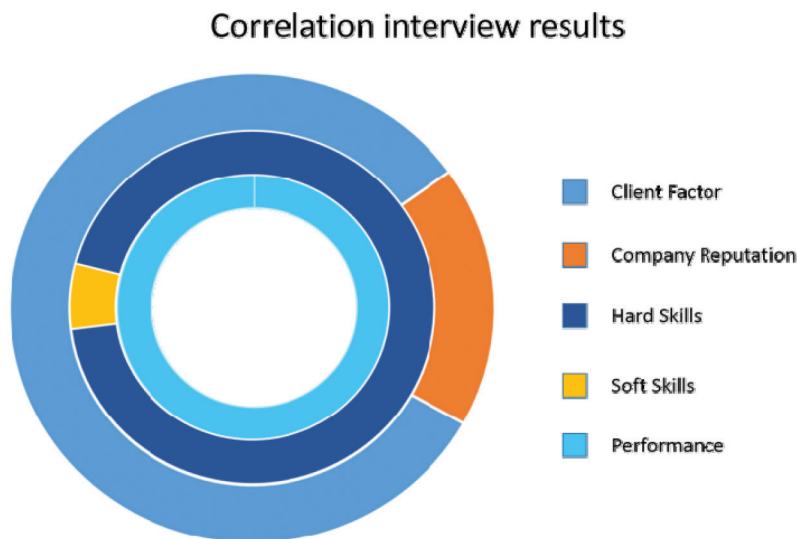


Figure 5: Correlation Interview Result Statistical Graph

hard skills have more impact than soft skills. All interviewees agree that performance has more impact than expected when it affects satisfaction.

6. Discussion and Managerial Implications

6.1. Discussion

Factors related to performance and expectations have had an impact on the satisfaction of customers when using

services provided by service providers. Problems such as technical errors, service employees wasting too much time on transactions, problems with overusing of resources, or limited access to commodities tracking programs (Polo Peña et al., 2016), and our research also do the same and have similar results. In this study, the relationship between performance factors and using expectations was found by using independent observed variable questions as a mediator.

According to research by O’Cass and Sok (2013), when customers participating in consultant service are interrupted

by technical errors, they have to wait for a long time, thereby reducing their satisfaction. However, in our research, another factor that also affects the satisfaction of customers is the problem identification and solving process. They also consider the connection and interaction between them. The reasons were consultant employees' lack of expertise and professional working, experience in customer services, and inability to give advice quickly and satisfy their customers (Siahtiri, 2017). The study of Carbonell and Rodriguez-Escudero (2015) also showed a correlation between these two factors that strongly affect the satisfaction of customers. In this study, we also see the relationship between the factors of Complaint and Fairness in complaint solving in the impact on customers' satisfactions. In this study, we also indicate that other factors like psychological and emotional factors also had a strong impact on the satisfaction of customers. The results show psychological causes such as feeling dissatisfied, stress due to long hours waiting for serving, and suffering pressure from lots of orders and deadlines assigned by customers, which sometimes annoy and irritate.

According to research by Grimmer (2022). This study also found factors related to the fairness of consulting services, which have still not been seen in other research recently. The questions coded into the observed variables have also contributed to clarifying its influence. Research by Mayser and Von Wangenheim (2013) has also shown the impact of problems on receiving and assessing the troubles between customers and finding reasonable methods for equitably handling them and the reason for that coming from customers not caused by employees themselves. The reasons come from the fact that consultant employees are not fair, serious, and concentrate on customer service. Service companies make a distinction based on customer knowledge. Employees seem to like to conduct transactions that finish quickly and save their consulting time, but customers feel that they are not treated the same just because they are new people.

Based on research and analysis, we find that all 7 main factors have an impact on the satisfaction of customers when using a product or service, even during pandemic times. In particular, the factors related to complaints, expectations, and performance are extremely concerning. Through this research and the consideration of other findings from other articles. We could see clearly that almost all the reasons that affect the satisfaction of customers are caused by employees.

6.2. Managerial Implications

According to research results, if employees want to satisfy their customers, they need to focus on factors such as performance, expectations, and improvement in their skills and experience. They have to spend more time improving their hard and soft skills when providing services to their customers.

Along with that, they need to keep optimistic thoughts when meeting their customers, so service providers will project good images in the eyes of the people they are serving. We could improve and enhance our staff' working effectiveness by participating in workshops and talk shows. Through sharing stories of expert people, they will help employees see where their actual strengths and weaknesses are, then enhance and eliminate them day by day. Learning how to serve irritating customers is also a thing. Employees must know the kinds of customers and have suitable serving methods. Change in solving customer complaints also makes you more good and professional in their mind. We need to have enough time for them, listening to their troubled stories and what makes them feel bad, so we know exactly how to deal. These are important factors that help service providers satisfy their customers. Besides, serving plenty of customers can cause employees to have some health issues, and we do not want to lose orders just because we could not see or hear anymore. When your health is guaranteed, your performance and service efficiency will be improved even more. When customers will have good service and we will have loyal customers.

7. Conclusion

This research was conducted to investigate the factors that affect such factors as expectations, performance, complaints, and fairness and the significance of those factors on consumer satisfaction. The results indicate that customer satisfaction is positively influenced by performance. In this case, a high proportion of hard skills have a greater influence than soft skills. This statement shows that while the user experience is important, it is not the most critical component. The results of a service, rather than the experience of using it, are the main factors that determine service quality, which is counter to conventional assumptions. Through the sub-factors of reputation and reputation of a service provider organization, the expectation has a particular effect on customer satisfaction, the results show that client factors have more impact than company reputation. The complaint provides the connection between expectations, performance, and especially fairness. According to the majority of respondents, is an extremely crucial feature when choosing an import and export service, it has the greatest impact on satisfaction. Fairness has a direct beneficial impact on customer happiness, and it is an extremely significant feature when customers choose an import-export business. According to research, raising consumer expectations, performance, and fairness leads to improved customer experience and satisfaction when they use the service, which is a significant benefit. When the complaint component still has a partial impact on satisfaction and is an intermediary variable that impacts the link between the other factors, it is recommended that it be investigated and researched further.

7.1. Theoretical Implication and Contribution

The conclusion of this research can contribute to the adoption and improvement of working practices in the organization, particularly in the consulted service companies, which are the main subject of this research. Overall, the main contribution of this work is to improve service performance and meet customer expectations, with the ultimate goal of improving the service quality. Specifically, in the import-export consultant service, the research shows that transaction history is the factor most people are interested in when determining the credibility and reputation of a service provider company. These are important factors in determining their expectations for the company's service. Therefore, we believe that these criteria should be prioritized in the process of searching for and selecting strategic partners for the company to establish a reputable image for its network of service providers. So, the size or percentage of the business is no longer the most important thing to think about.

Similar to transaction history as a factor of reputation, service accuracy is the leading factor in determining and measuring the service quality of an import and export service company. Therefore, to quickly resolve any risks that arise and ensure that the service's accuracy is as high as possible, the company should closely monitor the progress of the goods during the processing of goods for its customers. Moreover, another factor is dedication (fast, timely) is agreed upon by the majority of interviewees that this is the factor that most affects their experience when using services related to import and export. Through this assessment, companies should ensure that there is always personnel available to receive comments and handle consumer difficulties as needed.

7.2. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Nonetheless, there are some limitations to this research. One of the limitations is that it employed an open questionnaire to interview respondents. The data was processed and the most representative answer was found for each of the questions. The answers vary depending on the individual and may even go beyond those listed in the questionnaire. The results are subject to response judgment on each of the questions, so the interview information is likely to be incompletely conveyed due to content limitations. Second, it is extremely hard to get a response from managers or higher positions who deal with logistics outsourcing directly. Therefore, this research has a sufficient number of surveys from forwarders and consumers, but they are not as many as expected. We intend to conduct a greater number of interviews to get additional information from

industry experts with many years of expertise to increase the accuracy of the results of this study.

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