



Mind the gap: Temporal disconnects in the provision of complex service offerings

Maylor, H.; Geraldi, Joana; Johnson, M.; Turner, N.

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Abstract

Purpose: This study was motivated by a managerial problem where the performance measurement indicators of success indicated that the programme was successful, despite the customer being unhappy. We deployed SERVQUAL in order to explore underlying issues with the measurement framework. **Design/methodology/approach:** We deployed a survey based on a modified SERVQUAL instrument to respondents in Information Intensive Services (IIS) environment. The instrument was modified to the context based on a series of interviews with practitioners working in the IIS environment. We analysed the data using Structural Equation Modelling. To achieve higher levels of model fit we reformulated SERVQUAL using cluster analysis and then re-tested the new measurement model. **Findings:** We discovered that the original 'gap' concept of SERVQUAL does not stand up in a project-type environment when the scale is re-formulated. We suggest that this is due to the expectations – set at an early stage, and embodied within the contract – being different to the perceptions of performance. The perceptions measures were also more 'behavioural' than those for expectations. **Research limitations/implications:** These finding indicate that in order to use the gap concept, expectations and perceptions should be aligned, possibly through the use of a 'behavioural' contract. The research was limited to one context and to further any claims of generalisability should be tested in alternate contexts. **Originality/value:** As far as we are aware this is one of the first instances of SERVQUAL being deployed in a complex, outsourced programme and project context.

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Event: 16th Annual International EurOMA Conference

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Keywords: IT-enabled change; quality; service; SERVQUAL; temporal disconnects; satisfaction

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