SERVICES MARKETING: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract

Although the SERVQUAL framework remains a cornerstone for measuring perceived service quality, current research often treats operational service evaluation and strategic marketing management as separate domains. This study aims to bridge this conceptual gap by developing an integrated service marketing framework that unifies the five core dimensions of SERVQUAL with the 7P marketing mix. Adopting a qualitative Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and thematic synthesis approach, this study analyzes foundational service marketing literature alongside contemporary empirical research on digital transformation, customer touchpoints, and service innovation. The thematic synthesis reveals that SERVQUAL and the 7P mix function as complementary, multi-level mechanisms. SERVQUAL serves as an operational diagnostic tool for measuring customer perceptions, whereas the 7P framework provides the organizational infrastructure needed to design and deliver service value. Furthermore, customer satisfaction acts as a strategic mediator connecting operational performance and marketing capabilities to organizational loyalty and competitiveness. Theoretically, this study unifies service quality evaluation theory and strategic marketing planning into a single conceptual model. Practically, it offers actionable guidance for managers to align operational indicators (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical evidence) with the 7P marketing mix elements to optimize customer experiences in the digital age. This article presents a fresh perspective by systematically integrating SERVQUAL and the 7P mix amidst the dynamics of digital transformation, advancing toward a truly integrated framework for service marketing innovation.

Keywords: *Customer Satisfaction, Digital Transformation, Marketing Mix Integration, Service Innovation, Service Quality Dimensions*

INTRODUCTION

The service sector has become a primary driver of economic growth, employment, and competitiveness in both developed and emerging economies. Beyond its contribution to gross domestic product, services increasingly shape customer experiences, business innovation, and value creation across industries. However, rapid advances in digital technologies, connected knowledge economies, and social media have fundamentally transformed how services are designed, delivered, and evaluated (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Valos, Haji Habibi, Casidy, Driesener, & Maplestone, 2016). This transformation has also reshaped customer experience, as digital technologies increasingly enable customers to interact with firms through multiple digital channels and touchpoints (Kacprzak & Hensel, 2023). Service operations increasingly involve customers as active co-creators of value across complex and multi-touchpoint customer journeys (Gronroos, 1998; Tseng, Ma, & Su, 1999). Recent studies further demonstrate that customer journeys are becoming increasingly complex and non-linear as digital technologies, social media, and omnichannel environments create multiple interconnected points of interaction between customers and brands (Kent,

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Peirson-Smith, & Siregar, 2025; Zheng & Li, 2024). The increasing number and diversity of customer touchpoints create a fundamental challenge for service organizations because customer experiences are formed across interconnected online and offline interactions rather than through a single service encounter. Consequently, conventional approaches that evaluate service quality and marketing activities separately may be insufficient to capture the complexity of contemporary service experiences.

In contemporary service environments, customers evaluate services not only according to functional performance but also according to the quality of interactions, personalization, convenience, responsiveness, and the overall service experience. Empirical evidence demonstrates that these evaluations are increasingly shaped by interconnected customer touchpoints. A large-scale review of 293 studies by Weidig et al. (2024), for example, shows that personalized touchpoints influence customer experience across different stages of the customer journey, highlighting the interconnected nature of contemporary service experiences. Evidence from digital banking further indicates that digitalization has become an important dimension of service quality and is significantly associated with customer satisfaction. Zouari and Abdelhedi (2021) using an extended SERVQUAL model, found that digitalization constituted a distinct dimension of service quality among Islamic banking customers and significantly contributed to customer satisfaction. Similarly, Paudel (2025) found that digital readiness and digital literacy shape users' perceptions of e-banking service quality, trust, satisfaction, and usability. Taken together, these findings indicate that service quality evaluation in digitally mediated environments increasingly extends beyond traditional service attributes to include technology-related characteristics and customers' ability to interact with digital services. This development also raises questions about the adequacy of conventional service-quality measurement approaches. Vashishth and Chakraborty (2018) for instance, argue that although SERVQUAL and e-SERVQUAL are useful for evaluating traditional and electronic services, neither adequately captures the overall service quality of a firm. Consequently, service organizations need approaches that can simultaneously address service quality and broader marketing activities within increasingly complex service environments.

Against this changing service environment, the SERVQUAL framework remains a relevant foundation for evaluating service quality, while recent research demonstrates that its application increasingly needs to accommodate digital and technology-mediated service attributes. For example, Zouari and Abdelhedi (2021) found that digitalization can be incorporated as an additional service-quality dimension and has a significant relationship with customer satisfaction in Islamic banking. Similarly, research on e-service quality shows that website design, personalization, reliability, responsiveness, and other digital attributes significantly influence customer satisfaction and loyalty (Venkatakrishnan, Alagiriswamy, & Parayitam, 2023). Recent evidence further indicates that AI-driven service quality can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty through improvements in reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and user experience (Julian, Owen, & Utama, 2025). These findings suggest that although SERVQUAL remains a valuable foundation, contemporary service environments involve a broader set of digital and experiential attributes that extend beyond its traditional dimensions.

This development creates an important conceptual challenge. Existing studies have increasingly adapted SERVQUAL to digital contexts by incorporating additional dimensions such as digitalization, website design, personalization, convenience, and technology-related attributes (Lai, Chiu, & Otgonsure, 2019; Venkatakrishnan et al., 2023; Zouari & Abdelhedi, 2021). However, these extensions generally remain focused on expanding or modifying service-quality measurement, rather than examining how service quality interacts with broader strategic marketing mechanisms. Consequently, a gap remains in understanding how the SERVQUAL dimensions can be integrated with strategic service marketing elements, particularly the 7P marketing mix, to explain customer satisfaction, loyalty, and competitive outcomes in contemporary service environments.

To address this gap, this study develops an integrated service marketing framework that connects the SERVQUAL model and the 7P marketing mix within a unified conceptual perspective. The integration recognizes that customers do not experience service quality and marketing activities as independent components; rather, these elements are encountered simultaneously throughout the service journey. Accordingly, SERVQUAL provides the perspective for understanding customers' evaluation of service quality, while the 7P framework captures the broader strategic elements through which service organizations design and deliver customer experiences. By bringing these perspectives together, the study reinterprets conventional service marketing frameworks within the context of increasingly digital, interconnected, and customer-centric service environments.

This integrated perspective contributes to the service marketing literature in three ways. First, it provides a theoretical contribution by connecting service quality evaluation with strategic service marketing within a single conceptual framework. Second, it provides a conceptual contribution by extending the interpretation of SERVQUAL and the 7P framework from relatively separate analytical tools toward an integrated perspective of customer experience, service innovation, and digital transformation. Third, it provides a managerial contribution by offering service organizations a broader basis for redesigning service strategies, improving customer satisfaction and loyalty, and strengthening competitive advantage in rapidly evolving service markets. Through these contributions, the study responds to the growing need for service marketing approaches that reflect the interconnected nature of contemporary customer experiences.

Accordingly, this study aims to develop and examine an integrated service marketing framework that combines SERVQUAL and the 7P marketing mix to explain how service quality and strategic marketing elements jointly contribute to customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage in contemporary service environments. By examining these relationships within a unified framework, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how service organizations can integrate service quality management and strategic marketing to respond to the evolving demands of digitally mediated customer experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Service Marketing and Value Creation

Service marketing differs fundamentally from physical goods marketing because value is created primarily through interactions and process consumption rather than through the exchange of preproduced resource bundles (Gronroos, 1998). Unlike physical products, services are characterized by intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability, making customer experience a central element of marketing effectiveness. Although these traditional characteristics define services, recent literature argues that they must be continuously re-evaluated under service-dominant logic rather than normative manufacturing models (Hole, Pawar, & Bhaskar, 2018). Consequently, service marketing extends beyond promotional activities and encompasses the design of service processes, employee interactions, relationship management, and customer value creation.

The increasing importance of the service sector has transformed service marketing into a strategic capability that directly influences organizational competitiveness. In service industries, customer satisfaction and loyalty are generated through consistent service delivery, effective communication, and the ability to respond to changing customer expectations. Effective service marketing requires aligning strategic planning levels with core operational execution to prevent failures in strategy definition and implementation (Greenley, 1984; Gronroos, 1998). Therefore, service organizations must develop integrated marketing strategies that combine operational excellence with customer-oriented value propositions.

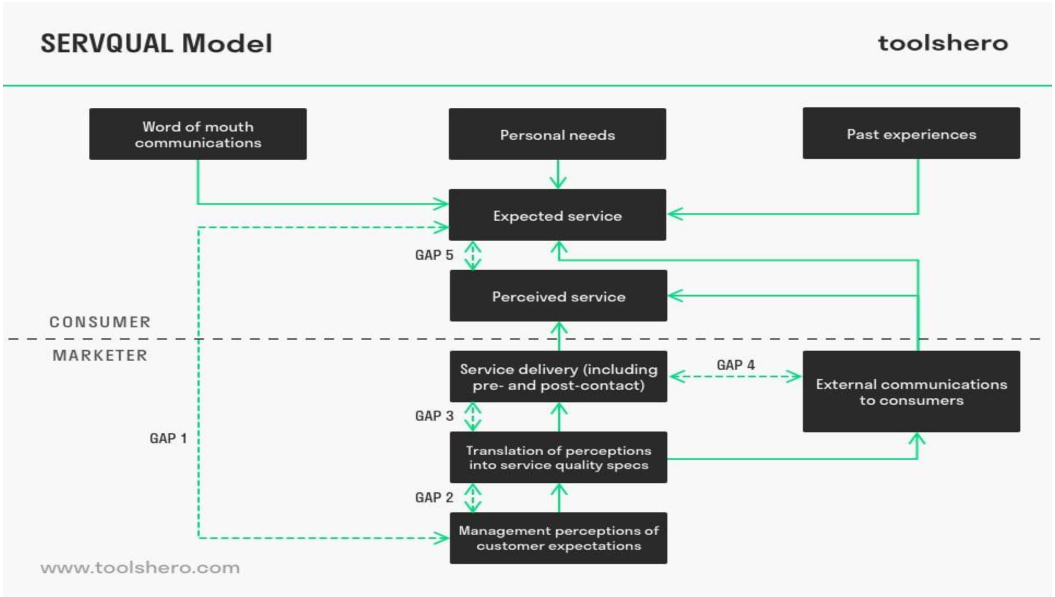

Figure 1. The SERVQUAL Model of Service Quality (Cronin & Taylor, 1992)
Source: Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988

Service Quality as a Strategic Marketing Capability

Service quality has long been recognized as one of the most important determinants of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and business performance. The relationship between service quality and customer behavior suggests that customers evaluate services by comparing their expectations with their actual service experiences. When perceived service performance exceeds expectations, customers are more likely to develop satisfaction, positive attitudes, and stronger behavioral intentions (Figure 1., Parasuraman et al., 1988). In service industries, internal marketing and human resource management play a vital role in executing customer care programs and driving service quality from within the organization (Lewis, 1989).

Previous studies consistently demonstrate that service quality positively influences customer satisfaction, which subsequently affects purchase intention and customer loyalty. However, customer satisfaction is not determined solely by technical service performance; it is also influenced by employee competence, service fairness, convenience, and service interactions. To optimize these interactions, service operations must map customer experiences from a customer journey perspective to systematically identify operational gaps and improve overall service delivery (Tseng et al., 1999). As a result, service quality should be viewed as a multidimensional strategic capability rather than merely an operational outcome (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Ladhari, 2008).

The SERVQUAL Model

The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) remains one of the most influential frameworks for measuring perceived service quality (Figure 1). The model evaluates service quality through five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. These dimensions represent customers' assessments of an organization's ability to deliver services consistently, respond promptly, inspire confidence, provide individualized attention, and maintain appropriate physical evidence.

A key contribution of SERVQUAL is its gap-based approach, which measures the difference between customer expectations and perceived service performance. The model identifies several organizational gaps—including knowledge, standards, delivery, communication, and satisfaction gaps—that may reduce perceived service quality. This diagnostic capability has made SERVQUAL widely applicable across banking, hospitality, healthcare, education, and other service industries (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Nevertheless, several scholars have questioned the conceptual and operational limitations of SERVQUAL. Cronin & Taylor (1992) argued that performance-based measures (SERVPERF) may better explain customer evaluations than expectation-performance gaps. Similarly, Ladhari (2008) noted that standard SERVQUAL may not adequately capture the complexity of contemporary service environments, highlighting the necessity of developing industry-specific measurement scales.

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

Customer satisfaction is generally defined as the customer's overall evaluation of service performance relative to prior expectations. In service marketing, satisfaction functions as a critical mechanism linking service quality to long-term customer relationships. Satisfied customers are more likely to repurchase services, recommend the organization to others, and develop stronger loyalty toward service providers (Cronin & Taylor, 1992).

Empirical evidence indicates that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. High service quality enhances customer satisfaction, while satisfaction strengthens trust, commitment, and repeat purchase behavior. In sectors such as banking and financial services, customer loyalty is further driven by perceived value, service provider reputation, switching costs, and social bonding tactics (Milan, Slongo, Eberle, De Toni, & Bebber, 2018). Furthermore, employee competence, motivation, and service responsiveness significantly influence customer perceptions and satisfaction outcomes. Therefore, customer satisfaction should be considered a strategic outcome of integrated service marketing activities rather than an isolated performance indicator.

The 7P Service Marketing Mix

To address the unique characteristics of services, the traditional marketing mix was extended from four elements to seven elements by incorporating people, process, and physical evidence. The 7P framework provides a broader strategic perspective for managing service organizations because it recognizes that service value is created through organizational systems and customer interactions rather than through products alone (Hole et al., 2018). In modern environments, social media integration fundamentally transforms the 7P mix by altering service communication channels, word-of-mouth advocacy, consumer-generated content, and customer listening capabilities (Valos et al., 2016).

People represent the human dimension of service delivery, including employee competence, behavior, and customer interaction quality. Process refers to the procedures and activities through which services are delivered consistently and efficiently. Physical evidence includes the tangible cues that influence customer perceptions of service quality, such as facilities, equipment, and environmental design. Together with product, price, place, and promotion, these elements enable service organizations to create customer-oriented service experiences and differentiate themselves in competitive markets. Furthermore, corporate brand equity and green brand positioning interact to enhance customer brand attitudes and market differentiation (Hartmann, Apaolaza Ibáñez, & Forcada Sainz, 2005; Voss & Mohan, 2016). Effective service marketing requires alignment among service design, pricing strategies, communication activities, employee capabilities, process management, and physical evidence (Hole et al., 2018).

Toward an Integrated Service Marketing Framework

Although SERVQUAL and the 7P framework have been widely applied in service marketing research, they are generally treated as separate analytical approaches. SERVQUAL focuses primarily on measuring perceived service quality, whereas the 7P framework emphasizes strategic marketing decisions and service management. Consequently, previous studies have provided limited understanding of how service quality dimensions can be integrated with strategic marketing elements to improve customer satisfaction and organizational competitiveness.

Furthermore, increasing digitalization, connected knowledge economies, and frictionless markets require a more comprehensive perspective on service marketing (Day & Montgomery, 1999). Organizations must simultaneously measure service quality, manage customer interactions, redesign service processes, and strengthen strategic marketing capabilities. Integrating SERVQUAL and the 7P framework enables organizations to align strategic positioning (Zahay & Griffin, 2010), optimize customer journey touchpoints (Tseng et al., 1999), and deploy relational bonding tactics (et al., 2018) to build sustainable competitive advantage. Such integration provides a powerful innovative approach that combines service quality assessment with strategic service marketing implementation in contemporary service environments.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative systematic literature review (SLR) approach to develop an integrated conceptual framework for service marketing innovation. Rather than collecting primary data, the study synthesizes existing knowledge on service quality, customer satisfaction, service marketing strategies, and competitiveness, with particular emphasis on the SERVQUAL and 7P marketing frameworks. A systematic review approach was selected because it enables the identification, evaluation, and integration of previous research findings in order to generate a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of contemporary service marketing (Ladhari, 2008).

Literature Search Strategy

The literature review focused on peer-reviewed journal articles and seminal publications related to service marketing, service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and service marketing strategy. The search process emphasized studies that explicitly discussed SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, customer experience, service operations, and the 7P marketing mix. The principal references included foundational works by (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Gronroos, 1998; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Tseng et al., 1999) and subsequent studies examining service quality, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and service marketing strategies (Hole et al., 2018; Ladhari, 2008; Milan et al., 2018; Valos et al., 2016).

The review also incorporated studies addressing service innovation, customer experience management, and marketing strategy integration in service organizations. These sources were selected because they provide complementary perspectives on service quality measurement and strategic service marketing implementation.

Inclusion Criteria

The reviewed literature was selected based on three criteria. First, the publication addressed service marketing, service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, or service marketing strategy. Second, the study provided theoretical, conceptual, or empirical insights into SERVQUAL, SERVPERF, the 7P framework, or related service quality models. Third, the publication contributed to understanding customer value creation, service competitiveness, or innovation in service organizations.

Studies that focused exclusively on product marketing, manufacturing quality management, or unrelated organizational contexts were excluded from the review. This selection process ensured that the conceptual analysis remained directly relevant to the research objective.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

The analysis employed a thematic synthesis approach. The selected studies were coded according to four analytical themes: (1) characteristics of service marketing, (2) dimensions of service quality, (3) customer satisfaction and loyalty mechanisms, and (4) strategic service marketing capabilities. These themes were subsequently compared to identify conceptual relationships, areas of convergence, and limitations in existing service marketing frameworks.

Particular attention was given to the complementary roles of the SERVQUAL and 7P frameworks. SERVQUAL was analyzed as a customer-oriented service quality measurement framework, while the 7P model was examined as a strategic service marketing framework. The synthesis process explored how these frameworks could be integrated to address contemporary challenges associated with customer experience, service innovation, and organizational competitiveness.

Conceptual Framework Development

Based on the thematic synthesis, this study develops an integrated conceptual framework that links service quality dimensions with strategic service marketing elements. The framework positions service quality (SERVQUAL) as the operational mechanism for evaluating customer perceptions, while the 7P marketing mix represents the strategic mechanism for designing and delivering superior customer value. Customer satisfaction is conceptualized as the central connecting mechanism through which service quality and strategic marketing capabilities influence customer loyalty and competitive advantage.

This conceptual integration provides an innovative perspective on service marketing by combining operational service quality assessment with strategic marketing implementation, thereby offering a more comprehensive framework for understanding customer value creation in contemporary service environments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Thematic Synthesis of Service Marketing Literature

The thematic synthesis identified four dominant themes that consistently appear across the service marketing literature: (1) service quality as the foundation of customer value creation (Lewis, 1989; Parasuraman et al., 1988); (2) customer satisfaction as a strategic mediator (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Milan et al., 2018); (3) strategic integration through the 7P marketing mix (Hole et al., 2018; Valos et al., 2016) and (4) service innovation and competitiveness (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Zahay & Griffin, 2010). These themes collectively demonstrate that contemporary service marketing extends beyond promotional activities and increasingly depends on the integration of service quality management, customer experience, and strategic marketing capabilities.

The reviewed literature indicates that organizations achieving superior service performance do not rely solely on operational efficiency; rather, they combine customer-oriented service quality with strategically designed service delivery systems (Gronroos, 1998; Tseng et al., 1999). This finding supports the argument that service marketing should be conceptualized as an integrated organizational capability that connects service quality, customer satisfaction, and competitive strategy (Hole et al., 2018; Zahay & Griffin, 2010).

Service Quality as The Foundation of Customer Value Creation

Across the reviewed studies, service quality emerges as the most fundamental determinant of customer value creation (Lewis, 1989; Parasuraman et al., 1988). The SERVQUAL framework remains the dominant approach for evaluating customer perceptions of service performance through the dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The literature consistently demonstrates that customers evaluate services by comparing expected service performance with actual service experiences.

However, the synthesis reveals that service quality should not be viewed merely as a measurement outcome. Rather, it represents an organizational capability that influences customer trust, perceived value, and relationship quality. Studies emphasizing customer experience suggest that service quality is increasingly evaluated across multiple service encounters rather than isolated transactions (Ladhari, 2008; Tseng et al., 1999). This finding implies that service quality management must be integrated with broader customer experience management practices.

A second important finding concerns the limitations of the traditional gap-based SERVQUAL approach. Several studies argue that performance-based evaluations may provide stronger explanatory power for customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions than expectation-performance comparisons alone (Cronin & Taylor, 1992). Consequently, service quality measurement should be complemented by strategic marketing mechanisms that actively shape customer experiences (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Valos et al., 2016).

Customer Satisfaction as a Strategic Mediating Mechanism

The thematic synthesis consistently identifies customer satisfaction as the central mechanism connecting service quality and customer loyalty. Rather than functioning as an independent outcome variable, customer satisfaction operates as a strategic mediator through which service quality influences repeat purchase behavior, customer commitment, and long-term relationship development (Cronin & Taylor, 1992).

The reviewed literature indicates that improvements in service quality increase customer satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens customer loyalty and competitive positioning (Gronroos, 1998; Zahay & Griffin, 2010). Importantly, satisfaction is influenced not only by technical service performance but also by employee competence, service fairness, communication quality, and convenience (Lewis, 1989; Tseng et al., 1999). This suggests that customer satisfaction reflects customers' overall evaluation of the service experience rather than isolated assessments of operational performance.

This finding has significant managerial implications because it highlights the need for service organizations to coordinate service quality management with employee development, customer communication, and relationship management initiatives. Service quality alone is insufficient unless it is translated into positive customer experiences and perceived value.

Strategic Integration Through the 7P Marketing Mix

The third theme demonstrates that the 7P framework provides the strategic infrastructure necessary for implementing service quality improvements (Greenley, 1984; Hole et al., 2018). While SERVQUAL evaluates customer perceptions, the 7P framework explains how organizations can design and deliver superior service experiences through coordinated marketing decisions (Gronroos, 1998; Hole et al., 2018).

The synthesis indicates that the additional service-specific elements (people, process, and physical evidence), play a particularly important role in translating service quality into customer satisfaction (Hole et al., 2018; Lewis, 1989). Employee competence directly influences assurance and empathy (Lewis, 1989; Parasuraman et al., 1988); service processes affect reliability and responsiveness (Gronroos, 1998; Tseng et al., 1999); and physical evidence shapes tangible quality perceptions (Hole et al., 2018). Therefore, the 7P framework complements SERVQUAL by addressing the organizational mechanisms that generate customer perceptions of service quality (Hole et al., 2018).

A notable finding is that service quality dimensions and 7P elements are conceptually interconnected (Hole et al., 2018; Valos et al., 2016). For example, improvements in process management strengthen reliability (Tseng et al., 1999), employee development enhances assurance and empathy (Lewis, 1989), and physical evidence reinforces tangibles (Parasuraman et al., 1988). This interdependence suggests that service quality and strategic marketing should not be managed separately (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Greenley, 1984).

Toward an Innovative Service Marketing Framework

The most important result of the thematic synthesis is the identification of the complementary relationship between SERVQUAL and the 7P marketing mix (Hole et al., 2018; Parasuraman et al., 1988). Existing literature generally treats these frameworks as separate analytical tools; however, the synthesis demonstrates that they represent different but interconnected levels of service marketing management (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Greenley, 1984).

SERVQUAL operates at the customer perception level by measuring how customers evaluate service performance (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman et al., 1988). In contrast, the 7P framework operates at the organizational strategy level by explaining how service organizations design and deliver customer value (Gronroos, 1998; Hole et al., 2018). Customer satisfaction functions as the connecting mechanism between these two levels, linking operational service quality with strategic marketing outcomes (Milan et al., 2018; Zahay & Griffin, 2010).

Based on this synthesis, an innovative service marketing framework can be proposed. The framework positions the five SERVQUAL dimensions as operational drivers of perceived service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988), while the seven marketing mix elements represent strategic drivers of service value creation (Hole et al., 2018). Customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between these operational and strategic dimensions, leading to customer loyalty and sustainable competitive advantage (Milan et al., 2018; Zahay & Griffin, 2010).

This integrated perspective extends previous service marketing research by demonstrating that service quality measurement and strategic service marketing implementation should be viewed as complementary rather than independent managerial processes (Greenley, 1984; Gronroos, 1998). Such integration is particularly relevant in contemporary service environments characterized by digital transformation, personalized customer experiences, and increasing competitive pressure (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Valos et al., 2016).

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to service marketing literature by integrating service quality theory and strategic marketing theory within a unified conceptual framework (Day & Montgomery, 1999; Gronroos, 1998). The study extends the application of SERVQUAL beyond service quality measurement and positions it within a broader value creation process supported by the 7P framework (Hole et al., 2018; Parasuraman et al., 1988).

From a managerial perspective, service organizations should redesign service marketing strategies by simultaneously managing service quality dimensions and strategic marketing elements (Greenley, 1984; Valos et al., 2016). Investments in employee development, process innovation, service design, and customer experience management should be coordinated with systematic service quality measurement (Lewis, 1989; Zahay & Griffin, 2010). This integrated approach enables organizations to improve customer satisfaction, strengthen customer loyalty, and achieve sustainable competitive advantage in rapidly evolving service markets (Milan et al., 2018; Zahay & Griffin, 2010).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study develops an innovative perspective on service marketing by integrating the SERVQUAL model and the 7P service marketing framework into a unified conceptual framework. Based on a systematic thematic synthesis of the service marketing literature, four major themes were identified: service quality as the foundation of customer value creation, customer satisfaction as a strategic mediating mechanism, strategic integration through the 7P marketing mix, and service innovation as a driver of competitiveness. These findings demonstrate that service marketing should no longer be viewed merely as a promotional or operational function, but as an integrated organizational capability that connects service quality management, customer experience, and strategic marketing implementation.

The analysis shows that the SERVQUAL framework remains highly valuable for understanding customer perceptions of service quality; however, its effectiveness can be enhanced when complemented by the strategic capabilities embedded in the 7P framework. Service quality dimensions influence customer satisfaction through operational performance, while the 7P elements provide the organizational mechanisms necessary to design, deliver, and continuously improve customer value. Consequently, customer satisfaction functions as the critical link between service quality and customer loyalty, ultimately contributing to sustainable competitive advantage.

The principal theoretical contribution of this study is the development of an integrated service marketing framework that combines operational service quality assessment with strategic service marketing capabilities. Unlike previous studies that examined SERVQUAL and the 7P framework independently, this study demonstrates their complementary roles in creating customer value, improving service performance, and strengthening organizational competitiveness. The proposed framework contributes to service marketing theory by positioning service quality and strategic marketing as interconnected components of a customer-centered value creation process.

From a managerial perspective, service organizations should simultaneously manage service quality dimensions and strategic marketing elements. Investments in employee development, service process innovation, customer experience management, communication strategies, and physical service environments should be aligned with systematic service quality measurement. Such integration enables organizations to improve customer satisfaction, strengthen customer loyalty, and respond more effectively to digital transformation and increasingly dynamic customer expectations.

This study has several limitations. As a conceptual paper based on secondary literature, the proposed framework has not been empirically tested across different service industries or cultural contexts. Future research should validate the framework using quantitative approaches such as structural equation modeling or longitudinal studies and examine its applicability in digital services, healthcare, hospitality, financial services, and platform-based service ecosystems. Comparative studies across developed and emerging markets may also provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of integrated service marketing strategies.

Overall, this study argues that the future of service marketing lies in the integration of service quality measurement and strategic marketing innovation. Organizations that successfully combine customer-oriented service quality with strategically designed service systems will be better positioned to create superior customer experiences, achieve sustainable competitive advantage, and maintain long-term competitiveness in rapidly evolving service markets.

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