

Co-Production Process Quality Management for Service Systems

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Purpose: The objectives of this paper are to propose an expanded strategy for process quality management in co-production settings and to demonstrate how applications of this strategy can lead to more effective process quality control than traditional methods. In addition, the paper has the objective of assuring that the variations in human factors that can influence the success of co-production encounters are fully considered in setting performance targets for the elements of service systems.

Methodology/approach: This paper will provide a brief review of statistical process control techniques and discuss their applications in both manufacturing and service sector organizations to date. The concept of co-production will be introduced with emphasis on how this feature of service delivery complicates the application of these traditional models. In addition, the quality of a service is often reflected by the so called “gap” between what the service provider planned to deliver and what the customer expected to receive. Other gaps are also discussed, and a theoretical model for combining statistical and experiential quality components using a multi-variate approach is presented. The paper concludes with examples of how this model can be applied, and recommendations for future research.

Findings: To be discussed

Research implications: Quality in services has been addressed in a variety of ways, ranging from direct applications of statistical process quality control models developed for manufacturing systems to surveys of customer satisfaction with their service experience. Each approach offers some insights, but no single approach has been able to span the domains that statistical process control and customer opinions of their experience represent. An integrated systems approach is proposed in this paper, linking these seemingly disparate approaches to quality assessment. Our intent is to provide direction for future research and development in the area of co-production process quality management.

Practical implications: The integration of both system performance and customer satisfaction in quality control of the service system provides insight into how managers can reduce the gap between what the service provider planned to deliver and what the customer expected to receive. The reduction of the gap would potentially lead to a more effective process control and higher customer satisfaction.

Originality/value: The integrative approach taken by the authors extends the existing body of research in the area of customer service quality management. Its practical applicability is expected to be appealing to service systems managers.

Key words: Service Quality, Co-Production Process, Management of Service Systems, Service Systems.

Paper type: Research in Progress