

# The Impact of Service Quality on Student Satisfaction of Myanmar Commercial College in Mandalay, Myanmar.

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## ABSTRACT:

This research study the impact of Service Quality on Student Satisfaction of Myanmar Commercial College in Mandalay, Myanmar. The SERVQUAL model was used, focusing on tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The results showed that all five dimensions of service quality had an average mean score above 5, indicating strong satisfaction. Pearson correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between service quality and student satisfaction. Multiple regression analysis revealed that tangibility, reliability, and empathy significantly affect satisfaction. The study suggests that Myanmar Commercial College should train staff to be courteous and friendly, and prioritize service-related problems. the practitioners in higher education can reassess their management strategies and can identify and implement appropriate measurement tools to redesign the service delivery system to improve service quality.

**Keywords:** Servqual, service quality, Student Satisfaction, Education, private universities.

## INTRODUCTION

Education sector in recent years has led to a growing demand for higher education services (Lim et al., 2011). The high demand for education services is also accompanied by the increasing of higher education service providers, particularly private universities (Naidu & Derani, 2016). Due to the selection system in state universities, private universities become alternative for prospective students who wish to continue their higher education (Rama, 2016). The institutions can gain student satisfaction through delivery of excellent service values and this is an integral part in securing a sustainable competitive advantage in today's international educational market (Binney et al., 2012).

Service quality is the feelings of customers concerning the presentation of products or services. Basically, the purchase intention creates through providing satisfactory service quality.). Besides, it can be defined as the modification between what services customer expects and what actually he/she understandings Islam et al. (2020). According to Al-jazzazi and Sultan (2017) Service quality is considered as the customer valuation of a specific service that helps to fulfill the customers' perceived expectation of the services. Expectations are contracted by the customers' prediction about a service what they can experience during the transaction and it may vary due to customers' knowledge about a product or service (Kant & Jaiswal, 2017). However, in the academic literature service quality has gained a remarkable and scholarly research attention (Nambiar et al., 2018). Likewise, some irrepressible factors effect on customers' expectations like background of the customers; company's promotional activities; customers' psychological condition; delivering services process; and image of the product (Ahrholdt et al., 2017).

Nowadays the demand of the customers is expanding on the basis of technological impact in the business. Every organization should know the expectation of the consumers basically what they want so that can fulfill the needs through providing attractive quality services. The significant of this study is to find out the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is the important critical index for the success of the any company. In order to earn more profit, the organization manage customer's satisfaction through providing customers' needs and building long term relationship with them.

This research the study service quality on customer satisfaction of Myanmar Commercial College. The main priorities for what a student looking for while getting admission in any education institution including private universities that how much quality is matter for a student to stay with particular university.

### **Rationale Of The Study**

Private Universities need to know how students perceive the services they offer so that they can improve on them. Kasper et al. (2006), suggests that service quality is one of the factors that affect customer satisfaction. Universities have therefore to satisfy their students in order to compete. Service quality leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Kasper et al., 2006). The student perception about satisfaction can act as an essential tool to enhance the universities service quality.

Private universities are highly interested in employment, start-up, and business-related education services as a way to help students develop convergence knowledge to prepare for the fourth industrial revolution and overcome the current employment problems. Private universities are even more desperate to utilize these programs. These practical education courses are based on business subjects such as economics, accounting, finance, and distribution. They also include courses that can help students learn about start-ups and find employment after graduation. This study was conducted with the goal of changing the needs of private universities, while recognizing the importance of implementing excellent service quality and maximizing student satisfaction.

The provision of high service quality is a fundamental strategy that service providers can afford to maintain and increase their number of students. High service quality will affect the financing, reputation, and popularity of private universities that can guarantee the number of prospective students applying for the next period. The purpose of the study is to analyze the effect of service quality on student satisfaction of Myanmar Commercial College.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objectives of the study are;

- 1)The impact of Service Quality on Student Satisfaction of Myanmar Commercial College in Mandalay, Myanmar.
- 2)To examine the most influencing factors of service quality that contributes most to satisfaction of students in Myanmar Commercial College.

### **Method of Study**

A cross-sectional study will be conducted between 2021 to 2025. The targeted population is the students attending undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs who actively enrolled during the academic session of January, 2025 in Myanmar Commercial College. Stratified random sampling method will be used to collect the data. There are totally 1500 students and sample size will be 315 students from all classes. Statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 26 will be used to analyze the data. Multiple regression analysis will be used to identify the casual relationship between independent and dependent variables.

The questionnaire consisted of three major sections. The first section contains questions about personal profiles of the respondents including gender, age, type of business and period with service providers. The second section contained SERVQUAL questionnaire and it comprises the statements relating to the five service quality

dimensions, namely; reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles and the third section contained statements relating to student satisfaction.

### Scope and Limitations of the Study

This research was limited to assessing the service quality related issues of Myanmar Commercial College in Myanmar. The target groups of this research are only students who actively enrolled in Myanmar Commercial College during the academic session of January, 2025. There are other variables related to service quality which are not included in this study. There are a number of stakeholders like instructors, staff members and others. But this research is only conducted on students.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the study will review the empirical work done on the perception of service quality. Different authors define quality for services differently. The below literature will discuss some of the well-known definitions of service quality, student satisfaction and then will discuss the empirical work done by well-known researchers.

### Concept of Service Quality

There is no slight difference in terms of service quality proposed by management researchers. Many ways are used to provide definitions of quality service terms by researchers or management practitioners. It is simply that defining the quality of service is the totality of product characteristics that act to please and meet the desired consumer needs (customers). The quality of service can be interpreted as certain characteristics inherent in services that create excellence, meeting the needs and excitement of customers. The quality of service can also be interpreted as the difference between consumer service expectations and perceived services, and when expectations are greater than performance, consumer satisfaction will not occur (Parasuraman et al., 1985).

Service quality is important not only for service-oriented firms but also for tangible product-oriented company. There is a great deal of ambiguity found in text on the subject of service quality definition. Tangible products can be evaluated through standards but service quality measurement is different according to different authors.

In the case of tangible goods, quality can be assessed by examining the goods. Quality control can be used to check specifications and reject defective goods. But service quality cannot be assessed in the same way as a tangible product due to particular feature of service such as, intangibility, in separability etc.

As in the case of goods, the service provider cannot undertake quality check before the service is finally delivered to the customer. In order to assess the service quality, the customer judges the expected service quality against the perceived quality when they receive it. There are mainly two methods for measuring service quality viz.,

- Gap analysis Service
- performance measures Gap analysis

### Gap analysis

Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988) are the creators of this instrument that is used to measure the customer perceptions of service quality (Islam, 2012). According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, (1988) service quality is the expectation of customers. According to them customers having expectations from companies and they compare these expectations with perceived service quality. If perceived service quality meets or exceeds expectations customers are feeling happy, but on the other hand if perceived service quality is less than expectation, then customer would be disappointed. For such purpose the proposed Gap model by presenting five different types of Gaps might occur between service provider and receiver. These gaps are the following

Gap - I - Gap between customer expectation and Management perception. The reasons for this gap are lack of adequate market research and lack of upward communication. This gap can be narrowed by adopting adequate research programs to know customer needs and to improve the communication system. It can be measured by

using the SERVQUAL scale and comparing the scores obtained from the management and customers.

Gap - 2 - Gap between Management perception and service quality specification. This gap exists in service firms because of the lack of whole hearted commitment of management to service quality, inadequate service leadership etc. It can be closed by standardizing service delivery process and setting proper organizational goals.

Gap - 3 - Gap between Service quality specification and service delivery. The third gap originates from the discrepancies in the actual service delivery, that is, the service providers or employees do not perform at the level expected by the management. It is because of the ineffective recruitment, lack of system, better human resource management system etc.

Gap - 4 - Gap between Service delivery and external communication. The gap between service delivery and external communication occurs due to exaggerated promise or ineffective communication to the customer, which raise customer expectations. This can be narrowed by efficient and effective communication system.

Gap - 5 - Gap between expected quality and perceived quality. This gap exists because of the inequality in the service expectation of customer and his service perception. This can be overcome by identifying, quantifying and monitoring customer expectations and perceptions through the effective use of marketing and marketing research tools.

From the above literature one can conclude that there should be proper dimensions of service quality against which service quality should be measured. The use of SERVQUAL in educational services has been widely demonstrated in previous studies (Oldfield & Baron, 2000; de Jager & Gbadamosi, 2013; Naidu & Derani, 2016).

The original SERVQUAL scale was comprised of ten dimensions, which following further testing by Parasuraman et al., (1988) reduced from ten to five dimensions. From the results of a variety of reference sources, especially the results of Parasuraman et.al (1985), Hanaysha et al. (2011), Osman et.al (2017), Mwiya et al., (2017), Onditi & Wechuli (2017) indicates that the dimensions and indicators of the service quality variables as follows:

1. Tangibles: Tangibility which is defined as the appearance of physical facilities, equipment's, communication materials and technology. All these provide enough hints to customers about the quality of service of the firm. Also, this dimension enhances the image of the firm. Hence tangibility dimension is very important to firms and they need to invest heavily in arranging physical facilities in our case the class rooms, computer labs, common rooms, toilets canteen and the physical appearance of the universities.

2. Reliability: It involves how consistently organization is providing quality service and how much customer can rely on the firm. In our case the consistency of private universities regarding service quality and competent lecturers and how much students can rely on university and the faculty members.

3. Responsiveness: It includes how much the staff members are ready and willing to provide services. Responsiveness is the willingness to help customers and to provide prompt service. This dimension focuses in the attitude and promptness in dealing with customer requests, questions, complaints and problems. It also focuses on punctuality, presence, professional commitment etc., of the employees or staff. It can be calculated on the length of time customers wait for assistance, answers to questions etc. The conditions of responsiveness can be improved by continuously view the process of service delivery and employees' attitude towards requests of customers. In our case the faculty members and the administrative staff and their devotion to organizations and students. How much they are having concern regarding student's complaint, learning process and their best interest at their heart.

4. Assurance: It refers to the skills of the service providers. It can be defined as employee's knowledge, courtesy and the ability of the firm and its employees to inspire trust and confidence in their customers. In our case the awareness of the faculty members and the ability to implant self-reliance in students regarding service providers.

5. Empathy: It shows how much organization understands customer's requirements. This dimension tries to convey the meaning through personalized or individualized services that customers are unique and special to the

firm. The focus of this dimension is on variety of services that satisfies different needs of customers, individualized or personalized services etc. In this case the service providers need to know customers personal needs or wants and preferences. In our case the ability of teachers to interact with students in order to get the exact requirement and fulfill the need accordingly.

These dimensions are captured in the SERVQUAL instrument and the item is measured on the basis of responses of two statements: the first, measures customer expectations concerning a service (E) and the second, is the perception of the actual service delivered by the firms within that service sector (P). The gap for each item is calculated as the perceptions score minus the expectations score ( $P - E$ ). The results of computation were as follows:

- A positive gap scores implied that expectations have been met or exceeded, service quality is perceived to be satisfied.
- A negative gap scores implied that expectations have not being met, quality is perceived to be unsatisfactory.

Gap scores can be analyzed for each individual statement and can be aggregated to give an overall gap score for each dimension (Naidoo, & Nundlall, 2010). Moreover, SERVQUAL has been applied widely by researchers in higher education to assess customer perceptions of service quality (Khodayari & Khodayari, 2011; Mohamad Yusof et al., 2012; Al-Alak & Alnaser, 2012).

### Service Quality in Educational Services

Services on educational services have the same characteristics as services in other service sectors, as the existence of intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, perishability, and lack of ownership (Gruber et al., 2010). Because of these similarities, according to Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka (2006), educational institutions need to apply market-oriented and profit-oriented principles to achieve competitive advantage and institutional sustainability. One of the basic principles applied to achieve both is to provide high service quality. The ability of service quality to meet the expectations of students will determine the level of student satisfaction, university costs and benefits, student switching behavior, and positive behavior such as word of mouth and repurchase intention (Leonnard et al., 2015). Furthermore, according to (de Jager & Gbadamosi, 2013), predictors of student satisfaction with educational services are internationalization, marketing and support, access, staff and academic quality, accommodation, and facilities.

The quality of the learning services in college is very important for students and other stakeholders with higher education. Quality higher education is also a challenge for all communities, public and private universities. This is why many universities around the world place high attention positions on their efforts to provide quality education services as closely as possible to customers for their satisfaction (Kundi et al, 2014). Service quality at higher education institutions is a major determinant for customers before buying a product or all types of services available that play an important role in measuring the performance of service products in the organization (Archambault, 2008; Kundi et al, 2014).

Based on the findings of Hagen and Jordan (2008), the foundation of student retention is academic advisement in higher education. On the other hand, students can develop their mature educational and career goals when academic consultation provided effectively. Sumaedi et al., (2012) depict that in higher education institutions the advisory services have an affirmative influence on perceived service quality. Also, it can increase the satisfaction of students and their learning outcomes. Also, Peterson et al., (2001) in their study state that positive perception of students about their institution is connected to effective academic advising and students are more satisfied when they received meaningful and effective academic counseling.

In educational institutions the curriculum has considered as academic program given to students. Also, the curriculum dimension in various articles is known as subject content, program issues, academic concerns and course content. In addition, several articles have shown that there is an optimistic association among overall student perceived quality and curriculum (Ling et al., 2010).

In universities considering the quality of teaching staff is more important for the reason that, one of the main

factors which have the main role in the largest positive effect on student satisfaction is teaching staff in universities. Also, Hill et al. (2003) find that the important factors for students related to teaching quality is the quality of the instructor such as lecture delivery, comment to students during the meeting and on projects, and the connection with students in the classroom.

Facility dimension is associated with accessibility of physical facilities which protect academic activities as well as non-academic activities. Based on various researches, this dimension is mentioned as tangibles, physical features, and physical issues.

Aldridge and Rowley (1998) represent that, Physical facilities such as library services, technology facilities, and lecture rooms have a significant effect on students' educational experience. The independent variables of this study are considered based on these factors.

### **Student Satisfaction**

In a higher education organization, both public and private universities, students are the main customer elements. Universally customer satisfaction can be an indicator of how well the higher education institutions have provided the best service to the students as their customers. As an antecedent variable, student satisfaction has an influence on the behavior of trust, loyalty, positive word of mouth (Jiewanto et al., 2012; Mwiya et al., 2017), re-enroll or student intention (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2016; Azam, 2018). Furthermore, about customer satisfaction, in some literature reviews highlighting there is a lack of consensus definition of satisfaction as a concept with the quality of service, and generally there is no clear instrument received for the satisfaction of students in higher education institutions (Danjum & Rasli, 2012). Nevertheless, there are a number of studies providing a definition of customer satisfaction. Service quality is perceived as customer satisfaction component (Kiran, 2010). In the conception of the theory submitted Fornell et al (1996), (in Osman et al, 2017), operationalized the definition of customer satisfaction into six dimensions, namely customer expectations, perceived quality, perceived value, customer complaints, and customer loyalty. Furthermore, according to Fornell et al (1996) customer expectations are measured through three indicators that are overall expectations, expectations about adjustments and expectations regarding reliability. Customer perceived quality is operationalized through three steps such as overall quality experience evaluation, customization experience evaluation and reliability experience evaluation. The perceived value is measured through two items such as the quality rating given the price and the price rating given the quality. Overall customer satisfaction is operationalized through three measures such as the overall assessment of satisfaction, the extent to which performance is more or more exceeding expectations and performance ratings. Customer complaints are measured through the level of complain or complaints both formally and informally. Customer loyalty is operationalized through three such items as the possibility of buyback, price increase tolerance aimed at buyback, and price drop tolerance to persuade repurchase.

### **Impact of Service Quality on Student Satisfaction**

The service quality in the field of education and higher learning particularly is not only essential and important, but it is also an important parameter of educational excellence. It has been found that positive perceptions of service quality have a significant influence on student satisfaction and thus satisfied student would attract more students through word-of-mouth communications (Alves & Raposo, 2010). The students can be motivated or inspired from both academic performance as well as the administrative efficiency of their institution. Ahmed and Nawaz (2010) mentioned that service quality is a key performance measure in educational excellence and is a main strategic variable for universities to create a strong perception in consumer's mind. Basically, most of the models of satisfaction often compares students' expectations to the observed service quality encounter that are referred as service quality gap but evidence has made certain that in application of performance only paradigm minus the expectation has given positive effect to students' perceptions of service quality and with that, satisfaction directly affects students' intention to evaluate the education institution favorably (Alnaser & Al-Alak, 2012). Regardless of which focus is applied, higher education institution seeks to provide high service quality in every part of its process in order to be in favor of student as primary consumer's fulfillment response; reason being satisfaction is indicated as the consumer's fulfillment response and service quality is considered as the key performance measurement for excellence in the education industry (Talmacean & Domnica, 2013). Overall perceived service quality is an antecedent to satisfaction and it is also a major prerequisite for

establishing and sustaining students' satisfaction and retention and also students' future referrals (Talmacean & Domnica, 2013). For this study, dimensions of service quality can be used as independent variables, because they play an important role in the academic success and raising the reputation of universities.

### Previous Studies

Previous studies have proven that high service quality in educational services has a significant effect on student satisfaction (de Jager & Gbadamosi, 2013; Leonnard et al., 2013; Mustaffa et al., 2016; Kasiri, et al., 2017, Leonnard, 2017).

Several research papers have indicated that positive perceptions of service quality have a significant influence on satisfaction (Alves & Raposo, 2010), and that positive perceptions of service quality have a significant influence on commitment (Ding et al., 2010; Rodríguez-Izquierdo, 2020). The research of students in a public university in Ghana, Mattah, et al., (2018) found positive relationships among education service quality, satisfaction and loyalty. In the case of a private university in Ireland, Prentice et al., (2018) studied the relationships between service quality, value and satisfaction on student customer intentions and behavior, and found that perceptions of good service quality will have a significant positive impact on satisfaction. In a study of Saudi Arabian private higher education institutions, Azam (2018) hypothesized about the relationship between service quality dimensions and satisfaction and highlighted that there is a significant relationship among the four dimensions (Assurance, Empathy, Reliability, Responsiveness) and customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Khan et al. (2011) have also observed that higher the level of students' satisfaction greater will be their willingness to put great efforts towards their studies.

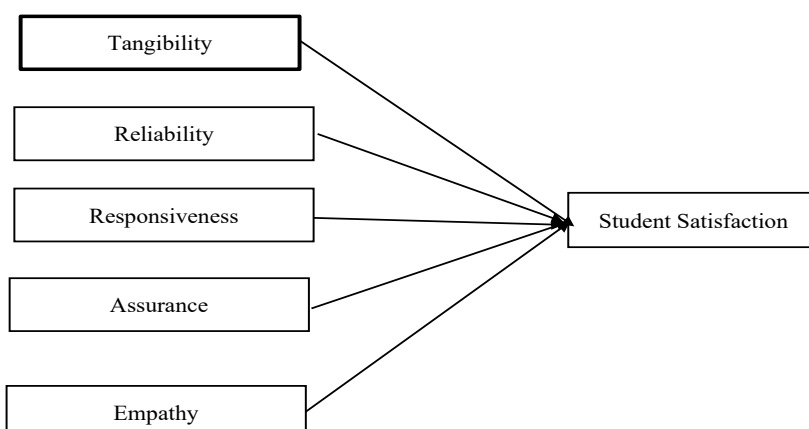
### Organization of the Study

This study includes Six chapters. Chapter (1) describes introduction, background of the study, problem statement of the study, research objectives of the study, definition of terms and organization of research paper. Chapter (2) presents the literature review. It is consisting of the concept of service quality, service quality in education sector, customer satisfaction and impact of service quality on student satisfaction. Chapter (3) describes research methodology. Chapter (4) describes profile of MCMI Chapter (5) presents descriptive analysis of respondents and empirical analysis of the effects of service quality on student satisfaction. In the last chapter (5), represents conclusions based on the findings and discussion, suggestions and recommendation, and needs for further research.

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on the review above, the proposed model is shown in Figure 1.1 This study adopted Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988)'s approach, and the dimensions of SERVQUAL were defined as the ability of higher education organizations to meet or exceed undergraduates' expectations. In this study, SERVQUAL was measured by five all dimensions, Tangibles, Responsiveness, Reliability, Assurance and Empathy.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework Service Quality Dimensions



Source: Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988)

## Key Findings

**Overall Satisfaction:** Descriptive analysis indicates high student satisfaction, Students appreciate to payment options, program accreditation, and lecturer experience.

**Correlation with Service Quality:** Strong positive relationships exist between student satisfaction and five service quality dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Higher service quality leads to greater student satisfaction.

**Impact of Service Quality:** Multiple regression analysis identifies tangibility, reliability, and empathy as the three most significant factors influencing student satisfaction.

**Empathy:** Commitment to meeting student needs fosters satisfaction.

**Reliability:** Partnerships with global institutions boost confidence in its degree programs.

**Tangibility:** Despite offering only online courses due to Myanmar's political and economic challenges, students positively view Myanmar Commercial College advanced e-learning system.

**Assurance & Responsiveness:** Although assurance influences satisfaction, its impact is not statistically significant. Responsiveness has minimal effect, suggesting a need for better communication strategies.

**Conclusion:** Given increasing competition in higher education, strong customer service is essential for student satisfaction and institutional success. Myanmar Commercial College should enhance service quality, especially in assurance and responsiveness, to further improve student experiences.

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