



The Effect of Service Quality on the Students' Satisfaction in Medan State Polytechnic

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v7i1.1305>

Abstract

This study attempts to investigate whether there is an effect of the service quality which covers reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible on the students' satisfaction in Medan State Polytechnic (MSP). The research approach used is descriptive quantitative by applying survey methods. This research was conducted at MSP from October to December 2018. The population in this study was the third-year students of the 2018/2019 academic year, totaling to 2,149 people with a total sample used in this study was 100 students. The data used in this study are primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through the distribution of questionnaire (questionnaire), interview, and observation. For secondary data, they were collected through documentation studies. Hypothesis testing with the F test was done by comparing the F value of the SPSS output results with the F table. The analysis shows that the responsiveness variable has a satisfaction level of 84.02% which is the highest level of satisfaction compared to other dimensions, while the tangible variable has the lowest satisfaction of 74.88%. From the overall dimensions of service quality, the level of customer satisfaction with service quality in the academic section of MSP reached an average of 81.39%. Based on the hypothesis test, it can be concluded that the variables of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangible simultaneously have a significant effect on the students' satisfaction at MSP which indicates that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected.

Keywords: *Service Quality; Students' Satisfaction; Medan State Polytechnic*

Introduction

The managers of higher education institutions as a form of service companies should not think that all the products or services they offer will certainly sell out regardless of what their customers want. Therefore, universities must be able to see what their customers want. In other words, if they want to increase value and satisfaction in the eyes of customers, namely students and the community in general, they must pay attention to service quality provided. Saleem, Moosa, Imam, & Ahmed Khan (2017) state that there is a need to ensure students' satisfaction with university. If they have a positive perception of the quality of service of the institution, then public trust in universities will also increase. It is in line with Dora (2017) clarifying that Almost all organizations are focused on high satisfaction because if the

customers are just satisfied, then they are easy to change their mind when it gets a better offer. Furthermore, this will affect the loyalty of students and the wider community to continue to use the services of higher education in the future.

The service quality (SQ) will depend very much on a quality management system approach that is able to guarantee that the needs of service consumers can be met by service providers. The development of a service quality management system that becomes the basis is the feedback from consumers. The service institutions must be able to develop evaluation systems from customers who use their services, and implement management systems documented in quality guidelines, procedures, work instructions, and recording forms.

Service quality is considered as a phenomenon considered within the context of expectations and perceptions of the customer about the service offered (Czarniecka-Skubina, Górska-Warsewicz, Laskowski, & Jeznach, 2019). Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, (1988) assert five dimensions of SQ usually known as *SERVQUAL*. Those five dimensions are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. The first dimension is reliability. Reliability is considered as the ability to provide the service accurately, and dependably as promised. The attributes to represent this dimension are (a) providing the services as promised; (b) reliable to handle the customer's problem; (c) stating the service correctly since the first time; (d) being on time to deliver the service; and (e) saving the notes based on the tenure dealt with.

According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), the responsiveness of employees is driven by a willingness or desire to help and provide services needed by consumers by not letting consumers wait for no apparent reason, so as not to give a negative impression on the services provided, if something goes wrong quickly responded, it can be an impressive and pleasant experience. The attributes that exist in this dimension are (a) to inform the customer about the exact time of the service; (b) quick service for customer (c) willingness to help customer; and (d) readiness to respond the customer's request.

Assurance dimension includes knowledge, ability, friendliness, courtesy, and trustworthiness of contact personnel to eliminate the nature of consumer doubts and feel free from danger and risk (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The attributes cover (a) the employees build the confidence of the customer; (b) the employees can make the customer feel safe during the transaction; (c) the employees can consistently be polite; (d) the employees are able to answer customer's question.

Parasuraman et al. (1988) argue that empathy covers the attitude of contact personnel and companies to understand the needs and difficulties of consumers, good communication, personal attention, ease of communication or relationships. The attributes that exist in this dimension are: (a) giving personal attention to customer; (b) the employees provides full attention to the customer; (c) prioritize the customer's business; (d) understanding the customer's need; and (e) comfortable operation time. Next, the last dimension is tangible. (Parasuraman et al., 1988)state that it is concerned with the availability of physical facilities, equipment, and communication facilities as well as others that can and must be in the service process. The attributes that exist in this dimension are:

In addition to the SQ factor, the type of university is also a consideration for prospective students. Vocational education such as polytechnic is an alternative choice for tertiary institutions. Medan State Polytechnic (MSP) is a vocational education institution that has the aim to shape qualified and skilled human resources through the teaching and learning process. To achieve these objectives requires an organizational climate that can stimulate motivation in lecturers to excel as well as to increase job satisfaction. At present the strategic role of the MSP is increasingly fading compared to when it was founded in 1982.

The services provided to customers will have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. According to Kotler (2000), customers' satisfaction is the level of one's feelings after comparing the performance (or results) he feels compared to his expectations. The higher the gap between customer expectations and the perspective perceived by the customer (gap), the customer will feel more dissatisfied with the services provided by the company, and vice versa. Customer satisfaction is very much determined by the quality of services desired by consumers, so universities as providers of education services should emphasize the provision of SQ in order to gain the trust of students and the wider community.

According to Law No. 12 of 2012 related to higher education, the university students are regarded as students registered and studying at certain universities. According to Evans (2006) in the corporate world, students are the same as consumers who buy products from universities. In general, an educational institution has diverse consumers, such as industry / corporation, parents, government and society as a whole, commonly known as stakeholders. Alves & Raposo (2007) defines student satisfaction as the process of comparing experiences received at universities with their expectations of the university.

Student's satisfaction is very important in running a university. It is defined as a short term attitude resulting from an evaluation of a students' educational experiences (Son, Ha, & Khuyen, 2018). This is also one of the challenges that a university should look toward (Muhammad, Kakakhel, Baloch, & Ali, 2018). In the context of student satisfaction with the quality of higher education services, student perceptions of SQ are assessed based on the service attributes provided by higher education. These attributes for example are the availability of lecturers with good and experienced education, responsiveness of the administration, the availability of facilities to support teaching and learning activities and so on. Product quality also influences such as the quality of graduates. Costs also affect the satisfaction of students. The services provided to students must be in accordance with the costs incurred by students if they want student satisfaction.

For this, it is necessary to know how the level of student satisfaction with the quality of education services in the MSP and at the same time to find what services are considered important for students but the services still do not meet student expectations, so that later obtained a suggestion that includes what services are important for students but the implementation is not good and needs to be improved; which services are important and have been well implemented and should be maintained or even what services that are not important to students will be found that can be ignored, so that priority services will be found.

There are some scholars conducting researches dealing with service quality and students' satisfaction. Chandra, Ng, Chandra, & Priyono (2018) conducted their research in order to observe the relationship of service quality towards students' satisfaction and loyalty. They conclude that there is a positive effect of service quality on student satisfaction and a positive influence of student satisfaction on student loyalty. Ayuni & Mulyana (2019) in their research attempt to see the relationship between service quality and the successfulness of e-learning in Open University, Indonesia. They drew conclusion that satisfaction obviously possess direct and significant effect on students' loyalty, even though the relationship of variables is not very strong. Green (2014) in his research tries to measure the role of service quality in higher education in South Africa. He argues that on average, customers had high expectations in tangibles, reliability and assurance dimensions and their highest perceptions were found in the assurance dimension.

Based on the background of the problem described above, the problem formulation in this study is whether there is an influence on the SQ (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible) on Student satisfaction at MSP? In relation to the problem, the hypothesis in this study is presented as the following:

Ha: There is a significant simultaneous effect of the variable dimensions of SQ in MSP on the students' satisfaction of MSP.

H0: There is no significant simultaneous effect of the variable dimensions of SQ in MSP on the students' satisfaction of MSP.

Methodology

This type of research used in this research is quantitative descriptive through survey methods. This research was conducted at Medan State Polytechnic located on Jl. Almamater No. 1 USU, Medan from October to December 2018. The population of this study was students in semester V of the academic year 2018/2019, for all study programs in the MSP, namely 2,149 people. For survey sampling, researchers used probability sampling, purposive sampling, and accidental sampling. The sample used in this study amounted to 100 students as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Research sample

No.	Department	Number of Respondents
1	Mechanical engineering	15
2	Civil engineering	13
3	Electrical engineering	15
4	Computer engineering	7
5	Accounting	32
6	Commerce administration	18
Total		100

The variables used in this study are the dependent variable and the independent variable. The independent variable is SQ (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible). The dependent variable is students' satisfaction. The data used in this study are primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained by using a questionnaire, interviews, and observations. Questionnaires were given to customers who have finished handling services in the academic section of MSP. Interviews were conducted with deputy director I for academic affairs, deputy director II for finance, deputy director III for student affairs, head of quality assurance unit, head of general administration and finance, head of departments, administrative staff, several teaching staff as main informants, and several people students as key informants. Secondary data were collected through documentation studies such as documents or reports on the number of service arrangements and profiles of the academic section of MSP, library studies, and bulletins or journals.

The data obtained were analyzed using the Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) or the suitability level analysis by comparing perceptions of performance according to customers with customer expectations. Hypothesis testing with the F test is done by comparing the F value of the SPSS ver 20 output results with the F table. Validity analysis and reliability analysis are carried out simultaneously which is processed by using SPSS the minimum sample in taking data is 30 respondents according to the opinion of Sinulingga (2011).

Results

Validity and Reliability Test Result

Respondents in the validity and reliability tests are from MSP students with 100 respondents for the distribution of multiple regression analysis questionnaires, then the correlation analysis between the question scores and the standard validity values was conducted. All questions on each variable have a validity value greater than 0.30 so that it is declared valid, and can be used in this study. For reliability testing, it was performed through the Cronbach alpha technique. Table 2 shows that the Alpha Cronbach value of all variables is greater than 0.60. This shows that the five independent variables and the Student Satisfaction variable are otherwise reliable or reliable for use in research.

Tabel 2. Reliability test result

Variabel	<i>Alpha Cronbach Score</i>	Status
<i>Reliability (X₁)</i>	0.901	Reliable
<i>Responsivenss (X₂)</i>	0.918	Reliable
<i>Assurance (X₃)</i>	0.917	Reliable
<i>Emphaty (X₄)</i>	0,919	Reliable
<i>Tangible (X₅)</i>	0.908	Reliable
Students' satisfaction (Y)	0.985	Reliable

Source: SPSS

Students' satisfaction

To find out the satisfaction of education services in MSP, researchers chose to use 5 dimensions of the quality of public services, namely reability, responsiviness, assurance, and empaty, and tangible. The reliability aspect consists of 14 statements. The highest level of satisfaction on the 8th statement is the well-structured lecture schedule with a value of 86.47%. The lowest level of satisfaction on the 4th statement is the availability of modules / textbooks with a value of 65.77%. The complete results are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Student Satisfaction Level on Reliability Variables

No	Statement	Interest Score	Satisfaction Score	Satisfaction level
1	Clarity in providing academic service information	351	453	77,48
2	Discipline of lecturers and staff in serving students	347	454	76,43
3	Time precision of academic services	345	439	78,59
4	Module / textbook availability	292	444	65,77
5	The ease of getting academic services	363	446	81,39
6	The ease of getting administrative services	335	436	76,83
7	The curriculum is well organized, structured and in accordance with employment	371	452	82,08
8	The lecture schedule is well organized	390	451	86,47
9	The presence of lecturers is in accordance with the lecture schedule	336	440	76,36
10	The ability of lecturers when teaching in class	383	462	82,90
11	The material presented is of high quality and in accordance with developments	366	461	79,39
12	Attitudes and abilities of administrative service officers in the department / Lab / Library	342	444	77,03
13	The institutions provide opportunities for student activities	356	434	82,03
14	The ease of student counseling and guidance activities	346	433	79,91

Based on the interview with Mrs. Nurisah as the deputy of director for academic affair, she asserted that,

“The module / textbook / coursnote have been provided by the institution, and students just have to buy it. The modules / textbooks / coursnotes have also been provided by the university, and I think the amount is sufficient to meet the needs of students. Maybe, at this time, the availability of the modul is still lacking, because the order has not arrived yet”.

From the results of this interview it can be seen that MSP continues to strive to meet the needs of textbooks for the students, but there are several obstacles faced in relation to the fulfillment of modules or textbooks for students such as the delivery process. Then, the dimension of responsiveness especially students' satisfaction in terms of educational services in MSP can be seen in table 4.

Table 4. The student's satisfaction level on responsiveness variable

No.	Statement	Interest Score	Satisfaction Score	Satisfaction level
1	Staff service responsiveness in the laboratory / department	344	410	83,90
2	The responsiveness of lecturers and staff serving students	360	432	83,33
3	The clarity of the procedure for borrowing and returning books in the library	358	414	86,47
4	The willingness of administrative officers at the department level in serving students	351	429	81,82
5	The complaints are resolved properly by student organizations	355	421	84,32
6	The ease of participating in student guidance and counseling activities	363	419	86,63
7	The clarity of employees in providing information	364	436	83,49
8	The staff service responsiveness in the library	356	418	85,17
9	The friendliness of lecturers in providing final assignment guidance services	367	449	81,74
10	The attitude of the department in handling students' complaints	345	446	77,35
11	The attitude and ability of library staff	347	412	84,22
12	The attitudes and abilities of administrative service officers in the department	370	432	85,65
13	The attitudes and capabilities of laboratory staff services	370	420	88,10
14	The award for outstanding students in the academic field	377	448	84,15

The highest level of satisfaction in the 13th statement is the attitude and service ability of laboratory staff with a value of 88.10%. This is because laboratory personnels in the department have been trained and skillful according to their level of expertise. Based on the results of an interview with deputy director II Mr. Abdul Rahman, he says:

“All employees whose main duty is in the laboratory must know their respective fields of work, because they include PLP employees, and have followed technical guidance on laboratory management. Yes, of course, they are experts”.

For the responsiveness aspect, the lowest satisfaction level on the 10th statement is the attitude of the department in handling student complaints with a value of 77.35%. The results of the interview with Ms. Nursiah as deputy director I for academic affairs, she says:

“I feel that student complaints have been responded to by the department, because every semester we at least hold an evaluation meeting which includes discussing students' complaints related to the services provided by the institution or department”.

In assurance variable, there are 14 statements. The highest level of satisfaction in the 10th statement namely security on campus during the day is well maintained with a value of 88.64% as shown in table 5.

Table 5. The students' satisfaction level on assurance variable

No.	Statement	Interest Score	Satisfaction Score	Satisfaction level
1	Institutional Reputation	377	434	86,87
2	Accreditation of study program	387	459	84,31
3	The standard number of students in a class	387	439	88,15
4	The security of parking in parking lots	366	444	82,43
5	The suitability of course material with learning plan	374	436	85,78
6	The ease of getting information about scholarships	349	453	77,04
7	The clarity of procedures for receiving scholarships	359	454	79,07
8	The institutional support for student organizations activities outside working hours	340	437	77,80
9	The freedom to carry out scientific activities on campus	355	433	81,99
10	The security on campus during the day is well maintained.	390	440	88,64
11	The institutional support for student talent activities	364	434	83,87
12	The freedom to participate in student organizations	383	444	86,26
13	The ease of academic information through communication information media (notice boards / banners / other media)	377	434	86,87
14	The classroom situation is conducive for learning	357	450	79,33

Based on researcher's observation, related to campus security during the day, especially the arrangement of parking for vehicle security, it is regarded as very good. The students' two-wheeled vehicles are parked in a centralized location that has been provided by MSP. Between the vehicle's entrance and the vehicle's exit, there is a security post in order to monitor its safety. In addition, every vehicle that will come out of the parking area must show a vehicle registration to ensure the existing security. Furthermore, the lowest satisfaction on the 6th statement is the ease of getting information about scholarships with a value of 77.04%. The information about scholarships is spread manually, or it is only informed through the media bulletin in each department so that it is vulnerable to disappear.

The SQ which is seen from the empathy aspect in terms of student satisfaction shows that the highest level of satisfaction is in the 12th statement namely the availability of student organizations in talent activities of students with a value of 87.06%. The lowest level of satisfaction on the third statement is the willingness of the reading room staff at the department and library level in helping to get a book reference with a value of 76.98%. The complete results can be seen in table 6.

Table 6. The students' satisfaction level on empathy variable

No	Statement	Interest Score	Satisfaction Score	Satisfaction level
1	The concern of lecturers and administrative staff in serving students	360	435	82,76
2	The concern for security personnel regarding security issues	354	435	81,38
3	The availability of the reading room staff in helping to obtain book references	331	430	76,98
4	The concern for janitors to clean the classroom	378	443	85,33
5	The availability of employees in the department to help solve student administrative problems	350	431	81,21
6	The academic service hours are according to students' needs	344	426	80,75
7	The adequacy of the number of lecturers in serving students	366	440	83,18
8	The lecturers and staff respond to complaints and suggestions well	362	432	83,80
9	Lecturers want to spend time outside of work hours to serve students	346	430	80,47
10	The communication between lecturers, staff and students is well established	378	445	84,94
11	The ease of contacting lecturers in guiding / counseling for student activities	360	433	83,14
12	The availability of student organizations in talent activities interests students	370	425	87,06
13	The student organization service hours according to student needs	360	422	85,31
14	The award for outstanding students in the field of talent and interest	372	442	84,16

The results of observation prove that the student organization at MSP for the institutional level is the Student Executive Board (*Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa*) and the Student Representative Council (*Dewan Perwakilan Mahasiswa*), and these organizations are very active in conducting various student activities. Meanwhile, at the department and study program level, there is a Study Program Student Association (*Himpunan Mahasiswa Program Studi*). In addition to accommodating the joy of students, student activity units (*Unit Kegiatan Mahasiswa/UKM*) were formed in accordance with their interests and interests, such as UKM for basketball, volleyball, robotics, cultural arts and many other types. For the lowest part, it is found that the officers in the library room in each department were not officers who had

librarian qualification education. This results in the officer not understanding his duties as a librarian. This is one of the obstacles faced why the quality of service for library reading rooms in each department of service has not been maximized.

The results of respondents' answers in table 7 present the tangible Variable contained 14 statements. The highest level of satisfaction in the 7th statement is the existence of parks and public space in the department with a value of 82.54%. The lowest satisfaction level on the 10th statement is the cleanliness of toilets with a value of 70.07%. The details are presented in table 7.

Table 7. The students' satisfaction level on tangible variable

No.	Statement	Interest Score	Satisfaction Score	Satisfaction level
1	The classroom comfort	340	448	75,89
2	Classroom facilities and media	322	455	70,77
3	Reading room in the library	348	430	80,93
4	The book collection in library	316	440	71,82
5	the facilities of laboratory room in department	340	443	76,75
6	Parking area at campus	336	433	77,60
7	The existence of parks and public places in department	345	418	82,54
8	Sport facilities	308	424	72,64
9	Praying facilities	367	446	82,29
10	The cleanliness of rest room	309	441	70,07
11	Wi-fi availability	276	450	61,33
12	The facilities and the comfort of service waiting room	326	427	76,35
13	The existence of other support facilities	315	438	71,92
14	The facilities of student organization room	334	431	77,49

Based on interview with deputy director II, he says “the existence of these parks makes the students feel at home and feel comfortable in campus. If they feel it, they will certainly improve their academic performance since discussions about the assignments of lecturers can be done in parks”. Regarding the level of student satisfaction with toilet cleaning services, especially those in each department, the researcher interviewed the head of general administration of the MSP. He says, “Every department, we have provided cleaning staff. Perhaps due to the high intensity of toilet use, the students felt that the cleanliness was not maintained, students should also have to maintain the cleanliness of the toilet because it was shared, they should have a sense of responsibility, too, that student should be”.

Based on the observation about the toilet cleanliness that many students complained about, researcher saw that in every department, the cleaning staffs were available and always cleaned student toilets at certain hours, but the students' responsibilities were also lacking. Overall, the level of student

satisfaction shows that the dimension of responsiveness variable has a satisfaction level of 84.02% which is the highest level of satisfaction compared to other dimensions, while the tangible variable has the lowest level of satisfaction with a satisfaction level of 74.88%. From the overall results of service quality dimensions, the level of customer satisfaction with service quality in the academic section of MSP reached an average of 81.39% as presented in table 8.

Table 8. The customers' satisfaction level each service quality variable

No	The dimension	Satisfaction level
1	<i>Reliability</i>	78,76 %
2	<i>Responsiveness</i>	84,02 %
3	<i>Assurance</i>	83,46 %
4	<i>Emphaty</i>	82,89 %
5	<i>Tangible</i>	74,88 %
	Average	81,39 %

Hypotesis testing

The statistical test results using the Simultaneous Hypothesis Test Method (F Test) obtained the value of Sig <0.05 or 0.007 <0.05. Since the Sig value is less than 0.05, then Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted. It means that there is a significant effect of SQ on the students' satisfaction of MSP.

Table 9. Significant value for Simultaneous Hypothesis Tests

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10,513	5	2,103	3,433	,007 ^b
	Residual	57,571	94	,612		
	Total	68,084	99			

Discussion

Based on the results of this study, it can be seen that several factors of the quality of education services in MSP have been running in accordance with what was expected, but there are also things that need to be improved in the quality of services such as the quality of the librarians and the toilet maintenance. Parasuraman et al. (1988) state by paying attention to the quality of service to consumers, it

will increase the index of customer quality satisfaction as measured by the dimensions of service quality that is tangible, empathy, reliability, responsiveness and assurance have an influence on customer satisfaction.

The results of the study are also in line with research conducted by Son et al., (2018) which states that the SERVQUAL model is suitable to assess effective factors for stakeholders' satisfaction with education services of universities. On the other hand, the findings oppose the research findings of Green (2014) clarifying that the assurance dimension is the highest in the customer's perception even though the sample is different. His research took the samples from undergraduate students at university, while this research took diploma students.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that the service quality covering reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangible variables simultaneously have a significant effect on the students' satisfaction of Medan State Polytechnic which indicates that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. Then, it is also suggested there are some aspects that need to be improved in order to elevate that students' satisfaction such as the improvement of the librarian quality and the facilities such as toilets, parks, and parking lots. Then, the problem of the delivery of the book should be overcome in order not to distract the learning process.

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