

The Relationship between Service Quality and Student's Satisfaction at Student Affairs Office Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China

Xiaodong Luo¹, Patima Rungruang²

¹MBA students Southeast Bangkok University, Thailand, 99497676@qq.com

²Advisor and Instructor of MBA program Southeast Bangkok University, Thailand, patima.pla2020@gmail.com

Abstract

The purposes of this research were 1) to study students' satisfaction of the service provided by Student Affairs Office. 2) to study Service Quality of Student Affairs Office. And 3) to study relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction of Student Affairs Office at Shandong College of traditional Chinese. The quantitative analysis method is applied in this research, based on the SERVQUAL model of perceived service quality theory, combined with the actual service quality of Student Affairs Office, according to five dimensions (reliability, tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy). The SERVQUAL model, with its five dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—offers a valid theoretical foundation for analyzing service quality in educational settings, where these factors are closely linked to student satisfaction and overall academic experience. The sample consisted of 297 students, academic year 2024, using simple random sampling. The instrument using Questionnaire to collect data with an index of consistency (IOC) between 0.67 – 1.00 and the overall reliability of 0.88. Statistics used to analyze the data were mean, standard deviation. The hypothesis was tested by using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The statistical significance was set at the 0.01 level.

The research results found that; 1) The students' satisfaction of the service, overall, at a high level. 2) The service quality of Student Affairs Office, overall, at a high level. 3) The overall relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction of the service at Student Affairs Office at Shandong College of traditional Chinese in the whole have the positive correlation, the findings suggest that enhancing service quality with a particular focus on the key factors identified such as empathy, responsiveness, and tangible improvements, will significantly improve student satisfaction. These efforts will contribute to the overall success and reputation of Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Keywords: SERVQUAL model, Service Quality in Higher Education, Students' Satisfaction.

Background and Statement of the problem

The relationship between service quality and student satisfaction in China, especially in higher education institutions, has been a key focus of research and discussion in recent years. As China's higher education system continues to evolve, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of service quality in universities, not only in terms of teaching but also in the overall student experience, including administrative services, campus facilities, and extracurricular activities. The research adopts the SERVQUAL framework developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) as the theoretical basis for measuring service quality.



Figure1: Top 10 Rankings About Service Quality of Campus Environment and Service in Shandong Province.
Source: <https://www.maigoo.com/top/402536.html>

Based on this ranking, we can conclude that top universities often provide high-quality services to students, which helps achieve higher levels of student satisfaction. The better the service quality, the greater the student satisfaction.

The quality of services provided by Student Affairs Office is a crucial aspect of the overall student experience. Student Affairs Office is typically responsible for a wide range of services, including academic support, organizational management, student affairs, campus life consultation, and more. These services play an essential role in supporting both the academic and personal development of students.

Student satisfaction is a key indicator for measuring the service quality of a college. As the school develops and the efficiency of the Student Affairs Office improves, student satisfaction becomes crucial in enhancing the institution's reputation and the office's ability to handle various tasks effectively. The quality of services can significantly influence students' overall perception of the college. When students feel supported by responsive, efficient, and caring services, their satisfaction with the educational experience increases. Conversely, poor service quality can lead to dissatisfaction, negatively impacting students' personal development, academic performance, and overall well-being. In some cases, insufficient support services may contribute to high dropout rates, which can adversely affect both students and the institution.

Student Affairs Office is the primary department responsible for interacting with students, and the quality of its services directly influences student satisfaction. However, challenges such as procedural complexity, operational inefficiency, and inadequate service quality often result in low levels of student satisfaction.

The quality of services offered by Student Affairs Office is essential to both personal and academic development. The overall relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction of the service provided by university in the whole have the positive correlation as a high level.(Zhao , 2023) Colleges should prioritize improving service efficiency, streamlining processes, and enhancing the overall service quality to ensure a positive student experience. Effective service delivery not only increases satisfaction but also improves the institution's reputation, reduces dropout rates, and fosters a supportive learning environment.

Although service quality in teaching has been extensively studied, limited research has examined the impact of non-academic services on student satisfaction, particularly within Student Affairs Offices in traditional medical colleges in China.

Objective

The purposes of this study are :

1. To study Service Quality of Student Affairs Office of Shandong College of traditional Chinese medicine, China.
2. To study student's satisfaction at Shandong College of traditional Chinese medicine, China.

3. To study the relationship between Service quality and students' satisfaction at Student Affairs Office at Shandong College of traditional Chinese medicine, China.

Expected benefits

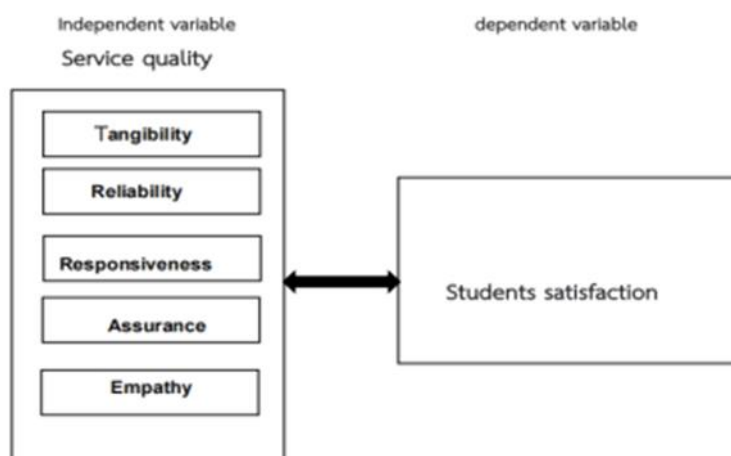
The results of this research will contribute to improving the service quality of the Student Office at Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine by identifying the main factors influencing service quality and enhancing student satisfaction.

1. Enhanced Service Quality: This study indicates that the service quality of college offices can be improved through better information management, process optimization, and staff training. It is recommended that college offices regularly assess and enhance service quality to promote the modernization of service management within the institution.

2. Identification of Key Service Quality Factors: Through a comprehensive analysis, this study identifies the main factors influencing service quality in college offices. Recognizing these key factors allows universities to focus on improving service quality more effectively and continuously prioritize student satisfaction.

3. Improved Student Satisfaction: The enhancement of service quality in college offices and the identification of key factors directly impact student satisfaction. By providing high-quality services, colleges can offer students more extracurricular activities and personal development opportunities, helping them improve their overall skills. Through these improved services, colleges can more effectively meet students' personalized needs, fostering their all-around development.

Conceptual Framework



Remarks: developing from delivering Quality Service model, Parasuraman (1990) refer Rungrueng, P., Chewngthrap, P., & Wonglek, P. (2021). Service quality and its relationship with user satisfaction at Chularat 3 International Hospital.

Research Methodology

1. Population and sample

Population consisted of 13,126 students enrolled Shandong college of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China in academic year 2024 (statistical report student office of traditional Chinese, 2024)

Sample of 297 students with the sample size determined by using Krejcie and Morgan Table (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) at a 95% confidence level and a tolerance not exceeding $\pm 5\%$.

Independent variables: Service Quality consists of 1) reliability, 2) tangibility, 3) assurance, 4) responsiveness, and 5) empathy and Dependent variable: 1) Student's Satisfaction.

2. Instrument Construction

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire, a self-administered format, designed based on a review of literature, theories, and relevant research. It consists of three parts:

Part 1: A questionnaire about Student's personal information.

Part 2: A questionnaire about Service Quality

Part 3: A questionnaire about Students' Satisfaction

Before proceeding with the actual data collection, the content fidelity of the questionnaire was tested. The questions were analyzed for the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC), with IOC between 0.67 and 1.00, which is consistent with the method proposed by Brown and Wilson (2020), who stated that the consistency index (IOC) should be greater than 0.7. After ensuring each question aligned with the research objectives, the questionnaires were try-out with 30 samples not included in the main research.

Instrument testing

The researcher conducted a quality assessment of the Questionnaire used in the study by performing a try-out with 30 personnel unrelated to the research sample. The data collected were analyzed to determine reliability using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The reliability analysis of the questionnaire indicates an Overall Paper Reliability coefficient of 0.88.

Service Quality	(overall is 0.89)	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
	Tangibility	0.81	5
	Reliability	0.91	4
	Empathy	0.91	6
	Responsiveness	0.94	5
	Assurance	0.89	5
Students' satisfaction		0.87	10

3. Statistic Applied in Research

The statistics used in this study are: Percentage, Average (X), Standard deviation (SD) and Pearson correlation coefficient

Research Results

Part 1: Results of Personal Information Data Analysis of the students including gender, age, Year of study at college, Majors. Frequency and percentage analysis was performed on the data.

Table 1 Analysis of Personal Information

Personal Information		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	192	64.65
	Female	105	35.35
Total		297	100.00
Age	Less than 20 years	28	9.43
	20– 22 years	126	42.42
	23 – 25 years	143	48.15
Total		297	100.00
Year of study at college	First year	41	13.80
	Second year	62	20.88
	Third year	194	65.32
Total		297	100.00
Major	Department of Medicine	106	35.69
	Department of Traditional Chinese Medicine	74	24.91
	Department of Chinese Medicine	95	31.99
	Department of Nursing	22	7.41
Total		297	100.00

Table 1 Shows the number and percentage of general information of parents of students who responded to the questionnaire, including gender, age, Year of study at collage, Major. From Table 1, it is found that general information of 297 students who responded to the questionnaire can be classified according to the following variables:

1. Gender: the majority of students who responded to the questionnaire were male (64.65%), and followed by females (35.35%), respectively.
2. Age: with the majority aged between 23-25 years old and above, with the largest number (48.15%), followed by 20-22 years old (42.42%), and under less than 20 years old (9.43%), respectively.
3. Year of study at collage: with the majority student in the third year, (65.32%), followed by the second year (20.88%), and under in the first years (13.80%) respectively.
4. Major: most the majority of students were in Department of Medicine (35.69 %), followed by Department of Chinese Medicine (31.99%), Department of Traditional Chinese Medicine (24.91%), and Department of Nursing (7.41%), respectively

Table 2 The mean and standard deviation of Service quality

Service quality	n = 297		
	\bar{x}	S	Level of Agreement
1. tangibility	4.11	0.96	High
2. reliability	4.06	0.99	High
3. empathy	4.09	0.95	High
4. responsiveness	4.08	0.99	High
5. assurance	4.08	0.96	High
Total	4.08	0.97	High

From Table 2 reveals that the Service quality is important student's satisfaction at Shandong College of traditional Chinese medicine, China as a whole and in all aspects is high ($\bar{x} = 4.08$). The area of utmost importance is the tangibility ($\bar{x} = 4.11$), followed by the empathy ($\bar{x} = 4.09$), responsiveness. ($\bar{x} = 4.08$), assurance ($\bar{x} = 4.08$), respectively.

Table 3 The mean and standard deviation of Students' satisfaction

Students' satisfaction	n = 297		
	\bar{x}	S	Level of Agreement
1. I am satisfied with the service quality other Student's Office Department.	4.20	0.87	High
2. I am satisfied with the service facilities provided by the Student's Office Department.	4.08	0.92	High
3. I am satisfied with the staffs in the Student's Offices.	4.09	0.92	High
4. I am satisfied with Student's Offices service places.	4.19	0.81	High
5. I like the efficiency of the staffs.	4.24	0.80	High
6. I like the service attitude of the staffs collage.	4.23	0.79	High
7. I like the efficiency of the staff.	4.03	1.03	High
8. I love visiting the Student's Offices.	4.12	0.97	High
9. I like to eat in the students' service places.	4.10	0.98	High
10. I am very satisfied with the service of the college.	4.01	1.05	High
Total	4.13	0.91	High

From Table 3, it was found that the top 3 factor of student's satisfaction at Shandong College of traditional Chinese medicine, China as a whole and all items are at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.13$). I like the efficiency of the staffs ($\bar{x} = 4.24$). I like the service attitude of the staffs collage ($\bar{x} = 4.23$). I am satisfied with the service quality other Student's Office Department. ($\bar{x} = 4.20$) respectively.

Table 4 The relationship between service quality related to students' satisfaction

Variables	Students' satisfaction			Results
	n	r	p	
Service quality	297	0.52	0.00*	Moderate
1.Tangible	297	0.33	0.00*	Low
2.Reliability	297	0.45	0.00*	Low
3.Empathy	297	0.76	0.00*	High
4.Responsiveness	297	0.46	0.00*	Low
5.Assurance	297	0.61	0.00*	Moderate

Table 4 presents the relationship between various aspects of service quality and students' satisfaction at Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China. The results show that overall, service quality has a moderate correlation ($r = 0.52$) with student satisfaction, indicating a significant positive impact. All variables are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

- Tangible ($r = 0.33$) reflects a moderate positive impact on satisfaction.
- Reliability ($r = 0.45$) shows a low but still significant correlation with student satisfaction.
- Empathy ($r = 0.76$), with the highest correlation, highlights the importance of personalized care in influencing student satisfaction, indicating that students highly value a compassionate approach in service delivery.
- Responsiveness ($r = 0.46$) indicates that students are significantly influenced by the responsiveness and attitude of the service providers.
- Assurance ($r = 0.61$) suggests that students appreciate service providers' competence and confidence in handling their needs.

In conclusion, all the factors—tangible aspects, reliability, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance—play crucial roles in shaping student satisfaction, with empathy and responsiveness being the most significant.

Summary of the Study

The correlation analysis of service quality—including tangibility, reliability, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance—reveals a strong relationship with student satisfaction. By focusing on these factors, colleges can enhance not only their attractiveness but also the overall quality of education they offer. Strengthening personnel by ensuring that well-trained professionals handle services directly improve service quality. Additionally, improving physical environments and streamlining processes can create a more conducive learning atmosphere. Enhancements in these areas will not only satisfy current students but also attract future students, contributing to the institution's long-term success and reputation for educational excellence.

Research Findings on Service Quality and Student Satisfaction at Student Affairs Office at Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine

1. Students' Satisfaction with the Student Affairs Office at Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine: The results showed that overall student satisfaction with the Student Office was at a high level. This reflects broader trends in service quality, where both the quality of education and the services provided are crucial factors in shaping student satisfaction.

2. Important Service Quality Factors Affecting Student Satisfaction: The key aspects of service quality that contribute to students' satisfaction at the Student Office include tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Students generally expressed satisfaction with the services provided by the Student Office, appreciating the convenience, clarity, and security of the services. The most influential factors affecting student satisfaction were convenience and speed of service, followed by clear procedures and contact details. Adequate facilities, professional service staff, and a warm service attitude were also regarded as important by students.

3. The Relationship between Service Quality and Student Satisfaction: The study revealed that service quality is moderately correlated with students' satisfaction at a statistically significant level of 0.01. The analysis showed that the individual service quality factors—tangibility, reliability, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance—have a positive correlation with student satisfaction, with the relationship being statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that enhancing service quality in the Student Affairs Office, with a particular focus on the key factors identified (such as empathy, responsiveness, and tangible improvements), will significantly improve student satisfaction. These efforts will contribute to the overall success and reputation of Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Discussions

Based on the results of the study, it was found that student satisfaction with the Student Office at Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SCTCM) is generally high. This high level of satisfaction can be attributed to several factors, including the quality of services, staff competence, accessibility, supportive environment, and efficient communication. These elements collectively contribute to creating a positive student experience, fostering trust and confidence in the Student Office. By continuously evaluating and improving these aspects, the office can further enhance student satisfaction, contributing to a conducive learning environment and the overall success of students.

The study also highlighted the significant role of service quality in shaping students' satisfaction at SCTCM. The high level of importance attributed to service quality factors emphasizes the need for continuous improvement in areas such as staff competence, efficient processes, clear communication, and a welcoming physical environment. By focusing on these supportive learning environment. Regular evaluation of service quality and responsiveness to student feedback are essential for maintaining high levels of satisfaction and ensuring the office continues to meet the evolving needs of the student body.

Furthermore, the results of the study reveal a statistically significant moderate relationship between service quality and student satisfaction at the SCTCM Student Office. This relationship is significant at the 0.01 level, indicating a low probability that the observed correlation occurred by chance. This finding supports the hypothesis that service quality plays a crucial role in influencing student satisfaction. However, the moderate strength of the relationship suggests that service quality alone does not fully determine student satisfaction. Other factors, such as individual student characteristics, expectations, or experiences outside of the Student Office, likely also contribute to student satisfaction. Future research could explore these additional factors to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the elements that influence student satisfaction at SCTCM. tangible aspects ($r = 0.33$) demonstrate a moderate positive influence on satisfaction, which is consistent with Mulyono et al. (2020), who suggested that tangible elements, such as facilities and physical resources, are often perceived as baseline expectations rather than differentiators of service quality. Reliability ($r = 0.45$) and responsiveness ($r = 0.46$) both show low to moderate correlations with satisfaction, reflecting that while dependable and prompt services are important, they may not be the primary drivers of student satisfaction in the Chinese higher education context. Assurance ($r = 0.61$) suggests that students value the competence and confidence of service providers, which aligns with Amin and Isa's (2021) findings that assurance significantly shapes satisfaction perceptions in administrative services. Most notably, empathy ($r = 0.76$) exhibits the strongest correlation, highlighting the central role of personalized care. This is particularly relevant in collectivist cultures like China, where Shahin (2020) noted that relational support and emotional understanding are critical to enhancing service experiences. Integrating these theoretical perspectives would strengthen the study's academic maturity and better situate its findings within broader scholarly discourse.

In conclusion, while service quality is a key determinant of student satisfaction, a holistic approach that considers various factors is essential for fostering an optimal student experience. Regular improvements and ongoing assessments are critical for maintaining high satisfaction levels and ensuring that the Student Office continues to effectively support the needs of students.

Recommendations

Tangible Aspect: The physical aspects of the Student Office at Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China, such as the condition of facilities, equipment, and learning resources, play a significant role in shaping students' perceptions. Given that tangible had a lower correlation ($r = 0.33$), the recommendation could ensure that classrooms, libraries, and laboratories are well-maintained and equipped with the latest technology can enhance the learning experience, making it more engaging and effective.

Reliability Aspect: This factor refers to the college's ability to consistently deliver on its promises. Reliable academic performance, timely provision of services, and dependable communication are essential in positively influencing student satisfaction. By establishing clear expectations and meeting them consistently, the

college can foster trust and confidence among students. Given that reliability had a lower correlation ($r = 0.45$), the recommendation could focus on implementing clear service protocols and student feedback mechanisms to strengthen consistency.

Empathy: The degree of care and attention provided by faculty and staff is essential for creating a supportive learning environment. Personalized attention, understanding individual student needs, and offering mentorship can greatly enhance overall student satisfaction. Colleges should prioritize training staff to be attentive, responsive, and empathetic to students' concerns. Since empathy had the highest correlation with satisfaction ($r = 0.76$), recommend specific training programs in emotional intelligence or mentoring schemes for student affairs staff.

Responsiveness: This refers to the college's ability to promptly address student inquiries and concerns. Given that reliability had a lower correlation ($r = 0.46$) By establishing clear communication channels and ensuring support services are easily accessible, the college can improve students' perceptions of the institution. Fast responses to academic and administrative queries contribute to a more positive experience.

Assurance: This aspect pertains to the competence and professionalism of the faculty and staff. Ensuring that instructors are well-qualified and knowledgeable enhances students' confidence in the education they receive. Since empathy had the higher correlation with satisfaction ($r = 0.61$), recommendation Providing ongoing professional development opportunities for faculty further improves the quality of education and boosts student satisfaction.

There should be further in-depth research into the service quality factors affecting students' satisfaction at the Student Office of Shandong College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China, to gain a competitive advantage. The findings of this study can inform future strategies and policies, helping the Student Office enhance its reputation and improve service quality, ultimately better serving the needs of students.

One critical factor that may influence service perceptions is the cultural and institutional context. In Chinese higher education, collectivist values often shape students' expectations, leading them to prioritize empathy, harmony, and group-oriented support services over individualistic concerns. Ignoring these cultural influences may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could address these gaps by conducting longitudinal studies to track changes in student expectations over time or by employing qualitative methods to explore how different student groups perceive and prioritize service dimensions.

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