

EXPECTATION AND PERCEPTION ABOUT THE SERVICE QUALITY OF THE B.ED. COLLEGES UNDER GAUHATI UNIVERSITY OF ASSAM: A GAP ANALYSIS

¹Hemanta Nath

ABSTRACT--The purpose of this descriptive research paper is to analyze the gap between student-teachers' expectations and perceptions about the service quality offered by the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam. The gap analysis has been done by taking consideration of the SERVQUAL model which was developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1985. For this study, the researchers considered the second year (2nd year) student-teachers of the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University. The total population for the study is 3740. The samples for the study have been selected using a multistage random sampling technique and the total sample size for the study is 363 with a 95% confidence level and 5% error of margin. A questionnaire has been prepared in tune with the SERVQUAL model, which has been standardized and used to collect the data from the selected samples. The researcher used simple mean via SPSS (V.20.0) to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that there is a gap across all the service quality dimensions, which indicates a loophole of service quality of the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University. These findings of the study would be helpful for the college management and administration, affiliated university, NCTE, policymakers to take appropriate measures for the improvement of service quality of the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam.

Keywords--Expectation, Perception, Service Quality, Teacher Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Service quality in higher education has got a lot of attention these days (Yavuz & Gulmez, 2016). Good service quality is essential to promote the institutions and to sustain a healthy and satisfying relationship with their primary customers. The service quality of the institutions occurs well when the customers (students) perceives that the delivery of the service exceeds their expectations about the service quality (Workie, Fenta, & Muluneh, 2017). Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, (1991) investigated that the service quality is measured through comparing expectations and perceptions of customers about the service provided by the institutions.

In order to understand the expectations and perceptions of customers about the service quality and the gap between expectations and perceptions about the service quality, the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry has a significant impact in commercial as well as education sector too (Shauchenka & Busłowska, 2010). The SERVQUAL model has been developed to assess the service quality of the commercial sector which later on used to assess the service quality of other sectors too. This model assesses

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Education, Assam University, Silchar, Ph: 8876676753, hemantanath6@gmail.com

the service quality under five dimensions i.e. Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). In this study, the researcher used a self-developed tool that is prepared in line with the SERVQUAL model keeping the SERVQUAL dimensions intact. Li, Asimiran, & Suyitno, (2018) in their study adopted a questionnaire in their study which has been prepared in tune with the SERVQUAL model. Alam, (2016) in his study to analyze students' expectations, perceptions and satisfaction used a questionnaire which is a refinement of the SERVQUAL model.

In this study, the researcher focused on understanding the service quality by analyzing the gap between student-teachers' expectations and perceptions about the service quality offered by the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam. Saleem, Ch, & Ahmad, (2017) conducted a study to identify the gaps in service quality of higher educational institutions and found that there are gaps in all the five dimensions of service quality. Li, Asimiran, & Suyitno, (2018) focused on findings students' expectations and perceptions about the service quality and the gap between students' expectations and perceptions about the service quality. The researcher found that there are gaps exists in students' expectations and perceptions about service quality.

B.Ed. colleges, as a teacher education institution, prepares future teachers of the nation which has a direct link with the quality of school education of the nation. The quality of school education of the nation largely depends upon the quality of teachers being prepared by the teacher education institution (Dilshad, 2010), which again rests on the service quality of the teacher education institution. These certainly express the criticalness of evaluating the service quality of the teacher education institutions.

II. METHODOLOGY

Exploratory descriptive survey method has been used for the present study which helps in an in-depth understanding of the problems and helps in describing in a better way. The second-year (2nd year) student-teachers of the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam are the population of the study which is 3740 (NCTE, 2019). The researcher used multistage random sampling to select the samples from the population. In the first stage, the researcher randomly selected seven B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University. In the second stage, the researcher randomly selected 363 student-teachers from the seven B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University with a 95% confidence level and 5% error of Margin.

The researcher developed and standardized the tool which has been used to collect primary data for the study. There are 48 items in the tool which have been prepared considering the present teacher education context in tune with the five dimensions of SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Validity and Reliability of the tool have been established. The Content Validity of the tools has been established by using the Lawshe method (Lawshe, 1975) and the Content Validity Index (CVI) is found to be 0.78. The researcher used the Rational Equivalence method to establish the reliability of the tool and the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (α) computed and found to be .939. After standardizing the tool, the researcher split the tool into two different tools. One tool to measure student-teachers' expected service quality and another tool to measure perceived service quality. The researcher used the simple mean method to analyze the primary data.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

To explore the gap between student-teachers' expectations and perceptions about the service quality offered by the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam, the mean score of each item has been calculated for both expected and perceived service quality. Subsequently, to find out the gap the mean score of expected service quality has been subtracted from perceived service quality. The gap analysis has been presented in table no 1.1.

Table 1.1: Item Wise Gap Analysis

Item Sl. No	Dimensions	Expected mean score	Perceived Mean score	Gap (P-E)
1	Tangibles	4.74	3.30	-1.44
2		4.38	2.92	-1.46
3		4.18	3.39	-0.79
4		4.65	4.04	-0.61
5		4.76	4.10	-0.66
6		4.82	3.84	-0.98
7		4.76	3.53	-1.23
8		4.31	2.18	-2.13
9		3.99	1.75	-2.24
10		4.50	2.80	-1.7
11		4.61	3.17	-1.44
12		4.08	2.13	-1.95
13		4.07	2.12	-1.95
14		4.49	3.23	-1.26
15	Reliability	4.51	3.59	-0.92
16		4.67	3.72	-0.95
17		4.53	2.91	-1.62
18		4.03	1.95	-2.08
19		4.52	3.72	-0.8
20		4.58	4.24	-0.34
21		4.39	3.42	-0.97
22		4.52	3.83	-0.69
23		4.46	3.67	-0.79
24		4.11	2.20	-1.91
25		4.09	2.21	-1.88
26		4.45	3.22	-1.23
27		4.67	3.65	-1.02
28	Responsiveness	4.59	4.04	-0.55
29		4.50	3.77	-0.73
30		4.43	3.82	-0.61

31		4.62	4.10	-0.52
32		4.45	3.86	-0.59
33	Assurance	4.58	3.98	-0.6
34		4.67	4.31	-0.36
35		4.31	3.86	-0.45
36		4.26	3.82	-0.44
37		4.74	4.19	-0.55
38		4.73	4.18	-0.55
39		4.53	3.98	-0.55
40		4.51	3.91	-0.6
41		4.47	3.83	-0.64
42		4.40	3.73	-0.67
43	Empathy	4.20	3.54	-0.66
44		4.47	3.65	-0.82
45		4.54	3.56	-0.98
46		4.35	2.82	-1.53
47		4.42	3.79	-0.63
48		4.36	3.82	-0.54

In table no 1.1., the mean score of expected service quality and the mean score of perceived service quality has been presented. In the last column of the table, the gap between expected service quality and perceived service quality of student-teachers about the service quality offered by the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam have been presented. The gap between the expected and perceived service quality shows that the service quality offered by the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University is not as per the expectations of the student-teachers. We can see a gap in each and every item under all the five dimensions of service quality. Among them, item no eight ‘College library should have access to online journals’; item no 18 ‘The college should give free access to internet facilities to the students’; item no 12 ‘The college should have a psychological Laboratory’; and item no 13 ‘The college should have a well-equipped language laboratory’ found to be the highest gap with a mean score of -2.13, -2.08 and -1.95 and -1.95 respectively. Item wise lowest gap found to be in the item no 20 ‘There should have regularity in classroom teaching in the college’ and item no 34 ‘Students of the college should feel safe in the college premises’ with a mean score of -.34 and -.36 respectively. The gap between student-teachers expected and perceived service quality depicts that the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University fail to deliver the service quality that matches the expectations of the student-teachers.

Table 1.2: Dimension Wise Gap Analysis

Sl. No	Dimensions	Expected SQ (Mean Score)	Perceived SQ (Mean Score)	Gap (P-E)
1	Tangibles	4.45	3.04	-1.41
2	Reliability	4.43	3.26	-1.17

3	Responsiveness	4.51	3.91	-0.6
4	Assurance	4.53	3.98	-0.55
5	Empathy	4.39	3.53	-0.86

In table no 1.2, dimension wise mean score of expected service quality and perceived service quality has been calculated. In the last column, dimension wise gap between expected and perceived service quality has been calculated. From the analysis, it is found that there is a gap in each and every dimension of service quality. The higher gap among the dimensions is found to be in the 'Tangibles' dimension with a mean score of -1.41, which indicates that the colleges under Gauhati University lack physical facilities which are important for the proper teaching-learning process in the B.Ed. colleges. The least gap among the dimensions is found to be in the 'Assurance' dimension with a mean score of -0.55 followed by the 'Responsiveness' dimension with a mean score of -0.6. The analysis shows that the service quality of the colleges under Gauhati University fails to meet the expectations of the student-teachers.

IV. DISCUSSION

Delivery of Service quality is very crucial for an institution to remain competitive. Delivery of good service quality is somehow related to students' satisfaction and students' loyalty towards the institutions (Chandra, Ng, Chandra, & Priyono, 2018). The findings of the present study revealed that the delivery of service quality of the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University is not up to mark. The delivery of service quality of the B.Ed. colleges fail to match the student-teachers' expectations across the different dimensions of service quality which might have a negative impact on student-teachers satisfaction and their loyalty towards the institution. Based on the findings, the researcher would like to suggest the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati university to arm the colleges with necessary physical facilities, such as Psychology laboratory, Language laboratory, Online access of different journals in the library etc. The researcher also suggests the B.Ed. colleges to provide training on socially useful productive works and exposure to the school environment to the student-teachers. Development of necessary teaching skills, professional ethics, proper guidance during practice teaching to the student-teachers should be ensured by the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University. The findings of the study would help the college management and administration to take necessary measures to ensure improvement in the service quality of the B.Ed. colleges. Apart from this, the findings would also help the affiliated university, NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education), policymakers to take essential measures for improving the service quality of the B.Ed. colleges under Gauhati University of Assam.

V. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to Dr. Remith George Carri, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Assam University, Silchar for his continuous and selfless support for the accomplishment of this research paper.

REFERENCES

1. Alam, T. (2016, Septmber). An Empirical Analysis of Students' Expectation, Perception and Satisfaction towards Service Quality of College of Business Administration; Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al Kharj, KSA. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9(33). doi:DOI: 10.17485/ijst/2016/v9i33/95003
2. Chandra, T., Ng, M., Chandra, S., & Priyono. (2018). The Effect of Service Quality on Student Satisfaction and Student Loyalty: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 9(3), 109-131.
3. Dilshad, R. (2010). Assessing Quality of Teacher Education: A Student Perspective. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 30, 85-97. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228486715_Assessing_Quality_of_Teacher_Education_A_Student_Perspective
4. Lawshe, C. (1975). A Quantitative Approach to Content Validity. *Personnel Psychology*, 28, 563-575.
5. Li, C. Y., Asimiran, S., & Suyitno, S. (2018). Students' Expectations and Perceptions on Service Quality of E-Learning in a Selected Faculty of a Public University in Malaysia. *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on*. Atlantis Press.
6. Parasuraman, A., Berry, L. L., & Zeithaml, V. A. (1991). Refinement and Reassessment of the SERVQUAL model. *Journal of Retailing*, 67(4), 420-450.
7. Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A Multiple - Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Seervice Quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 13-40.
8. Saleem, M., Ch, A. H., & Ahmad, S. (2017, August). Identification of Gaps in Service Quality in Higher Education. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 39(2), 171-182. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/07a4/28f7033c09d19a64d8142b4444c0ad6f5ca8.pdf>
9. Shauchenka, H., & Busłowska, E. (2010). Methods and tools for higher education service quality assessment (survey). *Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Białostockiej. Informatyka*, 5(1), 87-102. Retrieved from <http://yadda.icm.edu.pl/yadda/element/bwmeta1.element.baztech-article-BPB1-0047-0014>
10. Workie, D. L., Fenta, H. M., & Muluneh, E. K. (2017). Students' perception of service quality and its impact on their satisfaction in Amhara Region, Ethopia. *Ethopia Journal of Science and Technology*, 10(2), 95-108. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ejst.v10i2.2>
11. Yavuz, M., & Gulmez, D. (2016). The Assessment of Service Quality Perception in Higher Education. *TED EĞİTİM VE BİLİM*, 41. doi:10.15390/EB.2016.6187.