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SERVICE QUALITY (SERVQUAL) ON PHARMACEUTICAL STUDENTS SATISFACTION OF PHARMACEUTICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SIKKIM STATE, INDIA

M. Vetri Selvi
Assistant Professor, School of Management,
SRM University, Sikkim. India

Dr. V.M. Ponniah
Dean, School of Management,
Kattankulathur Campus, SRM University. Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

Service and quality are driving forces in the Pharmaceutical student's satisfaction. As Pharmaceutical student's satisfaction tussle for competitive advantage and high service quality, the evaluation of educational service quality is essential to provide motivation for and to give feedback on the effectiveness of educational plans and implementation. This research presents an enhanced approach to using SERVQUAL for measuring student satisfaction. It involves the use of factors concerning student services that are queried and surveyed using the SERVQUAL methodology. The proposed instrument was tested at Pharmaceutical student's satisfaction in Sikkim state, India.

Key words: Service and Quality, Pharmaceutical Student's Satisfaction, Educational Plans and Implementation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education, like most business and organizations today, is increasingly concerned about the quality of its goods and services. Currently, the literature pertaining to service quality in the higher education sector is significantly undeveloped. Traditionally, many researchers have focused their efforts on commercial services[1]. Considering any other services, management

education institutes are additionally a novel kind of service sector. In today's competitive educational environment like most business schools is increasingly concerned about the importance of measuring service quality[2]. Management education has seen a noteworthy growth in India within the recent years as mirrored within the steep rise within the range of institutes providing postgraduate programmes in management education. With the rise within the variety and kinds of business faculties, there are growing concerns about maintaining the quality of management education among the country.

As ISO 9001-2000 serves the purpose of increasing consistency of a product or enhancing service quality, the management institutions have to commit in fulfilling the requirements of providing good quality education. Berry and Parasuraman[3] argue that the strategic success of a service organization depends on the ability of service providers to enhance their images by consistently meeting or exceeding customer's service expectations. In this context management education institutions are a service provider and students are playing the role of customers. It is the responsibility of the academics staff and faculty administrator to adopt a policy of continuous improvement for students (customers) and to maintain the quality of management education. All of them in the institutions play separate role in ensuring service quality in management education. In India, education is that the key to the task of nation-building. It is additionally a well accepted undeniable fact that providing the right information and skills to the youth can ensure the overall national progress and economic process. It is an essential element in human resource development. The Indian education system acknowledges the role of education in inculcation the values of doctrine, respect for democratic traditions and civil liberties and go after justice. The ongoing demand to strengthen the Republic of Indian education sector has displayed several avenues for individuals of India additionally as non-residents of India to take a position in education sector that\'s why, Indian education sector has been recognized as a ―Sunshine Sector‖ for investment in the recent past. Education is such a prestigious and fruitful investment that it always rewards in multiple ways. It has always been accorded an honoured place in every economy. The strong and effective educational system results in the economic growth, social transformation and greater performance of the students. Thus, education industry plays an increasingly important role in supporting public education by meeting the demand for products and services that both complement basic education services and supplement their underlying goals. The industry is defined by four main categories: Schools/Service Providers, Supplemental Education Service Providers, Products and Education Service Businesses. As a result of globalization, Indian economy strongly influences higher education to improve quality of life.

2. GROWTH OF PHARMACY EDUCATION

Pharmacy is the art and science of manufacturing and dispensing of drugs prepared by natural and synthetic sources, and using them for the treatment and prevention of diseases. Pharmacy encompasses various professional skills, such as knowledge for drug synthesis, quality control tests, and detection of degradation products and storage of pharmaceutical products as well as dosage form preparation, route of administration, drug-drug and drugfood/herbal interactions. The responsibility of establishing a link between the realms of health sciences and basic pharmaceutical sciences lies in the hands of the pharmacist. Traditionally, the job of a pharmacist was to compound and dispense the required medications for patients. In 1990, Hepler & Strand proposed the idea of "Pharmaceutical Care", but it has taken form recently. This means that the role of a pharmacist has or will significantly shift from its traditional role and now the pharmacist is or will be expected to engage with the patient on a one-to-one basis, and help him/her understand the drug administration and implications of usage better.

Currently, there are more than 1500 institutions offering various pharmacy training programmes across the country. With an annual enrolment of around 100,000 students, the influx of students into pharmacy colleges is at an all time high. The pharmacy degree programs offered in India include: Diploma in Pharmacy (D. Pharm), Bachelor of Pharmacy (B. Pharm), Master of Pharmacy (M. Pharm), Master of Science in Pharmacy [MS (Pharm)] and Master of Technology in Pharmacy [MTech (Pharm)], Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD), and Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmacy (PhD). Integration of two courses like B. Pharm + MBA or M. Pharm + MBA has also been initiated by some institutions. Until the early 1980's, only 11 universities and 26 colleges offered pharmacy degree programmes in India.

Some of Pharmacy Institution only conducting Pharmacy courses in the State of Sikkim state, India. It is an independent, co-educational and self-financed institution offering Diploma, Undergraduate, Post graduate and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) pharmacy programmes.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Pharmaceuticals education is facing pressure to improve value in its activities[7]. The present tenet for enhancing educational value is to expend effort on continuous improvement, to focus on stakeholder interests, and to increase student satisfaction. Student satisfaction is often used to assess educational quality, where the ability to address strategic needs is of prime importance[8]. Quality in education can be said to be determined by the extent to which students' needs and expectations can be satisfied. Various concepts and models have been developed to measure student and stakeholder satisfaction. The present research builds upon the SERVQUAL instrument.

4. RESEARCH GAP – IDENTIFIED

Pharmaceuticals education has been urged with the need to evaluate their role in the society and identify their stakeholders. We believe that the success of a pharmaceuticals education is to some extent determined by its capability to identify its stakeholders and manage their demands and interests. Pharmaceuticals education needs to meet the demands and expectations of different stakeholders. For quality assurance to be achieved, managing relations with stakeholders is crucial because they are involved in internal and external evaluations of pharmaceuticals education. The quality of services provided by pharmaceuticals education must be continuously improved in order to keep up with the demands and interests of their stakeholders.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research was carried out with students exposed to a new type of educational program that combines face-to-face encounters with distance learning experiences. Respondents belong to five graduate courses in management. Data collection was performed at five different time points, targeting all attending students as they continued their studies[4].

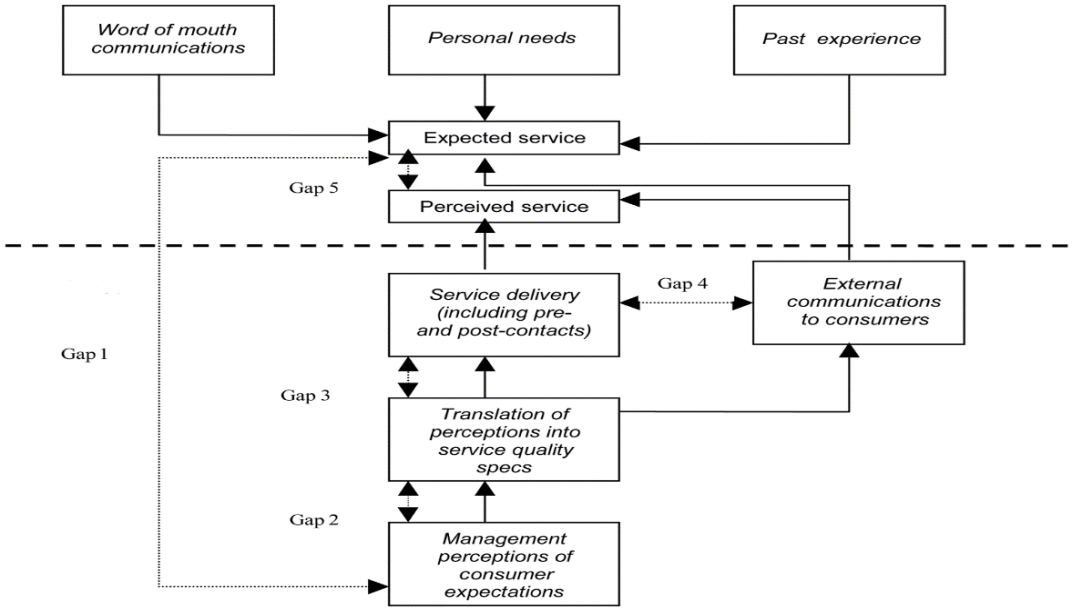
Author suggested that goal of this study was to determine the main variables that are part of the management strategies for quality assurance in higher education. The study was conducted in 2016 on a representative sample of secondary schools in Suceava County, Romania. The research methodology has mixed quantitative analysis of collected data using a questionnaire applied to teachers from seven schools in the Suceava County (268 respondents) and qualitative analysis of public documents referring to performances in the secondary education system.

To achieve the questionnaire, an adaptation of the SERVQUAL method was used, specific for the services domain. It was aimed at establishing the differences between perceptions and expectations of teachers on human and material resources necessary to ensure the quality of services in education. The results were correlated with data on students' performances in high school and / or professional school [5].

Authors explains that most of the existed researches of educational service quality are concentrated on the definition of service quality in education, measurement methods and the establishment of scales, or on student perception of service quality and its implication, while researches on the causes of educational service quality are quite scarce.

In this study, the discussion on the causes of educational service quality was complemented from the perspective of social network, especially through analysis at the team level. A total of 478 copies of social network questionnaires were collected from 15 educational teams. Meanwhile, targeting at the educational institutions' customers, the service quality survey was conducted with 1,487 copies of valid samples in total. The results indicate that individual-level social capital in the form of trust relations positively influences educational service quality. Among the group level factors, group centrality and number of cliques have a significant impact on group members' service quality, which also moderate the effect of trust on service quality [6].

6. PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL



Source: Parasuraman *et al.* (1985)

6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Gap 1: There is an impact on word of mouth communications and management perception

Gap 2: There is an impact on service quality space and management perception

Gap 3: There is an impact on service quality space and service delivery

Gap 4: There is an impact on external communications and service delivery

Gap 5: There is an impact on expected service and perceived service

7. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the level of service quality delivered by pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

2. To know the student satisfaction through the quality of service provided.

3. To measure the satisfaction level of current customer in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

4. To know the reliability of service in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

8. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Age	**Frequency**	**%**
<25	4	4.6
26-30	18	20.7
31-35	35	40.2
36-40	18	20.7
>40	12	13.8
Gender	Frequency	%
Male	67	77.0
Female	20	23.0
Total	87	100.0
Monthly Income of the Family	Frequency	%
<25000	7	8.0
26000-30000	15	17.2
31000-35000	33	37.9
36000-40000	23	26.4
>40000	9	10.3
Total	87	100.0

The above table 1, it is infers that 40.2 % of the respondents were belongs to 31 – 35 years, and 20.7 % of the respondents were belongs to 36-40 and below 25 years. The majority of the respondents (77 %) were male (23%) of Respondent is female. The majority of the respondent's family is earning 31000- 35000 income per month.

Table 2 On the quality of Service provided by pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India - Variable check under weighted Average Method.

S. No	**Particulars**	**No of Respondents**	**Points**	**Weighted Points**
1	Disagree	1	2	2
2	Neutral	19	3	57
3	Agree	45	4	180
4	Strongly agree	22	5	110
	Total	87		349
Weighted average = Total weighted Points / No of Respondents = 349/87= 4(Agree)				

From the table2, it is infer that the weighted average point for the quality of service is 4 which means most of the respondents are Agree about the quality of service they received.

Table 3 On ability of the employees to understand the customer specific needs- Variable check under weighted Average Method

S. No	Particulars	No of Respondents	Points	Weighted Points
1	Disagree	2	2	4
2	Neutral	35	3	105
3	Agree	30	4	120
4	Strongly agree	20	5	100
	Total	87		327
Weighted average =Total weighted Points/No of Respondents= 327/87= 3.7 or 4(Agree)				

From the table3, it is infer that the weighted average point for the ability of the teaching profession to understand the student specific needs is 4 which means most of the respondents are Agree about the ability of the teaching profession to understand the student specific needs they received.

Table 4 On courteousness of the teaching profession - Variable check under weighted Average Method

S. No	Particulars	No of Respondents	Points	Weighted Points
1	Disagree	1	2	2
2	Neutral	19	3	57
3	Agree	45	4	180
4	Strongly agree	22	5	110
	Total	87		349
Weighted average =Total weighted Points/No of Respondents= 349/87= 4(Agree)				

From the table 4, it is infer that the weighted average point for the courteousness of the employees is 4 which means most of the respondents are Agree about the courteousness of the employees they received.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS (H1): There is a significant association between age and Overall service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

Table 5 CROSSTAB

Age	Service Quality		Total
	Agree	Disagree	
<25	4	0	4
26-30	18	0	18
31-35	31	4	35
36-40	14	4	18
>40	11	1	12
Total	78	9	87

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.373	4	.251

As the Chi-Square value (0.251) is not less than the significant level of 0.05, so H_1 is rejected, H_0 is accepted. There is no significant association between the age and Overall service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS (H1): There is a significant association between gender and Overall service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

Table 6 CROSSTAB

Gender	Service Quality		Total
	Agree	Disagree	
Male	60	7	67
Female	18	2	20
Total	78	9	87

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.003	1	.954

As the Chi-Square value (0.954) is not less than the significant level of 0.05, so H_1 is rejected, H_0 is accepted. There is no significant association between the gender and Overall service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS (H1): There is a significant association between monthly income and Overall service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

Table 7 CROSSTAB

Monthly income	Service Quality		Total
	Agree	Disagree	
<25000	6	1	7
26000-30000	14	1	15
31000-35000	30	3	33
36000-40000	22	1	23
>40000	6	3	9
Total	78	9	87

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.412	4	.170

As the Chi-Square value (0.170) is not less than the significant level of 0.05, so H_1 is rejected, H_0 is accepted. There is no significant association between the monthly income and Overall service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

9. RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Majority of the respondents were belongs to 31 – 35 years, and 20.7 % of the respondents were belongs to 36-40 and below 25 years.
- Majority of the respondents (77 %) were male (23%) of Respondent is female.
- Majority of the respondents families earning 31000- 35000 income per month.
- Most of the respondents are agree about the quality of service they received. Which means most of the respondents are agree about the appearance of the teaching profession they received, majority the respondents are agree about the appearance of the materials they received, majority of the respondents are agree about the delivering the promises to do something by a certain time they received and majority of the respondents are agree about the teaching profession interest in solving students problems they received.
- Majority of the respondents are agree about performing right service they received, majority of the respondents are agree about providing services at the promised time they received,.

- Majority of the respondents are agree about the accuracy of the MIS they received and most of the respondents are agree about telling the students exactly when services will be performed they received.
- Best part of the respondents are agree about the receiving prompt service from the teaching profession they received and majority of the respondents are agree about the willingness of the teaching profession to help students they received.

10. CONCLUSIONS

Quality in a service organization is a measure of the extent to which the service delivered meets student's expectations because to the students, quality is all about Meeting or exceeding their expectation. The researcher has studied service quality in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India. The research has found various strategies for pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India to improve their service quality. The improvement in strategies like appearance of teaching profession s and materials in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India will attract the students. Then the improvement in teaching profession interest in solving students problems, performing right service and providing services at the promised time will increase the students in pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India. The proper accuracy of the MIS, receiving prompt service from the teaching profession s, telling the students exactly when services will be performed and willingness of the teaching profession s to help students will develop the growth of an organization. Then the improvement in strategies like never being too busy to respond, teaching profession actions that instil confidence, safety that the students feel in transactions with the teaching profession s and courteousness of the teaching profession s will increase the students satisfaction. Then the increase in ability of the teaching profession s to answer the questions, the individual attention, convenience of the operating, personal attention they received and ability of the teaching profession s to understand the students will lead to improve the efficiency of pharmaceutical educational institutions in Sikkim state, India.

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