



Assessment of Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Private Higher Education Institution: The Case of Rift Valley University College Adama

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to measure the service quality and its subsequent effect on customer satisfaction at Rift Valley University College using a model that describes various dimensions of service quality. To this purpose the researcher has studied the service quality using SERVQUAL model. Stratified sampling technique was used in the study to take a sample from the programs. Tangibles, assurance, responsiveness, reliability and empathy are five features of the model and in responsiveness and assurance they are satisfied, but in the remaining three students' feel dissatisfied. Managers should train employees, improve visually attractive facilities and coordinate all people, departments and organizations involved with the services. Finally, managers at RVUC should measure passengers' satisfaction and service quality seasonally to keep the services corresponded with customers' opinions.

Key words: service quality, customer satisfaction, *SERVQUAL model*

Introduction

Service quality and customer satisfaction are unquestionably the two core concepts that are at the root of the marketing theory and practices in modern world. In today's world of intense competition, the key to sustainable competitive advantage lies in delivering high quality services that will in turn result in satisfied customers. When competition increases and environmental issue becomes dynamic, the importance of service quality is increased. Even though the ultimate goal of every service giving industry is satisfying customers, more often, many of the service delivering organizations are failed to satisfy their customers as a result of not understanding customers' perceptions or their needs and wants well. Hence, this dilemma creates job difficulty to most business organizations that focus on customer relations. It is

from this fact that the research is highly motivated to do a research on this area. Hence, the focus of this paper is to assess the quality of service delivery and its impact on customer satisfaction in RVUC Adama campus.

Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to evaluate the effect service quality on customer satisfaction and identify which service quality dimension utmost contribute for customer satisfaction Rift Valley University College.

Methodology

Total samples of 225 respondents were taken as respondents. The collected data was processed by classifying the data in to its homogeneity of the respondents. As the data that was collected are both qualitative and quantitative in nature, it



was analyzed and presented by using descriptive statistical analysis techniques such as tables, graphs, and different types of charts. Percentage for the data was calculated in order to facilitate the analysis and to make it easily understandable for the readers. To facilitate the analysis of data SPSS 16 version software was used. The five independent variable were analyzed by using one sample t-test considering test value =3.

Results and Discussions

Demographic factors are very important indicators of performance in any organization. Even though demographic characteristics are not having great influence with this study, the researcher considers some of them which are believed to have relation with the study. Hence, the demographic characteristics like Age, Sex, Marital status, Educational level are emphasized.

The sex of respondents recorded by 50.7%, 49.3% were male and female respectively. Hence, in RVUC almost the proportion of male and female are equal. Regarding age of respondents 60.4% and 34.1% of the respondents were categorized with age group of 17-25, 26-35 respectively the remaining follows. Students 48.4% of them were second year students, 50.2% of the respondents were third year, 0.4% was fourth year and the remaining 0.9% was fifth year students. Enrollment, 60.9% attend degree program and the remaining 39.1% were attending TEVT Program while types of enrollment the evening program take the

lion share. Details of the service quality attributes are adopted to the study and presented in table 1 below.

Analysis of Service Quality and Students' Satisfaction

From the viewpoints given earlier the measurement scale for service quality proposed in the previous section, the researcher further investigated the gap in perceived quality services between RVUC students. Here, students were asked to separately evaluate each service attribute, according to the gap between their perception and expectations, using a five point likert scale: 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'neutral', 'agree', and 'strongly agree'. Five different scores were assigned: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 to represent this five-point scale.

The researcher used a statistical test of one-sample t- test for the data analysis. The one-sample T test procedure tests whether the mean of a single variable differs from a specified constant population mean. This test assumes that the data are normally distributed; however, this test is fairly robust to departures from normality. The sample size in my study was 225 and based on 'Central Limit Theorem' we were allowed to presume the data were normally distributed approximately as the sample size gets larger and larger. A 95% confidence interval for the difference between the mean and the hypnotized test value was supposed.

**Table 1. Service quality Dimensions and Measurement**

TAN1	The Campus has good appearance of building and grounds
TAN2	The library has space for group learning and discussion
TAN3	The library resources (recent books, Journals, periodical, etc) are good enough to your needs
TAN4	Class rooms are equipped with necessary teaching aids (white board, seats etc)
TAN5	Students have access general IT(internet) resources when they need
TAN6	Curriculum you are learning is relevant to the industrial needs
ASUR1	Instructors of the campus are friendly and courteous
ASUR2	Instructors at your department conduct productive/efficient research
ASUR3	Campus's staff have adequate knowledge on rules and procedure of the campus
ASUR4	Communication skills: courses are well taught in this campus
REL1	Registration is timely and error-free
REL2	The campus keeps its records accurately
REL3	Administrative staff demonstrate sincere interest in solving students' problem
REL4	The Campus provides its services at a time it promises to do so
REL5	Instructors declare students' exam result as per the schedule
RESP1	Students are informed of schedules and changes in schedule in advance
RESP2	Queries are dealt with efficiently and promptly
RESP3	Instructors have capacity to solve problems when they are arise
RESP4	I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this Campus
EMP1	The Campus provide personal attention to every person
EMP2	Instructors have convenient office-hours to advice students
EMP3	Opening hour of computer and workshops are convenient to the students
EMP4	The campus is focused on the best service for its students

Source: Fromquestionnaire, 2014

Satisfied students must have perceived perceptions equal to or more than expectations. So the hypothesized test value in this study is 3 and it can split students into satisfied and unsatisfied students and the null and alternative hypotheses can be specified as below.

Null hypothesis $H_0: \mu = 3$

Alternative hypothesis $H_a: \mu \neq 3$

As indicated above, the study specifies the level of sampling error 0.05 and thus the two-tailed critical value is ± 1.96 .

The scores for each attribute were then tabulated; the results can be found in Annex 2 (data analysis in details).



This study used SERVQUAL framework to model and analyze the student gap between expected and perceived service with respective to higher education service attributes as indicator of the perceived service quality and satisfaction. In this paper the five dimensions and their respective attributes of the model are expressed using a five point Likert scale. Hence satisfied students must have received perceptions equal to or more than expectations and vice versa.

Summary results:

The main conclusions of this paper which are drawn from the analyzed data are presented as follows:

Accordingly, in the three dimensions: empathy with a group mean of 2.69, tangibility and reliability both with a group mean value of 2.93 students' perceived services were lower than what they expected and in the other two dimensions: assurance with a group mean of 3.21 and responsiveness with a group mean of 3.04 their experiences were better than expectations. This is measured by taking the overall mean in respect to the test value which enables to compute the performance of the campus. Thus in most dimensions RVUC students are dissatisfied with the services which they get.

But with respect to each attributes, they had better satisfaction than expectations in ten out of twenty three attributes that have been considered in the questionnaire and in the remaining thirteen attributes they were dissatisfied.

Accordingly, the top five attributes of service quality whose experience had better than expected for

RVUC were in the sequence of ASUR1 (Instructors of the campus are friendly and courteous), TAN6 (Curriculum you are learning is relevant to the industrial needs), ASUR4 (Communication skills: courses are well taught in this campus), RESP1 (Students are informed of schedules and changes in schedule in advance) , and RESP3 (Instructors have capacity to solve problems when they are arise).

On the reverse the top five worst qualities of service attributes were consecutively given as TAN5 (Students have access general IT(internet) resources when they need), EMP2 (Instructors have convenient office-hours to advice students), EMP3 (Opening hour of computer and workshops are convenient to the students), EMP1 (The Campus provide personal attention to every person), and RESP2 (Queries are dealt with efficiently and promptly).attribute.

Recommendations

Primarily, it can inclusively infer that in three dimensions of the model students of RVUC are not satisfied with the perceived services and it warns managers to focus on students expectations. The campus should strive to gain more information about students' attitude and prepare plans to improve weak points.

In assurance and responsiveness, the company has satisfied customers. For instance for attributes like Instructors of the campus are friendly and courteous customers had get satisfaction. It makes the job easier for managers to empower this dimension. Hence, the company has to continuo those good things and strives to delight its customer more. For



responsiveness attribute the campus should improve mainly the mechanism of dealing with quires in efficient and prompt manner.

On the other hand, in tangibles and reliability the customers are not satisfied. The management should try to provide some visually appealing. Providing variety access general IT (internet) resources when they need , equipping the class room with necessary teaching aids like white board, seats , LCD and so on, and making the library resources recent books, Journals, periodical, etc are good enough to students' needs. Reliability consists of registration is timely and error-free, the campus keeps its records accurately, administrative staff demonstrate sincere interest in solving students' problem, the Campus provides its services at a time it promises to do so, and Instructors declare students' exam result as per the schedule. These five factors play an important role in satisfying students. RVUC has achieved a score on those attribute which lower than and comparable to expectation. From this the campus has to improve its record keeping through applying kaizen philosophy and the management should give training for administrative staff on how to participate on solving student's problem.

For Empathy, RVUC should give more focus to improve the empathy variable since they showed the worse service delivered to customers. From four attributes tested only one is comparable even though it is also below the test value whereas the other three are statistically insignificant which includes: The Campus should provides personal attention to every person, Instructors have convenient office-hours to advice students, and Opening hour of computer

and workshops are convenient to the students. Therefore, training should be given for the employee on improving on valuing and giving personal attention to the customers, the opening hours of computers and workshops should be in line with the students need and all instructors should post their advice hour for the student and should be stick to it.

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