

ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BASED ON SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS AT XYZ PLUS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (SMP)

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Abstract

The quality of educational services is a crucial factor in determining student and parent satisfaction, particularly at the junior high school (SMP) level, which is a crucial transitional period for students. This study aims to analyze the quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ using the SERVQUAL method based on five dimensions: *tangibles*, *reliability*, *responsiveness*, *assurance*, and *empathy*. The research uses a qualitative approach with an analytical descriptive design through analytical techniques *gap* narrative, comparing the expectations and perceptions of informants consisting of parents, students, and school officials, selected using techniques *purposive sampling*. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, then analyzed using interactive descriptive methods. The results of the study indicate that the overall quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ is in the good category. *responsiveness* shows a *gap* positive, while *reliability* and *empathy* has met expectations, while *assurance* and *tangibles* still showing a *gap* minor negatives that require improvement, especially in the pedagogical competence of teachers and the comfort of physical facilities.

Keyword: parental satisfaction, quality of educational services, *gap* analysis, SERVQUAL, junior high school

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main factors that plays a role in determining the quality of human resources and the progress of a nation. Through education, students not only gain knowledge, but also develop social skills, character, competencies, and critical thinking skills, which are essential in facing the challenges of life in the future (Simamora, 2023). Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System states that education aims to develop the potential of students to become people who are faithful, pious, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. In junior high school (SMP), the quality of educational services becomes crucial because students are in early adolescence. This period marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. During this phase, students are in dire need of quality educational support as they experience rapid physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. With good quality educational services, students can experience a comfortable learning environment, which can foster positive character, increase learning motivation, and support student achievement (Triwijayanti, 2022).

Currently, the educational landscape is becoming increasingly competitive, requiring schools to provide educational services that meet the expectations of students and parents, not just provide a good learning process (Letek, 2023). The quality of educational services encompasses several aspects, including the competence of teaching staff, the availability of learning facilities and infrastructure, responsiveness to student needs, the accuracy of academic services, concern and attention to student development, and the guarantee of a comfortable and safe school environment. Student satisfaction will increase if the quality of services provided meets or exceeds user expectations (Tahsinia, 2024). SMP Plus XYZ is an educational institution committed to improving the quality of education and character building, requiring regular evaluations of the quality of services provided to students. This evaluation aims to identify areas requiring improvement and to determine the extent to which the services provided meet students' needs and expectations. This information can be used as a basis for the school to develop strategies for continuously improving the quality of educational services.

One method that can be used to measure service quality is the method *Service Quality* (SERVQUAL) developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (Parasuraman, 1988). The SERVQUAL method is used to measure service quality based on gaps *orgap* between the expectations and perceptions of service users. This method has five main dimensions, namely physical evidence (*tangibles*), reliability (*reliability*), responsiveness (*responsiveness*), guarantee (*assurance*), and empathy (*empathy*) (Sa'idu N, 2023). In this study, the author used Descriptive Thematic Analysis which can directly group the informant's oral quotes into themes or large dimensions that have been determined from the start without the need for complicated code labeling first. Based on this description, research is needed on the quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ using the SERVQUAL method. This research is expected to provide an overview of the level of student satisfaction with the educational services provided by the school, identify service dimensions that have met expectations and those that still require improvement, and serve as evaluation material for the school in its efforts to continuously improve the quality of educational services.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive analytical design based on the SERVQUAL model. The evaluation of service quality at XYZ Plus Middle School was measured using narrative gap analysis techniques by comparing two main axes: *expectation* (expectations) and perceptions of the informants. Service quality is categorized as reaching the "Very Good" level if the perception narratives expressed by the informants consistently exceed or exceed their initial expectations. To ensure complete and comprehensive data, this study operates the five main dimensions of SERVQUAL as the main focus of data collection, namely physical evidence (*tangibles*), reliability (*reliability*), responsiveness (*responsiveness*), guarantee (*assurance*), and empathy (*empathy*) (Nurfadli, 2023).

In this study, the process of determining informants was carried out using the technique *Purposive Sampling* by establishing strict inclusion criteria. The primary informant group consisted of 8 parents or guardians of active students in grades VIII and IX who had attended the Plus Middle School for at least one academic year, and was supported by interviews with 5 active students. To ensure the validity of the data, this study also involved a group of supporting informants, namely the Homeroom Teacher, the Head of Administration (TU), and the Vice Principal for Student Affairs. Data collection was conducted through a combination of three techniques, namely in-depth interviews (*in-depth interview*) using semi-structured guidelines based on SERVQUAL dimensions, through non-participant observation of service facilities and activities at school locations, as well as documentation studies of profiles, SOPs, and lists of student complaints.

The data analysis technique was conducted using interactive descriptive techniques with three main stages: data compilation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In data compilation, the interview recordings were converted into verbal transcripts and then filtered for parent stories relevant to the topic of service quality. Furthermore, in data presentation, the interview results were grouped directly into a Narrative Gap Matrix based on five dimensions by comparing aspects of expectations and perception quotes in pairs without going through a coding process (Nurfadli, 2023). Finally, the meaning of the parent stories was interpreted into categories of school service quality (Very Good, Sufficient, or Poor) and existing obstacles were verified with the results of interviews with internal school officials to ensure the validity of the research data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained demonstrate field findings and an in-depth analysis of the quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ. The results are based on the perspective of parents as primary service users and confirmation from school management. Using a narrative gap analysis approach, the quality of services at SMP Plus XYZ explains the extent to which the reality of the services received (*perception*) can answer or even exceed the expectations or ideal standards desired by parents before entrusting their children's education (*expectation*).

Table 1. Results of the Narrative Gap Analysis of SMP Plus XYZ

SERVQUAL Dimensions	Informant/Students' Parents' Expectations (<i>Expectation</i>)	Perception / Field Reality (<i>Perception</i>)	Analysis <i>Gap</i> Qualitative & Conclusion
Responsiveness(<i>Responsiveness</i>)	Parents expect the school to be responsive in providing academic information and to respond quickly to complaints or questions via <i>WhatsApp</i>	The homeroom teacher and school administrators are very active, responding to messages within minutes, and are quick to respond to student learning challenges.	<i>Gap</i> Positive (Very Good). School service exceeds expectations. Instant response provides very high levels of satisfaction for parents.
Guarantee (<i>Assurance</i>)	Parents expect all teaching staff to be highly competent (certified), to master easy-to-understand learning methods, and to ensure a safe and polite school environment.	The school provides strict moral and physical security measures, and the teachers are very polite. However, not all teachers are professionally certified, and some still use teaching methods that are difficult for students to understand.	Happen <i>Gap</i> Minor Negative (Good but needs evaluation). Parental trust is well-established through the school's politeness and safety aspects. However, teachers' pedagogical competence (teaching methods) is a concern that needs improvement.
Physical Evidence(<i>Tangible</i>)	Informants hope that "Plus" label school facilities will have cool (air-conditioned), clean classrooms, complete laboratories, and a comfortable environment.	The building facilities are sturdy, the classrooms are clean, the air is well-ventilated, and the laboratories are adequate. However, the classrooms are not air-conditioned, making them a bit hot during the day.	Happen <i>Gap</i> Minor Negative (Good but needs evaluation). Overall, the physical facilities are considered good and functional, but the lack of air conditioning is a notable shortcoming that does not meet the ideal expectations of a "Plus" school.
Reliability(<i>Reliability</i>)	Informants hope that the teaching and learning process will run on time, that grade reports will be objective, and that the school's promises regarding its flagship programs will be fulfilled.	The lesson schedule is consistent, report cards are distributed on time, and flagship programs (such as tahfidz/language) run according to the initial curriculum.	There isn't any <i>Gap</i> (Good). Service meets expectations. The school demonstrates good consistency and accuracy in fulfilling its academic promises.
Empathy(<i>Empathy</i>)	Parents expect teachers to understand their child's unique characteristics and provide intensive, personal attention in the classroom.	Teachers cannot assist students individually due to the large number of students. However, they remain fair, caring, and responsive, providing special attention to students who appear to be significantly behind or struggling.	There isn't any <i>Gap</i> / Appropriate (Good). Service is at a realistically good level. Although individual attention is limited by class size, the teacher's emotional approach to student issues is considered proportionate and thoughtful.

Based on the results of field observations, interviews with school officials, and analysis using the SERVQUAL method, as can be seen in Table 1, an overview of the quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ is obtained based on the gap between parents' expectations and the actual conditions experienced in the field. The analysis was conducted on five main dimensions of SERVQUAL, namely *Responsiveness*, *Assurance*, *Tangibles*, *Reliability*, dan *Empathy*, with the following analysis results.

1. Responsiveness (Responsiveness)

In this dimension, the school was found to be able to provide services that exceeded parents' expectations. Parents expect the school to provide academic information quickly and be responsive to various questions and complaints submitted through communication media such as WhatsApp. Based on observations, homeroom teachers and school administrative staff demonstrated a very quick response in providing information and resolving various obstacles faced by students. Active and responsive communication created high satisfaction for parents because they felt they had easy and fast access to information. This finding aligns with research by Sentia (2022) and Hermanto (2019), which stated that the speed of response to service user needs is one of the factors influencing user satisfaction. Thus, in the responsiveness dimension, a positive gap occurred, indicating that the quality of school service has exceeded user expectations.

2. Assurance (Guarantee)

In the assurance dimension, parents expect competent educators with strong teaching skills and the ability to create a safe and comfortable school environment for students. Observations indicate that schools provide good physical and moral security, and teachers demonstrate polite and professional behavior in their interactions with students and parents. Teacher competence and professionalism are important factors influencing the quality of educational services and the success of the learning process (Simamora, 2023). However, some teachers still lack professional certification, and some learning methods are deemed not fully understood by all students. This situation indicates a small negative gap. Although parental trust in schools remains high, improvements in pedagogical competence and the development of more innovative learning methods are still needed to improve service quality in this dimension.

3. Tangibles(Physical Evidence)

The tangibles dimension indicates a small negative gap between parents' expectations and the reality. Parents expect superior physical facilities, such as comfortable, air-conditioned classrooms, a clean learning environment, and well-equipped and adequate laboratories. Observations indicate that school facilities are generally in good condition, with sturdy buildings, clean classrooms, adequate ventilation, and laboratory facilities available to support the learning process. However, the lack of air conditioning (AC) in classrooms means that daytime learning comfort does not fully meet the expectations of some parents. The availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure is a factor influencing perceptions of educational service quality and user satisfaction (Mulyah, 2020; Tahsinia et al., 2024). Therefore, although school physical facilities are functioning well, improving facilities that support comfortable learning still requires attention in efforts to increase user satisfaction.

4. Reliability (Reliability)

The reliability dimension showed excellent results, with no gaps between expectations and reality. Parents expect the learning process to proceed according to schedule, the assessment system to be conducted objectively, and the school's flagship programs to be implemented consistently. Observations revealed that learning activities proceeded according to the established schedule, report cards were distributed on time, and various flagship programs, such as Quran memorization and language development, ran according to school plans. The reliability of academic services is a significant factor influencing user satisfaction (Triwijayanti et al., 2022). These findings indicate that SMP Plus XYZ has a high level of reliability in its academic services, thus optimally meeting parents' expectations.

5. Empathy (Empathy)

In the empathy dimension, parents expect teachers to understand each student's unique characteristics and provide individual attention during the learning process. Observations indicate that teachers are not yet able to provide intensive individual support to all students due to the relatively large number of students in one class. However, teachers continue to demonstrate concern, fairness, and special attention to students experiencing learning difficulties or specific problems. According to Letek (2023), teachers' attention and concern for student needs is a crucial element in building satisfaction with educational services. Therefore, no significant gaps were found in the empathy dimension. The services provided are appropriate to the school's conditions and capacity and are deemed capable of meeting students' emotional needs proportionally.

Overall, the quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ is in the good category. The responsiveness dimension is the most prominent aspect because it demonstrates the school's ability to provide fast and responsive services to parents and students. Furthermore, the reliability and empathy dimensions also demonstrate good performance because the services provided meet user expectations. Meanwhile, the assurance and tangibles dimensions still show minor gaps that require attention from school management. Efforts to improve teachers' pedagogical competence through ongoing training and the development of more comfortable physical facilities can be strategies to improve the overall quality of educational services. The results of this study indicate that the quality of educational services is determined not only by school facilities and infrastructure, but also by the quality of communication, the reliability of the academic system, teacher competence, and concern for student needs. Therefore, regular evaluation of the quality of educational services is necessary so that schools can maintain their existing strengths while simultaneously making improvements in areas that require further development.

Research Implications

The results of this study indicate that the quality of educational services at SMP Plus XYZ has generally met parents' expectations, particularly in terms of responsiveness, reliability, and empathy. These findings can serve as evaluation material for the school to maintain the already good quality of service and make improvements in teacher pedagogical competence and the development of the school's physical facilities. With ongoing evaluation, the school is expected to improve parent satisfaction and the overall quality of educational services.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis of the quality of educational services using the SERVQUAL method at SMP Plus XYZ, it can be concluded that the overall quality of educational services provided by the school is in the good category and is able to meet the expectations of students' parents. The responsiveness dimension showed the best results with the presence of *gap* Positive, indicating that the school is able to provide information services and address student issues quickly, responsively, and exceed parental expectations. The reliability and empathy dimensions also showed positive results, as the services provided met parental expectations, particularly in terms of consistent academic program implementation, accurate learning schedules, and teachers' attention and concern for student needs.

Meanwhile, in the dimensions of guarantees and physical evidence, there are still gaps found *gap* negative on a small scale. In the assurance dimension, although the school has succeeded in building a sense of security and trust through the professional attitudes and courtesy of its teaching staff, improvements in pedagogical competence and teacher professionalism are still needed to optimize the quality of learning. In the tangibles dimension, school facilities are generally adequate and support the learning process. However, some aspects, such as classroom comfort, still need improvement to meet parents' expectations of the school. Overall, the research results indicate that SMP Plus XYZ's main strengths lie in the quality of communication, speed of service, consistency in educational program implementation, and a good relationship between the school and parents. Therefore, the school needs to maintain its excellence in these aspects while simultaneously making continuous improvements to the competency of its teaching staff and the development of its infrastructure to further enhance the quality of educational services and provide greater satisfaction to all users.

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