ASSESSMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY IN PERPUSTAKAAN SULTANAH BAHIYAH (PSB)

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ABSTRACT

Perpustakaan Sultanah Bahiyah (PSB) in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) is essentially learning organizations stimulating academic that provided services to world-class information resources that is important for the UUM students. This is highly critical in this article related to the service quality at PSB towards student satisfactions. Due to its importance, it is highly critical that a study on assessment of service in PSB is conducted. This article presents the result of a study, this article reflects outcomes in view of the following objectives: (1) to identify the level of service quality and integrated with Kano model and (2) to compare level of satisfaction among respondent groups. The study focuses on a group of 100 undergraduate students which are distributed along several groups of demographic differences such as gender, college of study, year of study and ethnicity. The customer satisfaction is measured along 5 quality dimensions of SERVQUAL (that are tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy) and the Kano Model. As a result we found that the level of satisfaction for female students towards quality services at PSB library is lower while that of the male students is otherwise.

Keywords: service quality, student satisfactions, SERVQUAL, Kano Model

INTRODUCTION

Quality is the basic philosophy and requirement of service profession. A service quality is fully meets expectations and requirements of the users. If a service profession provides right information to right user at right time and in required form, then it is maintaining quality.

The higher education institute sector must strive to deliver a high quality of service and satisfy its students, who some may term ‘participating customers’, to achieve sustainability in a competitive service environment (De Shields, 2005).

Library is one of the services provided in a university. Library in a university is regarded as an organisation which stimulates academic and research activities by providing access to the world-class information resources.
Problem Statement
Despite of good reputation and awards achieved by PSB, there are still complaints from UUM students regarding PSB services. Therefore, a preliminary survey has been conducted towards 10 undergraduate students of UUM to verify the existence of this problem. From the survey, it is true there are several issues related to quality of services provided by PSB which have led to dissatisfaction among UUM students. The survey done in Dhaka University Library shows the services provided does not match what is expected by the user (Shoeb, 2009). Therefore, there’s a need to conduct a scientific research to assess the level of UUM student’s satisfaction in regards to quality of services provided by PSB using the integrated model of SERVQUAL and Kano.

Research Question
1. What is the level of students’ satisfactions towards PSB services?
2. Is there any significant difference between the levels of students’ satisfactions in regards to respondent groups?

Research Objective
1. To determine the level of students satisfactions towards PSB services using SERVQUAL integrated with Kano Model.
2. To compare level of students satisfaction towards PSB services between respondent groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Particularly, it about the critical analyze of the relevant theories, models and concepts from key authors in the subject field. Zeithaml et al. (1988) stated that service quality is referred to the customer’s consideration about service overall performance or the customer’s overall impression and notion of the relative weakness or supreme of the organization and its services. In sum, according to Kang (2002) the primary characteristic of service quality is its commitment to measure how service delivery level matches customers’ expectation, which, in turn, is inter-related with customers’ satisfaction.

According to Zeithaml et al. (1988) satisfaction is the resultant outcome of an institution’s administrative as well as educational system’s coherent performance. Because the students will be more satisfied and motivated for completing their studies if the institution provides an environment which facilitates learning as example the institution contains proper infrastructure for educational utility accumulated with essential parameters of professional and academic development. Based on the majority articles of past researches studied, that had been observe it stated that SERVQUAL model by Parasuraman (1991) has been used to study and evaluate of service quality element toward the students’ satisfactions in a university library. The past research example such as a survey in Indian library (Raza, 2012) and Bangladeshi public university libraries (Islam, 2012; Shoeb, 2009). From past researches, the most frequent research model is used to measure perceive service quality is the SERVQUAL model. Hernon (2002) stated that SERVQUAL by Parasuraman et al. (1998) is an alternative approach to measure service quality for business sector then shifted to the assessment of library service quality among libraries.
SERVQUAL was initially developed by Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988) with the original dimensions include reliability, responsiveness, assurances, empathy and tangibles (Figure 1). Tangibility refers to the physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel. On the other hand, Reliability is about the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Meanwhile, Responsiveness is the willingness of service providers to help and provide prompt service. Next, assurance represents knowledge of service providers, courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence. Lastly, Empathy is individualized attention that the firm provides its customers. SERVQUAL used to determine the customer’s evaluation of quality as a gap (difference) function between expected and perceived service. Despite that, SERVQUAL also help to determine the excellence and weakness area that the most importance functions for the quality service improvement in the future.

![SERVQUAL Model by Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1988)](image)

Other than SERVQUAL model, another well-known and widely used model to capture customers’ requirements is Kano model established by Noriaki Kano (1984). This model was developed to categorize the attributes of a product or services based on how well they able to satisfy their customer needs. Kano model has several benefits which are; (i) promote the understanding of product/service requirement, (ii) give guidance for trade off situation, and (iii) developed wide range of product / service differentiation by examining the attractive attributes as the key to beating the competition in the marketplace. Kano model assessment translates customer requirement into percentage levels as in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X &gt; 95 ++</td>
<td>Excitement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 &gt; X &lt; 95</td>
<td>Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 &gt; X &lt; 85</td>
<td>Par performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X &lt; 70</td>
<td>Disappointment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By conducting this research article, SERVQUAL is very importance to integrate with Kano model. It is because, Kano Model may help the latter to prioritize which service gap will be put an effort to focus on and the entire service development process may be systematically deployed into pragmatic ways for improvements. Secondly,
introduce the Kano model categories or indicator can counter the linearity problem between attribute performance and customer satisfactions. Third, Kano model help to prioritized improvement of weak area based on Kano indicator or category. Next, according to Bharadwaj and Menon, (1997), integrate Kano with SERVQUAL will make better characterize of product attribute/ customers need relationships.

In sum, the uses integration of SERVQUAL and Kano Model is importance in this research article because SERVQUAL will be function to identify the gaps between predicted and perceived the service, gather the data about the level of importance and calculate the customers (students) satisfaction score while Kano Model is used to identify the Kano Category or indicator to find the weakness area and for the service quality improvement at PSB.

METHODOLGY

This research used the quantitative approach and survey questionnaire as the data collection technique. The questionnaire consists of two parts, A and B with part A asking for personal information of the respondents in nominal scale. Meanwhile, part B is about student perceptions on the service quality of PSB based on SERVQUAL dimensions (Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy), adapted from Raza (2012). The total of 28 questions represents these five dimensions. The SERVQUAL questionnaire is in the form of five point Likert scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

This study is only conducted among undergraduate students since this group is the largest population of library user in UUM compare to other user groups such as postgraduate students and academic staffs. Overall, total population of undergraduate students is 22,000 hence, according to Sekaran (2003), the number of sample size would be 400 students. Therefore, the questionnaire sets are distributed randomly to all 400 undergraduate students.

Generally, frequency analysis and descriptive analysis are done as the procedures and strategies for accomplishing the denoted research objectives. All these tests and analyses are ran using a statistical software called Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 produced by IBM. Reliability test is conducted to ensure the reliability of the research instrument (SERVQUAL questionnaire). Besides, frequency analysis is used to group the respondents into several intended categories such as gender, year of study and ethnicity. Meanwhile, the purpose of running descriptive analysis is to calculate the mean score of each SERVQUAL dimensions which interpret the level of students’ perceptions (satisfaction) towards PSB services.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Overall, only 100 questionnaire sets are collected at the end of data collection period which give the response rate of 25%. The result same as the number of questionnaire survey collected in Indian library research (Raza, 2012). This method is used because it was less time consuming and economical for a scattered population. The total 100 respondents come from 50 male students and others 50 from female students (Figure 2). The year of study for male respondents are 4 students from year 1 and 2, 9 students
from year 3 and 8 students from year 4 and for female respondents 4 students from year 1 and 2, 8 students from year 3 and 9 students from year 4 (Figure 3). For the ethnicity of the male student 41 students come from Malay, 3 from Chinese, 2 from Indian and 4 from others. For ethnicity of female respondents, 40 respondents come from Malay students, 6 from Chinese, 4 from Indian and no female respondents from others ethnicity (Figure 4). Lastly for the college of study, the 50 respondents come from under graduated students of COB, 25 under graduated students from CAS, and 25 students from COLGIS (Figure 5). As a result, the demographic frequency distributions result for this article such as below:

![Gender frequency](image1)

![Year of study frequency](image2)

![Ethnicity frequency](image3)

![College of study frequency](image4)

Mean scores obtained from descriptive analysis on the five SERVQUAL dimensions are presented in the following table (Table 2). Table 2 also exhibits the manually calculated percentage of Kano Model from the mean scores obtained.
Based on the total overall mean score table, the overall mean for empathy, which shows the highest reading at 78.80%, this shows student satisfaction toward empathy is better than others. While the responsive readings recorded the lowest at 70.00%, this shows the level of satisfaction at the lowest level compared to other dimensions. The highest ranking is empathy, second is tangible, third is reliability and assurance where both of them is same value and the lowest is from responsiveness dimension. Then, the comparison between the level of satisfaction among respondent groups as shown in the below:

### Table 3
Mean score for year of study (male)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assurance</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the mean score for a year of study of male table, the highest value of tangible indicated in two of the reading 4.08 compared to other years. While the lowest point in the same 3.73. Next to the reliability dimension, the four highest readings recorded over the years stated that of the 4.07. While the lowest reading recorded in the value of 3.80. The reading of 3.91 in four is a record high for the dimension most responsive compared to 3.60 in the reading for one that shows the lowest value. Dimensions assurance for one year showed the highest value of 4.00 compared to three that recorded the lowest value that is worth 3.70. The last dimension is empathy that showed the highest reading in two of 4.17 compared to 3.87 in the readings which is the lowest value.
### Table 4
Mean score for year of study (female)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assurance</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the mean score of study for female table, the reading for tangible dimension shows the highest value that is 3.73 in year one (1) compared to 3.62 for the lowest value of the year four (4). Next, the higher the mean for reliability found in year two (2), in the year one and year two is worth 3.65, while to the lowest value refers to four years. There may be responsive dimension shows the reading 3.38 compared to 3.07 in the lowest reading. The reading of 3.90 in year 1 is the highest compared to the 2.33 reading was the lowest in four years. Finally, a comparison of the dimensions of empathy had the highest value of 4.09 in the four and recorded a reading of 3.70 in two of the lowest value.

In sum, the comparison between male and female through year of study based on one-way ANOVA it prove that the result shows that there is no significant effect of respondent group on student satisfactions at the p<.05 level for the three conditions F= 0.74, p= 0.52. Lastly, for the T-test there was no significant difference in the score for respondent group level for male students (M= 4.02, SD= 6.18) and female students (M= 0.38, SD= 0.60).

### CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this research is important in raising awareness among the library institution about their service quality status toward the student satisfactions. The respondent comes from the library user itself that is UUM students. It is important to periodically evaluate the degree of implementation to ensure what the library have been doing is effective and as the act to continuously improve in their journey to become high rated to achieved the student satisfactions.

The main limitation of this study is the number sample size analysed. Sample size, n = 100 will cause the actual result sometimes is not comprehensive to determine the student satisfactions. Secondly, the limitation in this study that only focusing on five (5) element of SERVQUAL and service quality might be add up in the next research such as element of access or communication in service quality to see the assessment of service quality at the PSB toward the student satisfactions.

As a recommendation for the education purpose, next or future research can study more about the service quality element at PSB library that give assessment impact towards student satisfactions especially in responsiveness service quality dimension. For the
library institution itself, this research might be helped the PSB library quality services doing the improvement from time to time especially for the student satisfactions.

REFERENCES


