

Comparison of Expectation and Perception of Education Service Quality among Perspective Physical Education Professionals

Abhishek Mohindra, Gurmeet Singh, and Mandeep

ABSTRACT

Background: Service quality is an important indicator of the programme quality and satisfaction levels among service sectors like offices, banks, recreation clubs, universities etc. The number of studies devoted to service quality in the field of Physical Education is limited. The present study aims to determine the difference in the expectations and perceptions of education service quality among boys and girls studying in BPED and MPED courses in UT Chandigarh.

Methods: The study is a survey type study with a between group research design. The sample consists of 74 Female and 98 Male subjects. Random sampling method is used to select the sample. Furthermore, SERVQUAL questionnaire is used as the tool.

Results: The results depicted that significant differences in expectation of responsiveness dimension and perception of tangible dimension between Male and Female students were found. Moreover, it was also reported that females had higher levels of both expectation and perception of service quality in comparison to their counterparts, particularly in the expected responsiveness dimension and perceived Tangible dimension.

Conclusions: The results indicated dissatisfaction among physical education students with respect to overall service quality. Significant differences were reported among one sub-variable of expectation and one sub-variable of perception.

Keywords: Assurance, Empathy, Physical Education, SERVQUAL.

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A. Mohindra*

Junior Research Fellow Panjab University, India.
(e-mail: coolabhi220896@gmail.com)

G. Singh

Professor, Panjab University, India.
(e-mail: gurmeet@pu.ac.in)

Mandeep

Junior Research Fellow Panjab University, India.
(e-mail: jinghalamandeep@gmail.com)

**Corresponding Author*

I. INTRODUCTION

A noticeable characteristic of the modern age is globalization and rise in competition in all walks of life. With the tides of change the field of education has made the developmental innovations and has become a highly competitive sector. With fierce competition arising every day, educational institutions are posed with the threat of survival, higher revenues, increased stakeholder engagement and their chances for enrolling new customers primarily students Lapa and Bastac (2012). Offering high quality services seems to be the only way out for educational institutions to keep up with the competition and attract a greater number of potential customers in the form of students. Thus, service quality, in terms of facilities, teaching faculty, student satisfaction in an institution is an area that needs continuous assessment and enhancement. For this purpose, the principles and practices of service quality management have been knitted into the interwoven dimensions of education and specifically Physical Education. Continuous assessment of quality of the academic product or outcome while considering the overall educational experiences from the students' point of view is

the result of the burden of quality education and stress of the finances required to fulfill the standards of physical education. Hill (1995) suggested that students are the primary customers in the system of education service. The negative results of the organisation's bottom line are blamed on poorly designed or constructed facilities as attendance and revenue shortcomings are directly impacted by the facility in which education is imparted. The emergence of Higher education as a global business has resulted in the universities continuously exploring options for exporting higher education services Yusof, A., Hassan, Z. F., Rahman, S., & Ghouri, A. M. (2012). Moreover, the quality of services offered determines the superiority in creating unique experiences in the education sector where no true products are involved F. Khodayari and B. Khodayari (2011). Apart from increasing competition in the research outcomes universities are constantly burdened with responsibility of delivering qualitative services. Hence, assessing service quality in universities and colleges specifically institutes offering professional courses in physical education might give vital inputs that will enable the physical education teachers to continue improving the quality of education. Al-Alak and Alnaser (2012).

Achieving excellence in quality of services should be the prime focus in Higher education institutes, like any other service establishment. With the present study, the researchers aimed to put forward a contextual plan to measure service quality in the field of physical education across the higher education sector by collecting data that highlights the expectation and perception gap of service quality among male and female students. Son, J., Sung, J., & Choi, Y. (2018) reported that in comparison to males, females perceived service factors differently. Thus, the researchers tried to investigate the differences between males and females regarding perception and expectation of service quality.

A. Rationale of the Study

Higher education is most crucial for every individual as it is a foundation stone of their professional career. With the rise in number of institutions offering professional courses in the field of physical education quality in terms of services becomes a crucial factor and it becomes vital to understand the expectation and perception of the students with respect to service quality and how it varies due to the gender differences. Consequently, with the medium of this study the researchers are trying to find out these details.

II. METHODS

A survey type study has been designed to find out the attributes of expectations and perceptions among various dimensions of service quality. The sample consists of 172 under-graduate (BPED) and post-graduate (MPED) students (74 female and 98 male) from two colleges and a campus department of Panjab University, Chandigarh. The random sampling method was used for selecting the sample. Moreover, the tool used for data collection was SERVQUAL (service quality model). The questionnaire was self-administered and is considered as a very resourceful questionnaire for determining the gaps in service quality dimensions. The SERVQUAL scale is a 26 item questionnaire developed by Parsuraman *et al.* (1991). The questionnaire has been divided into three sections. In the first section questions consisted of demographic characteristics of students, such as gender, course undergoing and name of the institution. The second section was comprised of the SERVQUAL scale to assess expectations and perceptions of service quality and comprised of 26 items representing five service quality dimensions namely tangibles (6 items), reliability (5 items), responsiveness (5 items), empathy (5 items). The third section covers the satisfaction levels (3 items). The SERVQUAL statements were little rephrased keeping in view the study of physical education. The responses were recorded on a 5 point Likert scale anchored at "Strongly Agree" (5 points) to "Strongly Disagree" (1 point). Keeping in mind the pandemic situation in the country the mode of data collection was through online survey as the questionnaires were circulated among the respondents via Google questionnaire. The questionnaires were circulated personally by the researcher amongst the respondents and rapport was established to ensure the responses were genuine.

A. Statistical Analyses

IBM SPSS software was used to make all the statistical analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics, students t-test, paired sample t-test were used to analyze the data.

III. RESULTS

Demographics of the students are depicted in table 1. 86 respondents (50%) were from PGGC-11, 18 respondents (10%) from PGGC-42 and 68 (39.5%) respondents were recorded from Department of Physical Education Panjab University, Chandigarh. The respondents comprised 74 female and 98 Male respondents respectively: with 57.6% respondents from BPED and 42.4% respondents from MPED.

TABLE I: DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics	Description	N	%
Institute	PGGC-11	86	50
	PGGC-42	18	10.5
	PUC	68	39.5
	Total	172	100
Year of Course	1 st Year	56	32.6
	2 nd Year	90	52.3
	3 rd Year	11	6.4
	4 th Year	15	8.7
	Total	172	100
Course	BPED.	99	57.6
	MPED.	73	42.4
	Total	172	100
Gender	Male	98	57
	Female	74	43
	Total	172	100

TABLE II: MEAN DIFFERENCE OF EXPECTED SERVICE BETWEEN FEMALES AND MALES

Dimension/s	Sex	N	Mean	SD	T-Value	P-Value
Tangibles	Female	74	4.27	0.316	1.317	0.192
	Male	98	4.20	0.322		
Reliability	Female	74	4.24	0.623	1.389	0.167
	Male	98	4.11	0.604		
Responsiveness	Female	74	4.08	0.426	2.647	0.009
	Male	98	3.90	0.463		
Assurance	Female	74	4.20	0.653	1.903	0.059
	Male	98	4.01	0.640		
Empathy	Female	74	4.12	0.485	1.487	0.139
	Male	98	4.01	0.508		
Overall SQ	Female	74	4.18	0.401	2.335	0.021
	Male	98	4.04	0.362		

(Significant at 0.05).

The differences in mean scores of expected service quality amongst Male and Female students on the basis of T-test are outlined in Table II. The mean scores of Male subjects with respect to the five sub-variables (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) were 4.20, 4.11, 3.90, 4.01, and 4.01 respectively and the overall mean score was reported to be 4.04, on the contrary, the mean scores of Female subjects differed marginally with respect to the five sub-variables (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and were reported to be 4.27, 4.24, 4.08, 4.20, and 4.18 respectively and the overall mean score was reported to be 4.18. The results of table 2 reveal that Female subjects (N = 74) have high expected mean scores than Male subjects (N = 98) in all the dimensions of service quality. Moreover, the overall

expectations of Female subjects transcend the expectations of their counterparts. Moreover, significant differences were found between the expectations of Female and Male as the p value was reported to be 0.021 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance.

TABLE III: MEAN DIFFERENCE OF PERCEIVED SERVICE BETWEEN FEMALES AND MALES

Dimension/s	Sex	N	Mean	SD	T-Value	P-Value
Tangibles	Female	74	3.69	0.576	-1.958	0.050
	Male	98	3.86	0.556		
Reliability	Female	74	3.80	0.790	-1.894	0.062
	Male	98	4.00	0.623		
Responsiveness	Female	74	3.81	0.435	-1.231	0.221
	Male	98	3.88	0.386		
Assurance	Female	74	3.74	0.613	-1.185	0.238
	Male	98	3.84	0.421		
Empathy	Female	74	3.73	0.468	-1.455	0.147
	Male	98	3.83	0.439		
Overall SQ	Female	74	3.75	0.466	-2.047	0.042
	Male	98	3.88	0.362		

(Significant at 0.05).

The differences in mean scores of perceived service quality amongst Male and Female students on the basis of T-test are outlined in Table III. The mean scores of Male subjects with respect to the five sub-variables (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) were 3.86, 4.00, 3.88, 3.84, and 3.83 respectively and the overall mean score was reported to be 3.88, on the contrary, the mean scores of Female subjects differed marginally with respect to the five sub-variables (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and were reported to be 3.69, 3.80, 3.81, 3.74, and 3.73 respectively and the overall mean score was reported to be 3.75. The results of Table III reveal that Female subjects (N = 74) have high expected mean scores than Male subjects (N = 98) in all the dimensions of service quality. Moreover, the overall expectations of Female subjects transcend the expectations of their counterparts. Moreover, significant differences were found between the expectations of Female and Male as the p-value was reported to be 0.042 which is less than the 0.05 level of significance.

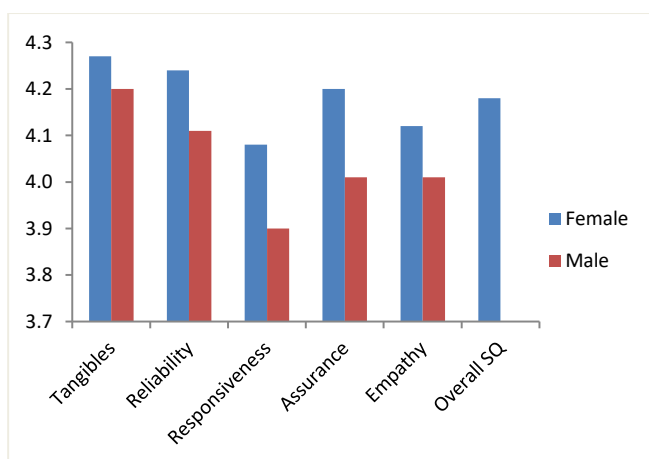


Fig. 1. Mean Difference of Expected Service between Males and Females.

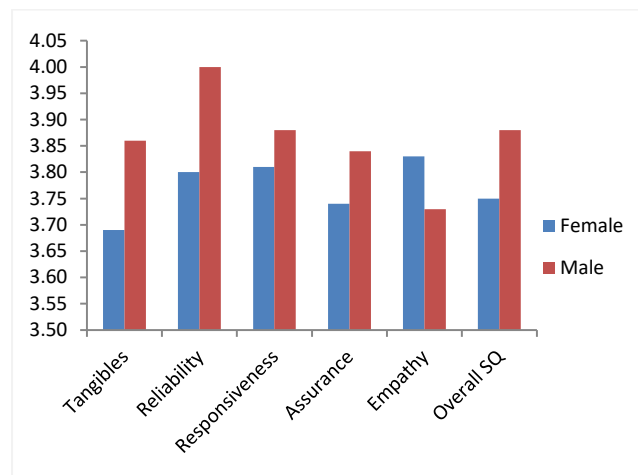


Fig. 2. Mean Difference of Perceived Service between Males and Females.

Table II and III depict the mean difference in the expected and perceived service quality between males and females. Results of the study indicated that significant differences were found with respect to expected and perceived service quality between male and female students with p-value < 0.05. Moreover, it was found that females had higher expectations of service quality than their counterparts (females, overall scores of M = 4.18 SD = 0.401; males overall scores of M = 4.04 SD = 0.362). In addition, it was also found females had lower perceptions of service quality than their counterparts (females, overall scores of M = 3.75; males overall scores of M = 3.88). Graph 1 and 2 depict mean differences in expectations and perceptions of service quality between males and females in all the five dimensions of service quality.

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study was designed with the purpose of assessing the service quality of physical education departments in various institutes which would aid in enhancing the quality and support the vision and mission of institutes for quality assurance, qualified and competent faculty members, proper infrastructure, and the accountability of physical education institutes to provide quality physical education to students. It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in expectation and perception of Physical education service quality among male and female students. On the basis of the results, it was concluded that significant differences are found in the expectation of the sub-variable responsiveness and perception of the sub-variable tangible between Male and Female physical education students with p-value < 0.05. The differences found were primarily because female students of physical education require special care and concern so that they can safely and efficiently participate in the physical education activities of their respective institutes. Moreover, the students of physical education have very high perceptions with respect to the infrastructure, equipment quality and facilities they avail during the course of their study. The results of the present study were in line with the study of Abdullah (2005) and Son *et al.* (2018) Son *et al.* (2018) in their study on the gender differences of spectators with respect to service quality; had reported that male and

female spectators perceived service factors differently. The overall findings of their study revealed that females considered helpfulness and kindness of employees as a crucial factor influencing service quality. Similarly, the overall findings of the present study reveal that females have higher overall expectation and perception levels of service quality as compared to males particularly due to the significant differences of expectation in Responsiveness dimension and perception in Tangibles dimension. Numerous studies are being undertaken in the higher education sector to ascertain the service quality needs of students across various streams.

V. CONCLUSION

From the results of the present study, it was found that Physical Education students were not satisfied by the overall service quality and females had higher expectations and perceptions in comparison to their counterparts in overall service quality. However, significant difference has only been found in expectation of the sub-variable responsiveness and perception of the sub-variable tangible. So, it is very important to work on improving the areas of Physical Education service quality that contribute to Responsiveness dimension, especially with respect to females and also infrastructure improvements in the Physical Education institutes are required to match the perception level of the students in terms of Tangibles dimension. The future research should focus on finding solutions that help in coping with the weak areas of service quality with respect to Physical Education and other allied fields.

A. Limitations of the Study

The present study covered the institutions imparting physical education courses in UT, Chandigarh. Due to the pandemic situation the data collection was limited to a less number of students. Thus, the questionnaire was carried out through Google form as the collection of data physically was not feasible due to closure of all educational institutions. Appropriate measures were taken to make the questionnaire in simple statements, but there may be chances of oversight by respondents to fill up the questionnaires on their devices.

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