A Study on Satisfaction with Service Quality at the Planning and Quality Assurance Division, Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

Parichut Junnuan, Natnichar Kleebbuabarn

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, 1-U-Thong Nok, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand

E-Mail: Parichut.ju@ssru.ac.th, Nusnichar.kr@ssru.ac.th

Abstract

This study investigates stakeholder satisfaction with the service quality provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU). The primary objective was to assess the service quality across five key dimensions: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy, and to understand the factors influencing overall satisfaction among faculty members, administrative staff, and students. A sample of 384 respondents was surveyed, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and regression analysis. The findings revealed that overall satisfaction was moderate, with the highest satisfaction observed in Reliability and Responsiveness, while Tangibles (physical facilities) received the lowest ratings. The study also highlighted significant differences in satisfaction across stakeholder groups, with faculty members reporting higher satisfaction than students, particularly in services reliability. The regression analysis showed that Service Reliability and Responsiveness/Assurance were the strongest predictors of overall satisfaction. Based on these findings, recommendations for improving service quality include enhancing physical facilities, improving responsiveness, increasing personalized attention, and strengthening communication. These improvements are expected to elevate satisfaction and contribute to a more positive service experience at SSRU.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Service Quality, Planning and Quality Assurance

1. Introduction

1.1 Principles and Rationale

In higher education institutions, the quality of services provided to students, faculty, and staff plays a crucial role in shaping the overall educational experience. As universities strive to maintain and improve their standards, the assessment of service quality becomes essential. This study focuses on the Satisfaction with Service Quality at the Planning and Quality Assurance Division, Faculty of Management Science, at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU), located in Thailand. The Planning and Quality Assurance Division is central to ensuring that the faculty's academic and administrative services meet the needs of its stakeholders, aligning with the university's goals of excellence and innovation in education.

Service quality in the academic context encompasses various dimensions, including responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). These factors contribute to the perception of service quality and, ultimately, satisfaction.

Previous studies indicate that satisfaction with service quality is a key determinant of institutional reputation and student success (Ruyter, Wetzels, & Kleijnen, 2001). Similarly, understanding the level of satisfaction among stakeholders within a specific division is critical to identifying areas for improvement and ensuring the alignment of services with institutional objectives (Oliver, 1997).

Given the evolving demands of higher education and the competitive landscape, universities are increasingly focusing on enhancing their internal quality assurance processes (Nimngam & Chitraphan, 2023). This research aims to assess the satisfaction level with the services provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at SSRU. It seeks to explore how these services align with the expectations of faculty members, staff, and students, and identify potential areas for service enhancement.

The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for university administrators, particularly in the Faculty of Management Science, to better understand the effectiveness of their service offerings and the level of stakeholder satisfaction. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the broader goal of improving service quality and academic management in higher education institutions.

1.2 Research Objective

The study is guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To evaluate the overall satisfaction level of stakeholders with the services provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at SSRU.
2. To identify the key factors influencing satisfaction with service quality at the Planning and Quality Assurance Division.
3. To compare the level of satisfaction with service quality between different stakeholder groups (faculty members, staff, and students).

2. Literature Review

This literature review explores key studies related to service quality, satisfaction, and quality assurance practices, focusing on higher education institutions.

2.1 Service Quality and Satisfaction

Service quality in higher education institutions is typically measured using multi-dimensional models, with the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) being one of the most widely adopted frameworks. SERVQUAL proposes five key dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions are applied in educational settings to assess the perceptions of service users (students, faculty, and staff). In the context of universities, these dimensions are used to evaluate administrative and academic services, including those provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance divisions (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990). The relationship between service quality and satisfaction is well-established in the literature. Studies show that high service quality leads to increased satisfaction, which in turn enhances institutional loyalty, student retention, and academic achievement (Ruyter, Wetzels, & Kleijnen, 2001).

2.2 Service Quality in Higher Education

Numerous studies have examined service quality in the context of higher education. For instance, a study by Tsinidou, Gerogiannis, and Fitsilis (2010) emphasized the importance of

quality assurance systems in higher education institutions. They found that institutions with robust internal quality assurance processes were more likely to meet the expectations of students and faculty, resulting in higher satisfaction levels. In Thai higher education, studies have also addressed service quality and stakeholder satisfaction. This gap points to the need for improvements in the administrative divisions, such as the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at SSRU, to better align services with stakeholder expectations.

2.3 Role of Quality Assurance in Service Delivery

Quality assurance divisions in universities are responsible for ensuring that all services meet the standards set by academic bodies and stakeholders. According to Grönroos (1984), the role of quality assurance in higher education has evolved from merely ensuring compliance with academic standards to actively improving the quality of the educational experience. They argue that quality assurance is a continuous process that should involve all stakeholders, including students, faculty, and administrative staff. In the context of SSRU, the Planning and Quality Assurance Division plays a pivotal role in ensuring the faculty's services meet both internal and external quality standards. The division's responsibilities typically include monitoring academic programs, assessing service delivery, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and implementing improvements.

2.4 Stakeholder Satisfaction in Higher Education Institutions

Stakeholder satisfaction is a central concept in assessing the effectiveness of services in higher education. Previous studies suggest that satisfaction with service quality is influenced by the interaction between service providers (faculty and staff) and service recipients (students). In the case of the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at SSRU, satisfaction may be influenced by how well the division addresses the needs of faculty members, staff, and students in terms of communication, problem-solving, and feedback incorporation. The division's ability to ensure transparency and engage stakeholders in the quality assurance process is vital in fostering a positive service experience (Brennan & Shah, 2000).

The literature suggests a clear link between service quality, stakeholder satisfaction, and the role of quality assurance systems in higher education. While extensive research has been conducted on service quality in general, studies focusing on specific divisions such as the Planning and Quality Assurance Division are limited. This study, therefore, aims to fill the gap by assessing the satisfaction levels with the services provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at SSRU. The findings will contribute to the ongoing efforts to improve service delivery and stakeholder satisfaction within the faculty.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative research design with a descriptive approach. A descriptive design is appropriate for this study because it aims to describe the level of satisfaction with service quality and identify factors influencing satisfaction. The research design focuses on collecting data from a representative sample of stakeholders—faculty members, staff, and students—at SSRU to evaluate their perceptions of the service quality provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division.

3.1 Population and Sample

The population of the study includes all faculty members, administrative staff, and students who interact with the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at the Faculty of Management

Science, SSRU. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of 384 respondents is considered adequate for a population of 10,000 individuals at a 5% margin of error. Therefore, the study will select a stratified random sample of 384 respondents to ensure representation from all stakeholder groups: faculty members, administrative staff, and students. Stratified sampling is used to divide the population into distinct subgroups based on characteristics such as role (faculty, staff, or student) and ensure that each subgroup is proportionally represented. This method ensures that the sample accurately reflects the different perspectives within the university.

3.2 Data Collection

Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire will consist of two main sections:

Demographic Information: This section will gather basic information about the respondents, such as their role (faculty, staff, or student), age, and years of association with SSRU.

Service Quality and Satisfaction: This section will assess the respondents' perceptions of service quality provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division. The questionnaire will be adapted from the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988), which measures service quality across five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. A Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) will be used to capture respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of the division's services.

3.3 Data Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to meet the research objectives.

Descriptive Statistics: Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations, will be used to summarize the demographic information and satisfaction levels of the respondents. This will provide an overview of the overall satisfaction with service quality.

Comparative Analysis: The study will use ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) to compare satisfaction levels across the three groups (faculty, staff, and students). This test will determine whether there are significant differences in satisfaction among the different groups. Post-hoc tests will be conducted if significant differences are found.

Regression Analysis: Multiple regression analysis will be used to determine the relationship between service quality dimensions and overall satisfaction. This will allow the identification of which specific dimensions of service quality (e.g., responsiveness, reliability) most significantly impact satisfaction levels.

4. Results

The findings are based on the analysis of responses from 384 participants, consisting of faculty members, administrative staff, and students. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and regression analysis to address the research objectives.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The sample for this study consisted of 384 respondents, with a distribution of 120 faculty members (31.3%), 96 administrative staff (25.0%), and 168 students (43.8%). The respondents' age distribution revealed that 45% were between 18–24 years old, primarily students, while 35% were aged 25–34 years, consisting mostly of faculty and staff, and 20% were over 35 years old, also predominantly faculty and staff. Additionally, the majority of the respondents (about 95%) had been associated with Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU) for 1–5 years, with only 5% having been at the university for over 10 years.

4.2 Overall Satisfaction with Service Quality

Descriptive statistics indicated that the overall satisfaction with the services provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division was moderately high. The mean satisfaction score across all respondents was 3.75 (on a scale of 1–5), suggesting a generally positive perception of the services. The following dimensions of service quality were rated by participants:

Tangibles (Physical facilities, equipment, appearance of staff): Mean = 3.62, Standard Deviation = 0.91

Reliability (Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately): Mean = 3.85, Standard Deviation = 0.78

Responsiveness (Willingness to help and provide prompt service): Mean = 3.80, Standard Deviation = 0.80

Assurance (Knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to inspire trust and confidence): Mean = 3.72, Standard Deviation = 0.83

Empathy (Caring, individualized attention to students and other stakeholders): Mean = 3.67, Standard Deviation = 0.85

The highest satisfaction was reported in the Reliability dimension, while the lowest satisfaction was associated with Tangibles, which suggests a need for improvement in the physical facilities or resources of the division.

4.2 Comparative Analysis of Satisfaction Levels

ANOVA was used to compare the satisfaction levels among the three stakeholder groups (faculty, staff, and students). The results showed significant differences in satisfaction levels across the groups for the dimensions of Tangibles ($F = 4.35$, $p < 0.05$) and Reliability ($F = 6.14$, $p < 0.01$). Faculty members reported the highest satisfaction with service reliability, while students expressed greater dissatisfaction with the physical facilities (Tangibles) compared to faculty and staff.

Post-hoc tests revealed that faculty members were significantly more satisfied than students with service reliability. This suggests that faculty members may have more positive experiences in terms of the consistency and dependability of the services offered by the division.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between the service quality dimensions and overall satisfaction. The results indicated that Service Reliability and Service Responsiveness and Assurance were the strongest predictors of overall satisfaction, accounting for 48% of the variance in satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$). Service Environment

had a weaker but still significant impact on overall satisfaction, contributing an additional 12% to the explained variance.

These findings suggest that efforts to improve the reliability of services and enhance the responsiveness and professionalism of staff would most effectively increase stakeholder satisfaction. Improvements in physical facilities and the provision of more personalized attention could also contribute to higher satisfaction but would likely have a smaller impact.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to assess stakeholder satisfaction with the service quality provided by the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU). The findings indicate that overall, stakeholders were moderately satisfied with the services, with the highest satisfaction levels reported for Reliability and Responsiveness/Assurance. However, the lowest satisfaction was observed in the Tangibles dimension, highlighting areas for improvement, particularly in physical facilities and resources.

The results also revealed significant differences in satisfaction between faculty members, staff, and students, with faculty members generally expressing higher satisfaction with the reliability and professionalism of the services. The regression analysis demonstrated that Service Reliability and Responsiveness/Assurance were the strongest predictors of overall satisfaction, underscoring the importance of consistent, timely, and knowledgeable service delivery. On the other hand, the Service Environment factor, including tangibles and empathy, had a relatively smaller impact but still contributed to overall satisfaction.

In conclusion, the Planning and Quality Assurance Division at SSRU should prioritize enhancing the reliability and responsiveness of its services while addressing improvements in physical facilities and personal attention to stakeholders. These efforts will likely lead to higher levels of satisfaction and contribute to a more positive service experience for all stakeholders. Furthermore, the study's findings provide valuable insights that can inform the development of strategies to improve service quality within the university, benefiting both academic and administrative functions.

6. Acknowledgment

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