

## The critical dimension of Service Quality in Higher Education

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### Abstract:

**Purpose:** Of this study to identify, the factors affect to service quality in higher education and test these factors.

**Methodology:** of this study was conduct at Cihan university Erbil\Iraq, Data collected from Students who study Faculty of Administration and Financial sciences, distributed 300 questionnaires, to test four factors which affect to service quality factors named (academic, non-academic, tangible and reputation), analyzed using SPSS package and descriptive analysis Reliability test, Mean and regression to test the hypotheses.

**Finding:** indicated that there were a significant relationships between the four variables and service quality however the tangibles dimensions was the highest affect on services quality and the lowest affect was between reputation and service quality.

**Keywords:** service quality, academic, non-academic, tangible.

### المستخلص :

تهدف الدراسة الى تحديد العوامل التي تؤثر على جودة الخدمة في قطاع التعليم العالي وكذلك تهدف الى اختبار هذه العوامل ،اجرية الدراسة في جامعة جيهان اربيل وكانت عينة الدراسة طلاب كلية الادارية والعلوم المالية وزعة ٣٠٠ استمارة استبيان التي تحتوي على العوامل الاربعة الاساسية للدراسة وهي العوامل (الاكاديمي ،الغير اكاديمي ،الملموس و السمعة)،استخدم ادوات التحلي SPSS لأيجاد اختبار الموثوقية ، المتوسط والانحدار لاختبار فرضيات الدراسة . النتائج تشير الى ان هناك علاقة مهمة و تأثير ايجابي من العوامل الاربعة على جودة الخدمة في قطاع التعليم العالي  
**كلمات مفتاحية:** جودة الخدمة،الاكاديمية، غير اكاديمي .

## 1. Introduction

Iraq has not yet Give attention toward trade in education field however, increase the competition in the global market with the globalization affect to Iraq higher education sector. the globalization in education didn't give to Iraqi higher education any opportunity to increase and align the world quality in education.

Higher education sector currently looking to mercantile competition mandatory by economic forces, increase this competition led to develop the higher education sector in most of the countries and global education markets, also reducing of governmental funds because of the financial crisis.

Education filed should continuously improving the quality and provide modern ways to deliver the services to their customers Like other profit organization if education sector launch good service in higher education will led to good reputation obtain a sustainable competitive advantage, With increasing the competition and using the social media the students have a good information, knowledge and experience to chosers the best university or college

However, it is necessary for education field to recognize students(customer) expectations. Higher education field has pay more attention to implement quality management methodologies dimensions and focusing to customer prospection. To attract the customers (students) academic institutions should determine the way of measuring service quality.

### 1.1 Research objectives:

1. To identify and select the factors affect to service quality.
2. To exam, the factors affect to service quality.

### 1.2 Research Questions as following.

1. What is the impact of academic dimension on services quality?
2. What is the impact of non-academic dimension on services quality?
3. What is the impact of tangible dimension on services quality?
4. What is the impact of reputation dimension on services quality?

## 1. Literature Review

Themes in this section are evident in more recent models on service quality in higher education.

## 2.1 First model A strategic service quality framework (Yeo 2008)

According Yeo (2008) chose during his study that conducted in a Singapore tertiary institution, Model A consists from three factors (Customer focus, Quality course design, delivery, and Quality support services) which affect to services quality in higher education. the sample of study

Were face-to-face interview with employees and 12 academics, the finding showed the quality services in education sector must offering the past experience, investigation and discussion. However, the researcher Trigger points which related with customer focus factor (the students' costumer or product?) students as a customer side will be suitable if they adopt modern marketing perspective, students as products part if we consider to the students the outcome of education process and provide them to the society with good quality to serve the people Factor Quality courses design and delivery? Found The purpose of Tertiary institutions it is to provide education framework that can provide the students with high quality to meet the market demand anticipation should pay attention on the teaching performance. The Factors of Service support are take a good part of service quality such as sport center, library, clinic , cafeterias and etc. for example, the higher education students in some universities pay more attention to support services then others. (Yeo 2008 p.145)

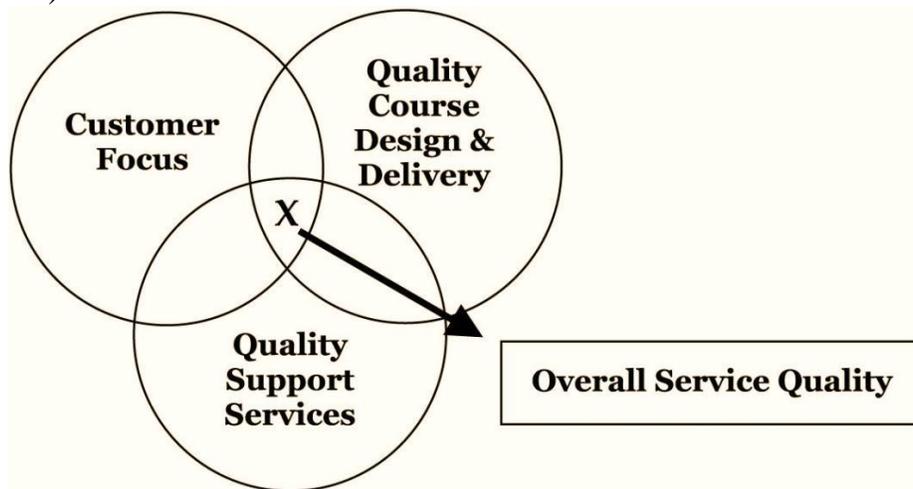


Figure 1. A strategic service quality framework by (Yeo 2008)

## 2.2 Second Model HESQUAL by (Teeroovengadum et al 2016)

This model consists of five primary dimensions, and nine sub-dimensions included a total of 48 items. The primary factors are Administrative Quality, physical environment quality, core EQ quality, support facilities quality and transformative.

The study conducted in Mauritius a developing country, a sample of 207 students was surveyed.

### **Finding of this study:**

1- *Administrative Quality* dimension suggested Two sub-dimensions The first factor was termed “Attitude and Behavior” The second factor was “Administrative Processes” the Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) found have a significant and positive affect to services quality.

2- *Physical Environment Quality* related in this dimension three sub-dimension namely infrastructure, learning setting, and general infrastructure the Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) found have a significant and positive affect to services quality.

3- *Educational Quality* dimension suggested four sub-dimensions Attitude and Behavior, Curriculum, Pedagogy and Competence, the Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) found have a significant and positive affect to services quality.

4- *Support Facilities* with this did not consist of no sub-dimension the result showed the direct affect on service quality was significant.

5- *Transformative Quality* this dimension did not consist of sub-dimensions the result showed the direct affect on service quality was significant.

(Teeroovengadum et al 2016 p.254)



Figure 2 HESQUAL model (Teeroovengadum 2016)

### 2.3 Third Model SERVQUAL dimensions in private and public higher education by Calvo-Porrall et al 2013.

The third model consists of three factors lead to quality services in education the main three factors are Tangibility, Assurance and Empathy.

- Tangible factors (facilities, comfort, spaciousness, functionality)
- Assurance elements (efficiency, quality, speed of service)
- Empathy elements (ability to understand the needs of students and respond to them)

The research sample covered private and public centers 150 undergraduate students in private and 105 students from public university.

### Finding of this study:

- 1- Tangible factor found strongest affect to perceived quality
- 2- Assurance factor found non significant to perceived quality
- 3- Empathy factor found has a significant affect to perceived quality

The resulted indicated the tangible factor has a highest affect to perceived quality and Empathy factor less affect but both two factors have significant affect however assurance factor result showed there is no significant affect. (Calvo-Porrall et al 2013 p.601.610)

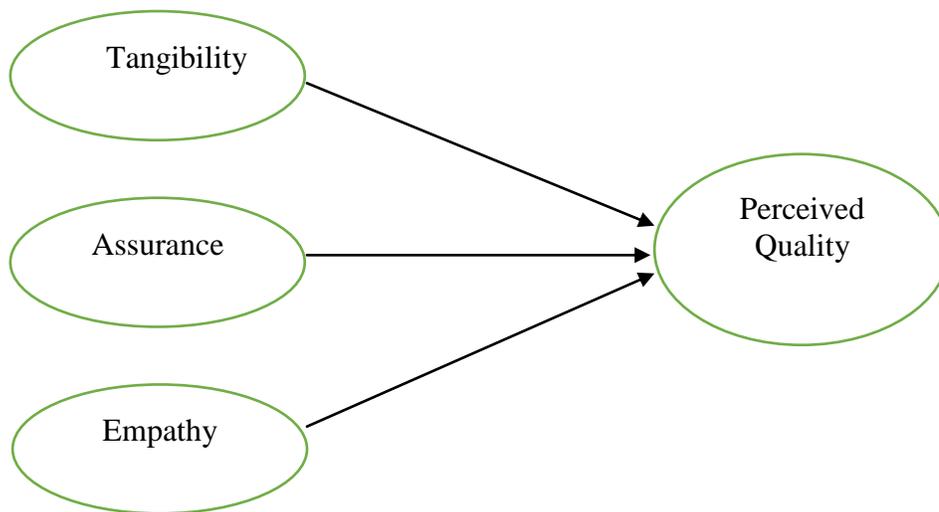


Figure 3. Perceived quality in higher education By (Calvo-Porrall 2013)

## 2. The proposed Model of service quality

Based on previous most of the models consist of academic and non academic dimension and other related hence proposed the model below which consist of four dimensions namely academic, non-academic, tangible and reputation.

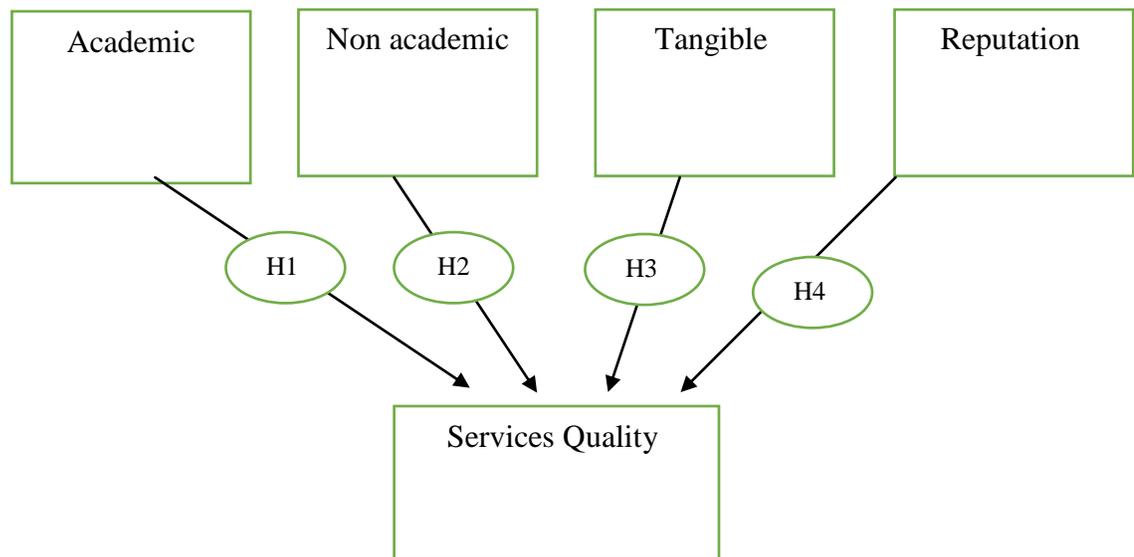


Figure 4- Dimensions of service quality By author

### 3.1 Hypotheses

- H1:** There is impact of Academic dimensions on Service Quality.  
**H2:** There is impact of non-Academic dimension on Service Quality.  
**H3:** There is impact of tangible dimensions on Service Quality.  
**H4:** There is impact of reputation dimensions on Service Quality.

### 3. Methodology

The conceptual model includes variables coming from different study variables which we propose will affect to services quality at university, the sample students from Cihan university-Erbil, Faculty of Administration and Financial sciences. To examine the model variables in various contexts, with different student populations and at different levels. 300 questionnaires distributed and 277 questionnaires was useful and acceptable. Questionnaire including four variables three variables carry 4 items and other one carry 3 items. A five-point Likert scale '1' strongly disagree' and '5' 'strongly agree', Descriptive analyses of means and Reliability was tested to each dimensions by SPSS Package.

#### 4. Data analysis

Table 1 Dimensions, items, No. of items and loadings.

Dimensions	Items	No. of items	Loadings
Academic	lecturers are gives students enough information about course content.	4	.722
	lecturers have a good Responding to request for assistance.		.738
	Lecturers have a positive attitude.		.821
	Department provide Feedback and progress		.771
Non Academic	honestly interest in solving problems	4	.651
	quickly responding with complaintsThe policies and regulations at university smooth operation of academic activates.		.552
	The registration process is easy		.689
Tangible	The facilities at university are visually attractive.	3	.612
	University has modern equipment.		.892
	university staff are neat in appearance.		.812
Reputation	University with Internal quality programs	4	.881
	University has a good location in region		.610
	Easily employable graduates		.726
	University provide Health services		.753
			.432

Source: by author

#### 5.1 Reliability statistics

Using Cronbach's alpha to measure the Reliability (Table 2).

Table 2 Cronbach's alpha of the study dimensions.

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
Academic	0.720	4
Non Academic	0.687	4
Tangible	0.912	3
Reputation	0.771	4

Source: by autho

**Table3. Regression and Mean results.**

Dimensions	Mean	Sig. ( <i>p</i> )
Academic → service quality	3.56	.765*
Non Academic → service quality	3.29	.654*
Tangible → service quality	4.00	.867*
Reputation → service quality	3.22	.578*
<b>Service Quality</b>	<b>3.517</b>	

Note: \* $p < .05$ .

Source: by author

Table 3 shows that the mean scores service quality in Higher Education dimensions namely Academic, non academic, tangible, and reputation are between 3.0 and 4.0. The mean result of services quality (which is the overall score of the four dimensions) was 3.517

## 5. Finding and discussion

Based on table 3 which represent Regression results to test four hypotheses.

### **H1: There is impact of Academic dimensions on Service Quality.**

The first hypothesis of this research stated that H1 There is impact of Academic dimensions on Service Quality. the first question of this research was found the impact of academic dimension on services quality.

Based on regression result showed in table 3 the impact of academic dimensions was .765 which mean positive and significant impact on service quality, Therefore, first hypothesis is supported and accepted.

Findings of other researchers match the finding of this study according (Ushantha and Kumarab2016 p.103) found during his study positive and significant affect between Academic dimensions and service quality.

### **H2: There is impact of non-Academic dimension on Service Quality.**

The second hypothesis of this research stated that H2 There is impact of non-Academic dimensions on Service Quality. the second question of this research was found the impact of non-academic dimension on services quality.

Based on table 3 the regression of this dimension was .654 depending on this result the impact positive and significant impact on service quality, therefore the second hypothesis is accepted.

Finding of other researchers match the finding of this study, ( Latif et al 2017 p.12), (Ushantha and Kumarab2016 p.103) found there are positive and significant affect between non-Academic and services quality.

### **H3: There is impact of tangible dimensions on Service Quality.**

The third hypothesis of this research stated that H3 There is impact of tangible dimensions on Service Quality. the third question of this research was found the impact of tangible dimension on services quality.

The third hypothesis of this research represent highest impact among other factors in this study the regression result showed .867, therefore the third hypothesis is accepted.

Finding of other researchers match the finding of this study, according (Nadiri et al 2009 p.529) which conduct in North Cyprus found same result significant and positive affect between tangibles and services quality.

### **H4: There is impact of reputation dimensions on Service Quality.**

The fourth hypothesis of this research stated that H4 There is impact of reputation dimensions on Service Quality. the fourth question of this research was found the impact of reputation dimension on services quality.

Based on table 3 regression result showed the lowest significant and impact among other variables therefor the fourth hypothesis accepted.

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendation.**

The conceptual model proposed for services quality dimensions in higher education (Table 1 and figure 1) provides a basis for improvement and measurement quality in this area. It is based on three models as well as reviewing articles related of service quality dimensions proposed for higher education. Empirical study is to test and examine the dimensions, which related on service quality namely (academic, non-academic, tangible and reputation) result showed that all this four dimensions are significant and positive affect with highest affect from tangible and lowest affect from reputation. Study recommendation that the service quality measurement is sufficient. One of the important limitations of this study is that this study

selecting one university that will push the author to do not generalize the finding to other universities.

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