

PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF SERVICE QUALITY OF ART EDUCATION UNDERGRADUATES IN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to analyze the correlation between perception and satisfaction of service quality among art education undergraduates in China. This study uses a descriptive research design. Two sets of questionnaires were used to gauge student perception and satisfaction with service quality in art education of higher colleges. Each set of the questionnaire consists of 22 items using five Likert scales. The samples were second-year art education undergraduates (200 males, 200 females) from Sichuan Film and Television College and Sichuan Vocational Art College in southern China. Before the actual study, a pilot test was carried out to obtain the reliability and validity of the instrument. Findings from the quantitative data show that students' perception has different degrees of correlation effect in the dimensions of Tangibility, Reliability, Responsibility, Security, and Empathy among art education undergraduates in China. There were no noticeable gender differences between male and female students. Therefore, we can conclude that attention should be paid to improving student satisfaction with the service quality of art education in colleges from the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL scale. This study has specific theoretical and pedagogical significance. Theoretically, these findings support the "SERVQUAL" (Service Quality) theory. In terms of pedagogical implication, the results show that the teaching quality in higher education needs to be improved to meet the satisfaction of students. In addition, further research should be conducted on other relevant factors affecting students' satisfaction to improve the service quality of art education in Chinese higher colleges.

Keywords: Service Quality, Art education, Perception, Expectation, Satisfaction, Chinese undergraduates

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Juran (2001), a famous American expert on quality management, said that the 20th century was recorded in history as the century of productivity, and the future 21st century will be the century of quality. With the development of the popularization of higher education, the challenge of quality has become an important research object in the field of higher education all over the world and has become the focus of the whole society. By the 1980s, 'quality' had become the essential keyword in the world's higher education and one of the most valuable research topics.

As the highest level of education, higher education shoulders the task of cultivating high-level talents for the country and society, which is of great significance to the development of the country and society (Luo, 2006). Developing a high level of university education is an important part and prerequisite for building a world-class university and an important symbol to measure the development level of a country's economy, science and technology, and education. Higher education shoulders the dual tasks of cultivating high-quality talents and developing science and technology. It is essential for the country to fundamentally enhance its scientific and technological strength and its total national strength. For a country, the quality of college student's education, as well as the accompanying achievements in knowledge and scientific and technological innovation, is an important symbol to measure the development level of the country's higher education as well as the development level and prospect of science and technology, economy and culture. For educational institutions, college students' education quality is an essential indicator of their educational level and status (Xing, 2009). Therefore, quality is the lifeline of higher education, and improving quality is the eternal theme of college students' education.

In majors of art, the student satisfaction model of service quality in higher education is constructed to improve the evaluation system to promote service quality in higher education. Finally, promote the core competitiveness of higher majors of art. SERVQUAL model is a unique technique and method used by enterprises to measure service quality by taking advantage of the gap between actual perception and expectation of customer satisfaction (Shao, 2018). This study attempts to apply the SERVQUAL model to evaluate service quality in higher art education. It adopts a descriptive research method to focus on how the SERVQUAL model can be applied to evaluate the service quality of higher art education. This paper proposes a conceptual model of student satisfaction with the service quality of higher art education. This paper discusses the relationship between the various dimensions of student satisfaction and puts forward corresponding countermeasures and suggestions to improve students' service quality.

1.2 Research Questions

1. Is there a correlation between students' perception and satisfaction of service quality among undergraduates in art education of Chinese higher colleges?
2. Is there a correlation between the 'Tangibility' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among undergraduates in art education of Chinese higher colleges?
3. Is there a correlation between the 'Reliability' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among undergraduates in art education of Chinese higher colleges?
4. Is there a correlation between the 'Responsibility' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among undergraduates in art education of Chinese higher colleges?
5. Is there a correlation between the 'Security' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among undergraduates in art education of Chinese higher colleges?

6. Is there a correlation between the 'Empathy' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among undergraduates in art education of Chinese higher colleges?

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

At present, according to domestic and foreign research, the evaluation mode of higher education service quality is mainly based on the Service Quality evaluation mode of management. The Service Quality questionnaire consists of 22 items and the characteristics of higher education. SERVQUAL is the abbreviation of Service Quality, which was first used in 1988 by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988). They used a Multiplex Scale for Measuring Consumer Perception of Service Quality, in which a customer-oriented questionnaire survey is proposed based on the Customers' Perception of Service Quality theory. The higher the SERVQUAL score is, the more significant the gap between customer service experience and service is. The lower customer perception of service quality, and vice versa.

SERVQUAL divides service quality into five dimensions: Tangibility, Reliability, Responsibility, Security, and Empathy. Tangibility refers to the list of existing facilities, equipment, and service personnel. Reliability refers to the ability to reliably and accurately promise travel services; responsibility, and willingness to help customers and improve service levels quickly. Security refers to employees' knowledge, courtesy, and ability to express confidence and trustworthiness. Empathy refers to caring for and providing personalized service to customers. Each layer of the five dimensions is subdivided into several items in the questionnaires so that users can state their perceptions of service quality. The total score obtained by the users or customers indicates their evaluation of service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1994).

In general, the SERVQUAL model has promoted the development of service quality evaluation research, and many scholars have further enriched and developed this evaluation model in the process of empirical research. Although many scholars have questioned the design principle and adaptability of the SERVQUAL model, most of them still use this method when evaluating customers' perception of service quality. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1994), the SERVQUAL model can evaluate the service quality of various industries, but it is necessary to make appropriate adjustments and transformations according to the particularity of the industry before using the model.

In the 1990s, SERVQUAL began to attract the attention of higher education circles. Some scholars carried out preliminary applied research to evaluate the service quality of higher education, and some achievements have been achieved so far. At the same time, the validity and rationality of the SERVQUAL model in the field of higher education have been demonstrated by some scholars. Han (2013) pointed out that SERVQUAL can become an effective evaluation tool for higher education service quality as long as SERVQUAL is modified to a certain extent according to the characteristics of higher education service quality. Compared with other quality security or quality management methods, SERVQUAL not only has a unique perspective of taking students as the evaluation subject but also has a powerful diagnostic function because it dramatically improves the pertinence and vitality of

the application of the evaluation method in quality improvement of higher education (Han, 2013)

Many researchers have applied SERVQUAL to study educational service quality in different regions, majors and colleges. Wang (2014) believed that the SERVQUAL evaluation scale was applicable. Based on theoretical analysis and literature research, the university extended professional perception evaluation scale designed in this study has passed the reliability test and validity test, and the results show that the scale has high reliability and validity. The time operation of the whole investigation process, from scale design, and questionnaire issuance to data sorting, analysis, and calculation, and finally to the conclusion, indicated that the investigation and evaluation activity based on SERVQUAL Scale is feasible. Wang (2019) found in his research on library service quality that SERVQUAL provides a compelling new method for service quality evaluation of Chinese university libraries. The empirical results in her doctoral thesis fully demonstrate the reliability and accuracy of the SERVQUAL evaluation method. The index of improving library user perception has become the focus of evaluating library service quality. This study demonstrates the SERVQUAL service evaluation method. The five dimensions of SERVQUAL summarize service quality characteristics and make abstract services become operable variables, thus having the significance of management practice, which is also the basis of service quality assessment (Lin, 2012). In her doctoral thesis, she gave SERVQUAL values of student perceptions in the process of education service based on the gap analysis model and SERVQUAL evaluation model and developed a measurement scale for customer satisfaction evaluation of education service quality based on the specific characteristics of education service.

Although SERVQUAL has been criticized and questioned by some scholars (Dem, 2017), the SERVQUAL tool or any other variant or modified form still dominates the current quality of service research.

2.1 Satisfaction of Service Quality in Higher Education

The concept of student satisfaction is developed from customer satisfaction in marketing management. The term "customer satisfaction" was introduced by Kotler (2012) from the area of psychology into the field of marketing, which is the beginning of the research on customer satisfaction. Kotler (2012, an internationally renowned marketing expert, believes that customer satisfaction is a color emotion generated after comparing the actual perceived results of products or services with their expectations. Student satisfaction is the extension and application of customer satisfaction theory in education. According to him, student satisfaction can be seen as students' subjective evaluation of educational services. Satisfaction is a relative concept; there is no unified concept at present. Chinese scholars have different understandings of the concept of student satisfaction. Through literature review, representative viewpoints are found: Cheng (2017) studied in his paper that there is a significant difference in student satisfaction in public and private colleges, and students in private colleges have low satisfaction with college education services. His study indicated that students of different grades have significant differences in their perception of the quality of education services; There is a significant positive correlation between educational service quality and educational service satisfaction. His research results show that among the five

dimensions of SERVQUAL, the tangibility dimension is the primary dimension that affects students' perceived evaluation of educational service.

Wang (2014) in the correlation analysis concluded that there was a significant positive correlation between students' perception and their satisfaction. In the dimension of 'reliability,' there is a significant positive correlation between students' satisfaction and professional trust. On the other hand, he also concluded that risk perception has a significant negative correlation with student satisfaction.

Lin (2012), in her research conclusions and suggestions, mentioned that a comprehensive survey of graduate student satisfaction and the construction of a widely applicable national graduate students' satisfaction evaluation model could effectively evaluate the quality of higher education services and promote healthy competition and self-optimization among colleges. According to her data analysis results, student satisfaction from all dimensions varies significantly due to the different types of colleges they attend. For example, students in college A have the worst perception and experience of tutor guidance, management service, and scientific research practice, and their dissatisfaction level is the lowest. Students in college B have the worst perceptual experience of course teaching and the lowest degree of dissatisfaction. Zhang (2016) in her study also confirmed that the evaluation of college satisfaction directly impacts the quality of students' educational services. In the process of higher education service evaluation, the subject of evaluation is the students who benefit directly, and the object of evaluation is the process and effect of education service provided by colleges. At present, most of the evaluation models of higher education service quality in domestic and foreign studies are based on the SERVQUAL evaluation model of management, which combines 22 items with the characteristics of higher education to create a model to evaluate the service quality of higher education.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The design of this study is a descriptive research design using a questionnaire. The original SERVQUAL scale uses 22 questions to measure the five dimensions of service quality: reliability, Tangibility, security, empathy, and responsibility. This questionnaire refers to the publication *Adaptation and Application of SERVQUAL Scale in Higher* published by Oliveria and Sao Paulo State University (De Oliveir& Ferreira, 2009). The questionnaire 1 and 2 models in this paper have been modified appropriately according to the specific content of this study. Questionnaire 1 is students' perception of service quality in art education of higher colleges by 22 items. Questionnaire 2 is students' satisfaction for service quality by 11 items, which refers to the model of De Olivier & Ferreira's publication (2009).

In this study, the sample is taken from the second-year students of art education majors of a different gender from Sichuan Film and Television college and Sichuan Vocational Art college in southern China are selected as the research objects. A self-administered questionnaire will randomly select samples from public and private sectors to collect empirical data. Seven hundred six questionnaires were sent out, and 400 valid ones were recovered. The questionnaires were collected from students of four different art majors (Fine Art, Music, Art of Broadcasting and Hosting, and Traditional Opera) , including 200 male students and 200 female students.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1. Is there a correlation between students’ perception and satisfaction of service quality among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges?

Table 4.1 Correlation between students’ perception and satisfaction with service quality

		Average Satisfaction	Average Perception
Average Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	0.858**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	400	400
Average Perception	Pearson Correlation	0.858**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The findings from the correlation coefficient test in Table 4.1 show that the significance (P) =0.000<1, therefore, it was statistically significant, and the correlation coefficient is 0.858, above 0.66, is a high correlation. These findings answer Research Question 1 that there is a high correlation between students’ perception and satisfaction of service quality among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges. The research of Liang (2015) demonstrates that students are the main body of satisfaction evaluation. She thought that students select evaluation indicators according to their perception and reflect students' educational service needs on the other side, and students as direct customers can evaluate the quality of service. Grönroos (1984) was the first person to advocate the SERVQUAL model. He also said that only customers could evaluate and draw conclusions about service quality through subjective perception. High-quality education services for students should meet the practical needs of students at different levels (Liang, 2015).

Meanwhile, Dem (2017) also clarifies the correlation between college student perception and their satisfaction. Because of Sig. =0.000(2-tail)<0.01, student perception of college service quality, namely evaluation, is related to students' behavioral tendency of satisfaction in his research. Therefore, the correlation between perception and satisfaction of service quality student perception of service quality is closely related to their satisfaction. Moreover, Zhuo (2013) proposed that according to SERVQUAL of PZB (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry), the service quality of the five dimensions has a significant positive correlation and influences

the overall service quality. In his research, he also used SPSS correlation analysis and Kendall's tau_b coefficient value to measure a correlation between the five dimensions and the service quality of colleges. The statistical results show a significant correlation between the quality of service in Tangibility, Reliability, Responsibility, Security, and Empathy and the overall quality of service. In summary, his research conclusions are consistent with the findings from the correlation coefficient test in Table 4.1.

RQ2 Is there a correlation between the 'Tangibility' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges?

Table 4.2 Correlation between 'Tangibility' dimension of students' perception and satisfaction of service quality

		(Tangibility) Perception	(Tangibility) Satisfaction
(Tangibility) Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.740**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
(Tangibility) Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 4.2 shows the correlation between the 'Tangibility' dimension of student perception and satisfaction. As we can see, in this analysis, the correlation coefficient of Perception (Tangibility) and Satisfaction (Tangibility) is 0.740. The corresponding significance is ** in the upper right corner, indicating that $P < 0.01$ is significant. The correlation coefficient is above 0.66, which means a more moderate positive correlation between the 'Tangibility' dimension of student perception and satisfaction with service quality. Therefore, it can be considered that there is a significant correlation between the 'Tangibility' dimension of students' perception and satisfaction with service quality. The Tangibility of SERVQUAL refers to material equipment and people. It involves the physical facilities, equipment, staff, and service-related materials of the service provider (Dem, 2017). In higher education services, Tangibility represents the teaching equipment of colleges, whether the staff is clean or not, or whether the office looks professional. The findings of The analysis of service quality dimensions affecting student satisfaction in Dem (2017) show that the higher value of Tangibility (Sig. = 0.000, $P < 0.05$), the higher The satisfaction of students. So there is a positive correlation between the growth of the Tangibility dimension of student perception and satisfaction in the quality of educational service.

RQ3. Is there a correlation between the 'Reliability' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges?

Table 4.3 Correlation between 'Reliability' dimension of students' perception and satisfaction of service quality

		(Reliability) Perception	(Reliability) Satisfaction
(Reliability) Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.735**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
(Reliability) Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.735**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

As demonstrated in Table 4.3, the correlation coefficient between the 'Reliability' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality is 0.735, and the corresponding significance is ** in the upper right corner, indicating $P < 0.01$. There is a significant relationship between them, and the correlation coefficient between them is over 0.66 and 0.135, indicating a moderate positive correlation. Moreover, Perception (Reliability) and Satisfaction (Reliability) are positively correlated. Reliability refers to the ability to reliably and accurately fulfill service commitments (Parasuraman et al., 1988). For example, what the college promises to students can be done on time; Students can show concern and help when they are in trouble; colleges are reliable; The college can deliver promised services to students on time; The college can adequately record the relevant records. According to Shao (2018), in terms of reliability quality, which is based on the different analysis results of demographic characteristics, it can be seen that the reliability quality of students in liberal arts, science, and social sciences is in different disciplines higher than that in engineering, which shows that the quality of students' education service who major in engineering lays more emphasis on knowledge creation, and the higher the quality of their perception is, the higher degree of satisfaction is.

Therefore, in terms of reliability, the more education services provided by colleges meet students' perceived needs, the higher student satisfaction will be.

RQ4. Is there a correlation between the 'Responsibility' dimension of service quality and student satisfaction among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges?

Table 4.4 Correlation between 'Responsibility' dimension of students' perception and satisfaction of service quality

		(Responsibility)	(Responsibility)

		Perception	Satisfaction
(Responsibility) Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.739**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
(Responsibility) Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.739**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The details are plotted in Table 4.4; the corresponding significance is ** in the upper right corner, $P < 0.01$, significance. It appeared that the correlation coefficient between the 'Responsibility' dimension of perception and satisfaction is 0.739, which means a moderate positive correlation. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), Responsiveness in customer perceived service quality theory is defined as the willingness to help customers improve their service level quickly. For example, colleges can tell students strictly when services are provided; colleges can provide timely services; college faculty and staff are always willing to help students; Faculty and staff are always the first to meet the needs of students. In Ali et al. (2022) 's study, Quality Assurance in Education, it is concluded that another related dimension, "access," had a lower average score than other dimensions of service quality. This dimension is related to ease of contact, approachability, and accessibility of staff, including both non-academic and academic. Poor perception of this dimension may harm student satisfaction. They think colleges should ensure that students have access to their staff through multiple channels, such as email, phone, or face to face. Through these measures, existing students can improve their awareness of the 'Responsibility' dimension of colleges' services quality to improve their satisfaction, which can raise the university's profile and help attract new students, using existing students as a promotional channel. (Ali et al., 2022). Therefore, According to Ali et al.'s research conclusions, it is proved that there is a correlation between the five variables of the responsibility dimension and satisfaction.

RQ5. Is there a correlation between the 'Security' dimension of service quality and student satisfaction among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges?

Table 4.5 Correlation between 'Security' dimension of students' perception and satisfaction of service quality

		(Security) Perception	(Security) Satisfaction
(Security) Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.803**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
(Security) Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.803**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

As presented can be seen in Table 4.5. A central aim of this test is to detect a correlation between the 'Security' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality. The corresponding significance of the test result is ** in the upper right corner, indicating that $P < 0.01$ is significant. The correlation coefficient between them is 0.803, which is a strong positive. Security refers to the knowledge, etiquette, and confidence expressed by employees to make them credible (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In higher education services, for example, staff are trustworthy; in educational services, students will feel reassured; Faculty are polite; Staff can get appropriate support from the college to provide better service. As in other industries, there are relationships between service quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction, and behavioral tendency in higher education.

Customer satisfaction has a significant direct positive impact on customer behavior tendency. Service quality has a direct positive influence on perceived value and customer trust. The direct effect of service quality on customer satisfaction is not significant, but it has an indirect effect on customer satisfaction through perceived value and customer trust. Service quality has an indirect effect on customer behavior tendency through customer trust and customer satisfaction. University image affects customer satisfaction through perceived value and customer trust. University image directly influences customer behavior tendency and affects customer behavior tendency through customer trust and customer satisfaction. The direct positive effect of customer trust on behavior tendency is the greatest (Liu, 2009). Therefore, there is a significant correlation between the 'Security' dimension of student perception and satisfaction.

RQ6. Is there a correlation between the empathy dimension of service quality and student satisfaction among art education undergraduates in Chinese higher colleges?

Table 4.6 Correlation between ‘Empathy’ dimension of students’ perception and satisfaction of service quality

		(Empathy) Perception	(Empathy) Satisfaction
(Empathy) Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	.772**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
(Empathy) Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.772**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 4.2 shows the correlation between the 'Empathy' dimension of student perception and satisfaction. As we can see, in this analysis, the correlation coefficient of Perception (Empathy) and Satisfaction (Empathy) is 0.772. The corresponding significance is ** in the upper right corner, indicating that $P < 0.01$ is significant. The correlation coefficient is above

0.66, which means a more moderate positive correlation between the 'Tangibility' dimension of student perception and satisfaction of service quality. Empathy means caring for and providing personal services to customers. Specifically, the company will provide individual services for customers (Parasuraman et al., 1988). For example, in higher education services, staff members give individual attention to students; Employees are expected to understand the needs of students; colleges give priority to the interests of students; The service hours provided by the college cannot meet the needs of all students. Sun (2014) concluded in her research that in the score statistics of service quality, the option of 'Empathy' dimension that colleges attach importance to students' needs and regularly solicit students' opinions has the lowest score, indicating that the college does not attach enough importance to students' needs and interests. It can be seen that whether students' needs are met directly affects the degree of satisfaction of educational service quality. Therefore, there is a significant correlation between the 'Empathy' dimension of student perception and satisfaction.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This paper analyzes the background, purpose, and significance of service quality evaluation in higher art education in China, reviews relevant theories and literature at home and abroad, and comprehensively uses the literature method, pattern analysis method, and questionnaire survey method to try to apply SERVQUAL model to service field of higher art education in China. In this study, a SERVQUAL model was constructed to evaluate the service quality of higher art education in China, and a questionnaire was compiled to match the model. This paper makes an empirical study of art majors in Two Chinese colleges: Sichuan Film and Television College and Sichuan Vocational Art College. In this study, the priority order of service quality of these two colleges is improved by combining the empirical research and SPSS data analysis chart, and improvement strategies are put forward. Finally, the following conclusions are drawn in this study: The basic idea and concept of service quality evaluation and SERVQUAL evaluation model of service quality management in Chinese higher art education is feasible and has excellent application prospects. However, SERVQUAL model needs to be modified according to the specific field and cultural background. According to the actual situation of art education services in Two Chinese colleges: Sichuan Film and Television college and Sichuan Vocational Art College, Construct an evaluation model of service quality in art education in Chinese colleges corresponding to 22 specific indicators in five dimensions including Tangibility, Reliability, Responsibility, Security, and Empathy. The application scope of SERVQUAL model is further broadened.

The empirical analysis of service quality in art education in Chinese colleges shows that student perceptions of service quality in art education positively correlate with student satisfaction. The higher the degree of students' education service quality, the higher the student satisfaction was. According to the data analysis results of SPSS, the dimensions of Reliability, Empathy, Responsibility, and Security is located in the competitive advantage area. In contrast, Tangibility is located in the second improvement area in the art education services of Chinese colleges. Therefore, to improve the service quality of art education, Chinese colleges should first improve the tangible service by expanding the development channels of art students and academic communication channels; secondly, by improving the quality of academic training, establishing service incentive mechanisms, and establishing the consciousness of serving students as the center. Finally, the services provided by the

dimensions of Reliability, Empathy, Security, and Responsibility are regarded as the competitive advantages of Chinese colleges in attracting and maintaining excellent students in art education.

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