

Quality Educational Management

Hairuddin Ali

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TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER 1: 1-10

What the Students Expects and Perceive about Trustworthiness?

CHAPTER 2: 11-20

What the Students Expects and Perceive about Trustworthiness?

CHAPTER 3: 21-32

Crime Scene Prevention: A Study of Effective Security Management at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)

CHAPTER 4: 33-50

Leadership and Islamic Management: Basis for Quality Education

CHAPTER 5: 51-68

Leadership and Islamic Management: Basis for Quality Education

CHAPTER 6: 69-88

What You See is Not What You Get: a Case of the Quality of Services

CHAPTER 7: 89-98

An Investigation of Post Graduate Students and Academic Staff Affectionate Relationship

CHAPTER 8: 99-118

Students' Satisfaction toward Service Quality in Admission & Records Department, Centre For Foundation Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia

CHAPTER 9: 119-137

Students' Satisfaction towards Library Service Quality at a Local Higher Learning Institution

CHAPTER 10: 139-154

THE EFFECTS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A RESEARCH UNIVERSITY STATUS

✓ **CHAPTER 11: 155-167**

The Quest for Quality Services: Does SERVQUAL Perfectly Measure the University Services?

CHAPTER 12: 169-188

What Customers Expect and Perceive From a University Services?

CHAPTER 11

The Quest for Quality Services: Does SERVQUAL Perfectly Measure the University Services?

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Introduction

Education is a service industry. It needs to adopt the techniques in measuring the quality of its services and the satisfaction of its customers. Service quality also has become a predominant part advanced organization's strategic plan. Increasing attention paid to service quality has resulted more progress and profit in organizations. Higher education possesses all the characteristics of service industry, i.e, intangible, heterogeneous, inseparability, variability, perishable, and the customer (student) participates in the process. However, quality measurement in higher education continues to be a vexing and difficult issue. Most evaluation of higher education has primarily used tangible criteria (Hadikoemoro, 2001).

Many universities naturally offer various services that can answer the needs of the students. One of the reliable offices among the universities is their Postgraduate Office. It seems that kind of office is busy for the entire university year from enrollment until the end of the study year. Behind the piles of workload staffs and the important of assisting the student, how can we say that the services they offer effective? This is the one of complex office is already introduced in many of the universities with the continuous recruitment of the office staff who always deal with students as customers.

As a university department, Centre for Postgraduate Studies (CPS) is expected to play a central role ensuring action plans that are in place and are effectively implemented to support the university's Quality Assurance System and Balance Scorecard. The mission of CPS is to provide quality services in vary aspects to serve postgraduate students' activities in campus and also facilitating the postgraduate teaching and learning process to ensure they are on par with world class universities and. Moreover, CPS also aims to provide friendly, efficient and effective services to satisfy all customers.

Hence, it is vital to regularly measures the performance of service quality from students' perspective because they are directly involved in the education process. They can be seen and act as a consumer or customer as well as a product of the education institution. Students' view on all aspects of their higher education experiences is essential to monitor the quality of education. The data and information gained will help the service provider and the stakeholder to make judgments about level of quality in particular universities (Brennan et al., 1997).