

# Assessing the Quality of Educational Services from the Viewpoint of Medical Students of Islamic Azad University of Qom Based on SERVQUAL Model 2013

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## A-R-T-I-C-L-E I-N-F-O

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## A-B-S-T-R-A-C-T

**Background & Aims of the Study:** Special education services are services that are offered by universities and higher education institutions play essential role in the development of societies. So pay attention to improving the quality of teaching and research is ongoing, it seems necessary. Therefore, the service quality gap may be developing programs to improve the quality of educational services provided. This study aimed to evaluate the quality of educational services from the viewpoint of medical students of Islamic Azad University of Qom was based on SERVQUAL model in 1392 years.

**Materials & Methods:** The present study was descriptive, analytical the cross-sectional analytic study was done in 1392. Using a sample size formula for descriptive studies in limited populations, the probability of type I error probability equal to 0.50, standard deviation equal to 0.67 and carefully fold 0.01 each student was required to select a minimum number of samples. Sampling is done in several stages and a total of 200 medical students participated in the study. The data collection tool was a questionnaire based on SERVQUAL instrument. Students' responses to the questionnaire, the realities and expectations of service quality in five dimensions include tangibles, reliability, assurance, responsiveness and sympathy. To describe data, descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation of the distribution of test and ANOVA were used. Analysis of the data in SPSS version 19 was used at a significance level of less than 0.05.

**Results:** The results showed that the five dimensions of service quality gaps existed. The average gap in the tangible (-1.81) was observed Other dimensions, then the responsiveness (-1.44) empathy (-1.31), the reliability (-1.30) and minimum gap relating to the assurance (-1.15) evaluated.

**Conclusions:** Overall, the gap between expectations and reality seen in all aspects of the show was meeting students' expectations of the services provided. It is therefore proposed to improve the quality of services, while planning to hold workshops on how to serve and enhance communication skills for employees, while allocating budget gap dimensions that showed the highest in priority.

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## Background

In a competitive environment that organizations compete with each other to attract customers, Customer satisfaction is a key

element in the success and excellence of services provided by organizations and is an important factor for profitability and customer

loyalty to the organization. The role of higher education experts to meet the needs of the community given the important role of higher education, one of the main concerns of the world in the quality assurance of academic programs and products (1).

Overall, the gap between expectations and reality seen in all aspects of the show was meeting students' expectations of the services provided. It is therefore proposed to improve the quality of services, while planning to hold workshops on how to serve and enhance communication skills for employees, while allocating budget gap dimensions that showed the highest in priority.

On the other hand, due to the complexity of the concept of quality in higher education, particularly in the areas of general consensus has yet been reached regarding the quality of higher education. Evaluation of service is one of the ways that will help to improve. The history of education is mainly carried out by the teacher and parent evaluations were done and while the subject of mutual evaluation, especially in higher education (2). Students in the teacher evaluation is a valuable resource that will result in real productivity. Important feature of higher education in the current era is getting competitive. Higher education system as a dynamic system with both quantitative and qualitative impact that sustainable development depends on the harmonious development of both quality and quantity (3). Quantitative expansion of higher education, regardless of the quality consequences such as academic failure, academic affiliation, brain drain, lack of entrepreneurship, lack of knowledge will lead to (4).

Despite its age the quality of the words that everyone has the same definition. In fact, one can expand the quantity and increase the quality of students and graduates, there's no reason to be ideal. Now, at the global level, the views of students about all aspects of the education provided in educational institutions are considered as an essential factor in monitoring

the quality of universities, is considered (5). Since the quality characteristics of university students meet the expectations of the training process is to examine the gap between expectations and perceptions of students, the quality of the process can be determined. Low the gap between expectations and perceptions of students, the quality of educational services provided. Special education services are services that are offered through universities and higher education institutions, communities have a essential role in the development. So pay attention to improving the quality of teaching and research is ongoing, it seems necessary.

One of the methods often used to evaluate the quality of higher education and universities, SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman (6). SERVQUAL model is a model through analyzing the gap between customer expectations and perceptions of service quality is attempting to measure. This model is also known as gap analysis. It's qualities from 5 evaluates. These five dimensions include tangibles, reliability, or reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (7).

The ultimate goal of this model is to lead the organization toward excellence in performance (8). SERVQUAL, a valid instrument for assessing the quality of service and compared to other methods of quality assessment, the benefits that ability to adapt to different types of environments of services, the reliability and validity of the perceptions and expectations of customers, the relative importance of the five dimensions of perceived service quality and ability analysis based on demographic characteristics, psychological and other areas, including the benefits that all organizations can differ with respect to their characteristics and needs, to make the appropriate changes are specific to the model used

In some universities, medical research results indicate that five dimensions of service quality gap in educational which represents an undesirable level of quality of service is (11,12). Studies in the United States, Canada

and Australia also shows the gap in university education (13-15).

Since the quality of educational services provided by schools to improve, in which the quality of their outputs are usually graduates increase and the effects of this improvement would extend throughout the community and thereby improve the quality of all parts of society, have internalized.

**Aims of the study:** According to importance of understanding both perceptions and expectations of students as customers of education, improve the quality of educational services and narrow the gap between the existing and desired condition of evaluate and determine the quality gap in educational services to the medical students of Islamic Azad University of Qom was performed.

## Materials & Methods

The present study was descriptive, analytical the cross-sectional analytic study was done in 1392. The total study population consisted of 806 person who were Professional doctorate degree in medicine 198, and other undergraduate courses Nursing 195 midwifery 208, and 205 person were enrolled Laboratory Sciences.

In this study, a multi-stage sampling was used to select samples. The first group of training courses covering specific Qom University of Medical Sciences, Islamic Azad and Using a sample size formula for descriptive studies in limited populations, the probability of type I error probability equal to 0.50, standard deviation equal to 0.67 and carefully fold 0.01 and study the minimum number of samples required for educational Each 50 person and generally of 200 person randomly selected from the list. Students studied medicine at the doctoral level professionals and undergraduate courses in nursing, midwifery and laboratory science. Enrolled students who have completed at least one semester. The study also included students in all courses prior to entering the

clinical course of time. (Medical school basic science and Physiopathology of other disciplines in the field before Internships).

Information required by the SERVQUAL questionnaire contains three sections: demographic data needed and the two corresponding questions about the perceptions and expectations of students from different educational services in the five dimensions of service quality educational, Assurance (5 questions) Reliability (7 questions) Empathy (6 questions) responsiveness (5 questions) and Tangible (4 items), a total of 27 questions were asked to provide.

Questions based on a Likert scale from one to five points were classified. In response to questions on the perception of 5 option is quite important, important, somewhat important, important and unimportant, and the expectations of 5 options very good, good, fair, bad or very bad. The content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts and its reliability by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient equal to 0.88 in the study was the evaluation of Bahrain(19). Of the students with the knowledge that their information is confidential questionnaires were included in the study and practice. For data collection the researcher personally visited the school in question and after explaining the purpose of the study, instructions for completing the questionnaire respondents Contract.

**Data analysis:** To describe data, descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation of the distribution was used, also according to the objectives of the present study was to compare the quality of the educational gap between the disciplines of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Analysis of the data in SPSS version 19 was used at a significance level of less than 0.05.

## Results

The total number of subjects participating in the study, 200 medical students and medical sciences. Of students participating in the

study 37.5% male and 59.5% female and 3% did not respond to this question. 24.6% of participants at the doctoral level professional and 75.4% Percent were enrolled in undergraduate. In Medicine, 42 percent of students in the second year of study subjects and in science laboratories and midwifery 54 percent in the third year of study and 51 percent in the second year enrolled nursing. The mean age of subjects  $21.31 \pm 2.32$ , minimum 18 and maximum 33 years. The subjects had a mean  $16.11 \pm 1.52$ . The returned questionnaires were 100%.

In the table 1, the average gap in educational service quality based on SERVQUAL model to view samples shown.

**Table 1. The average gap between the quality of educational services based on SERVQUAL model to view samples**

Dimensions	Average Expectations	Average perceptions	Gap
Assurance	4/19	3/04	-1/15
Responsiveness	3/94	2/50	-1/44
Empathy	4/17	2/83	-1/34
Reliability	4/24	2/94	-1/30
Tangible	4/21	2/40	-1/81

The largest gap in the tangible with a score of -1.81 was achieved. Gaps in the quality of tangible services means that attraction bulk materials used in the training of teachers, attractive appearance and physical facilities (buildings, classrooms, chairs), Being efficient and modern equipment and teaching materials (internet, library and video projector ...) appearance polished and professional teachers

and school staff for students not enjoy the efficiency and attractive appearance.

The responsiveness to the gap score of -1.44 after the most tangible aspect of the gap between the quality of educational services from the perspective of the students achieved. The dimensions of quality (responsiveness) to demonstrate the sensitivity and awareness for inquiries, questions, complaints and customer focused (30).

Empathy dimension gap was in the research, -1.31, this dimension reflects the desire of the university to provide fast service to students and reflect the sensitivity and awareness of requests, questions and complaints raised by the students.

Also, the reliability of the study with a score of -1.30 was more robust in comparison with other aspects of quality shows, but still the gap is negative, the expectations were higher than perceptions.

Dimension ensuring the minimum gap in the quality of educational services for students' perspective so that the average gap dimension -1.15 was the score. Due to the lower slot dimension it became clear that is not University dimension ensuring that the students 'expectations of students' confidence in Create a sense of security and peace in the student meets. The results showed that most students believe that there is a gap between the existing and desired condition.

In the table 2, the mean and standard deviation of students' perceptions and expectations of study in the field of study of educational services provided.

**Table 2. The mean and standard deviation of students' perceptions and expectations of educational services in the field of study subjects**

	Field of Study	Perceptions		Expectations		Quality Gap	P
		Average	SD	Average	SD		
Assurance	Medicine	4/28	0/96	3/39	0/69	-0/89	P=0/023
	Nursing	4/12	1/06	2/44	0/76	-1/68	
	Midwifery	4/30	0/89	3/34	0/93	-0/96	
	Laboratory Science	4/07	0/97	3/00	0/61	-1/07	
Responsiveness	Medicine	4/03	0/93	2/84	0/76	-1/19	P=0/018
	Nursing	3/77	0/98	2/02	0/63	-1/75	
	Midwifery	4/03	1/03	2/70	0/90	-1/33	
	Laboratory Science	3/94	1/01	2/44	0/86	-1/50	

<i>Empathy</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	4/12	1/1	3/17	0/88	-0/95	P=0/011
	<i>Nursing</i>	4/23	0/85	2/14	0/92	-2/09	
	<i>Midwifery</i>	4/25	0/76	3/16	0/99	-1/09	
	<i>Laboratory Science</i>	4/16	0/75	2/86	0/81	-1/3	
<i>Reliability</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	4/11	1/00	3/11	0/66	-1/00	P=0/019
	<i>Nursing</i>	4/26	0/93	2/39	0/73	-1/87	
	<i>Midwifery</i>	4/44	0/97	3/22	0/55	-1/22	
	<i>Laboratory Science</i>	4/17	0/81	2/48	0/91	-1/69	
<i>Tangible</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	4/23	0/96	2/61	0/85	-1/62	P=0/027
	<i>Nursing</i>	4/05	0/66	1/93	0/92	-2/12	
	<i>Midwifery</i>	4/40	0/72	2/60	0/61	-1/8	
	<i>Laboratory Science</i>	4/17	0/88	2/48	0/66	-1/69	
<i>All dimensions</i>	<i>Medicine</i>	4/15	0/97	3/02	0/89	-1/13	P=0/029
	<i>Nursing</i>	4/08	1/01	2/18	0/88	-1/90	
	<i>Midwifery</i>	4/28	0/69	3/00	0/86	-1/28	
	<i>Laboratory Science</i>	4/08	0/81	2/76	0/93	-1/32	

According to the results, we can say that the quality gap of educational services in all available fields and expectations mean score than the mean score of perceptions. But it was not to the same degree in interdisciplinary and ANOVA test showed that, there are significant differences in the average gap between the fields of medical education.

According to ANOVA, the quality of educational services in all aspects of the SERVQUAL and the gap between academic disciplines, there is a significant difference ( $P=0.29$ ). In this regard, the Post hoc test showed the average gap in nursing education, significantly more than other academic disciplines and the average gap in the medical field was significantly lower than in other fields the average gap in the fields of gynecology and clinical laboratory significantly less than most of the disciplines of nursing and medicine.

## Discussion

This study examines the quality of educational services from the viewpoint of medical students of Islamic Azad University of Qom, was conducted in 1392 based on SERVQUAL model. The results showed that students, the quality of the existing constitution optimal educational services, there is a negative gap.

The negative assessment of the quality of educational services in all five dimensions of service are and the study shows educational services in all aspects of school improvement is needed. The results of this study are consistent with results of studies in the country. Ali Kebraei so that the study of Zahedan Medical Sciences (11) divide the quality of educational services -1.49, Abbasiand of Shahrud Medical Sciences(27)-1.26 and study the Rasoul Abadi at the kordestan University of Medical Sciences (28) -1.64, The prosperity gap Rasoul Abadi of our results, it seems a little more. In other studies, the quality of education at other universities were negative. Bahraini M. Studies, School of Dentistry (19) and T. Aghamolaei in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences (12) and Z. Kavosi at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (37) and the T. Enayati of Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences (36) and R. Mohebbifar of Qazvin University Medical (38) Of these studies considered..

The similarity of these results with the results of this study can be far from the demands and expectations of medical students in universities and educational services provided to show the current status. Because the quality of educational services directly related to students' satisfaction. This argument is based on the results of similar research that has been done in the area of educational and non-educational.

The largest gap in the Tangible with a score of -1.81, respectively. In a similar study, M. Bahraini (19) as well as the tangible (-0.70) and Hassan ghalavand in Urmia University of Medical Sciences (21) dimension the most tangible aspects of service quality gap among the other showed. But the studies of Ali Mohammadi in Tehran University of Medical Sciences (20) Z. Kavosi (37) and R. Mohebbifar (38) which has the least gap is tangible in them are inconsistent. A review of similar studies conducted in other parts of the world show that this applies not only in our schools but also in universities in developed countries has been a challenge. In a study by Richard & Adams conducted to determine the quality of educational services in the United States showed that the students perspective, does not provide quality services to them (25).

The results are consistent with the results of his studies because their research showed that the dimension physical factors between expectations and perceptions of customers, there is a gap. Also finding out gaps in physical and Galloway (35) were consistent. Perhaps because it was the cause of students' expectations of their university.

Gaps in dimension quality of tangible services means that Environment Education and Research, facilities and physical tools such as buildings, classrooms, chairs, and school supplies and other items that are used the efficiency and attractive appearance suffer. In other words, the image dimensions are not appropriate for students of University facilities provide.

This may indicate that the structure and physical facilities of higher education distance learning environments are physical standards. Because the following services to victims and students are judged objectively and probably due to the negative impact of consumers' dissatisfaction would be even more than this dimension, it is necessary to pay more attention to the relevant authorities

However, in some studies, including research into Aghamolaei and colleagues (12). Ali Kebraei (11) results in the following different and sometimes conflicting. It should be noted that In these studies, there is also a crack in the concrete, but the gap is lower compared to other dimensions.

The response dimension a gap score of -1.44, after tangible dimension the most gap between the quality of educational services from the perspective of the students achieved. The results obtained in similar studies by F.Arboni (18) After meeting with the -1.26, Bahraini (19) -0.55 , Alimohammadi (20) and Enayati (36) with an average of 4.32 is consistent with results .

There are gaps in these terms suggests that teachers and advisors to students when needed, are available below. Students to convey your comments regarding education issues simply do not have access to the authorities. Student comments about educational issues under the program applies. Students are not to study sources for further reading. Hours that can be used for teaching and learning issues, especially the advice to see their Master, they were not announced. We can say that because of the long waiting period for answers to some questions students or convey their views to the large volume of work, education officials and faculty members and as a result, students do not display sensitivity to the requests and suggestions in this aspect, there is a greater gap. The results of the present study with the results of this research study Karydis (31) and Lim and Tang (23) in line and with the results of Berry (32) and Chin, and Pun (33) and Sewell (34) is Counter current. By comparing the results with the results of the country studies in Zanjan University of Medical Sciences, Dental Medicine, Mazandaran was a gap in the responsiveness in all university confirmed (11,18).

Because these universities to be evaluated in terms of geographical, cultural and academic types can vary, it can be argued that the quality

gap in service dimension a widespread problem and to the attention of higher education administrators and ministry needs. Because it seems that the problem is not only related to university study and possibly in other academic centers in the field of service dissatisfaction seen. The researchers believe that more and more extensive studies are needed in this area.

The empathy gap in this study, -1.31, this dimension reflects the desire of the university to provide fast service to students and reflect the sensitivity and awareness of requests, questions and complaints raised by students. Quality gap in this dimension indicates that flexibility in meeting the specific circumstances of each student and teacher expectations of student behavior is not. Besides the classes and assignments provided by the present course is inappropriate. It seems that the volume of construction work in education, the large number of students and teachers on the staff and also a bit of experience and skill of some of the staff and teachers has made them a chance to express empathy and have students listen to the comments. The results of this research, especially with Ali Mohammadi in Zanjan University of Medical Sciences (20), the Enayati of Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences (36) and Richard and Adams (25) show that alignment for the study, they also found that the empathy gap between expectations and perceptions of customers in the third category.

The reliability of the study with a score of -1.30 More robust in comparison with other aspects of quality shows but yet the gap is negative, therefore expectations were higher than perceptions. Negative perceptions of the expectations of the following may be negative, indicating that the university failed to provide timely services and full effort and enthusiasm shown students are expected to solve problems. It also shows that the activities conducted by faculty and staff when they have promised not and officials hear from their students who do not show respect to and it would impose less of

their programs and the students do not attend college places for relaxation.

Results Tofighi and colleagues (16) showed that the lowest gap in trust aspect is somewhat consistent with our results. Goharinezhad race results (29) -1.28 is consistent with this research. Furthermore, in other studies Aghamolaei (12), Arebouni (18) M. Bahraini (19) M. Rasoolabadi (28), the lowest gap is assured.

The results also showed that the last dimension assurance the lowest gap in the quality of educational services to the students So that the average gap in the field of -1.15 was the score. In assurance aspects that the students have to make sure to create the right environment to facilitate discussion about the subject matter to prepare students to future jobs the expertise of university professors, students failed to meet expectations. The results in this study with the results of Chu, Peter alignment because research shows they also found that the following is guaranteed between expectations and perceptions of customers splitter (22,24)

This ensures a study investigating the Abbasian Shahroud University anymore (27) is consistent. On the other hand, Ayatollahi studies (17), which was significant only after ensuring that, only the mean, and Enayati studies (36) and Z Kavosi (37) and Barnes (26), which has the largest gap is guaranteed not match.

In conclusion it can be said that in this study the quality gap of educational services in all disciplines are available and the mean score of perceptions, expectations were higher than average scores. But it was not to the same degree in interdisciplinary and ANOVA test showed a significant difference in the average gap between the disciplines of medical services there.

In this context, given that the larger gap in the quality of nursing education was reported. So that the group usually expect higher expectations of the quality of educational services. We have higher expectations of

students paid more attention to the quality of the group were able to reduce the gap. The results indicate that students are not happy with the current state of the quality of education in schools, and analyze the quality of educational services and the existence of gaps in all five aspects of the students' expectations and perceptions. In all cases, the expectations of students beyond the level of perceptions of them. In other words, students in all aspects of the study are not happy with the quality of services received. In this study, the largest gap in aspects of tangible, responsiveness, empathy, reliability and assurance respectively. Well established in the fields of nursing in the School of Medical Sciences, Islamic Azad University Qom had the most negative gap. According to surveys conducted among medical universities in the country, almost all studies have reported the existence of gap training.

Considering the results, it is suggested to be important to the students' opinion about the quality of educational services also, the new training methods and tools used. Need to hold workshops for faculty and staff and student meetings to hear comments seem necessary. However, with the improvement of service quality, customer satisfaction and attract more customer. Moreover, the effects of quality improvement would extend to the whole community and thereby improve the quality of all parts of society, have internalized.

## Footnotes

### Conflict of Interest:

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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