UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF SERVICE QUALITY AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNICS IN MALAYSIA

NOOR SAADAH ZAINAL ABIDIN

FPP 2008 8
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF SERVICE QUALITY AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNICS IN MALAYSIA

By

NOOR SAADAH ZAINAL ABIDIN

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, In Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 2008
DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved husband, mother and children,

My brothers and sister-in-laws
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF SERVICE QUALITY AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNICS IN MALAYSIA

By

NOOR SAADAH ZAINAL ABIDIN

February 2008

Chairman : Foo Say Fooi, PhD
Faculty : Educational Studies

This study determines business students’ levels of perceptions of six service quality factors and their relationships to their satisfaction in polytechnics. The factors identified from literature were quality of program, facilities, academic staff, support services, accessibility and location, as well as campus climate. Differences among students’ years, levels of studies, types of sponsorship and zones were determined as well as predictors of students’ satisfaction. The primary data were collected using student survey questionnaires through proportionate cluster sampling. A total of 469 business students were involved in the study sample. Findings indicated ‘moderate’ to ‘good’ levels of satisfaction among students. Significant differences were observed between certificate and diploma students on quality facilities, support services and campus climate. Significance
differences were found among students of different years on quality facilities. Significant differences also existed among polytechnics in North, East, Central and South zones. All six service quality factors were linearly correlated and significant with levels of students’ satisfaction, the strongest was for campus climate ($r = .774, p = .0001$). Five out of six service quality factors accounted for 66.2% of the variance in students’ satisfaction. This study had implications on both quality facilities and support services in polytechnics. Both tangible (quality of program, facilities, academic staff, support services, accessibility and location) and intangibles aspects (campus climate) were important in polytechnics. Administrators need to improve strategies aimed at achieving better students’ satisfaction emphasizing both tangible and intangible aspects and responding to the demand for skilled workers in a competitive economy.
Abstrak tesis dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

HUBUNGAN PERSEPSI DAN KEPUASAN KUALITI PERKHIDMATAN DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR PERDAGANGAN DI POLITEKNIK DI MALAYSIA

Oleh

NOOR SAADAH ZAINAL ABIDIN

Febuari 2008

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Fakulti : Pengajian Pendidikan


v
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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 18th February 2008 to conduct the final examination of Noor Saadah binti Zainal Abidin on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “The relationship between perception and satisfaction of service quality among business students in polytechnics in Malaysia” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date:  10th July 2008
DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at UPM or at any other institution.

______________________________
NOOR SAADAH ZAINAL ABIDIN

Date: 15th May 2008
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<td>BAHEIS</td>
<td>Islamic Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers Department</td>
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<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
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<td>PMQA</td>
<td>Prime Minister Quality Award</td>
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<td>Quality Academic Staff</td>
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<td>Quality Support Service</td>
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<td>SIRIM</td>
<td>Standard and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia</td>
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<td>SPM</td>
<td>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Science</td>
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SQ = Service Quality
SS = Students’ Satisfaction
TSP = Time Sector Privatization
TQM = Total Quality Management
WASC = Western Association for Schools and Colleges
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The economic development and prosperity of any country depend on its resources (Ngalingam & Sivanand, 2004). Among all the resources, manpower plays a vital role in driving the economy. Highly skilled, knowledgeable and competent manpower is nurtured and developed through education and training. According to Ngalingam and Sivanand (2004), the right education for the people of a nation is the responsibility of its government. It is therefore important that the government has as its priority the development of world class education system because according to Abdullah (2005), the quality of our education system will determine the quality of the country’s future.

However, in meeting the growing demand of middle-level technically skilled manpower in Malaysia, polytechnics were established to ensure continuous success of industrial projects that are needed for the economic development of the country. Polytechnics are under the Polytechnics Management Division in the Department of Polytechnics Studies and Community Colleges in the Ministry of Higher Education. Polytechnics offer two-year certificate and three-year diploma programs for post SPM students. Courses offered include engineering, business and those of the service industry. Currently, there are 20 polytechnics operating in the country where 19 of them have permanent campuses. Under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010),