

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES: A STUDY OF STUDENTS' SATISFACTION IN A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Ali Muktiyanto, Noorina Hartati, Rini Dwiyani Hadiwidjaja, Irma

Universitas Terbuka (INDONESIA)

Abstract

A higher education institution that organizes distance education systems deal with challenges related to the services that can be provided for students. Distance education systems require students to have the ability to learn independently by utilizing a variety of learning support services provided by the institution. As an institution of higher education that implements distance education systems, Universitas Terbuka (UT) has been providing a variety of learning support services, both in academic and non-academic areas. This study aimed to analyze the various academic and non-academic services provided by UT that can affect students' satisfaction. The result showed that some types of services have satisfied the students; however, there are also some things that need to be improved, especially in terms of academic services.

Keywords: distance education, learning support services, self-learning

1 INTRODUCTION

Universitas Terbuka (UT) as the only higher education in Indonesia that serves distance education systems. UT plays an important role in providing academic and non-academic services for students who do not meet the requirements for studying in Face to Face Universities. Despite its monopoly, but still have to maintain the quality of services, especially to students. It is intended to meet the needs of students so that they are satisfied that in the end they are loyal to the Universitas Terbuka.

An effective way to measure user satisfaction is to assess the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality (Pitt et al., 1995). Quality of service is the extent to which a service meets the customer's needs (Wiesniewski and Donnelly, 1996). Quality of service is the difference between customer service expectations and perceived service (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Dissatisfaction occurs when the expectation is greater than the performance and the perceived quality is less satisfactory (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Customer satisfaction may mediate the relationship between perceived quality and customer loyalty (Hsu et al., 2008).

Bahroom (2009) stated "service quality is important in Higher Education Institutions, and this is more so in an open and distance learning (ODL) environment". Quality of service is a fundamental and important aspect for the sustainability of an institution of higher education, especially higher education distance (ODL). This is due to the dropout rate at ODL student tuition higher than conventional students (face to face).

Universitas Terbuka (UT) is an institution that implements ODL in the learning process and have the students spread to all corners of Indonesia. The quality is generally measured by college graduates academically, but people have started paying attention to quality higher education as a whole, both graduates and university management itself is a proof of quality. UT has a quality assurance, both academic quality and quality management. Academic quality in the form of accreditation from the National Accreditation Board (BAN) College while the quality management through ISO 9001: 2000/2008. At the international level UT acquire and maintains Quality Certification from the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) to date. Distance education system requires students to have the ability to learn independently by utilizing a variety of learning support services provided by the institution.

As an institution of higher education that implements distance education systems, Universitas Terbuka (UT) has been providing a variety of learning support services, both in academic and non-academic areas. Based on the background and the formulation of the problem described above, the purpose of this study was to determine students' perceptions of learning support services in terms of the student satisfaction and the importance of services, the type of learning support services is the most satisfactory

for the students dan the type of learning support services is the most important for the students. Research to be carried out is expected to be beneficial for UT as advice and improvement of service quality student satisfaction on the services that have been given to be able to determine other policies in the future.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 Students' Satisfaction

Students' satisfaction is a top priority for higher education institutions. Satisfaction can be defined as efforts to comply with something or making something to be adequate (Tjiptono and Chandra, 2005). Kotler and Keller (2006) defines satisfaction as a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing the perception of performance or the result of a product with expectations. Thus, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of students is the difference between expectations and perceived performance. If the performance of institutions is smaller than the expectations of students, students become dissatisfied. If fitted with the expected performance, then the student will be satisfied. Meanwhile, if the performance exceeds them, then the student will be very satisfied. High student satisfaction that will ultimately raises the loyalty of students to remain in college. As expressed by Kotler and Keller (2006) found a high satisfaction creates an emotional connection is very strong with a brand, not just a rational preference, which in turn will create high customer loyalty.

It is however easy to realize the satisfaction of students comprehensive and sustainable. For students who are facing today is different from the students in the past several decades. Now students are more educated and aware of their rights. Therefore, UT should be able to satisfy what is considered important for students. So the goal of satisfying the student can be right on target. According to Oliver (1997) satisfaction is a judgment that the features of the product or service, or product / service itself, provide a level of compliance with regard to consumption of fun including the level of under-fulfillment and over-fulfillment.

Institutions of higher education are often conceptualized as part of the service industry. Therefore, the higher education institutions to pay more attention on meeting the expectations and needs of students as customers (DeShields et al., 2005). Athiyaman (1997) and DeShields et al. (2005) have examined student satisfaction in the context of customer satisfaction and service quality. Athiyaman (1997) found that the characteristics of the service is 1) an emphasis on teaching students well; 2) the willingness of staff to consult students; 3) library services; 4) computing facilities; 5) recreational facilities; 6) class sizes; 7) the level and difficulty of the subject content; and 8) the burden of student work. DeShields et al. (2005) states that students who are not satisfied will take fewer courses or completely abandon the lecture. DeShields et al. (2005) believes that the intense competition in the education market, universities must begin to assess and adopt the strategy of marketing orientation that meet market needs. They benefit from understanding customer needs, modify and improve services in order to successfully provide high quality services. In a competitive market required a thorough understanding of the target market including students and stakeholders.

Development of institutional service quality measurement instruments Open Distance Learning (ODL) has done Bahroom et al. (2009) at the Open University Malaysia (OUM). Instruments called ODLPERF generated from item 29 survey questions Importance-Performance OUM involving 2,491 students in 2008. Of the total questionnaires sent, only 894 returned and used in this study. Using AMOS 16.0 and methods of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, this study resulted in four factors of service quality, the real evidence, reliability, assurance, and empathy. These four dimensions are formed of 14 items. Factors real evidence consists of items that are important questions to meet the obligations of their studies, as well as buildings and facilities associated with ODL institutions. Reliability made up of items that are expected of students to academic staff and the services provided. Security is a factor that shows the importance of ODL institutions meet the expectations of students related to academic qualifications. Lastly, empathy shows items related to the problem approach, the lack of contact, availability, attention and comfort. Among the four dimensions, reliability is a factor that is not as significant as predictors of quality of services.

Research Abdullah (2006) describes the methodology of development of Higher Education Performance (HEdPERF), an instrument measuring the quality of services of the higher education sector. Forty-one (41) items proposed instrument tested empirically through a unidimensional, validity and reliability of the exploratory and confirmatory analysis. A valid measurement scale reliably used as a means of tertiary institutions in enhancing the performance of services amid the global education market competition. The

results of this study are very important, because previous studies have focused on the generic measurements of service quality. As a result, the measurement of the perceived quality of higher education can not be measured in total. In addition, previous studies too narrow, when too stressed to academic quality and a lack of attention to the non-academic aspects as a learning experience. Research Abdullah (2006) yielded six dimensions of quality of different services and conceptually clear, namely the aspect of non-academic, academic aspects, reputation, access, issues program, and understanding.

Rashid and Aaron (2004), tested the students' perception of service quality institutions ODL in Malaysia. Focus group sessions and structured questionnaire was used to collect relevant information from respondents. A total of 44 respondents participated in focus groups and other 1,197 survey questionnaires were administered alone. The study shows the quality characteristics of ODL services differ from traditional higher education institutions. As a new perspective of service quality, this instrument was tested at ODL institutions in Malaysia. In addition, it was found total satisfaction is also related to each dimension of service quality. T-test and ANOVA showed gender, ethnicity, type of program, and the central location to learn affect the perception of service quality ODL.

Lagrosen et al., (2004) tested the key dimensions of higher education in Austria, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. They found 11 key dimensions of quality, of the collaboration of corporate, information and responsiveness, programs offered, campus facilities, teaching practices, internal evaluation, external evaluation, computer facilities, collaboration and comparison, factors post-study, and other sources of literature.

On another study, Oldfield and Baron (2000) using a 2 stage approach in data collection. Both of these steps are focus groups and questionnaires as previous research done Joseph and Joseph (1997). Oldfield and Baron (2000) found three important factors forming the quality of higher education in Universities UK, namely the need, acceptance, and function. The need to refer to items or things fulfillment of the students to the obligations of the study, such as knowledge of the academic staff to answer any questions the students, the confidence of staff employees, the attention of the academic staff, the interest of administrative staff in problem solving, assistance immediately, understanding the needs of students and others. Acceptance refers to the need for students but not essential for the educational process. In this case includes the individual attention of the academic staff, the provision of services on time as expected, academic staff were polite and caring. Lastly, the functionally practical value as a convenient operating hours, equipment up to date, and provide the services promised. This study demonstrates that perceptions are changing throughout the study period, with dimensions of acceptance is more important than the other dimensions.

2.1.2 Learning Support Services (LSS)

Learning Support Services (LSS) in this study consisted of 6 (six) aspects of the service that is the aspect of public services, aspects of registration services, aspects of tutorial services, aspects of the service practicum, service aspect of teaching materials, and aspects of the service organization of exams. Aspect services generally include clear information about UT, tuition paid students than the services provided, the ease of contacting staff UT, ease of contact tutors, staff friendliness UT in serving students, and speed the handling of complaints. Aspects registration services include processing service registration file, payment services in partner banks UT, and a settlement of registration. Aspects tutorial service includes the assignment of material tutors, the role of tutor to help students understand the course material, the role of tutor to help students understand the course material, and the suitability of the implementation of the tutorial schedule. Aspects of the service practicum includes assignment of material instructor, the instructor's role in assisting the practical implementation, the feedback provided instructors for practical implementation, ease of obtaining schedules practical implementation, the conformity practical implementation schedules, and completeness of equipment practicum. Aspects of teaching materials include the ease of obtaining teaching materials, the speed at which teaching materials, ease of understanding of teaching materials, and physical packaging quality teaching materials. Aspects of the service organization of exams include ease of obtaining information test execution, the availability of test scripts, test execution order, the quality of the facility location / place of examination, and the speed of settlement of value.

2.1.3 Self Learning

UT Studentis expected to study independently. How self-learning requires students to learn on their own initiative or the initiative. Self-learning can be done alone or in groups, either in study groups and in tutorial groups. UT provides teaching materials created specifically to be studied independently. In

addition to using teaching materials provided by UT, students can also take the initiative to take advantage of the library, follow the tutorial either face to face or over the internet, radio, and television, as well as using other learning resources such as teaching material of computer aided programs and audio / video (UT, 2015).

self-learning in many ways determined by the ability to learn effectively. Ability to learn depends on the speed of reading and the ability to understand the content of reading. To be able to effectively self-learning, UT students are required to have self-discipline, initiative and strong motivation to learn. Students are also required to be able to manage his time efficiently, so that they can learn on a regular basis by learning self-determined schedule. Therefore, in order to succeed at UT, prospective students must be prepared to learn independently (UT, 2015).

3 RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used is descriptive method, which examines perceptions of a group of students regarding student services, physical facilities, and mode of learning for student satisfaction. The purpose of the research is descriptive is to create a picture or painting in a systematic, factual, and accurate about the facts, nature and combined inter phenomenal investigated (Umar, 1996).

3.1.1 Data Collecting Methods

Data used in the preparation of this research is the primary data. Primary data, ie data directly obtained by conducting field studies directly on the object studied through a questionnaire with interview techniques to the students of UT. Questionnaires are a number of written questions that are used to obtain information from respondents in terms of a report on his personal, or the things that he knew (Arikunto, 2002).

Measurement scale to measure student services, physical facilities, the mode of learning, and student satisfaction is an ordinal scale. Ordinal scale is a scale that sort of data from the lowest level to the highest level or vice versa with no regard to the data interval (Umar, 2002).

The results of the weighting on the ordinal scale using Likert Scale. According Sugiyono (2000), a Likert scale used to measure attitudes, opinions or perceptions about a person or a group of social phenomenon. In this study, respondents were asked to fill out a questionnaire with the statement following reply:

Score Answer Questionnaire

Type of Answer	Score
Strongly Agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

Type of Answer	Score
Very Important	4
Important	3
Not Important	2
Very Unimportant	1

3.1.2 *Data and Collection Techniques*

According to Sekaran (2000), sampling is the process of selecting several units of the population so that by studying the samples, and to understand the characteristics of the subjects of the sample, allowing for understanding the characteristics of the entire population. In this research using random sampling.

1. Population

The study population was all students of the Department of Accounting Faculty of Economics, UT registered in the year 2016.1. Samples in this study were from 326 students.

This study was designed to analyze the various academic and non-academic services provided by UT that can affect students' satisfaction at Regional Offices. Research will be conducted in several Regional Offices.

Based on basic theories, this study used some dimensions of perceptions and expectations, measured by:

1. Public Services
2. Registration Services
3. Tutorial Services
4. Teaching Material Services
5. Examination Services

The method used in this study is explanatory survey method. The analytical method used is statistical analysis and measurement model description testing. Meanwhile, Validity and Reliability of all instruments were measured by T-value test, Standard Loading Factors (SLF), Construct Reliability, and Variance Extract.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The objectives of this study were to analyze the level of satisfaction and importance of the students towards the learning support services provided by UT. Our sample consists of 326 students of accounting study program.

All of the instruments have a valid score with T-value ≥ 1.96 and Standardized Loading Factors ≥ 0.5 (Igbaria et al., 1998). The reliability test shows that all instruments were reliable with Construct Reliability ≥ 0.70 and Variance Extracted ≥ 0.5 (Hair et al., 1998).

There are the dimensions in this study

1. Public Services
2. Registration Services
3. Tutorial Services
4. Teaching Material Services
5. Examination Services

4.1.1 Satisfaction Level

1. General Services
87.7% of the students stated clear information about UT. 89.9% of the students stated tuition fees paid in proportion to the services provided. 79.2% of students said easy contacting staff UT. 73.7% of students said easy to access tutors UT. 86.3% of the students stated that the UT staff is friendly. 76.3% of the students stated quicker handling of complaints.
2. Registration
88.7% of students were satisfied with the services the registration file processing. 88.3% of students expressed satisfaction on payment services in the partner banks UT. 84.2% of students were satisfied with the services of registration case settlement.
3. Services Tutorial
85.4% of students were satisfied with the mastery of a tutor. 82% of students said they were satisfied the tutor's role in helping to understand the course material. 77.2% of students said they were satisfied on the feedback provided tutors to exercise / assignment. 85% of the students stated tutorial implementation according to schedule.
4. Service Subjects
86.6% of the students stated easier to obtain teaching materials. 76.6% of the students stated quickly receive teaching materials. 81.2% of students said easy to understand instructional

materials. 88.9% of the students stated physical packaging of quality teaching materials. 82.2% of students expressed an easy to use application TBO. 86.7% of students expressed satisfaction towards the availability of teaching materials in TBO. 86.9% of the students stated teaching materials received and in which order. 77.8% of students said they were satisfied with the teaching materials received prior to the first meeting of the tutorial.

5. Service Implementation Exam
86.4% of the students stated easily obtain information on implementation of the test. 92.5% of students were satisfied with the availability of a test script. 88.6% of the students stated that the test execution tertib. 78.9% of the students stated location facilities / quality test center. 76.5% of the students stated resolving cases faster value.

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE

1. General Services
74.2% membutuhkan students clear information about UT. 76.3% of students consider important tuition fees paid in proportion to the services provided. 71.2% of students need to contact staff needs UT. 69.6% of students in need of ease of contact tutor UT. 71.5% of students in need of hospitality staff in serving the UT students. 71.2% of students need the speed of complaints handling.
2. Registration
75% of students require registration file processing service. 74.2% of students in need of bank payment services at UT partners. 72.9% of students require registration case settlement services.
3. Services Tutorial
72.7% of students requiring mastery of a tutor. 71.4% of students need a tutor's role in helping to understand the course material. 73.4% of students need a tutor feedback given to the exercise / assignment. 72.7% of students need a tutorial suitability implementation schedule.
4. Service Subjects
74.3% of students in need of easy teaching materials. 73.1% of students in need of teaching materials reception speed. 72.5% of students need to understand the ease of teaching materials. 72.9% of students in need of physical packaging of quality teaching materials. 83.4% of students in need of an easy to use application TBO. 83.3% of students need the availability of teaching materials in TBO. 85.3% of students require conformity with the teaching materials received were booked. 68.8% of students consider important teaching materials received prior to the first meeting of the tutorial.
5. Service Implementation Exam
74.6% of students in need of ease of obtaining information test execution. 75% of students requires the availability of a test script. 74.2% of students in need of order in the exam. 71.5% of students in need of facility location / place of examination quality. 72.2% of students in need of a quick settlement of the case value.

LSS	Satisfaction	Importance
A1	87.7	74.2
A2	89.9	76.3
A3	79.2	71.2
A4	73.7	69.6
A5	86.3	71.5
A6	76.3	71.2
B7	88.7	75
B8	88.3	74.2
B9	84.2	72.9
C10	85.4	72.7
C11	82	71.4
C12	77.2	73.4
C13	85	72.7

LSS	Satisfaction	Importance
E22	86.6	74.3
E23	76.6	73.1
E24	81.2	72.5
E25	88.9	72.9
E26	82.2	83.4
E27	86.7	83.3
E28	86.9	85.3
E29	77.8	68.8
F30	86.4	74.6
F31	92.5	75
F32	88.6	74.2
F33	78.9	71.5

5 CONCLUSIONS

Service aspect that concerns setter / public services are A3 and A4. For registration services concern is B7. While the tutorial service that became the determinant factor is C11 and C13. On the service aspect of teaching materials, the decisive aspect is E23. While the service holding the exam is F33.

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