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Assessing service quality in conservatory according to students' opinions

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to investigate the opinions of students in Turkish music state conservatory about service quality in their conservatory. Research was conducted with 9 students in Turkish Music State Conservatory. The sample of the study was determined by convenience sampling method. Research design is phenomenological design. "Service Quality in Conservatory Interview Form" prepared by researchers was used in order to investigate opinions of students about service quality in their conservatory. According to the findings; 9 categories were found for satisfaction about academicians. One category was found for satisfaction about management. No category was found for satisfaction about sources. 3 categories were found for satisfaction about course and course schedules. One category was found for satisfaction about settlement of their conservatory. 4 categories were found for satisfaction about other staff. One category was found for satisfaction about internationalization of their conservatory.

Keywords: Conservatory; service quality; opinion; student.

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1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and information society, educational institutions are forced to rethink themselves in terms of mission, vision, process and output, and universities are introducing new ways of shaping their education systems (Dogan, 1999). The main goal in all educational institutions is to improve the quality of education and training services for students. The concept of quality should be considered as a multidimensional concept, which should be handled in a comprehensive way, including the quality, institutional structure and characteristics of the educational institutions in the university, the ability to respond to social needs and the quality of service for students (Ozgul & Devebakan, 2005; Ekinci & Burgaz, 2007).

Quality in education is linked to both output (an academic program) and the process (curriculum, planning, and other factors affecting the program) (Ozdemir, 2002). This has become more and more noteworthy for students who are beneficiaries of the service at the universities since the concept of quality began to be defined as "quality is what the customer wants". It is foreseen that the students who are the buyers of the education services will prefer the universities offering higher quality education. Graduates of high-quality universities have balance their qualifications with their working lives, and as a result, they are successful and universities can be employed more easily (Sahin, 2009). The training process should cover all these dimensions, which are not limited to teaching in the academic environment, but also involve student-teaching associations outside academic setting, including the training program and academic counseling, and students' views on the educational process (Ekinci & Burgaz, 2007).

Students' expectations from universities, their opinions and evaluations are important in terms of increasing the quality of education. The universities that take this into consideration give importance to student satisfaction and observe and restructure the education and training services in educational institutions in the direction of student opinions (Ulug, 1999). Determining how the quality of education services, which is one of the functions of the university, is perceived by the students who are also the recipients of these services is a very critical issue in terms of university management that cares about quality studies in education (Quinn et al., 2009). So the aim of this research is to investigate the opinions of students in Turkish music state conservatory about service quality in their conservatory.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Model

Phenomenological design was used while investigating opinions of students about service quality in their conservatory. These type of designs aims to investigate phenomenologies that we don't realize well in our mind (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011).

2.2. Population and sample

The accessible population of the study consists of conservatory students in Ankara. The sample of the study was determined by convenience sampling method. This method gives researchers speed and practicality and researchers select the state which close and easy to access (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). Study was conducted with 9 students in conservatory students.

Table 1. Demographic informations of students participated in the study

Variable	Groups	n
Gender	Female	5
	Male	4
	Total	9
Class	Second grade	2
	Third grade	5
	Fourth grade	2
	Total	9
Age	20 age and below	1
	21-25 ages	3
	26-30 ages	1
	31 age and over	4
	Total	9

Gender, class, age of students participated in the study were given.

2.3. Instruments

"Service Quality in Conservatory Interview Form" prepared by researchers was used in order to investigate opinions of students about service quality in their conservatory. Two academicians reviewed interview form and in accordance with their recommendations, logical and language, errors were corrected.

Following questions were asked to the participants:

- How is your satisfaction about academicians in your conservatory?
- How is your satisfaction about management of your conservatory?
- How is your satisfaction about sources in your conservatory?
- How is your satisfaction about course and course schedules in your conservatory?
- How is your satisfaction about settlement of your conservatory?
- How is your satisfaction about other staff in your conservatory?

- How is your satisfaction about internationalization of your conservatory?

2.4. Analyses

Data was analyzed with content analysis. Content analysis reveals codes and categories from the raw data (Patton, 2002). For validity and reliability, data analysis process was explained in detail; interpretation of the data involved the participants' own direct statements (Ratcliff, 1995).

3. Findings

Data obtained with semi-structured interview form was analyzed and findings are as follows:

Table 2. Student's opinions for satisfaction about academicians in their conservatory

	Participants								
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
I am satisfied	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
I am not satisfied		✓			✓				
Communication skills	✓			✓			✓		✓
Support and guidance	✓			✓		✓			✓
Enthusiasm	✓		✓						
Teaching skills			✓				✓		✓
Knowledge in the field			✓			✓	✓	✓	
Interaction with the students			✓					✓	
Attitude towards the students			✓	✓				✓	
Availability			✓			✓			✓
Experience				✓					

9 categories were found in content analysis. Most repetitive categories were «communication skills, support and guidance, knowledge in the field». They were repeated 4 times. «Experience» was repeated once. Other categories were repeated twice or three times. Second and fifth participants were not pleased about academics. The statements of participants were as follows:

P1: ...I am generally satisfied with the level of communication skills, support and guidance and enthusiasm of academics...

P3:...I am pleased about teaching skills, enthusiasm, knowledge in the field, interaction with the students, attitude towards the students and availability of academics...

P4:... I think that academic staff encourage us, motivate us and are experienced in our field. Communication skills of academic staff are extremely good and they have positive approach towards students...

Table 3. Students opinions for satisfaction about management of their conservatory

		Participants								
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Categories	I am satisfied		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
	I am not satisfied	✓				✓		✓		
	Support for social activities		✓	✓					✓	✓

One category was found in content analysis. First, fifth and seventh participants were not pleased about management. The statements of participants were as follows:

P1:... I do not think that the management of the conservatory is very self-sacrificing...

P2:... They support students for social activities. They care much about these events...

P3: ... Management provides concerts, seminars, meeting with local and foreign academicians that will develop us...

P5:... Problems and difficulties arising from lack of sufficient experience and accumulation can be.

Table 4. Student's opinions for satisfaction about sources in their conservatory

		Participants								
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Categories	I am satisfied									✓
	I am not satisfied	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

No category was found in content analysis. Only ninth participant was pleased about sources. The statements of participants were as follows:

P2:...The places I can socialize outside are not provided. The classrooms are inadequate and the quality of the equipments in the school is very bad...

P4:...In terms of resources, our institution seems inadequate...

P6:... This is a very uncomfortable situation. We have all the disadvantages of a new institution...

P7:... We do not have a library because our school is new. Our work environments are also newly provided. I think that this situation is very damaging our school...

P8:... We do not have enough facilities in the school, we do not have enough tools. Our study rooms are adequate but we do not have the necessary equipment...

Table 5. Students opinions for satisfaction about course and course schedules in their conservatory

	Participants								
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
I am satisfied	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
I am not satisfied					✓	✓	✓	✓	
Distribution of lessons in terms	✓		✓						
Number of courses taken in a semester	✓	✓							
Weekly course schedules	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓

3 categories were found in content analysis. Most repetitive category were «weekly course schedules". It was repeated 5 times. Fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth participants were not pleased about course and course schedules. The statements of participants were as follows:

P1:...In general, there is no problem about distribution of courses in terms, number of courses taken in a term, weekly course schedules, but in some courses I think that individual education will be more productive...

P5:.. The distribution of lessons should be revised again and some changes should be made about course contents ...

P3:... I am pleased with the weekly course schedules, distribution of our courses. This distribution enabled us to spend more time for activities...

P9:... I am pleased with the weekly course schedules...

Table 6. Student’s opinions for satisfaction about settlement of their conservatory

		Participants								
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Categories	I am satisfied	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	I am not satisfied					✓				
	Distance to city center	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

One category was found in content analysis. Only fifth participant was not pleased about settlement. The statements of participants were as follows:

P2: ... The location is very nice and the distance to the city center is fine...

P4:...The settlement of the conservatory is good, very close to the center and easy to transport...

P8:... I am very pleased with the present location of our conservatory. I think it is nice to be close to the center of the city and easy for the transportation...

Table 7. Student’s opinions for satisfaction about other staff in their conservatory

		Participants								
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Categories	I am satisfied	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	I am not satisfied									
	Sensitivity	✓					✓			
	Physical appearance		✓	✓						
	Attention to clothing and cleaning		✓							
	Respond to requests instantly		✓	✓	✓		✓			

4 categories were found in content analysis. Most repetitive categories was «respond to requests instantly". It was repeated 4 times. The statements of participants were as follows:

P2:... They pay attention to their physical appearance, clothing and cleaning. I am happy that they respond to requests instantly...

P5:... Non-academic staff are trying to make a contribution with great sacrifice without any demand and expectation...

P6:...The staff are all good and polite. I am very pleased. They are responsive, friendly and helpful...

Table 8. Students opinions for satisfaction about internationalization of their conservatory

Categories	Participants								
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
I am satisfied	✓	✓	✓	✓					
I am not satisfied					✓	✓	✓		
Appreciation of the academic staff on the international field		✓	✓	✓					

One category was found in content analysis. Fifth, sixth and seventh participants were not pleased about internationalization. Eighth and ninth participants said nothing. The statements of participants were as follows:

P1:... Although this is a new school, I think that the conservatory is doing important work on internationalization ...

P2:...We are pleased that the academic staff see appreciation on the international field...

P7:... The level of internationalization of our institution is bad because students are extremely uninterested in the English courses. I think they will regret very much in the future. This is one of our problems about introducing our culture and music...

4. Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

In this study; 9 categories were found for satisfaction about academicians. Most repetitive categories were «communication skills, support and guidance, knowledge in the field". They were repeated 4 times. «Experience» was repeated once. Other categories were repeated twice or three times. Second and fifth participants were not pleased about academics. The main factors affecting students' perceptions of academic and institutional service quality were found to be: the academic skills of staff (Yilmaz, Demircan, Bal & Koskan, 2010). Another important result of the research is that there are teaching members who fulfill and do not fulfill the duties of the education faculty (Aksu, 2015). In the study conducted by Ozcakir-Sumen and Caglayan (2013), it has been seen that the teacher candidates imagine the instructors who can be models for teacher candidates with modern buildings, social

environments, technological possibilities, new methods, free and scientific environment, practical lessons. According to Sahin (2009), while the satisfaction level of the students generally increased within three years, in 2007-2008 academic year, the level of satisfaction with the teaching staff, counseling and course schedules were found to be moderate.

Another finding is that one category was found for satisfaction about management. First, fifth and seventh participants were not pleased about management. Teacher candidates' expectations are mostly after graduation (Aksu, 2015). The main factors affecting students' perceptions of academic and institutional service quality were found to be: the the social and physical facilities of the faculty (Yilmaz, Demircan, Bal & Koskan, 2010). According to Sahin (2009), while the satisfaction level of the students generally increased within three years, in 2007-2008 academic year the level of satisfaction especially in the management, resources and computer facilities were found to be "low".

No category was found for satisfaction about sources in this research. Only ninth participant was pleased about sources. The main factors affecting students' perceptions of academic and institutional service quality were found to be: the physical facilities of the department and the student advisory service (Yilmaz, Demircan, Bal & Koskan, 2010). In the study conducted by Ozcakir-Sumen and Caglayan (2013), it has been seen that the teacher candidates imagine the instructors who can be models for teacher candidates with modern buildings, social environments, technological possibilities, new methods, free and scientific environment, practical lessons. According to Sahin (2009), while the satisfaction level of the students generally increased within three years, in 2007-2008 academic year the level of satisfaction especially in the management, resources and computer facilities were found to be "low".

In this study 3 categories were found for satisfaction about course and course schedules. Most repetitive category were «weekly course schedules". It was repeated 5 times. Fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth participants were not pleased about course and course schedules. The main factors affecting students' perceptions of academic and institutional service quality were found to be: course content and teaching techniques, supplementary features of courses and its effects on success, to question of course contents in exams, examination of the timeliness and accuracy. (Yilmaz, Demircan, Bal & Koskan, 2010). It has been seen that in Aksu (2015)'s study; there are proposals for the department by students such as removing unnecessary courses, increasing number of training courses, increasing internship applications. In the study conducted by Ozcakir-Sumen and Caglayan (2013), it has been seen that the teacher candidates imagine the instructors who can be models for teacher candidates with modern buildings, social environments, technological possibilities, new methods, free and scientific environment, practical lessons. According to Sahin (2009), while the satisfaction level of the students generally increased within three years, in 2007-2008 academic year, the level of satisfaction with the teaching staff, counseling and course schedules were found to be moderate.

Another finding is one category was found for satisfaction about settlement of their conservatory. Fifth participant was not pleased about settlement. The result was that the students who were studying at the faculties of education had more favorable opinions about the region and city where the university was located compared to the negative opinions (Aksu, 2015).

4 categories were found for satisfaction about other staff in this research. Most repetitive categories was «respond to requests instantly". It was repeated 4 times. The main factors affecting students' perceptions of academic and institutional service quality were found to be: the caring attitude of academic staff, a sense of belonging to the department (Yilmaz, Demircan, Bal & Koskan, 2010).

Finally one category was found for satisfaction about internationalization of their conservatory. Fifth, sixth and seventh participants were not pleased about internalization. Eighth and ninth participants said nothing.

This research can be investigated with different methods and samples and reasons of findings can searched. Other variables that affect servis quality of schools may be investigated. Education and training activities can be restructured in line with the feedback received from students by giving due importance to student opinions to increase the quality of conservatories.

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