

How Can We Effectively Evaluate the Quality of Services and Enhance Satisfaction in Physical Education Courses for Iranian University Students throughout the Years?

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to identify the difference between the expectations and perceptions of management and students regarding the quality of services provided by physical education courses 1 and 2.

Methods: This research was conducted through a descriptive survey, in which the statistical population included staff and students who have taught, served, or studied the physical education course during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023 at Alzahra University. The sample size included 100 students and 25 staff. The research tool was the SERVQUAL questionnaire with 22 items. The data was analyzed using SPSS software.

Results: Results revealed a significant difference between students' satisfaction levels regarding the overall quality of services and the five dimensions. Expectations and perceptions among staff and students, except for the dimensions of responsiveness and empathy in expectations and the dimensions of reliability and assurance in perceptions, are consistent. This adaptation of expectations and perceptions indicates that the sports sciences faculty has not fully satisfied the students. Emphasizing students' perceptions shows that the faculty excels in responsiveness.

Conclusion: The identified gaps in service quality dimensions can guide planning to achieve university service quality goals. Therefore, it is recommended that the dimensions with the most significant gaps be prioritized, and that more effort be devoted to enhancing service quality and student satisfaction by periodically reviewing the performance of program managers and ensuring compliance with the guidelines.

Keywords: Assurance, Empathy, Reliability, Responsiveness, Tangible factors

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Introduction

Paying attention to the importance of sports and physical activity in the physical and mental health of people in society, the importance of sports organizations and centers in identifying and focusing on essential factors for the continuation of people's participation in physical activities is necessary (Poursoltani Zarandi, 2021). Therefore, sports organizations are engaged in sports and physical activity with continuous efforts and using different sports marketing methods to find the interests and needs of the people in society and provide appropriate services in line with their needs (Fesanghari et al., 2017). Today, successful organizations have realized that paying attention to customers' needs is paying attention to how to provide services to customers (Kaviani, 2004). Providing high-quality services increases new customers, expands existing business, and maintains existing customers, so service quality depends on evaluating customers' perceptions of the organization's service performance analysis to become the basis for customer satisfaction (Rozita et al., 2014).

Considering that more than half of the gross production of most countries in the world comes from the service sector, and due to the characteristics of this sector, such as direct communication with customers, the importance of paying attention to the quality of services increases (Poursoltani Zarandi, 2021). Service quality can be defined as a measure that shows how well the services provided meet the customer's expectations of the service, so how customers perceive the quality of the service should be the primary concern of managers. Parasuraman et al. (1985) have defined quality as the difference between the expectations and perceptions of customers regarding the optimal condition of service delivery. Hence, quality directly impacts customer satisfaction (Seyedjavadin et al., 2008). One of the active organizations in the service industry is universities, whose product is inherently the

provision of services (Shahverdiyani, 2010). Educational services are one of the most essential service areas in every society. Therefore, it seems necessary to pay continuous attention to improving the quality of educational services (Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad, 2014). In addition to paying attention to the crisis caused by financial constraints and quantitative expansion, higher education should also maintain, improve, and promote quality. Therefore, neglecting the quality of services of universities and higher education centers will cause some consequences (Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad, 2014).

The present study was also conducted to study the satisfaction of Alzahra University students with the quality of services of the Physical Education courses 1 and 2. The provision of university services in the physical training unit is significant because, according to the preliminary findings of the World Health Organization, lack of physical activity and sedentary lifestyle are of the ten causes of death in the world (Shabani, 2022). If we can make regular physical activity a part of our lifestyle, we should have a unique look at sports in schools and universities. Studies have shown that regular physical activity patterns remain stable for years after graduation (Hazavehei et al., 2009). Also, one of the reasons that has delayed the measurement and evaluation of service quality is the complexity of identifying the characteristics and components that are effective in the quality of the service process (Ramezani et al., 2013). There are different methods to measure the quality of services. In this field, the most common and essential measurement tool is the "Servqual" model, which was introduced by "Parasuraman and Zeithaml". The question is whether the quality of the services provided in the physical education courses 1 and 2 of Alzahra University has satisfied the students. What are their expectations from the university's general physical education course?

Literature Review

So far, transitional research has focused on service quality and satisfaction. For example, in the research by Fransi et al. (2010) entitled "Measuring service quality in sports management: the application of Servqual scale," findings showed that the Servqual scale is a suitable tool for evaluating the quality perceived by consumers (Fransi et al., 2010). Also, Wijaya et al.'s research (2023) investigated "Students' satisfaction analysis of student management services in the information systems study program at Prima University of Indonesia using the service quality method (Servqual). The research results showed that the SERVQUAL method has good quality in measuring student satisfaction (Wijaya et al., 2023). Agha Moulaei et al. (2007) also conducted a study entitled "The Quality of Educational Services from the Student's Viewpoint at Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences." The findings showed that, according to the students' views, there is a quality gap in all five dimensions of service and all terms related to each dimension. The highest quality gap was observed in the response dimension, followed by empathy, Reliability, tangible factors, and Assurance. The difference between the quality gaps in different dimensions of educational services was statistically significant. The result is that the students' expectations were beyond their understanding of the existing situation and were not met in any of the dimensions (Agha Moulaei et al., 2015). Arefi and Zandi (2019) also showed in research entitled *The Proposal of the Integration Model of Quality Improvement Models: An Approach to Customer Orientation in Higher Education* that paying attention to customers' demands is undeniable, even if these demands change over time. (Arefi and Zandi, 2019). In this regard, Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023) investigated the "Evaluation of the quality of educational services of Payam Noor University in Hamedan based on the Servqual model." The results showed that students'

perception of the quality of educational services is low. Their expectations are high, and the average gap between students' perceptions and expectations of the quality of educational services is negative in all dimensions of the Servqual model. The highest gap is observed in the empathy dimension, and the smallest is in the responsiveness dimension. The results showed that students are not satisfied with the quality of educational services (Enayati Novinfar et al., 2023).

However, Khatibi et al. (2011), in the study of the educational services of the Faculty of Physical Education of the University of Tehran, showed that there is a negative gap between the current situation and the desired situation in all dimensions of service quality (Khatibi et al., 2011). Abbasian et al. (2012) also investigated the "gap analysis between students' perceptions and expectations of the quality of educational services using the Servqual model." The research findings showed a quality gap in all aspects of the quality of educational services and terms related to its measurement. The most significant quality gap was observed in the responsiveness dimension. The smallest gap was observed in the assurance dimension, and the results of this study showed that the students' expectations were not met in all aspects of the service. Also, Ramezani et al.'s research (2013) examined the "service quality of university sports facilities based on the Servqual model (case study: Guilan University)." The results of this research showed that there was a negative gap in all dimensions (objective elements, reliability, responsiveness, reassurance, and empathy) of the service quality of Guilan University's sports facilities, and the most significant quality gap was related to the dimension of objective elements and the smallest to the dimension of reassurance. Ramzani et al., 2013). The research of Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad (2014) was also conducted to evaluate the quality of educational services of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of

Guilan based on the Servqual model. It showed a negative gap between the perceptions and expectations of organizational customers, and the quality of educational services in the studied communities is low (Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad, 2014).

Radmard's research (2015) also examined the quality of sports services at Shahid Chamran University of Ahwaz from the student's point of view with emphasis on extracurricular activities it showed 1) there is a difference between students' satisfaction with the overall quality of services in the current and desired conditions of Shahid Chamran University of Ahwaz sports facilities. 2) There is a difference between students' satisfaction with service quality in the existing and desired sports facilities of Shahid Chamran University of Ahwaz. 3) The dimensions of the quality of services expected by the students from the university's sports facilities have not had the same priority and importance. In this way, the dimension of responsiveness has the highest score, and the dimension of reliability has the lowest score in importance (Radmard, 2015). Fazel Bakhshi et al. (2017) who analyzed the expansion of quality performance in the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of Kharazmi University based on the Sarvqual model, showed a negative and significant gap in all needs and components (human resources, educational services, research services, welfare services, administrative and management services) identified in two dimensions of expected quality and perceived quality (Fazel Bakhshshi et al, 2016).

Also, Hematinezhad et al. (2019) studied the service quality of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of Guilan University from the point of view of graduate students. The purpose of this research was to investigate the gap between students' expectations and perceptions of the services of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of Guilan University. The findings showed that in all aspects of the quality of

educational, research, and sports facilities of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of Guilan University, the score of students' perceptions of the quality of services (current situation) is significantly lower than their expectations. In other words, there is a negative gap in all five dimensions except the responsiveness dimension in the research department (Hematinezhad et al, 2019)

In this regard, Moubed et al.'s research (2023) examined "Evaluating the quality of dormitory services with the combination of SERVQUAL and Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) models (in a case study: Ardakan University)." In this research, to evaluate the quality of dormitory services at Ardakan University from the point of view of the students living there, the Servqual model and the IPA model were used for analysis. Examining the students' expectations and perceptions of the provided services and the gap between them using a designed questionnaire shows a negative gap in all aspects of the quality of the dormitory services, with the most significant gap related to the concrete dimension and the least related to the guaranteed dimension (Moubed et al, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

The term service quality is used in different ways. Service quality refers to a service provider's ability to satisfy customers efficiently, which can improve business performance (Ramya et al, 2019). The following are the expected service quality models:

1-Servqual model

Servqual is one of the most famous methods of measuring service quality, created in 1985 by Parasuraman and his colleagues. Their research shows that customers evaluate quality by comparing service performance (perception) with what they think it should be (expectation) (Naghash, 2016). Servqual is a model by which the quality of the services provided can be increased by reducing the gap between the expectations and perceptions of the customer.

The Servqual model's primary basis is determining customer satisfaction by measuring gaps in the service delivery model (Radmard, 2015).

2-Mattsson's ideal value model of service quality

Mattsson, in his ideal value model of service quality, which he presented in 1992, states that in most of the studies conducted on service quality, "expectations are considered as the belief of having the desired characteristics and a standard for evaluation," however Now, this issue needs to be examined in the light of other standards such as standards based on experience, ideals, minimum acceptability and desirability (Mattsson, 1992).

3-Kano model

In 1984, Noriaki Kano and his colleagues introduced a famous model called "Kano's Customer Satisfaction Model," which can distinguish three types of product needs that affect customer satisfaction differently. Three types of needs are: 1) Basic needs: features that are necessary in a product. 2) Functional needs: needs that provide customer satisfaction as much as their level of satisfaction. 3) Exciting needs: Needs significantly affect customer satisfaction, and absence does not cause dissatisfaction (Peirow and MirFakhradini, 2016).

4- Gro'nroos functional and technical quality model

Gro'nroos introduced the functional and technical quality model in 1984. Gro'nroos has identified three components of service quality: technical quality, functional quality, and image. 1) Technical quality is the quality the consumer receives due to their interaction with the service company, which is crucial for them. The evaluation of service quality is also essential. 2) Functional quality is how the consumer receives the technical result. This quality is essential for him and his view of the services he received. 3) Image is essential for service companies, and there may be an expectation that the image is created by the technical and

functional quality of the service, which includes other factors (tradition, ideology, conversation, pricing, and public relations) (Gro'nroos, 1984). According to the previously mentioned cases and considering the effort to understand the concept of service quality and satisfaction, the present research has tried to answer the hypotheses that determine the satisfaction conditions of Alzahra University students from the services provided in physical education courses 1 and 2. These hypotheses are presented below, and the research findings are stated below each one.

Materials and Methods

The current research is applied-developmental research with a descriptive-survey nature and has been carried out quantitatively. Its general purpose was to identify students' satisfaction at Alzahra University with the quality of services of physical education courses 1 and 2. Population and statistical sample: Our research population was taken from the 1st and 2nd physical education course students, the professors and staff of these units, and the faculty in the second half of the academic year 2022-2023. The statistical population of students of Physical Education course 1 was 360 people, the statistical population of students of Physical Education course 2 was 396 people, and the number of professors and staff was 25. In students sector, the convenience sampling method was utilized for this study and in professors and staff sector, the sampling method used was the total number method. According to the tests used in this research, the number of statistical samples including 100 physical education students of courses 1 and 2 and also 25 professors and staff members was sufficient. In their services to students, professors serve as instructors and trainers, as well as employees who provide these course units. Research tool: The research tool is the Servqual standardized service quality questionnaire. This questionnaire examines the five dimensions of service quality (Assurance, Responsiveness, Reliability, Empathy, and the

organization's appearance and facilities (tangible factors). SERVQUAL measures customer expectations and perceptions for each service quality dimension with 22 questions. Then, the importance of each of the above five dimensions based on the score of the customers from a 7-point Likert scale, including completely disagree (1), disagree (2), somewhat disagree (3), have no opinion (4), somewhat agree (5), agree (6), completely agree (7).

The scale accurately measures attitudes by providing various agree, disagree, and in-between responses.

Each item is numerically valued. The sum of these values gives the score on the scale, which indicates the respondents' tendency (Sullivan, Gail & Artino, Anthony, 2013). The score gap is calculated based on the score difference of two categories of questions related to customers' expectations and perceptions. A negative score indicates that the actual service

Results

Two hundred twenty-five people participated in this study, including 25 professors and staff, 100 students of physical education unit 1, and 100 students of physical education unit 2. The average age of faculty and staff was 43.6 years (10.8+/-), and the average age of students in

(perception score) is lower than expected (expectations score). The score gap is a reliable indicator for all five service quality dimensions. By using Servqual, service providers can index their service quality level and identify areas for improvement. Validity and reliability of the research: this questionnaire is a general tool for measuring the quality of services, which Fransi et al. (2010) adjusted and rewrote for appropriate use in the sports sector (Ramezani et al., 2013), therefore using the opinion of expert's Sports management confirmed its validity and its reliability using Cronbach's alpha method was calculated as 0.84 for the expectations questionnaire and 0.91 for the perceptions questionnaire. Statistical tests: Student's t-test and analysis of variance were used in the SPSS software environment research variables: tangible factors, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

both groups was 22 years (2.4+/-). In the following, to check the satisfaction of people for each of the factors in the questionnaire based on the items, the average expectations and perceptions have been calculated, and the results are presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Average expectations and perceptions by factors and study groups

Variable	Group	Evaluation			
		Expectations		Perceptions	
		Average	standard deviation	Average	standard deviation
Tangible factors 1. The equipment should be up-to-date and modern. 2. The physical facilities should be impressive. 3. The staff should have a clean and well-groomed appearance. 4. The appearance of the physical facilities should be appropriate to the type of services provided.	Professors and staff	6/5	0/55	4/22	1/41
		6/52	0/65	4/08	1/16
	Physical education students 1 Physical education students 2	6/52	0/63	3/97	1/12
		Professors	6/51	0/46	4/98

<p>Reliability</p> <p>5. To perform the promised work or service by the specified time.</p> <p>6. The organization should show its interest in solving customer problems.</p> <p>7. They should be reliable.</p> <p>8. The organization should provide its services exactly when promised.</p> <p>9. They should maintain customer records carefully.</p>	and staff	6/59	0/71	4/44	0/98
	Physical education students 1				
	Physical education students 2	6/58	0/5	4/3	0/98
<p>Responsiveness</p> <p>10. They should not be expected to tell customers exactly when the implementation services will be provided. (-)</p> <p>11. Customers should be realistic and expect immediate service from the staff of these organizations. (-)</p> <p>12. Staff should not always be willing to help the customer. (-)</p> <p>13. It is a good thing if they do not have time to respond to customer requests immediately. (-)</p>	Professors and staff	5/21	1/31	5/10	1/96
		Physical education students 1	5/37	1/10	4/21
	Physical education students 2				
			5/58	1/04	4/41
<p>Assurance</p> <p>14. It should be possible for customers to trust the staff of these organizations.</p> <p>15. Customers should be able to feel safe in their interactions with the staff of these organizations.</p> <p>16. Staff of organizations should always behave politely.</p> <p>17. Staff should have sufficient knowledge to answer customers' questions.</p>	Professors and staff	6/58	0/56	5/60	1/07
		Physical education students 1	6/34	0/91	4/87
	Physical education students 2				
			6/56	0/61	4/93
<p>Empathy</p> <p>18. These organizations should not be expected to give individual attention to customers. (-)</p> <p>19. Staff should not be expected to give personal attention to customers. (-)</p> <p>20. Staff should not be expected to understand customers' needs. (-)</p> <p>21. It is unrealistic to expect these organizations to have the best interests of their customers in mind. (-)</p> <p>22. These organizations should not be expected to have working hours and operations that are favorable to all their customers. (-)</p>	Professors and staff	5/06	1/03	4/75	1/29
		Physical education students 1	5/19	1/26	4/25
	Physical education students 2				
			5/63	1/19	4/26

According to Table 1, the average expectations in all three study groups are higher than perceptions for all factors. Also, besides the reassurance factor, the highest average expectations in other factors belong to physical education students 1 and 2. In contrast, the

average perceptions of professors and staff for all factors are higher than that of students. In the following, to check the significance of the difference in the average expectations and perceptions of teachers, staff, and physical education students 1 and 2 among different

factors, Student's t-test and analysis of variance were used, the results of which are presented below. Table 2 shows the results of the paired t-test. The average difference of expectations and

perceptions (satisfaction) for each factor in the study groups has been calculated and tested in this table.

Table 2. Comparison of the means of different factors to separate the study groups

Group	Variable	Average	standard deviation	95% confidence interval		paired t-test	p-value
				Low level	High level		
Professors and staff	Tangible factors	2/37	1/62	1/62	3/02	6/86	0/0
	Reliability	1/73	1/43	1/05	2/29	5/61	0/0
	Responsiveness	0/11	2/65	0/39	2/57	2/8	0/01
	Assurance	0/72	1/57	0/07	1/37	2/3	0/031
	Empathy	0/41	1/62	-0/28	1/12	1/23	0/231
Physical education students 1	Tangible factors	2/44	1/41	2/16	2/72	17/22	0/0
	Reliability	2/15	1/21	1/9	2/38	17/68	0/0
	Responsiveness	1/17	1/95	1/72	2/5	10/81	0/0
	Assurance	1/43	1/72	0/17	1/09	1/77	0/0
	Empathy	0/94	1/52	0/63	1/24	6/15	0/0
Physical education students 2	Tangible factors	2/54	1/44	2/25	2/83	17/64	0/0
	Reliability	2/27	1/21	2/02	2/5	18/68	0/0
	Responsiveness	1/17	1/75	1/85	2/55	12/6	0/0
	Assurance	1/75	1/67	1/42	2/08	10/51	0/0
	Empathy	1/37	1/55	1/06	1/68	8/84	0/0

Based on the results of Table 2, there is a significant difference between the expectations and perceptions of all factors in each group, professors and staff and students of physical education 1 and 2 (except empathy between professors and staff) according to the p-value of the paired t-test (at the 0.05 level) There is; In

all cases, the average score of expectations is higher than perceptions. To investigate the difference in the expectations and perceptions of different factors among the three study groups, the variance analysis test was used, the results of which are presented in Tables 3 and 4, respectively:

Table 3. Analysis of the variance of the expectations of different factors among the three study groups

Variable	Group	expectations		
		Average	standard deviation	variance analysis test

				F	df	P-value
Tangible factors 1. The equipment should be up-to-date and modern. 2. The physical facilities should be impressive. 3. The staff should have a clean and well-groomed appearance. 4. The appearance of the physical facilities should be appropriate to the type of services provided	Professors and staff	۶/۵	۰/۵۵	۰/۰۱۲	۲	۰/۹۹۲
	Physical education students 1	۶/۵۲	۰/۶۵			
	Physical education students 2	۶/۵۲	۰/۶۳			
Reliability 5. To perform the promised work or service by the specified time. 6. The organization should show its interest in solving customer problems. 7. They should be reliable. 8. The organization should provide its services exactly when promised. 9. They should maintain customer records carefully.	Professors and staff	۶/۵۱	۰/۴۶	۰/۱۵۳	۲	۰/۸۵۹
	Physical education students 1	۶/۵۹	۰/۷۱			
	Physical education students 2	۶/۵۸	۰/۵			
Responsiveness 10. They should not be expected to tell customers exactly when the implementation services will be provided. (-) 11. Customers should be realistic and expect immediate service from the staff of these organizations. (-) 12. Staff should not always be willing to help the customer. (-) 13. It is a good thing if they do not have time to respond to customer requests immediately. (-)	Professors and staff	۵/۲۱	۱/۳۱	۶/۹۲۲	۲	۰/۰۰۱
	Physical education students 1	۵/۳۷	۱/۱۰			
	Physical education students 2	۵/۵۸	۱/۰۴			
Assurance 14. It should be possible for customers to trust the staff of these organizations. 15. Customers should be able to feel safe in their interactions with the staff of these organizations. 16. Staff of organizations should always behave politely. 17. Staff should have sufficient knowledge to answer customers' questions.	Professors and staff	۶/۵۸	۰/۵۶	۲/۳۶۶	۲	۰/۰۹۶
	Physical education students 1	۶/۳۴	۰/۹۱			
	Physical education students 2	۶/۵۶	۰/۶۱			
Empathy 18. These organizations should not be expected to give individual attention to customers. (-) 19. Staff should not be expected to give personal attention to	Professors and staff	۵/۰۶	۱/۰۳	۴/۲۶۱	۲	۰/۰۱۵
	Physical education students 1	۵/۱۹	۱/۲۶			

customers. (-) 20. Staff should not be expected to understand customers' needs. (-) 21. It is unrealistic to expect these organizations to have the best interests of their customers in mind. (-) 22. These organizations should not be expected to have working hours and operations that are favorable to all their customers. (-)	Physical education students 2	5/63	1/19			
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Based on the results of Table 3, there is a significant difference (at the 5% level) between the expectations of the factors of responsiveness and empathy among the groups of professors and staff, physical education students one and physical education students 2, so that the average score of the expectations of

professors and staff is lower than that of physical education students 1 and 2. Physical education students have the highest scores in expectations. The results of Table 4 show the perceptions of different factors among the three study groups:

Table 4. Variance analysis of perceptions of different factors among the three study groups

Variable	Group	perceptions				
		Average	standard deviation	Variance analysis test		
				F	df	p-value
Tangible factors 1. The equipment should be up-to-date and modern. 2. The physical facilities should be impressive. 3. The staff should have a clean and well-groomed appearance. 4. The appearance of the physical facilities should be appropriate to the type of services provided.	Professors and staff	4/22	1/41	0/489	2	0/614
	Physical education students 1	4/08	1/16			
	Physical education students 2	3/97	1/12			
Reliability 5. To perform the promised work or service by the specified time. 6. The organization should show its interest in solving customer problems. 7. They should be reliable. 8. The organization should provide its services exactly when promised. 9. They should maintain customer records carefully.	Professors and staff	4/98	1/33	4/214	2	0/016
	Physical education students 1	4/44	0/98			
	Physical education students 2	4/3	0/98			
Responsiveness 10. They should not be expected to tell customers exactly when the implementation services will be provided. (-) 11. Customers should be realistic	Professors and staff	5/10	1/96	1/672	2	0/19
	Physical education students 1	4/21	1/46			

and expect immediate service from the staff of these organizations. (-) 12. Staff should not always be willing to help the customer. (-) 13. It is a good thing if they do not have time to respond to customer requests immediately. (-)	Physical education students 2	۴/۴۱	۱/۲۷			
Assurance 14. It should be possible for customers to trust the staff of these organizations. 15. Customers should be able to feel safe in their interactions with the staff of these organizations. 16. Staff of organizations should always behave politely. 17. Staff should have sufficient knowledge to answer customers' questions.	Professors and staff	۵/۶۰	۱/۰۷	۵/۴۵۶	۲	۰/۰۰۵
	Physical education students 1	۴/۸۷	۰/۹۶			
	Physical education students 2	۴/۹۳	۱/۰۱			
Empathy 18. These organizations should not be expected to give individual attention to customers. (-) 19. Staff should not be expected to give personal attention to customers. (-) 20. Staff should not be expected to understand customers' needs. (-) 21. It is unrealistic to expect these organizations to have the best interests of their customers in mind. (-) 22. These organizations should not be expected to have working hours and operations that are favorable to all their customers. (-)	Professors and staff	۴/۷۵	۱/۲۹	۱/۸۱۶	۲	۰/۱۶۵
	Physical education students 1	۴/۲۵	۱/۳			
	Physical education students 2	۴/۲۶	۱/۱۱			

Based on the results of this table, there is a significant difference (at the 5% level) between the perceptions of reliable and reassuring factors among the groups of professors and staff, physical education students 1 and physical education students 2, so the average perceptions of professors and staff are higher than physical education students 1 and 2.

As we know, the level of service quality has a direct relationship with satisfaction, and we also know that satisfaction is equal to how much the expectations and perceptions of the customer (students) match (Parasuraman et al, 1985). Therefore, this research shows in which dimensions of service quality there is satisfaction and in which dimensions there is a need to improve performance to obtain

customer satisfaction. This research investigates the differences in expectations and perceptions of professors, staff, and physical education students 1 and 2. The purpose of doing it was to check the level of expectations and perceptions of students, identify the shortcomings, and strengthen the strengths of the components of their satisfaction.

1- There is no difference between the expectations of professors and staff, students of the physical education unit 1, and students of the physical education course 2 in tangible service quality factors.

The results showed that the average scores of the expectations of tangible service quality factors include up-to-date and modern equipment; physical facilities are significant;

The employees should have a clean and well-groomed appearance, and the appearance of the physical facilities should follow the type of services provided (questions that exist in the dimension of tangible factors) among the study groups, there is no significant difference (p -value = 0.972), and it is approximately equal to 6.5. The obtained results are consistent with the research results of Ramezani et al. (2013) and Andam et al. (2014). Also, the results are inconsistent with those of Agha Moulaei et al. (2007) and Abbasian et al. (2013).

2- There is no difference between the expectations of professors and staff, students of physical education unit 1, and students of physical education unit 2 in the reliability of service quality.

The results showed that the average scores of service quality credibility expectations include doing the promised work or service at a particular time, showing the organization an interest in solving customers' problems, and being reliable. This organization should provide its services. When the data promises to be delivered, they should carefully keep customer records with them (questions in the reliability dimension). There is no significant difference between the study groups (p -value=0.859), almost equal to 6.5.

The obtained results are consistent with the research results of Ramezani et al. (2013). Also, the results obtained are inconsistent with the research of Agha Moulaei et al. (2007) and Abbasian et al. (2013).

3- There is no difference between the expectations of professors and staff, students of physical education unit 1, and students of physical education unit 2 in responding to the quality of services.

The results showed that the mean scores of service quality response expectations include: they should not be expected to tell customers exactly when the service will be provided, customers should be realistic and expect immediate service from the employees of these organizations, employees should not be inclined to help the customer, this is a good thing if they do not have time to respond immediately to the customer's requests (questions in the response dimension) are

significantly different among the study groups (p -value=0.001) and It is equal to 5.21, 5.37, 5.58 respectively.

The obtained results are consistent with the results of the research of Andam et al. (2014), Dehghan and Goodarzi (2019), Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), and Abbasian et al. (2013). Also, the obtained results are inconsistent with the research results of Ramezani et al. (2013).

4- There is no difference between the expectations of professors and staff, students of the physical education unit 1, and students of the physical education course 2 in ensuring the quality of services.

The results showed that the average scores of service quality assurance expectations include: it should be possible for customers to be able to trust the employees of these organizations, customers should be able to feel safe in their interactions with the employees of these organizations, employees of organizations should always behave politely, they must have enough knowledge to answer customers' questions (questions that exist in the assurance dimension) among the study groups, there is no significant difference (p -value=0.096) and it is equal to 6.6, 6.3 and 6.6, respectively.

The obtained results are consistent with the research results of Ramezani et al. (2013), Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad (2014), and Dehghan and Goodarzi (2019). Also, the results obtained from Andam et al. (2014) and Abbasian et al. (2013) do not match.

5- There is no difference between the expectations of professors and staff, students of the physical education unit 1, and students of the physical education course 2 in the empathy of service quality.

The results showed that the average scores of service quality empathy expectations include: these organizations should not be expected to give individual attention to customers, employees should not be expected to provide personal attention to customers, we should not expect organizations' employees, customer needs understand, it is unrealistic to expect these organizations to seek the best interests of their customers; these organizations should not be expected to have their hours and operations favorable to all of their customers (questions in

the empathy dimension) among The study groups have a significant difference (p -value=0.015) and it is equal to 5.06, 5.19 and 5.6 respectively.

The obtained results are consistent with the results of Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad (2014), Andam et al. (2014), Dehghan and Goodarzi (2019), Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), and Abbasian et al. (2013). Also, the obtained results are inconsistent with the research results of Ramezani et al. (2013).

6- There is no difference between the perceptions of professors and staff, students of the physical education unit 1, and students of the physical education course 2 in the tangible service quality factors.

The results showed that the average scores of perceptions of tangible service quality factors among the study groups do not differ significantly (p -value=0.614) and are 4.2, 4.08, and 3.97, respectively. According to Table 2, it can also be seen that there is a significant difference between expectations and perceptions, tangible factors in all three groups of professors and staff, students of Physical Education course 1, and students of Physical Education course 2.

The results obtained with the results of research Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023), and Hematinezhad et al. (2019) are consistent. Also, the results obtained are inconsistent with the results of the research by Abbasian et al. (2013).

7- There is no difference between the perceptions of professors and staff, students of physical education unit 1, and students of physical education unit 2 in the reliability of service quality. The results showed a significant difference in the average scores of service quality credibility perceptions among the study groups (p -value=0.016), and it is about five among the professors and staff and 4.4 among the students of physical education course 1 and 2. Table 2 shows a significant difference between expectations, perceptions, and credibility in all three groups of professors and staff, students of Physical Education course 1, and students of Physical Education course 2. The results obtained from the results of researchers Khatibi et al. (2011), Abbasian et

al. (2013), Andam et al. (2014), Soita (2012), and Dehghan and Goodarzi (2019) are consistent.

8- There is no difference between the perceptions of professors and staff, students of physical education course 1, and students of physical education course 2 in responding to the quality of services. The results showed no significant difference in the average scores of service quality responsiveness among the study groups (p -value=0.190), which are 5.1, 4.21, and 4.41, respectively. Table 2 shows a significant difference between the expectations, perceptions, and responsiveness in all three groups of professors and staff, students of physical education course 1, and students of physical education course 2. The results obtained with the research of Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023), Ramezani et al. (2013), Naqhash (2016), Hematinezhad et al. (2019), and Soita (2012). Also, the results obtained are not consistent with the results of the research of Andam et al. (2014), Dehghan and Goodarzi (2019), and Abbasian et al. (2013).

9- There is no difference between the perceptions of professors and staff, students of physical education course 1, and students of physical education course 2 in ensuring the quality of services. The results showed that the average score of service quality assurance perceptions among the study groups has a significant difference (p -value=0.005), 5.6 among the professors and staff, and 4.9 among the students of physical education courses 1 and 2. According to Table 2, we also notice a significant difference between expectations, perceptions, and assurance in all three groups of professors and staff, students of the physical education course 1, and students of the physical education course 2. The results obtained from the research were Naqhash (2016), Mallaei (2017), Fazel Bakhshi et al. (2017), and Hematinezhad et al. (2019). Also, the results obtained are not consistent with the results of Hematinezhad and Hematinezhad (2014), Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), and Andam et al. (2014).

10- There is no difference between the perceptions of professors and staff, students of physical education course 1, and students of

physical education course 2 in empathy for service quality. The results showed that the study groups' average perceptions of service quality empathy are not significantly different (p -value=0.165) and are 4.75, 4.25, and 4.26, respectively. According to Table 2, we also notice no significant difference between the expectations and perceptions of empathy among professors and staff. Still, there is a significant difference between students of the physical education course 1 and students of the physical education course 2. The results obtained by the researchers Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023), Naqhash (2016), Firouzi (2016), Mellaei (2017), Fazel Bakhshi et al. (2017), Hematinezhad et al. Also, the obtained results are inconsistent with the research of Dehghan and Goodarzi (2019), Abbasian et al. (2013), and Andam et al. (2014).

11- It is not meaningful to prioritize students' expectations of factors related to the quality of services provided in the physical education course.

The results showed that for the students of the physical education course 1, the reliability factor (6.59) has the highest priority. After that, tangible factors (6.52), reassurance (6.34), responsiveness (5.37), and the empathy factor (5.19) have the lowest priority. For the students in Physical Education course 2, the reliability factor (6.58) has the highest priority, followed by reassurance (6.56), tangible factors (6.52), empathy (5.63), and the responsiveness factor (5.58) has the lowest priority. The results aligned with Agha Moulaei et al.'s (2007) research in empathy and responsiveness, which has the lowest priority, consistent with Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023). Also, it is inconsistent with the results of Bagherzadeh et al.'s research (2008). In their results, the dimensions of empathy and responsiveness were the most important, while they were the least important in this research.

12- The prioritization of students' perceptions of the factors related to the quality of services provided in the physical education course is not meaningful. The results showed that for the students of physical education course 1, the assurance factor (4.87) has the highest priority,

followed by reliability (4.44), empathy (4.25), responsiveness (4.21), and tangible factors (4.08) the lowest priority and for the students of the Physical education course 2 also has the highest priority for reassurance (4.93), followed by responsiveness (4.41), reliability (4.31), empathy (4.26) and tangible factors (3.97).

The results obtained were in line with Agha Moulaei et al. (2007) research in the dimension of empathy for physical education students 1 and are consistent with the results of Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023). The results obtained from physical education students 1 are consistent with the research of Agha Moulaei et al. (2007). It is inconsistent with results from Bagherzadeh and Bagherzadeh's research (2009). In their results, the dimensions of empathy and responsiveness were the most important, while they were less critical in this research.

Discussion

The results of the research showed that there is a significant difference between the level of satisfaction of the students of the physical education course 1 and 2 with the overall quality of the service as well as its five dimensions (tangible factors, credibility, responsiveness, reassurance, and empathy) in the current state of the Faculty of Sports Sciences, these results It indicates that the student's expectations of providing services are higher than their perceptions of the current situation. Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023), Khatibi et al. (2011), Abbasian et al. (2013) also reached similar results in evaluating the quality of educational services, that there is a difference between expectations and perceptions in all dimensions of service quality. The comparison of the results of the conducted research shows that the difference in the expected and perceived quality in each college and university depends on the variety of the field of study, the number of students and faculty members, the age of the university, the prevailing organizational culture, the physical space and educational facilities (Hematinezhad et al, 2019). In this study, we found that the expectations and perceptions among the professors, staff, and students of physical education course 1 and 2 in

Tables 3 and 4, except for the dimensions of responsiveness and empathy in expectations and the dimensions of reliability and assurance in perceptions, the rest of the dimensions are consistent with each other. In Table 2, the adaptation of expectations and perceptions shows that the Faculty of Sports Sciences has not satisfied the students of physical education courses 1 and 2 in any service quality dimensions. According to Table 1, the prioritization of the dimensions of service quality was done to determine the level of satisfaction of the students of physical education course 1 and 2; the reliability dimension is more important among the students of physical education course 1 and 2, and the responsiveness dimension is the least important, however, Prioritizing the perceptions of the students of physical education course 1 and 2, we concluded that the Faculty of Sports Sciences had performed better in the dimension of responsiveness. At the same time, it has the most minor importance for students of physical education course 1 and 2, and the dimension of credibility has the most significance for students of physical education course 1 and 2. However, the Faculty of Sports Sciences has not been able to perform well in terms of the expectations of the students.

According to Table 2, regarding the difference between expectations and perceptions, among the five dimensions, the empathy dimension for physical education students 1 and the responsiveness dimension for physical education students 2 show the slightest difference. In the dimension of empathy, which includes personal attention to students, understanding their needs, and having respectful behavior with students, the results are consistent with the results of Hematinezhad et al. (2019) and Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023) is not consistent in the dimension of responsiveness, which includes the availability of staff and professors to answer questions, quick and timely provision of services, and fast and timely notification of services, the results obtained with the results of Enayati Novinfar et al. (2023). It is not aligned with the results of Agha Moulaei et al. (2007), and Abbasian et al. (2013).

Among the five dimensions, the most significant difference between expectations and perceptions was observed in the tangible factors dimension for physical education students 1 and 2 groups. Factors such as the physical conditions of the service delivery environment, facilities, and equipment and the well-groomed appearance of professors and staff are related to tangible factors. The results are consistent with those of Ramezani et al. (2013) and Hematinezhad et al. (2019). This research showed that according to the years of teaching physical education courses in universities, there are gaps between expectations and perceptions related to this course in universities. The findings of this research show that the staff pay attention to the students' opinions, but they were evaluated at a low level in showing sincere interest in solving the students' problems. Therefore, this department needs more attention from management and employees.

Conclusion

The observed gaps in service quality dimensions can be used as a guide for planning to achieve university service quality goals. For this reason, sports science faculty managers and employees can help improve service quality by considering the service gaps and specified priorities. In this way, students can also experience quality services and education. Also, based on the results of this research, the researcher made suggestions the follows to obtain more satisfaction from students and improve the quality of university services:

- 1) The sports equipment in the Faculty of Sports Sciences halls should be updated and modernized.
- 2) The physical facilities of the Faculty of Sports Sciences should be appropriate to the type of services provided.
- 3) When the Faculty of Sports Science promises to do something by a particular time, it should fulfill its promise at the same time.
- 4) The Faculty of Sports Sciences staff should diligently solve the student's problems.
- 5) The Faculty of Sports Sciences must provide the services students need in the shortest possible time.

- 6) The professors of the sports science faculty should show up on time and at the specified time to start the class.
- 7) The Faculty of Sports Sciences professors and staff should have time to respond to the student's requests.
- 8) The Faculty of Sports Sciences should pay attention to the proper functioning of the site when selecting the unit so that the students do not face problems.
- 9) The Faculty of Sports Sciences employs staff who can understand students' needs.
- 10) The Faculty of Sports Sciences professors should pay special attention to the students' performance and their requests.

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