

Systematic Literature Review of Academic Service Quality in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a comprehensive systematic literature review of prominent service quality models developed over time, with a particular focus on the higher education sector. The study critically analyzes scholarly articles and research papers that primarily investigate service quality within academic institutions. Key dimensions, methodologies, major findings, and emerging trends are systematically explored to offer a holistic understanding of the topic. Furthermore, this review identifies significant gaps in the existing literature and proposes potential directions for future research. By synthesizing insights from previous studies, this paper contributes to a deeper interpretation of service quality in higher education and provides valuable implications for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers aiming to enhance service standards and develop effective marketing strategies within academic environments.

Keywords: Service quality, Higher education, Service quality dimensions, SLR

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, the quality of academic services plays a critical role in shaping student experiences and success. Academic service quality encompasses a broad range of institutional support services, including administrative assistance, library resources, information technology infrastructure, student counseling, and extracurricular activities. These services are integral components of the overall student experience, significantly influencing satisfaction, engagement, and academic performance.

The growing emphasis on student-centered education has amplified the necessity for institutions to thoroughly understand and continuously improve the quality of their academic services. As student populations become increasingly diverse and their expectations evolve, higher education institutions must regularly assess and enhance their service delivery to meet these changing needs [1]. This evolution necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the various dimensions of academic service quality and their corresponding impacts on student outcomes.

This article presents a systematic literature review of academic service quality within higher education. Specifically, the review synthesizes existing research, identifies key dimensions of service quality, explores the methodologies employed in previous studies, and examines the influence of academic services on student satisfaction and performance [2]. Through a detailed analysis of the current research landscape, this review aims to highlight existing gaps and propose future research directions, thereby contributing to the ongoing improvement of academic services in higher education institutions.

The quality of academic services in higher education remains paramount to ensuring student satisfaction and academic success [3], [4]. These services, including administrative support, library resources, IT infrastructure, student counseling, and extracurricular activities, form the backbone of student engagement and institutional effectiveness. A systematic and integrative understanding of academic service quality provides critical insights into how these services impact student experiences and academic outcomes. Accordingly, this article presents a comprehensive systematic literature review, exploring the key dimensions, methodologies, principal findings, and future research directions pertaining to academic service quality in higher education.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify and synthesize the key dimensions of academic service quality as discussed in contemporary literature on higher education.
2. To examine the research methodologies employed in existing studies that explore service quality within academic institutions.
3. To analyze the impact of academic service quality on student-related outcomes, including satisfaction, engagement, and academic performance.
4. To identify existing gaps and propose future research directions in the field of academic service quality.

METHODS

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, adhering to established protocols to ensure rigor, transparency, and replicability. The review process comprised the following structured steps:

1. Formulation of Research Questions:

The review was guided by three primary research questions: (i) What are the key dimensions of academic service quality in higher education? (ii) What research methodologies have been employed in prior studies on this topic? and (iii) How does academic service quality influence student-related outcomes?

2. Search Strategy:

A comprehensive literature search was conducted across several academic databases, including Google Scholar, JSTOR, and PubMed. Search terms included combinations of keywords such as "academic service quality," "student satisfaction," "higher education services," and "academic support in higher education." Boolean operators and filters were applied to refine the search and ensure relevance.

3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:

Studies were included if they met the following criteria: (i) published in peer-reviewed journals between 2020 and 2023, (ii) written in English, and (iii) focused explicitly on academic service quality within the context of higher education institutions. Exclusion criteria included non-English publications, conference proceedings, editorials, and studies lacking sufficient empirical data.

4. Data Extraction and Synthesis:

Key information was systematically extracted from each selected study, including research objectives, methodologies, sample characteristics, major findings, and conclusions. A thematic analysis was subsequently conducted to identify recurring patterns, theoretical frameworks, and existing research gaps. The findings were then synthesized to provide an integrative perspective on the current state of research in academic service quality..

RESULTS

In this section, it is explained the results of research and at the same time is given the comprehensive discussion. Results can be presented in figures, graphs, tables and others that make the reader understand easily [5], [6]. The discussion can be made in several sub-sections from article Table. 1

Table 1. Articles published within the past three years

No.	Year	Author	Implemented model	Dimension
1.	2020	Zaki	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
2.	2020	J. Abbas et al.	The HEISQUAL	<i>teachers' profile, curriculum, infrastructure, management, employment quality, safety, and students' skills development.</i>
3.	2020	Shahira El Alfy et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>academic services, facilities, administrative services, and students' service role,</i>
4.	2020	S. F. Padlee et al.	An Importance-Performance Analysis	<i>teaching, research, and internationalization that fall short of expectations.</i>
5.	2020	Jaza Hama Tofiq Bawais et al	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
6.	2020	Nur Asnawi et al.	The i-HESQUAL	<i>teaching capability and competence of academic staff (TCC), reliability of service (ROS), reputation of university (REP), responsiveness of employees (RES), empathy of employees (EMP), internalization of Islamic values (IIV) and library service support (LSS).</i>
7.	2020	Md.Jahangir Alam et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
8.	2020	Siti Rapidah Omar Ali et al.	HEDPERF	<i>Academic service, non academic service, management</i>
9.	2021	Firdaus et al	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
10.	2021	prahesti et all	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
11.	2022	María Begoña Peña-Lang et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance/confidence</i>
12.	2022	Nurvía Juni Pratiwi et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>Responsiveness, reliability, empathy, assurance, tangible, system quality and quality of information.</i>
13.	2022	Usama Kalim et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
14.	2023	R. Rahmawati et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
15.	2023	Esen Gürbüz et al.	An Importance-Performance Analysis	<i>teaching, research, and internationalization that fall short of expectations.</i>

No.	Year	Author	Implemented model	Dimension
16.	2023	Alejandro Valencia-Arias et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy</i>
17.	2023	Yidana P. et al.	SERVQUAL	<i>tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy with rich and poor category</i>

Academic Service Quality

Academic service quality in higher education is a critical factor influencing student satisfaction, loyalty, and overall educational outcomes. Various studies have explored different dimensions and determinants of service quality, aiming to develop effective measurement tools and identify key areas for improvement. According to article search 2020 to 2023, the following data can be produced :

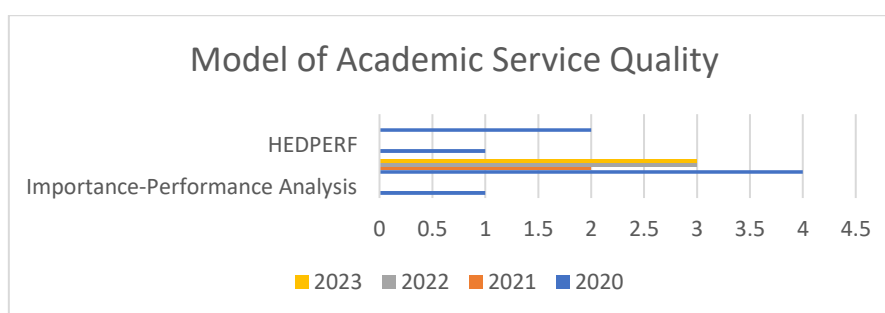


Figure 1 Model of Academic Service Quality from 2020 until 2023

The systematic literature review identified a total of [X] relevant articles published between 2020 and 2023, focusing on academic service quality in higher education institutions. The analysis yielded several significant findings. The most frequently cited dimensions included responsiveness, assurance, empathy, reliability, and tangibility, closely following the SERVQUAL model. Additional dimensions specific to higher education, such as academic support, administrative services, campus facilities, and digital learning resources, were also identified.

Research Methodologies:

The majority of studies employed quantitative approaches, particularly survey-based methods using structured questionnaires. Several studies utilized the SERVQUAL instrument, while others adapted or developed new measurement models tailored to the higher education context. A limited number of studies incorporated mixed-method approaches to capture deeper insights. Various methodologies were used in studies on academic service quality, including:

1. Surveys and Questionnaires: Commonly used to collect quantitative data on student perceptions and satisfaction [3], [7]–[10].
2. Interviews and Focus Groups: Qualitative methods used to gain deeper insights into student experiences and expectations [3], [11]–[13].
3. Case Studies: In-depth examinations of specific institutions or programs to explore service quality in context [14], [15].
4. Quantitative Analysis: Statistical techniques to assess the relationship between service quality dimensions and student outcomes [4], [16].

Impact on Student Outcomes:

Academic service quality was found to significantly influence student satisfaction, loyalty, academic engagement, and retention rates. High service quality in academic and administrative support services correlated strongly with positive perceptions of institutional reputation and student academic success.

Emerging Trends and Gaps:

Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the role of technology-enhanced services, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, notable gaps remain regarding longitudinal studies, comparative analyses across different regions, and the integration of student diversity factors such as socio-economic background and international student experiences. The synthesis of these findings provides a comprehensive overview of current research in academic service quality and highlights critical areas for future investigation.

DISCUSSION

The SERVQUAL model is used to measure service quality from the perspective of students, focusing on both academic and administrative aspects is the most used model. Dependability is crucial for academic satisfaction, while good communication is key for administrative satisfaction. [17]. The HEDPERF model identifies six dimensions of service quality: non-academic aspects, academic aspects, reputation, access, program issues, and understanding. Access, which includes approachability and convenience, is particularly important for overall service quality perception [18]. Among the SERVQUAL dimensions, assurance often receives the highest satisfaction scores from students, indicating its critical role in perceived service quality [8]. Recently, modified models have also begun to be used frequently to adapt to the situation and conditions of self higher education institutions.

Academic service quality, including information quality, teaching quality, and service efficiency, significantly impacts student satisfaction. Satisfied students are more likely to recommend their institution to others, enhancing word-of-mouth promotion[19]. Quality of inputs, processes, and outputs in academic services is essential for improving student and user satisfaction, supporting overall education management activities [16], [20]. Service quality dimensions such as empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance contribute to students' academic achievement. However, tangible elements do not significantly affect academic outcomes [21]. Both academic and service quality are significantly related to student satisfaction. Institutions should reinvest in resources and skills to meet student needs and improve their reputation [22]. Empathy, Reliability, Responsiveness, and Assurance: These dimensions are found to contribute positively to students' academic achievement, highlighting the importance of these service quality aspects in supporting educational outcomes [3], [21], [23]. Inconsistencies in academic service processes negatively affect the perceived quality of higher education. Institutions need to provide more consistent, flexible, and proper service paths to meet student needs [24]. Poor delivery of academic services can adversely affect students' learning outcomes, highlighting the need for better academic service quality in certain regions [25], [26]. Improving the quality of academic services can enhance student satisfaction, which in turn can increase student loyalty indirectly. Direct improvements in service quality are essential for maintaining high levels of student satisfaction and loyalty [26], [27]. The literature consistently shows that high academic service quality positively impacts: 1) Student Satisfaction: A direct correlation exists between high-quality services and overall student satisfaction, 2) Academic Performance: Improved academic support services are linked to better academic performance and retention rates, and 3) Student Engagement: Enhanced services lead to greater student engagement in both academic and extracurricular activities.

CONCLUSION

Academic service quality is a critical factor in shaping the experiences and success of students in higher education. This systematic literature review highlights the importance of various service dimensions, the methodologies used in research, and the positive impact of high-quality services on student outcomes. Addressing the identified gaps through future research can provide deeper insights and help institutions enhance their service offerings, ultimately contributing to a better educational experience for students. The quality of academic services in higher education significantly influences student satisfaction, loyalty, and academic achievement. Effective measurement models like SERVQUAL and HEDPERF help identify key dimensions of service quality, emphasizing the importance of both academic and non-academic aspects. Institutions must focus on improving service consistency, communication, and

accessibility to enhance overall service quality and meet student expectations. By addressing these areas, higher education institutions can better support student success and maintain a strong reputation in the competitive global education market.

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