

ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES USING A MODIFIED SERVQUAL SCALE

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of the study is to assess the service quality in high public education in Albania, using the SERVQUAL approach. Today Albanian public universities are facing fierce competition from private universities, so they find imperative focusing firmly on service quality they offer to students. The paper reports on a modified SERVQUAL survey of students from five public universities in Albania. The survey aims to capture the perceptions and expectations students have about the service they receive in respective universities, leading to an evaluation of overall perceived service quality based on gap analysis.

The data analysis reveals interesting findings on students' perceptions of service quality in high education. The universities' management would benefit from these findings by knowing which gap should receive the most attention in order to gain competitive advantage. An improved service quality will also help them to face the competition from other high education institutions. The study confirms the SERVQUAL scale as a suitable tool in assessing service quality in public sector, holding the same strengths as in private sector. The continuous measurement of service quality in universities will help in engaging in a continuous improvement of this quality, creating a good basis for achieving higher objectives. Service quality measurement will also help in creating a market-orientation for public universities, focusing more on the student as a customer.

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