



Records Office Service Quality and Student Satisfaction in a Private Junior and Senior High School

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ABSTRACT

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Administrative support offices shape students' overall impression of a school, yet little local research has examined how records-office service quality relates to student satisfaction at the basic-education level. This study investigated the relationship between records office service quality and student satisfaction among Junior High School and Senior High School students of a private school in the Philippines. Anchored on the SERVQUAL model and the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, the study measured service quality across five dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—and related these to overall student satisfaction. A descriptive-correlational design was used with a stratified random sample of 345 students who had transacted with the records office, using a validated survey questionnaire. Data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple linear regression. Results showed that service quality was rated High overall ($M = 4.11$), with assurance rated highest and reliability rated lowest, and that students expressed a High level of satisfaction ($M = 4.12$). All five dimensions correlated significantly and positively with satisfaction ($r = .64$ to $.84$, $p < .001$), leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. Regression analysis identified responsiveness and assurance as the unique, significant predictors of satisfaction, with the full model explaining 74% of the variance. Findings suggest that timely staff response and trustworthy, courteous service are the most efficient levers for improving student satisfaction with records-related services in private basic education institutions.

KEYWORDS:

service quality, SERVQUAL, student satisfaction, records office, expectancy-disconfirmation theory, private basic education.

INTRODUCTION

Private schools increasingly function as service-delivery ecosystems in which administrative efficiency is treated as inseparable from academic excellence. Within this ecosystem, the records office anchors the academic identity of students, serving as the point of contact for enrollment, transcripts, record updates, and clearance transactions (Mallares et al., 2024). In private institutions, where competitiveness depends heavily on student and parent satisfaction, records offices are expected to process requests promptly, accurately, and courteously.

Service quality is defined as the gap between customer expectations and actual service delivery, a concept extended

to education because students are increasingly regarded as key stakeholders (Dugenio-Nadela et al., 2023). The SERVQUAL model, developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, remains among the most widely used tools for evaluating administrative and support services and describes service quality along five dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Fuchs & Fangpong, 2021). Complementing SERVQUAL, the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory explains satisfaction as arising from the comparison between expected and perceived performance: satisfaction follows when perceived performance meets or exceeds expectations, and dissatisfaction follows when it falls short (Van Ryzin, 2013; Martínez-Tur et al., 2011).

Registrar and records offices have drawn particular research attention because they manage some of the most frequently accessed student transactions. Chavez (2024) found that combining SERVQUAL with statistical process control reduced service-delivery variability and errors in a Philippine university registrar's office. Similar work has documented

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persistent problems with paper-based filing and incomplete adoption of electronic systems in registrar offices (Metto et al., 2022a; Mallares et al., 2024). At the secondary level, Akib et al. (2023) applied SERVQUAL to a vocational school's student-administration services. They reported good performance on tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and empathy, but only average performance on assurance.

Locally, service quality has been consistently linked to student satisfaction: Abdulah (2021) found service attitude to be the strongest predictor of satisfaction among Philippine college students, while Laureta and Dioso (2020) reported that students and parents evaluate school services along distinct dimensions rather than as a single undifferentiated experience. However, most Philippine SERVQUAL research has examined higher-education institutions, and studies specifically addressing records-office service in Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) settings remain scarce (Li & Pateña, 2023; Minja et al., 2024).

This gap is significant because JHS and SHS students in private schools are frequent users of records-office services—for enrollment, scholarship applications, and document requests—yet their perceptions of service quality have rarely been examined empirically, and the specific service dimensions that most strongly predict their satisfaction remain unclear. Addressing this gap, the present study investigated the relationship between records-office service quality and student satisfaction among JHS and SHS students of a private school in the Philippines, guided by the following objectives: (1) describe the demographic profile of respondents; (2) determine the level of records-office service quality across the five SERVQUAL dimensions; (3) determine the level of student satisfaction; (4) determine whether a significant relationship exists between service quality and satisfaction; and (5) identify which dimension(s) significantly predict satisfaction. Findings are intended to provide school administrators and records-office personnel with an empirical basis for strengthening frontline service delivery.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a descriptive-correlational research design, appropriate for identifying the characteristics of a phenomenon and establishing the relationship between two or more variables (Abdulah, 2021). The descriptive component measured records-office service quality across the five SERVQUAL dimensions and student satisfaction; the correlational component tested whether these variables were significantly related.

The study was conducted in a private Junior and Senior High School operating under the Philippine K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum. The school's records office is responsible for enrollment records, issuance of report cards and certificates, and management of JHS and SHS academic records.

Participants were JHS and SHS students who had personally transacted with the records office during the academic year in which data were collected. A stratified random sampling procedure was used to obtain a representative sample across Grades 7 to 12, with sample size determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error. A total of 345 students participated.

Data were collected using a researcher-made, three-part survey questionnaire. Part I gathered demographic information (grade level and sex). Part II measured perceived records-office service quality using items distributed across the five SERVQUAL dimensions (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy), adapted from established registrar-service instruments (Chavez, 2024; Fuchs & Fangpong, 2021). Part III measured overall student satisfaction using items adapted from prior Philippine student-satisfaction studies (Laureta & Dioso, 2020; Abdulah, 2021). All items used a five-point Likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree), interpreted using the following scale of means: 4.21–5.00 (Very High), 3.41–4.20 (High), 2.61–3.40 (Moderate), 1.81–2.60 (Low), and 1.00–1.80 (Very Low). The questionnaire underwent face and content validation by subject-matter experts and was pilot-tested to establish internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha.

Following approval of the research proposal, a written request was submitted to the school administration. Respondents were briefed on the study's purpose and their rights as participants, including the voluntary nature of participation, before completing an informed consent/assent form and the survey questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness, coded, and analyzed.

Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage for the demographic profile; weighted mean and standard deviation for the level of service quality and satisfaction; Pearson product-moment correlation to test the relationship between service quality and satisfaction; and multiple linear regression to identify which SERVQUAL dimensions significantly predicted satisfaction. All analyses were conducted with a significance level set at $\alpha = .05$.

The study observed the ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent (with parental consent/assent for minor respondents), and confidentiality, in accordance with the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Respondents were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and all data were used solely for academic purposes.

RESULTS

Of the 345 respondents, 219 (63.5%) were Junior High School students and 117 (33.9%) were Senior High School students; nine respondents (2.6%) gave an ambiguous grade-level response and were retained in the overall sample but excluded from grade-level comparisons. Slightly more than

half of respondents were female (55.7%) compared with male (44.3%) (Table 1).

Records-office service quality was rated High overall ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.73$) (Table 2). Assurance obtained the highest composite rating ($M = 4.24$, Very High), followed by Empathy ($M = 4.15$), Tangibility ($M = 4.14$), Responsiveness ($M = 4.02$), and Reliability ($M = 3.99$), the lowest of the five dimensions though still within the High range. Within Assurance, staff courtesy and protection of record privacy were rated most favorably; within Reliability, performing the service correctly the first time was rated lowest; and within Tangibility, the comfort and accessibility of the waiting area was rated lowest. Within Responsiveness, the item indicating that staff was never too busy to respond to student inquiries obtained the single lowest mean across the entire instrument. Students expressed a High level of overall satisfaction with records-office services ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.61$) (Table 3).

Pearson correlation analysis showed that overall service quality was strongly and positively correlated with student satisfaction, $r(343) = .82$, $p < .001$ (Table 4). All five individual dimensions were significantly and positively correlated with satisfaction, ranging from a moderate-to-strong association for Tangibility ($r = .64$) to strong associations for Responsiveness ($r = .84$), Assurance ($r = .80$), Reliability ($r = .79$), and Empathy ($r = .70$). The null hypothesis of no significant relationship between records-office service quality and student satisfaction was therefore rejected.

A standard multiple linear regression with the five SERVQUAL dimensions entered simultaneously as predictors of student satisfaction was statistically significant, $F(5, 339) = 190.45$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .74$, Adjusted $R^2 = .73$ (Table 5). Responsiveness was the strongest unique predictor ($\beta = .71$, $p < .001$), followed by Assurance ($\beta = .35$, $p < .001$). Empathy showed a smaller, statistically significant negative coefficient ($\beta = -.17$, $p = .003$), while Tangibility and Reliability did not contribute unique significant predictive power ($p = .758$ and $p = .948$, respectively). A supplementary diagnostic check found high intercorrelation among the five dimensions ($r = .64$ to $.93$) and variance inflation factors exceeding 8 for Reliability and Responsiveness, indicating multicollinearity. This pattern indicates that the negative Empathy coefficient reflects statistical suppression from shared variance among predictors rather than a true negative effect, given Empathy's strong positive zero-order correlation with satisfaction ($r = .70$).

DISCUSSION

The predominance of Junior High School respondents reflects the generally larger JHS population relative to SHS under the Philippine K to 12 curriculum. It is consistent with survey compositions reported in comparable school-services studies (Patalinghug et al., 2021). The balanced sex distribution suggests that sex is unlikely to be a major confounding factor, consistent with Li and Pateña (2023),

who found no significant satisfaction differences by sex in a records-related SERVQUAL study.

The High-to-Very-High ratings across all five SERVQUAL dimensions indicate that the records office studied delivers generally strong service, with Assurance emerging as its clearest strength. This mirrors Rahmawati et al. (2023), who likewise found Assurance to be the highest-rated SERVQUAL dimension in a university-wide study, but contrasts with Minja et al. (2024), where Reliability, not Assurance, was the strongest dimension. This divergence suggests that the relative ranking of SERVQUAL dimensions is shaped by the specific institutional and cultural context rather than reflecting a universal pattern.

The strong, significant correlation between overall service quality and student satisfaction ($r = .82$) supports the Expectancy-Disconfirmation premise that satisfaction is shaped by how well perceived service performance meets expectations (Van Ryzin, 2013; Martínez-Tur et al., 2011), and is consistent with prior findings that service quality and student satisfaction are reliably related across educational contexts (Dugenio-Nadela et al., 2023; Mohd Yusof et al., 2022).

The regression results, however, add nuance to this relationship. Although all five dimensions correlated significantly with satisfaction individually, only Responsiveness and Assurance retained unique predictive value once shared variance among the dimensions was accounted for. This finding aligns with Kimaita et al. (2023), who identified responsiveness as one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of student satisfaction across Kenyan universities, and with Baniya (2016), who identified responsiveness and empathy as primary satisfaction drivers in a management-school context. It diverges from Ismail et al. (2021), who found reliability and empathy—not responsiveness—to be the significant predictors of satisfaction with academic advising, and from Minja et al. (2024), where reliability was the most influential dimension. Such divergence, also noted by Kimaita et al. (2023) as a general pattern in the SERVQUAL literature, underscores that the specific dimension that matters most for satisfaction is context-dependent.

Practically, the findings suggest that interventions aimed at improving how promptly and confidently staff attend to student concerns—rather than broad, undifferentiated service improvements—are likely to yield the largest gains in student satisfaction. The single lowest-rated item in the entire instrument, concerning staff availability during peak periods, together with the comparatively lower Reliability ratings, point to concrete, actionable targets: adjusting staffing during high-demand periods and strengthening first-pass document accuracy through standardized verification procedures.

This study is limited by its cross-sectional, single-institution, self-report design, which is subject to common method bias and does not capture strand/track-level differences among Senior High School respondents. The high intercorrelation

among SERVQUAL dimensions also limited the ability of standard multiple regression to isolate each dimension's independent contribution fully. Future research should consider confirmatory factor analysis or structural equation modeling, multi-institution samples, and qualitative triangulation to clarify further which service dimensions most strongly shape student satisfaction in basic education settings. In conclusion, records-office service quality was rated High overall. It was strongly, positively related to student satisfaction among JHS and SHS students in the private school studied, with Responsiveness and Assurance

emerging as the most influential dimensions. These findings offer school administrators an empirical, locally grounded basis for prioritizing responsiveness- and assurance-related improvements to strengthen frontline records-office service delivery.

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TABLES

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Grade Level and Sex (N = 345)

Variable	f	%	Remarks
Grade Level			
Junior High School	219	63.5	Majority
Senior High School	117	33.9	
Ambiguous response*	9	2.6	
Sex			
Female	192	55.7	Majority
Male	153	44.3	
Total (N)	345	100.0	

Table 2. Summary of Records Office Service Quality by Dimension

Dimension	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Tangibility	4.14	0.82	High
Reliability	3.99	0.88	High
Responsiveness	4.02	0.80	High
Assurance	4.24	0.71	Very High
Empathy	4.15	0.79	High
Overall Service Quality	4.11	0.73	High

Table 3. Level of Student Satisfaction with Records Office Services

Variable	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Overall Student Satisfaction	4.12	0.61	High

Table 4. Correlation Between Service Quality Dimensions and Student Satisfaction (N = 345)

Variable	r	p	Interpretation	H ₀
Tangibility	0.64	< .001	Strong positive	Rejected
Reliability	0.79	< .001	Strong positive	Rejected
Responsiveness	0.84	< .001	Strong positive	Rejected
Assurance	0.80	< .001	Strong positive	Rejected
Empathy	0.70	< .001	Strong positive	Rejected
Overall Service Quality	0.82	< .001	Strong positive	Rejected

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Student Satisfaction from Service Quality Dimensions

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	Decision
(Constant)	1.274	0.112	—	11.40	< .001	—
Tangibility	-0.010	0.032	-.01	-0.31	.758	Not sig.
Reliability	-0.004	0.056	-.01	-0.07	.948	Not sig.
Responsiveness	0.539	0.069	.71	7.79	< .001	Significant
Assurance	0.304	0.046	.35	6.65	< .001	Significant
Empathy	-0.132	0.044	-.17	-3.00	.003	Suppressed

Note. $R^2 = .74$, Adjusted $R^2 = .73$, $F(5, 339) = 190.45$, $p < .001$. Dependent variable: Student Satisfaction (composite mean).

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