

# INTI INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

### Students' Perceived Service Quality and Satisfaction: The Case of Dining Environment at INTI International University

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## Abstract

The study was conducted to report the service quality provided by the INTI Cafeteria which provides dining services to students and employees of INTI (INTI International University) as one of the non-academic supporting facilities. Based on the comments received from students, the study was conducted to find out in detail about the level of satisfaction of students who use the dining places and their expectation of a good dining place. This study applied the famous SERVQUAL's five dimensions of service quality (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy) to capture the service quality provided by INTI Cafeteria. Service Gap Analysis shown a negative direction of the total mean score (-1.24) of 7-Point Likert Scale from 22 attributes that indicated the cafeteria still need to upgrade the services to meet the customer expectation. The ranking of expectation and perception given by students was sorted and documented. The study highlighted the areas that need improvement and strong points of INTI Cafeteria. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) tool was used to test the given hypothesis on SERVQUAL dimensions that applied to INTI Cafeteria's dining environment. This report with several potential recommendations in improving and monitoring dining services will be very useful to the management and outlets owners of the dining places at INTI to upgrade their tangible and intangible service elements to help INTI to gain a better competitive position in educational business. It will gain public recognition in providing good dining services, attention to dining safety and quality that directly link to the public perception on INTI who care about their students.

*Keywords: Service Quality, Students' Perception, Students' Expectation, Customers' Satisfaction, Students' Satisfaction, SERVQUAL Model*

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Hung Hwee Li  
August, 2010

## Declaration

"I hereby declare that this research project is of my own effort  
except for those summaries and information of which the sources  
are clearly specified"

9<sup>th</sup> August 2010

Hung Hwee Li

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## List of Abbreviation

ESPs :	Educational Service Providers
CSF :	Critical Success Factors
SQ :	Service Quality
INTI :	INTI International University
HEI :	Higher Education Institutions
QAA :	Quality Assurance Agency
MQA :	Malaysian Qualifications Agency
KPI :	Key Performance Indicator
SPSS :	Statistical Package for Social Science

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

### 1.0 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the research background mainly on service quality in service industries. The research field is focus on dining places at INTI International University (INTI). One of the important fields is the service spectrum, mainly in providing a dining service to its students and employees. Subsequently, a brief review on quality framework of INTI will be presented, and basic information on the overall and international student populations and accommodation will be included. The general background of INTI's dining environment and the features of the INTI Cafeteria are described. The chapter also presents the main context of problem statements, followed by research questions and research objectives. The significance of this study is explained. The importance of limitations and relevant assumptions are outlined for further discussion.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

This is a practical study that focuses on INTI cafeteria to identify student perception on the service quality offered by INTI and the current level of student satisfaction. A detail study is necessary to be carried out to understand the level of student satisfaction and service quality provided by the service providers of INTI campus. According to Elliott and Shin (2002), there is positive impact on student satisfaction towards student retention, motivation, recruiting effort and fundraising as it is derived from any of the repeated experiences of students in campus life in term of academic, social, physical, and spiritual experiences. In educational institutions, the dining place is one of the facilities provided to serve students and their employees,

not only in providing breakfast and lunch but a place to gather for discussion and to refresh them after a lesson/class. A high standard dining place will add credit to the campus facilities to attract more students to enroll in respective courses. Educational service providers (ESPs) should place close attention to promote their service quality in various dimensions in achieving student satisfaction due to the increasingly competition in the industry especially in private higher education. Furthermore, a dining place in institutions is one of the common issue among students during the period of survey.

Student satisfaction on the service quality provided by dining places viewed as one of the critical success factors (CSF) for INTI. Previous researchers have identified that service quality is closely linked with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Hong, Prybutok and Zhao 2010, Parasuraman et al, 1985, Tantakasem 2000). Many researchers have taken up topics in Service Quality in education and have been widely reported in literatures, but measuring of service quality in universities' cafeterias is considered rare as compared with the study on the overall academic services processes. Furthermore, there is increasingly pressure to access this information as INTI has been upgraded to University level. Dining service is one of non-academic facilities provided by INTI that need attention and care to be able to accommodate the increasing number of students from local and international markets. Furthermore, the diversify of students from different cultures drives the research work in dining experience to gain better understanding on student expectation and seek for improvement in its weaker areas.

Since a dining place is essential part in the campus, it is crucially important for campus management to convey the core message to their outlets' owners to improve the quality of food and services to make students happy and enjoy their study life in the campus. Since the core value in educational business is to provide quality education supported with learning facilities such as library and laboratories, the monitoring and management of the service quality and problems at dining place has been neglected and treated with less importance

(Zopiatis and Pribic, 2007). The research work takes initiative to conduct a survey to gather data with its attention in reducing students' unhappiness and complains about the dining services in the campus. Parasuraman et al. (1985) revealed that success of an establishment of food and beverage is highly rely on the capability of the service provider in satisfying their customers by meeting or exceeding customers' expectation. This can be done by providing excellent dining experience that complying with tangible and intangible characteristics.

## 1.2 Educational Quality Review

"Quality", a simple word that can be found in dictionary, but it is difficult to define. Many researchers and linguists are still continuously innovating the way of identifying and measuring quality. The measuring of service quality is seems harder than measuring physical quantities. The ranking of top 100 of colleges and universities globally has keep changing from time to time as all these rating is highly rely on several dimensions that related to academic and non-academic areas. Table 1.1 shows the World Rankings Weight:

Table 1.1: Criteria for World Universities Rankings

Criteria	Ranking Weight (%)
Peer Review Score	40
Recruiter Review	10
International Faculty Score	5
International Students Score	5
Faculty/Student Score	20
Citations/Faculty Score	20

(Source: Times Higher Education, 2010)

([www.timeshighereducation.co.uk](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk))