

The Synergy of School and Parent: A Strategy to Improve the Quality of Educational Services

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the level of parental satisfaction with the educational services at SDIT Kartika Buana and to formulate strategies for improving service quality through a synergistic approach between the school and parents. The research employed a quantitative descriptive method using the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) approach. The sample consisted of 50 respondents randomly selected from a population of 319 students. The research instrument was a Likert-scale questionnaire developed based on the five dimensions of service quality as defined by Kotler and Armstrong, as well as Zeithaml and Bitner, namely: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The findings indicate an average satisfaction level of 3.93 and an expectation level of 4.20, resulting in a conformity level of 95%. The Cartesian analysis revealed that the quality of the learning program, teacher competence, and the alignment between cost and educational quality are key priorities for improvement. Meanwhile, teacher behavior and the *Tahfidz* (Qur'an memorization) program fall under the category of aspects that should be maintained. This study highlights that synergy between the school and parents is a critical strategy in maintaining and enhancing the quality of educational services, particularly within integrated Islamic elementary education institutions.

Introduction

SDIT (Integrated Islamic Primary School) Kartika Buana Boja Kendal is one of the integrated Islamic primary education institutions established in 2017. Since its inception, the school has shown significant development in terms of both student enrollment and supporting facilities. SDIT

Kartika Buana has 319 students and flagship programs based on Islamic values. Currently, SDIT has become the main choice for families seeking holistic education for their children, one of which is SDIT Kartika Buana Boja Kendal (Rusadi, Millena Apriliani . Fauzi, n.d.). According to (Tjiptono, 2010), customer satisfaction is the level of a person's feelings after comparing perceived

performance with expectations. This aligns with the opinion of Kotler (2001), who states that customer satisfaction depends on the perceived performance of a product or service relative to the buyer's expectations. In the context of education, every experience of students and parents, both inside and outside the classroom, can shape perceptions that influence their satisfaction and loyalty toward the school (Pratiwi, A. R., & Robbian, 2022), (Dakhori, R., Rahayu, S., & Sulistyowati, 2024). High-quality educational services can strengthen the school's image and enhance public trust (Douwes & Saputra, 2024), (Nasikhah et al., 2024). Conversely, negative experiences can quickly spread through informal community communication (Jiang et al., 2020). Therefore, it is essential for schools to systematically measure and analyze parental satisfaction as a foundation for improving service quality. Previous studies have examined various aspects of educational services; however, most have focused primarily on the internal perspectives of schools (Madani, 2019), (Ramovš & Milfelner, 2023), (Douwes & Saputra, 2024).

This study seeks to address that gap by adopting a customer satisfaction approach inspired by the business world, namely the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) developed by Martilla and James. This approach enables the identification of priority areas for improvement by mapping the gap between expectations and the actual performance of educational services. The aim of this study is to determine the level of alignment between parents' expectations and their satisfaction with the educational services at SDIT Kartika Buana, and to formulate strategies for

quality improvement based on the synergy between the school and parents.

Literature Review

Customer satisfaction in the context of educational services is a key indicator in assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of educational institutions in meeting the needs of students and their parents. Over the past five years, educational institutions have become more aware of the importance of considering the perspective of service users, and attention to this dimension has grown stronger. (Dakhori, R., Rahayu, S., & Sulistyowati, 2024) It emphasizes that service quality has a direct impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty within the secondary school environment. In a similar study at a *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (Islamic elementary school) (Wijayanti, 2020), she stated that the implementation of ISO 9001:2008 quality management had a positive impact on customer satisfaction, with a relatively high level of conformity between expectations and actual performance. This indicates that the application of a standardized quality management system can serve as a strategic instrument in ensuring the quality of educational services. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry introduced the SERVQUAL Model and this model became the main reference for measuring the dimensions of service quality, including in the field of education. This model encompasses five main dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. (Agustika, G. N. S., Sudjana, I. N., & Darmadi, 2020) used the SERVQUAL approach to evaluate academic services within the Faculty of Education at Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha (Educational University of

Ganesha). Their research found that SERVQUAL was effective in identifying significant service gaps between students' expectations and their perceived experiences. Similarly (Pratiwi, A. R., & Robbian, 2022) demonstrated that the quality of educational services, as measured through the SERVQUAL framework, significantly influences customer loyalty at SMP Islam Terpadu Izzuddin Palembang. Beyond SERVQUAL, the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) method has been widely used in studies examining customer satisfaction in the educational sector.

This method evaluates two key variables perceived importance and actual performance to determine areas requiring prioritized improvement. Research conducted by (Yuliyanto, A., Safitri, D., & Rahayu, 2022), confirmed the effectiveness of IPA in assessing the implementation of an e-learning development workshop. The results provided useful insights for formulating more strategic and focused service quality improvement initiatives in education. It is undeniable that collaboration between schools and parents is a fundamental element in the development of responsive and adaptive educational services. (Fredy, A., Lestari, S., & Nurhidayah, 2021) emphasized that active parental involvement spanning from routine communication to participatory decision-making plays a pivotal role in enhancing trust and satisfaction with educational institutions. Accordingly, parental involvement should be considered an integral aspect of the educational service management system and not an additional component.

Research Method

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach to measure parental satisfaction with educational services at SDIT Kartika Buana and map out service improvement strategies based on the evaluation results. This study aims to systematically describe the alignment between parental expectations and perceptions of various aspects of educational services provided by the school.

This study involved a population of 319 people, consisting of all parents of students at SDIT Kartika Buana. A random sampling technique was employed, resulting in a sample of 50 respondents representing Grades 1 through 6. The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire administered via Google Forms, which was designed based on the service quality dimensions outlined in the SERVQUAL model proposed by (Parasuraman, A., Zeithmal, V.A. & Berry, 1988), The SERVQUAL model comprises five dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

Each dimension was operationalized into a set of service indicators evaluated by respondents using a five-point Likert scale, both for actual performance and for perceived importance. The collected data was analyzed using the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) approach, as developed by (Martilla, J. A. and James, 1977), This approach allows researchers to map the level of alignment between expectations and performance and to determine service improvement priorities using a Cartesian matrix. The formula used to calculate the level of suitability is as

follows: $Tki = (Xi / Yi) \times 100\%$,

Where Xi represents the actual performance score and Yi represents the expectation score. The results of these calculations are then plotted on a Cartesian diagram divided into four quadrants to determine appropriate improvement strategies:

Quadrant A (high priority), Quadrant B (maintain performance), Quadrant C (low priority), and Quadrant D (possible resource reallocation).

This method was chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview of which service factors need to be improved, maintained, or reallocated to ensure greater effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of educational services at the integrated Islamic elementary school level.

Result and Discussion

Parental Satisfaction with Educational Services

This study aims to assess the extent to which educational services at SDIT Kartika Buana meet parents' expectations. Based on a survey of 50 parent respondents, the average satisfaction score for services (X) was 3.93, while the average expectation score (Y) was 4.20. These results indicate that, overall, the services provided by the school fall within the "good" category, with a conformity level of 95%. This percentage suggests that the school has successfully met the majority of parents' expectations, although certain aspects still require improvement. These findings are consistent with the concept of service quality proposed by (Tjiptono, 2010), which states that customer satisfaction—in this case, parents—is achieved when their

perceptions of service are equal to or exceed their expectations.

Analysis of Educational Service Dimensions

To identify which aspects of service should be maintained or improved, an analysis was conducted based on the SERVQUAL dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

Table 1. *Recapitulation of Performance, Expectations, and Conformity Levels*

No	Service Indicators	X (Implementation)	Y (Expectation)	Conformity (%)
1	Ease of Enrollment Procedures	4,16	3,26	128 %
2	School Facilities	3,54	4,14	86%
3	Quality of Worship Facilities	3,84	3,86	99%
4	Speed of Administrative Services	3,84	3,90	98%
5	Quality of <i>Tahfidz</i> Flagship Program	4,00	4,78	84%
6	Quality of Learning Programs	3,80	4,78	79%
7	Complai	3,74	3,66	102

	nt			%
8	Handling Teacher Behavior	4,90	4,58	107%
9	Teacher Compete nce	3,78	4,62	82%
10	Alignme nt between Educatio nal Costs and Quality	3,72	4,44	84%
Average		3,93	4,20	95%

From the table, it can be observed that most indicators fall below the expected levels, although some indicators exceed respondents' expectations. Therefore, it is necessary to map the results onto a Cartesian diagram to determine service improvement priorities.

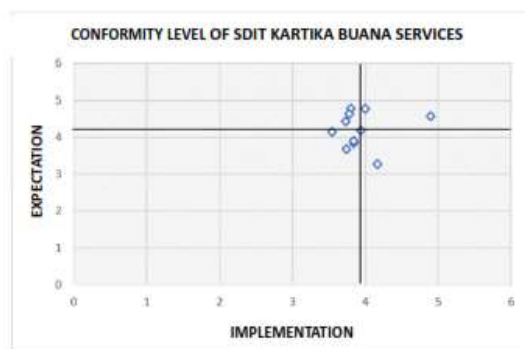
Cartesian Diagram Analysis: Determining Improvement Priorities

Based on the Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) approach, service indicators are mapped into four quadrants that illustrate the relative position between the level of expectations and actual performance.

Table 2. *Quadrant Mapping in the Cartesian Diagram*

No	Indicators	X	Y	Quad rant
1	Ease of Enrollment Procedures	4,16	3,26	D
2	School Facilities	3,54	4,14	C
3	Quality of Worship Facilities	3,84	3,86	C
4	Speed of Administrat ive Services	3,84	3,90	C
5	Quality of <i>Tahfidz</i> Flagship Program	4,00	4,78	B
6	Quality of Learning Programs	3,80	4,78	A
7	Complaint Handling	3,74	3,66	C
8	Teacher Behavior	4,90	4,58	B
9	Teacher Competenc e	3,78	4,62	A
10	Alignment between Educational Costs and Quality	3,72	4,44	A

Picture 1.



priority improvements, as the aspects located in this quadrant are characterized by high levels of importance but relatively low levels of performance. Indicators in this quadrant include the quality of learning programs, teacher competence, and the alignment between educational costs and quality. These findings indicate that parents place significant emphasis on the quality of the teaching and learning process, educator professionalism, and the transparency and effectiveness of school fees. However, the school has not yet fully met these high expectations. Therefore, these aspects should be treated as strategic priorities for service enhancement.

Quadrant B represents service areas that are already meeting, and in some cases exceeding, parental expectations. Two indicators in this quadrant are the **Tahfidz** (Qur'an memorization) flagship program and teacher behavior. The performance of these aspects not only aligns with expectations but also demonstrates high quality, providing added value to parents as service users. Accordingly, the school should maintain this level of achievement by ensuring consistent quality in implementation, offering continuous professional development for educators, and further strengthening flagship

programs as a distinguishing feature of the institution.

Quadrant C includes indicators that, although important, are perceived as lower priorities by parents in the context of overall satisfaction. These include school facilities, prayer facilities, the speed of administrative services, and the handling of complaints. While the performance of these aspects is relatively good, they do not significantly influence parental satisfaction. Therefore, although gradual improvements are still needed, resource allocation should be more focused on Quadrant A, which contains aspects with higher urgency.

Quadrant D contains a single indicator: the ease of the enrollment procedure, which has shown performance that exceeds parental expectations. Although this aspect was not a top priority in parent assessments, the school has succeeded in providing excellent service in terms of administrative efficiency and accessibility. While exceeding expectations in this area adds value, resource allocation for this indicator should be managed efficiently to avoid overinvestment in areas considered less critical by users.

In conclusion, interpreting these quadrants provides an important foundation for strategic school decision-making. Prioritizing improvements based on the position of indicators within the quadrants not only identifies areas requiring attention but also emphasizes the importance of selective, needs-based quality management. Ultimately, this strategy will strengthen the synergy between schools and parents in continuously improving the overall quality of educational services.

Implications of School–Parent Synergy

This study found that synergy between schools and parents is not merely a complement to the educational process, but rather a fundamental foundation for building and improving the overall quality of educational services. When schools are able to establish strong, open, and responsive relationships with parents—attentive to their needs and aspirations—a higher level of trust is cultivated. This, in turn, leads to increased parental satisfaction with the services provided.

Active parental involvement in their children's education has a positive impact not only on the quality of services but also on students' holistic learning outcomes

This condition aligns with the view of (Zeithaml, V. A., dan Bitner, 2003) who emphasize the importance of emotional engagement and two-way communication in building customer loyalty. In the context of education, parents are the “primary customers” who not only demand results but also value a process that is high in quality, humane, and transparent. Therefore, a strong synergy between the school and parents must be built through regular communication, mutual respect, and trust-based relationships (Epstein, 2018).

To achieve this, schools must take strategic steps. First, by organizing regular communication forums with parents, schools can share program developments, gather feedback, and align mutual expectations. Second, transparency of information—regarding learning programs, student evaluations, and educational fees—must be improved to avoid misunderstandings or dissatisfaction. Third, schools are expected to

continuously enhance the capacity of educators through ongoing training and professional development in order to ensure professionalism and the quality of interactions between teachers, students, and parents.

Lastly, conducting regular satisfaction surveys serves as an essential tool for understanding the evolving expectations of parents and provides a foundation for evaluating and improving service quality. Through these strategic efforts, the synergy between schools and parents becomes not merely a short-term approach to maintaining satisfaction, but a long-term investment in cultivating a collaborative, inclusive, and sustainable educational culture.

Conclusion

Based on the satisfaction survey conducted with 50 parents of students at SDIT Kartika Buana, it can be concluded that, overall, the educational services provided by the school have met parental expectations, with a performance-to-expectation alignment rate of 95 percent. This figure reflects a high level of satisfaction, yet also indicates several critical areas that require further attention and quality improvement.

Through Cartesian diagram analysis, indicators such as the quality of learning programs, teacher competence, and the alignment between educational costs and service quality were identified as top-priority areas for improvement. In contrast, teacher behavior and the *Tahfidz* flagship program are positioned strategically and should be maintained, as they meet or even exceed expectations. Meanwhile, aspects such as school

facilities, prayer spaces, and administrative services fall into the low-priority category, and the ease of the enrollment process has been rated as exceeding expectations.

These findings underscore the importance of strong synergy between schools and parents in developing excellent educational services. Parental involvement, open communication, and continuous service evaluation are key elements in creating a responsive and adaptive educational environment that meets community needs. Therefore, strengthening the school–parent partnership must be continuously developed as a core strategy for sustainable and public-oriented quality improvement in educational services.

Recommendation

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that SDIT Kartika Buana improve service aspects that have not yet met expectations, particularly the quality of instruction, teacher competence, and the balance between educational costs and service quality. The school should also maintain service elements that have already satisfied parents, such as teacher behavior and the *Tabfidz* program.

To sustain and enhance parental satisfaction, it is essential to conduct regular evaluations and maintain open communication. This ongoing synergy between the school and parents will contribute positively to the overall quality of educational services.

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