

**PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY:  
A STUDY AMONG STUDENTS IN  
SABAH MARA VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE**

**BY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on the relationship between students' satisfaction and their perceived service quality provided. Using empirical data and a conceptual model, the results of this study indicate that students' college experience is positively related to their satisfaction. It is accepted that educational institutions have many customers: students, staff, faculty, alumni, donors, and others. Furthermore, the increased turmoil in the higher educational market place may encourage higher educational institutions to utilize a more consumer-oriented philosophy in delivering their services. Since this study specifically investigated the link between consumer-oriented educational institutions and their students' perception, developing satisfied customers is consistent with this principle. One of the implications of this study is that those educational institutions which understand consumer-oriented principles may have a better chance of satisfying the wants and needs of their students more effectively. The additional implications for administrator and management teams are also discussed as well as suggestions for further research are made.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this first chapter a series of topics are considered which deal with, background, research problems, research objectives, significance of the study, definition of terms, and limitations of study.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

For some time, excellence in customer service has been vigorously pursued as a strategic business objective by many organizations in the public and private sectors, but it has only recently begun to be identified as a critical success factor in the education sector. The huge growth in number of students, internationalization of education, the need to reduce dependence on government funding and the rise of a consumer culture have prompted a need to focus on quality and customer service. Much of the study on service quality aspects of higher education has concentrated on effective course delivery mechanisms, and quality of courses and teaching (Bourner, 1998; Cheng and Tam, 1997; Soutar and McNeil, 1996). The mechanisms for measuring service quality of courses and programs often rely on research instruments (e.g. students' feedback questionnaires) devised by representatives of the