

# RELATIONS BETWEEN SATISFACTION OF LEARNERS AND QUALITY OF INFORMAL TRAINING IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

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The government maintains that education mustn't be commercialized, and that is why the education as a service is still a new concept to most Vietnamese people. In fact, however, the education is a service. So this article will treat it as a service and call it "the education service."

## 1. Service quality

In supplying services, quality is important to the satisfaction of customers. A service considered as of high quality must be outstanding and perfect. According to Zeithaml and Britner (1996) one of the most -accepted scales for service quality is the SERVQUA.

This scale is based on five principal factors: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibles and measured in 21 observations.

Based on the five factors, I has worked out six factors used for measuring the quality of informal training in the information technology along with 24 observations (introduced in my thesis "Định Vị Thương Hiệu Trung Tâm Tin Học – Trường Đại Học Khoa Học Tự Nhiên" – Positioning the Brand Name of the Informatics Center of the HCMC University of



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Natural Sciences). The six factors are:

- Trainer: enthusiasm, responsiveness to learners, teaching ability, practical knowledge and uniformity.
- Facilities: machine and equipment for practices, classrooms, register room and others.
- Empathy: trainers' ability to understand their learners.
- Practical responsiveness: understandable and

practical courses that could solve

- Serving ability: employees of the center are courteous and responsive to learners' demand.
- Support: the center could arrange employment or give financial support to learners.

## 2. Concept of satisfaction

There are many definitions of satisfaction. Kotler (2001) defines it as the degree of feelings originated

from comparison between results from the products and customer's expectations. Tse and Wilton (1988) say it is the customer's reaction to assessing differences between previous expectations and actual realization of the product as the final acceptance when using it. Oliver (1997) considers it as the customer's reaction to the degree by which expectations are met. Generally, the satisfaction is the cus-

Component	Not standardized		Standardized Beta	t value	p value
	B	Standard error			
(Constant)	.008	.527		.015	.988
Facilities	.276	.027	.467	10.294	.000
Trainers	.124	.032	.190	3.811	.000
Serving ability	.123	.036	.162	3.406	.001
Practical responsiveness	.096	.031	.137	3.057	.002

tomers' contentment when using the product because it meets all, or part of, their expectations.

In this article, I consider the satisfaction of learners as feedback from learners on services supplied by the training center.

### 3. Relation between satisfaction and service quality

Service suppliers usually think that the service quality is the customers' satisfaction. Many researches, however, show that they are two separate concepts. The customers' satisfaction is a general concept that reflects their contentment when employing a service, while the service quality is based on specific components of a service.

Many researchers have established this relation. For example, Tho et al. (2003) examine the outdoor recreation service and Cronin and Taylor (1992) the dry cleaning service. Results of their researches show that the service quality affects the customers' satisfaction. According to the researchers, the relation between the satisfaction and service quality could be represented by:

$$\text{Satisfaction} = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n$$

Where  $X_n$ : component n of the service quality

$\beta_n$ : parameters

### 4. Results of analyses

The research method comprises two steps: quantitative and qualitative researching and analyzing with SPSS software: results of multiple linear regression with stepwise method produce the following pattern:

Components with p value under 0.05 are omitted and ones with p value higher than 0.05 remains: two omitted components are empathy and support.

In results of qualitative research, most of research samples pay attention to support for learners, but in

regression analysis between variables with degrees of satisfaction of learners, this component proves to have no relation with the satisfaction of interviewed learners. This is common among many studies. This could be explained by the fact that most learners want to find suitable jobs after taking training courses, which relies a lot on knowledge and ability of each individual. Therefore, learners want to get necessary expertise and skills before looking for jobs instead of depending on initial support from the training center. That is why such components as facilities, trainers, serving ability and practical responsiveness were appreciated by learners because of effects on their learning process.

To express these components more simply, we can use the following equation:

$$\text{Satisfaction} = 0.467 (\text{facilities}) + 0.190 (\text{trainers}) + 0.162 (\text{practical responsiveness}) + 0.137 (\text{serving ability})$$

In this equation, the learners' satisfaction is only based on four components that are as follows in order of importance: (1)

teaching facilities (with the standardized beta coefficient of 0.467); (2) trainers (0.190); (3) practical responsiveness of the training program (0.162); and (4) serving ability of the training center (0.137).

Determining what are the most important components to learners is very useful for the development strategy of the center. After determining and rating these components, the center could concentrate its resources on improving components that are important to learners and within its reach, thereby, ensuring a better quality for its education service and satisfaction for learners. ■

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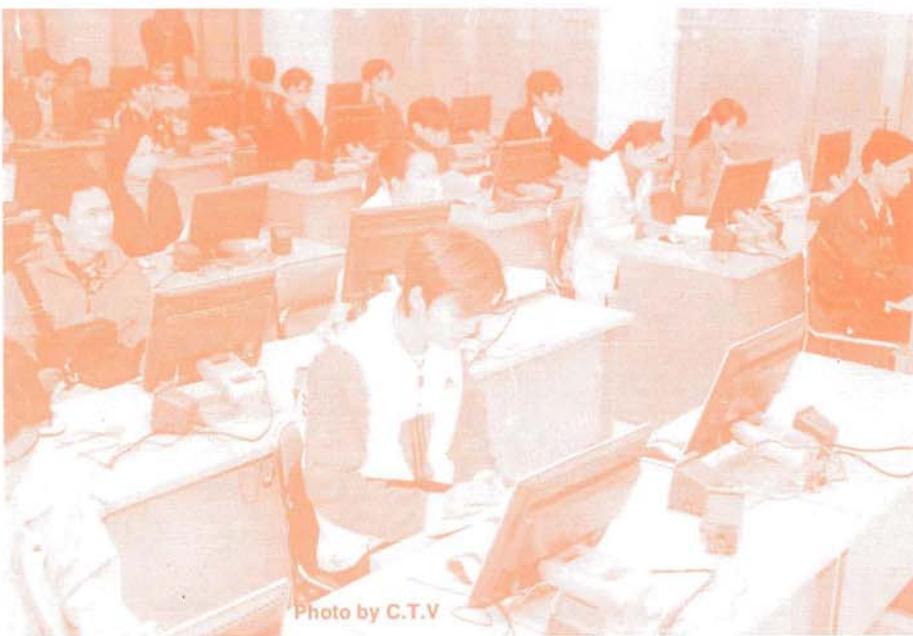


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