

Memoirs of students' expectations before, during, and after MBA program

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Abstract

Universities face a lot of pressures, especially when competing among themselves to recruit a fair number of the student population. To successfully attract, recruit and retain students in such a highly competitive industry sector, these institutions must constantly make improvements to the quality of service they offer to students. Service quality, broadly referred to as "SERVQUAL is a measurement of service quality based on the difference between the customer's expectations of the quality of service he/she will receive, and his or her perceptions of the service received" (Nadiri et al., 2009, p. 531). It addresses students' satisfaction level using various indicators, including tangible and intangible factors. This helps university to know students' expectations levels even as they try to match them with achievable learning outcomes and programs. Universities need to understand students' expectation before enrolling in a MBA program and match such expectations to their perception of the MBA program after they must have successfully completed a particular semester or graduated from the program. The present research is an ongoing, two-phased, Action Research (AR) study of a start-up university – the American University of Malta (AUM) MBA program. Phase one begins by exploring current students' expectations as they start their MBA journey. Since the MBA program at AUM is run consecutively for two years, phase two will map the students' overall expectations to their perception of the program after the first year of study. The research will be done in collaboration with students and professors at the institution.

Keywords: action research; perception; quality; satisfaction; service

Reference

Nadiri, H., Kandampully, J., & Hussain, K. (2009). Students' perceptions of service quality in higher education. *Total Quality Management*, 20(5), 523–535.