

Student Perceptions of Library Service Quality at SMA Negeri 1 Enam Lingsung

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes student perceptions of library service quality at SMA Negeri 1 Enam Lingsung using the LibQUAL+ model. As a quantitative descriptive study, it involved 90 students selected through proportional stratified random sampling to represent all grade levels. Data were collected via questionnaires covering the dimensions of Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place, and subsequently analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results indicate that overall library service quality falls into the good category, with an average score of 4.02. While staff attitude and reliability are primary strengths, the transition toward a digital library is hindered by limited accessibility to electronic collections and a lack of online catalog integration. This study concludes that integrating interpersonal service excellence with digital infrastructure modernization is crucial to enhancing students' independent learning. Practically, the school must prioritize e-resource development and digital literacy training for staff to ensure the library remains relevant as a modern information center. Therefore, implementing these strategic improvements is essential to bridge the gap between user expectations and the current quality of digital service.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Quality education serves as the primary instrument for shaping intelligent and competitive individuals, as mandated by Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution and Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021 (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2021). A critical pillar of this educational success is the fulfillment of national standards for facilities and infrastructure, particularly the school library. Based on Law No. 43 of 2007 (Republik Indonesia, 2007), a library is defined as a professional information management institution that functions as a learning resource center rather than merely a warehouse for books.

Amidst the rapid digitalization of information, school libraries face significant challenges in maintaining their relevance and physical existence (Lasa, 2017). Stuart and Moran (2017) emphasize that the physical library remains essential as a communal space and tangible evidence of institutional knowledge. Consequently, service quality becomes the "spearhead" that determines whether a library can effectively meet evolving user expectations or, conversely, hinder the progress of an educational institution (Anwar, 2019). Strategic management is required to optimize library functions in supporting the curriculum (Saleh, 2014).

Research regarding user perceptions of library services has expanded significantly over the last decade. Nabila (2024) identified that while service speed at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Bandar Lampung is commendable, physical infrastructure and book availability remain major obstacles. Similarly, Fitriani (2021) highlighted a lack of service promotion at SMAN 1 Palembang despite positive librarian attitudes. Suryani

(2020) further argued that tangible facilities at SMK Negeri 2 Bandung dominate the formation of positive student perceptions.

Most existing studies consistently utilize the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality through five generic dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). However, a significant research gap exists regarding methodological suitability. While SERVQUAL is widely used, it was originally developed for the commercial and industrial sectors, making it less precise for the unique academic and non-profit ecosystem of a library (Cook & Heath, 2001).

This study addresses this gap by applying the LibQUAL+ model, which is specifically validated by the Association of Research Libraries (2022) for educational contexts. The novelty of this research lies in its application of three specific dimensions Affect of Service, Information Control, and Library as Place to analyze an anomaly at SMAN 1 Enam Lingkungan. Based on library circulation data for the 2023/2024 academic year, student visits averaged only 10–15 daily, representing just 1.6% of the 923 total students.

The urgency of this research stems from preliminary findings indicating a disparity between student expectations and reality. Specifically, 17% of students reported not receiving textbooks for the Kurikulum Merdeka, alongside inadequate facilities and interpersonal communication issues. Failure to address these gaps threatens the development of a sustainable literacy culture and impedes the quality of independent learning. Therefore, this study aims to analyze student perceptions of library service quality at SMAN 1 Enam Lingkungan using the LibQUAL+ approach to formulate strategic improvements.

2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This study employs a quantitative descriptive design to measure the quality of library services as the primary variable at SMA Negeri 1 Enam Lingkungan. The research was conducted at this institution over a period of approximately three months. This approach was selected to provide a systematic overview of the phenomenon through objective numerical data. The population consisted of 923 students from grades X, XI and XII, with a sample size of 90 respondents determined using the Slovin formula.

The application of research methods in a library context requires high precision to ensure data validity (Mulyani, 2018). To ensure proportionate data representation across grade levels, the participants were selected using proportional stratified random sampling. Proper school library management must be supported by accurate data collection to identify user needs effectively (Bafadal, 2015).

The primary research instrument was a structured questionnaire adapted from the LibQUAL+ model. The measurement utilized a five-point Likert scale. Before the full-scale distribution, the instrument underwent validity and reliability testing using SPSS version 26.0 on 30 non-sample respondents. Validity was determined based on the corrected item-total correlation, while reliability was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, where a value greater than 0.60 indicates internal consistency (Sujana, 2012). Descriptive statistics were then used to calculate means and percentages, which were categorized to describe the factual level of service quality.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The processed research data shows that students' perceptions of the quality of library services at SMA Negeri 1 Enam Lingkungan are in the good category. All LibQUAL+ dimensions achieved a consistent average score above 4.00. A comprehensive analysis of the data indicates that the school library has successfully positioned itself as a reliable center of academic support, characterized by an optimal balance between staff friendliness (human interaction) and the comfort of the physical facilities provided. This success reflects the institution's strong commitment to providing high-quality services that not only meet but also exceed students' expectations, thus positively impacting their overall learning experience.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Student Perception Results Toward Library Service Quality

No	Dimension	Average	Category
1	Affect of Service	4,02	Good
2	Information Control	4,02	Good
3	Library as Place	4,03	Good
	Overall Average	4,02	Good

Discussion

In the Affect of Service dimension with score 4.02, the reliability sub-indicator achieved the highest score 4.04, indicating that staff possess high consistency and accuracy in administrative duties. According to Parasuraman et al. (1990), reliability is the bedrock of user trust. However, the assurance aspect received the lowest score 3.73. This gap likely stems from the staff's limited background in formal library science, which affects their confidence when providing complex information consultations. To address this, the school should implement basic library management training to elevate staff assurance to a level that matches their operational reliability (Sinaga, 2014).

Regarding Information Control with score 4.02, the highest score was achieved by the book completeness sub-indicator 4.04, while the ease of searching for information received the lowest score 4.00. The positive response toward collection completeness highlights success in managing physical resources despite the ongoing digital transition. Specifically, the library has initiated tangible preparations, including catalog digitization and providing dedicated computer terminals for e-book access (Pradana, 2020). However, the lower score in search ease suggests that while the collection is present, the retrieval system requires modernization. This finding validates the application of LibQUAL+ over SERVQUAL. Unlike the generic SERVQUAL, LibQUAL+ allows for a more nuanced assessment of how information accessibility rather than just tangible assets impacts user satisfaction within an academic ecosystem (Nitecki & Hernon, 2000; Rahayuningsih, 2015).

The Library as Place dimension achieved the highest overall average 4.03. The sub-indicators for room comfort and quietness (atmosphere) reached the highest scores 4.04, while supporting facilities received the lowest 4.02. Students expressed high satisfaction with the library's tranquility and organized layout, even though the facility is a repurposed classroom. This confirms that cleanliness and atmospheric management are more significant drivers of comfort than mere physical luxury (Darmono, 2015). This aligns with the Quality of Space theory, which prioritizes psychological comfort and environmental control over architectural opulence (IFLA, 2015). Creative management of existing resources proves that a conducive environment can be maintained through disciplined maintenance and spatial arrangement (Tjiptono & Chandra, 2016).

The balanced scores across all dimensions demonstrate a strong synergy between the librarian's role and facility availability. High service quality is known to increase user referrals and institutional loyalty (Ladhari & Morales, 2008). Furthermore, the findings of this study offer important strategic implications: while the current physical environment is adequate, libraries must address lower scores in searchability, support facilities, and, most importantly, active climate management to create more engaging, conducive, and modern learning spaces. To address this, libraries must implement a strategic shift focused on staff development.

This involves comprehensive training and mentoring programs for library staff, focusing on improving digital literacy, refining information retrieval systems, and adopting a service-oriented mindset. By strengthening staff competencies and implementing training targeted at user engagement, libraries will transform into vibrant information hubs for the academic community.

In conclusion, while these findings align with the work of Nabila (2024) and Suryani (2020), this study offers a unique contribution through the LibQUAL+ framework. By identifying specific weaknesses in information assurance and technical retrieval indicators, this study provides a sound roadmap for school libraries. The novelty of this research lies in the proof that interpersonal excellence and proactive physical environmental management, supported by ongoing staff development, can maintain the relevance of libraries during the digital transition, provided that the technical ease of access to information continues to be optimized.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the library service quality at SMA Negeri 1 Enam Lingkungan is categorized as good, with consistent performance across all LibQUAL+ dimensions. The findings emphasize that service excellence relies heavily on the interpersonal competence and reliability of the staff. The novelty of this research reveals that during a digital transition, positive student perceptions can be maintained when effective interpersonal services and a conducive Library as Place environment successfully compensate for temporary technological limitations. Practically, this implies that schools must prioritize the integration of human-centered service excellence with the modernization of Information Control to ensure long-term service sustainability.

For future research, it is suggested to investigate the role of school leadership in driving library transformation. Exploring how strategic decision-making influences resource allocation and staff motivation will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the structural factors that sustain library excellence in the digital age.

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