

Enhancing Student Satisfaction through Service Quality and Perceived Value in Islamic Boarding Schools



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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the influence of service quality and perceived value on student satisfaction at Islamic boarding schools in Jombang Regency. Service quality includes three main dimensions, namely the quality of the physical environment, the quality of personal interaction, and the quality of results. The perceived value consists of five dimensions: functional value, emotional value, social value, epistemic value, and conditional value. Student satisfaction is measured based on learning programs and teaching methods. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The research sample amounted to 200 students who were selected using the proportional sampling technique. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed descriptively. The results of the study show that the quality of services is most affected by the quality of the physical environment, which includes learning facilities, dormitories, and worship facilities. The perceived value is most influenced by epistemic values, which reflect the students' curiosity in exploring religious knowledge. Meanwhile, student satisfaction is most influenced by learning programs that integrate Islamic values in each subject. This research makes academic and practical contributions, especially in the management of Islamic boarding schools to improve the quality of service and student satisfaction through strengthening Islamic educational values.

KEYWORDS: Islamic Boarding School, Jombang, Perceived Value, Service Quality, Student Satisfaction,

I. INTRODUCTION

Student satisfaction is a crucial aspect in the sustainability and development of Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions. In the context of pesantren, student satisfaction is not only related to academic aspects, but also includes a broader spiritual, social, and personal dimension. When students are satisfied with their educational experience, they tend to be more actively involved in the learning process, show positive character development, and become effective informal ambassadors in promoting pesantren. More than that, the satisfaction of students reflects the success of the pesantren in fulfilling the mandate of parents and the community to form a generation that is not only capable in religious science, but also ready to face the challenges of modern times. In boarding education systems such as Islamic boarding schools, student satisfaction is also closely related to their ability to adapt to the environment, which in turn affects their academic achievement and personal development. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2016), satisfaction is defined as a feeling of pleasure or disappointment that arises from comparing perceived performance with their expectations.

In the world of pesantren education, the level of student satisfaction is an important concern because it is related to the sustainability of the educational institution. The low level of student satisfaction can have an impact on decreasing public interest in choosing the pesantren as an educational place, which can ultimately affect the sustainability of the pesantren's operations. The increasingly competitive competition between educational institutions makes pesantren managers face challenges in identifying factors that affect student satisfaction. Based on the perspective of prospective new students, the experiences and testimonials of students who have studied at Islamic boarding schools can influence their decision to choose a Islamic boarding school. Keep in mind that the pesantren education system is closely related to various supporting aspects, such as dormitory facilities, learning systems, health services, worship facilities, parenting systems, extracurricular programs, kitchen management, cleaning services, and various other supporting facilities that overall contribute to the level of student satisfaction.

Service quality is the first factor that affects student satisfaction according to research (Pakpahan & Adhitya, 2023; Sumardin et al., 2023; Yunas et al., 2023). Service quality is a subjective evaluation that arises from a cognitive process in which clients

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compare their initial expectations with actual services they believe they have received (Nunkoo et al., 2020; Roy et al., 2018). The next factor that affects satisfaction is the value felt according to (Arango, 2014; Giantari et al., 2021). The perceived value is students' anticipation of the results of purchasing and using educational services provided, both benefits and sacrifices (Spreng et al., 1993).

Islamic boarding schools, as traditional Islamic educational institutions, have special characteristics that distinguish them from other educational institutions. According to data from the Directorate of Islamic Boarding School Education of the Ministry of Religion (2023), the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia has reached 30,000 with a total of more than 5 million students. Special in Jombang Regency, known as the "City of Santri", there are more than 300 Islamic boarding schools with various characteristics and specificities. Large Islamic boarding schools in Jombang such as Tebuireng, Bahrul Ulum Tambakberas, Mambaul Ma'arif Denanyar, and Darul Ulum have given birth to national figures and thousands of alumni spread across various fields.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in knowing more about the influence of service quality and perceived value on the satisfaction of Islamic boarding school students in Jombang Regency. The goal to be achieved in this study is to describe the quality of service, perceived value and satisfaction in the Jombang Regency Islamic Boarding School. The benefits of this research can make a contribution that can be used from various aspects. The benefits obtained from this research include: Academic contribution where the results of scientific studies can be used as complete reference material for future researchers who take the topic of the quality of educational services, perceived values, and student satisfaction in the context of Islamic educational institutions. The practical contribution that this research can be used as input for pesantren managers in improving service quality and creating added value for students, as well as for foundations to develop strategies to increase student satisfaction through improving the service system and strengthening the values felt by students during their education at the pesantren.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Service Quality

Service quality is the expected level of excellence and the control of this level of excellence to meet customer desires (Tjiptono, 2019). Service quality focuses on efforts to meet customer needs and desires and the accuracy of its delivery to keep up with customer expectations. (Zeithaml et al., 1996) defines service quality as how far the difference between reality and customer expectations for the services they receive. There are 5 main dimensions of service quality known as SERVQUAL.

According to (Brady et al., 2002), service quality can be measured through three indicators. The quality of Personal Interaction is an aspect that emphasizes the interaction between service providers and service recipients, especially in the context of education, including interactions between lecturers or support staff and students, including communication skills, attitudes, and professional skills of staff in interacting. Meanwhile, the Quality of the Physical Service Environment focuses on the availability and condition of physical infrastructure and facilities that support the learning process such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and recreational facilities, including aspects of comfort, cleanliness, and aesthetic value of the physical environment. The Quality of Results focuses on the output of the services provided, including the quality of learning materials, the relevance of the curriculum to the needs of industry or employment, and student learning outcomes which include knowledge and skills acquired during the learning process. These three indicators form a comprehensive unity in measuring the quality of services, especially in the context of education.

Perceived Value

Perceived value is an overall evaluation of the benefits of a product or service based on the perception of what is received and what is given (Berry et al., 1988). (Woodruff, 1997) defines customer value as the customer's preference and evaluation of product attributes, attribute performance, and consequences arising from use to achieve consumer goals and intent. The perceived value is subjective and individual, because each consumer has different evaluation standards.

(Sheth et al., 1991) suggests that the value perceived by consumers consists of five dimensions. Functional value is related to the perceived utility of a product's usefulness, price, and performance, while social value focuses on the benefits obtained from social influences related to the use of the product. The emotional value dimension reflects the experience of feelings and emotions that consumers get when using the product, while the epistemic value refers to the benefits obtained from the knowledge aspect in the use of the service. Finally, the conditional value describes the perceived utility based on the specific situation or conditions under which the product is in use. These five dimensions form a comprehensive framework in understanding how consumers perceive the value of a product or service they use.

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Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the assessment that the features of a product or service, or the product/service itself, provide a level of fulfillment related to pleasant consumption, including under-fulfillment and over-fulfillment levels (Oliver, 2014). (Tjiptono, 2015) explained that customer satisfaction contributes to a number of crucial aspects, such as the creation of customer loyalty, increased company reputation, reduced price elasticity, reduced future transaction costs, and increased employee efficiency and productivity. The measurement of satisfaction in this study uses indicators according to (Osman & Saputra, 2019; Razinkina et al., 2018) namely learning programs and teaching methods. The selection of these two indicators is based on several main reasons. First, both focus on the core learning process that directly affects the quality of learning. This ensures a focus on the aspects that are most relevant to the main goals of higher education. Second, there is strong evidence of a relationship between these two indicators and learner satisfaction as presented by Biggs & Tang, 2011; Entwistle & Ramsden, 2015; Gardner, 2011; Hattie & Group, 2009; Prince & Felder, 2006; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Yorke & Knight, 2003)

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a research approach, with an explanatory research design, to describe the pattern of research variables. The location of this study is the 5 largest Islamic Boarding Schools in Jombang Regency. The total population in this study is 28,595 students, the sample is determined by the slovin formula and assumption (Hair et al., 2006) then the number of samples in this study is 200 students. The sampling technique uses proportional sampling. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire, with student respondents who have lived for at least one year at the Islamic boarding school. The data analysis technique used is descriptive analysis.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Service quality is successively shaped by the quality of the physical service environment, the quality of personal interaction, and the quality of results. The quality of the physical service environment is the first to be formed because the quality of the physical service environment is the first aspect that is seen and felt by students and guardians, including learning facilities, dormitories, places of worship, and other supporting facilities that give the first impression. After the physical environment is adequate, the quality of personal interaction becomes the next focus because it involves the relationship between ustadz/ustadzah, caregivers, and students who strongly emphasize Islamic values in interaction, where the formation of student character is highly dependent on the quality of this interaction. Then the quality of the results is at the lowest due to several factors: there is still a lack of standardization of outcome measurement in Islamic boarding schools, the main focus of Islamic boarding schools that emphasize the process of character formation rather than academic results alone, the evaluation system that has not been well structured, and the challenges in measuring qualitative non-academic learning outcomes such as religious understanding and behavior change. (Pahrin et al., 2023).

The biggest contribution to the formation of service quality is the quality of the physical service environment, which is reflected in the statement that each student occupies one bench during the learning process. First, the condition of one bench for one student shows the availability of adequate learning facilities, where this optimizes the focus of learning for each student without being disturbed or crowded with other students. Second, this arrangement reflects a good standard of classroom feasibility in accordance with the ideal ratio between the number of students and the available facilities, thus allowing the learning process to run more effectively. Third, the provision of individual benches indicates the seriousness of the pesantren in managing the physical environment that supports the learning process, which directly affects the quality of knowledge absorption and the comfort of students. Fourth, this facility also shows the application of modern educational standards in the pesantren system that pays attention to ergonomic aspects and personal needs of students. Fifth, this condition proves that pesantren gives priority to the provision of quality physical facilities as the basis for the formation of good educational services. Thus, the availability of individual benches is an important indicator that validates the contribution of the quality of the physical service environment in shaping the overall service quality in Islamic boarding schools. In addition to the quality of the physical service environment, other factors that are also important in the formation of service quality are the quality of personal interaction and the quality of results. The quality of personal interaction is how the ustadz/ustadzah provides good teaching and is open to receiving questions from students. The quality of personal interaction affects the quality of service through the creation of effective communication between ustadz/ustadzah and students in the learning process, the formation of a harmonious relationship between caregivers and students in daily life, the existence of intensive guidance and assistance in the development of student character, as well as the application of Islamic values in every interaction in the pesantren environment which facilitates the process of knowledge transfer and the formation of more morals Optimal. The quality of results is related to the increase in understanding and abilities that students get after learning, this shows that students get better scientific standards than before so that educational goals can be

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achieved. Meanwhile, the quality of results affects the quality of services through the achievement of learning targets, both academic and non-academic, the formation of graduates who have competencies in accordance with expectations, positive changes in religious understanding and practice, and an increase in public trust in the quality of pesantren education which reflects the realization of educational outputs in accordance with the vision and mission of the pesantren.

The perceived value is consecutively shaped by epistemic value, functional value, emotional value, social value, and conditional value, which is in line with research (Yulia & Untoro, 2016). The value felt in Islamic boarding schools is mainly in the form of epistemic values because the learning of the yellow book is the main characteristic of Islamic boarding schools that distinguishes them from other educational institutions, coupled with the encouragement to seek additional information outside the classroom that shows the development of critical thinking and independent learning of students, thus creating a strong foundation in religious understanding. Functional value is the next factor because of the application of knowledge in daily life that shows the transformation from knowledge to real practice, as well as effective learning programs in increasing religious understanding which proves the success of knowledge transfer. Emotional value as a further factor is shown through the comfort of living in a dormitory that reflects positive adaptation and daily activities enjoyed, creating a psychological condition that supports the learning process. The social value in the next stage can be seen from the positive interaction between students in inviting joint activities and the ability to work together in learning, which proves the success of the pesantren in shaping the social character of students. Finally, conditional value complements through a regular schedule that shows a professional pesantren management system and additional skills programs that prove pesantren do not only focus on religion, so that it becomes an added value that supports the formation of comprehensive students.

The greatest contribution to the formation of perceived value is the epistemic value reflected in the statement that the learning program gives me curiosity that encourages me to explore new knowledge. Epistemic values are a very important factor for students, because this determines the motivation of students in exploring and developing knowledge in Islamic boarding schools. If the learning program is not able to arouse curiosity, then students will tend to be passive and less encouraged to explore deeper knowledge. A learning program that fosters curiosity means that the pesantren has succeeded in creating a learning atmosphere that stimulates the cognitive of students. This will increase the perceived value because students feel that learning at the pesantren provides encouragement to continue to develop themselves through the exploration of new knowledge. All will help students to grow into active and independent learners. In addition to epistemic values, other factors that are also important in the formation of perceived values are functional values, emotional values, social values, and conditional values. Functional value is the practical benefit that students feel from the learning program. Emotional value is related to positive feelings that arise during the learning process. Social values are related to the benefits of interacting with fellow students. Conditional value is a benefit that students feel in certain situations, such as when facing learning challenges.

Student satisfaction is formed successively by the learning program and the benefits of teaching because the learning program is the first formation because it is the core of the education system in Islamic boarding schools, where every subject that is integrated with Islamic values is the main foundation in shaping the understanding of students. The learning program is also strengthened by direct practical exercises that allow students to apply the knowledge they have learned, thereby creating a more meaningful and comprehensive learning experience. After a strong learning program is formed, the teaching method becomes the second shaping that supports the delivery of the program, where the way the teacher explains the material is easy to understand and the opportunity given to students to ask questions creates an interactive and effective learning atmosphere. This order of formation shows that the substance of the learning program with quality and Islamic values is the top priority in creating student satisfaction, which is then supported by teaching methods that make it easier for students to understand and master the learning material. The largest contribution to the formation of student satisfaction is that the learning program is reflected in the statement that each subject is associated with Islamic values because, first, this is in accordance with the main goal of students and parents choosing education at Islamic boarding schools that prioritize the understanding and application of Islamic values in every aspect of learning. Second, integrating Islamic values in each subject provides uniqueness and added value that is not obtained in general education institutions, where students not only get knowledge but also an understanding of how to relate it to an Islamic perspective. Third, this approach helps students build a comprehensive worldview where science and religion are not seen as separate, but complementary to each other. Fourth, the association of subjects with Islamic values makes it easier for students to understand the relevance and application of knowledge in daily life in accordance with religious guidance. In addition to the learning program, another factor that is also important in the formation of student satisfaction is the teaching method. The teaching method is how the method and method of delivering *ustadz/ustadzah* in providing learning can help students understand the material well and get a deep understanding of the knowledge taught so that students feel satisfied with the learning process followed.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The quality of service is reflected successively by the quality of personal interaction, the quality of the physical service environment, and the quality of the results, the most appreciated is the quality of the physical service environment because students who live in Islamic boarding schools are highly dependent on physical facilities such as dormitories, study rooms, and worship facilities in their daily lives. The values felt are reflected in functional, emotional, social, epistemic, and conditional, the most appreciated is the epistemic value because it is in accordance with the main goal of mondok students, which is to seek religious knowledge. Student satisfaction is reflected by learning programs and teaching methods, the most appreciated is the learning program because the learning substance that integrates Islamic values in each subject reflects the essence of pesantren education that distinguishes it from other educational institutions. Word of mouth is reflected by intensity, positive valence, and content, the most appreciated is positive valence because when students feel real benefits and positive experiences while in pesantren, they have a strong urge to share their success stories with others.

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