

## The Effect of Each Other Perceived Service Quality and Institutional Image In Pre-school Education

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

Studies aimed to investigate *service quality* which forms one of the key points of an institute and *institutional image* which is described as a filter that plays active role in perception of service quality revealed that those terms were deterministic factors of service quality and institutional image of service provider companies. There are so many methods in literature about service quality assessment. Some of them are prevalently used whereas others are only used in sectorial applications. Most prevalently used method was suggested by Parasuman et. Al. and it is called as Servqual method. In this study, elements that predict service quality were identified as tangibles, *reliability, assurance, responsiveness and empathy*. Those elements identified by Parasuman et. Al. are parallel to those identified by LeBlanc & Nguyen (1996) (*physical environment, communication skills of the staff, service quality, institution identity and accessibility*) for the image perception in service management (Lee, 2003, 9; Canoğlu, 2008, 20). Abstract structure of the services provided by preschool education facilities which is known as a management system with intensive service attached importance to quality concept and image studies for education foundations.

Perception of students and families about the service provided by education sector is becoming more important day by day. Thus, management of student and family perception in terms of educational service quality highlights the role of institutional image in addition to improvement of monitoring or evaluation tools (Cerit, 2006, 347). At this point, basic factors that predict quality of education are listed as: *physical equipment and arrangement, an education program that organize all of the developmental fields, teacher-child communication, family's attendance to the education program, evaluation of the program* (Sevinç, 2005, 36). According to literature elements that affect service quality of pre-school education are listed as: *Physical elements/ Physical equipment and organization, Reliability/ Teacher-child communication, Responsiveness / Public relations, Guarantee/ Focusing on desires and*

*needs of individuals, Empathy/ An education program that organize all of the developmental fields.*

**Method:** Main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of service quality and dimensions of perceived institutional image; and effect of perceived institutional image and perceived service quality in pre-school education facilities. Two models were developed for that purpose. Perceived service quality was evaluated in five (empathy, reliability, sensitivity, guarantee and physical conditions) dimensions and perceived institutional image was evaluated in four (quality image, institutional communication, social image and institutional perspective) dimensions.

Influence of independent variable on dependent variable was mentioned in both of two models. In both models it was proposed that the all of the relationships between dependent and independent variables were a positive affect each other. In other words, service quality perception of individuals affect institutional image positively and on the other hand institutional perception of individuals is also affected by perceived service quality positively. With regard to literature, hypothesis about the relationship between service quality in education and perceived image is identified as following:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived service quality affects positively dimensions of the perceived institutional image in pre-school education institutes.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived institutional image affects positively dimensions of the perceived service quality in pre-school education institutes.

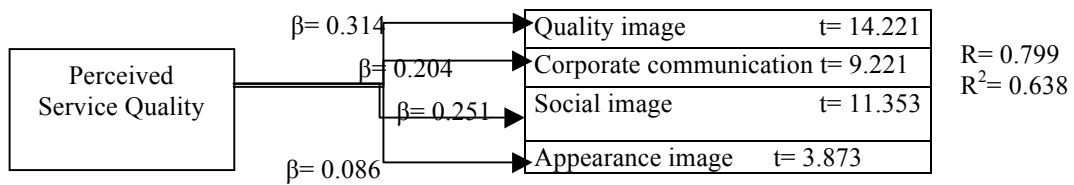
**Sample:** Sample of this study consists of families using service provided by pre-school institutes in Kayseri. Pre-schools include children from “*crèche*” (0-36 months old), “*kindergarten*” (36- 66 months old) and “*nursery class*” (48-66 months old).

**Instruments and Procedure:** Data was collected by using a questionnaire form that consists of three parts, 9 questions and 49 statements. Various previous studies in literature were taken as a basis for survey formation and statements in those studies were changed because of the subject of current study. In conclusion, at first stage demographic characteristics of the families, at second stage service performance of the pre-school facilities perceived by families (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Okumuş and Duygun, 2008; Talih, 2008) and finally perceived institutional image were evaluated separately (Polat, Abat and Tezyürek, 2010; Doğan and Varinli, 2010; Tuna,2009). 250 questionnaires were evaluated in this study. Reply rate of questionnaires was found as 70%.

**Findings:** KMO test was applied in order to test sample size in relation with perceived service quality and value was calculated as 0.908. Five factors determined as a result of factor analysis are: “Empathy”, “reliability”, “responsiveness”, “assurance” and “physical environment”. Five factors represent 63.6% of total variance and Cronbach’s Alpha value which indicates reliability of factors in the scale was calculated as 0.913. In addition, KMO test was also applied to test sample size in relation with perceived institutional image and it was calculated as 0.918. 4 factor groups identified as a result of factor analysis are listed as: “quality image”, “institutional communication”, “social image” and “institutional perspective”. Those four factors represent 62.6% of total variance and Cronbach’s Alpha Value which indicates reliability of factors in the scale was calculated as 0.891.

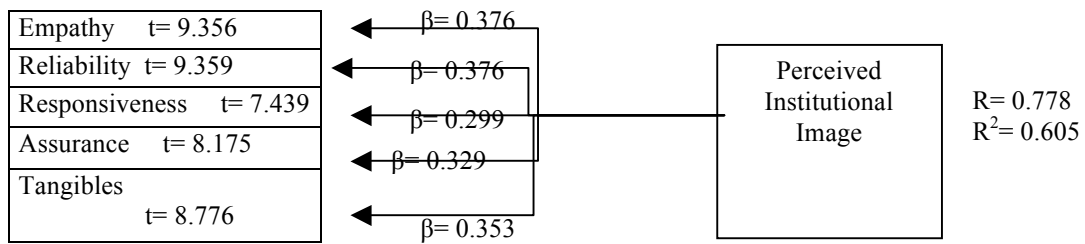
In following stages, relationship of perceived service quality with dimensions of perceived institutional image and dimensions of perceived service quality were evaluated according to analysis of five factor groups of service quality and four factor groups of perceived institutional image. Two models were developed in this context. In Model 1 perceived service quality was found as the first most related dimension with quality image and social image was found as second, institutional communication as third and finally perspective image as fourth related dimension. Findings obtained by the way of Model 1 are given below:

**Model 1:** Effect of Perceived Service Quality on Dimensions of Perceived Institutional Image



In Model 2 reliability was found as first, empathy as second, tangibles as third, assurance as fourth and finally responsiveness as fifth dimension of perceived service quality that related with perceived institutional image. Findings obtained by the way of Model 2 are given below:

**Model 2:** Effect of Perceived Institutional Image on Dimensions of Perceived Service Quality



**Discussion**

As the result of this study hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were accepted as valid. Results of the relationship between perceived service quality and perceived institutional image indicates that families primarily emphasized presence of qualified teacher that provide education for children, providing education programs according to developmental phase and quality of the nutrition provided for children. Secondly, families expect that pre-school education facilities should be responsive for the social, environmental, cultural, artistic concerns. Third, strong institutional communication, in other words accessibility of physical transportation, easier communication between directors and staff, politeness of the staff and willingness of the staff in problem solving are other qualities expected by families. Finally, families also pay attention to the size and usefulness of the campus, and staff dressing.

This study examined the effect of each other service quality and perceived institutional image. Population of research is limited to some districts in Kayseri Province. Therefore the findings can be generalized only in this district. However content of this study can be extended as included other provinces as well. Following issues can be investigated in future studies:

- Mediator role of the directors, trainers and other staff in this relationship
- Contribution of the students to the institutional image as client and main element of the institute
- Comparative analysis of these relations pre-school educational institutions exists in public and private sector