Service Quality Relating to Students' Satisfaction of Student Affairs Departments in University: Case study in China

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Abstract

The Objectives of this research were to study 1) student' satisfaction of the service provided by university; 2) service quality of student affairs office in university; and 3) relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction of the service provided by university. This research uses quantitative research method, based on the SERVQUAL model of perceived service quality theory, combined with the actual service quality of a university student work department, according to five dimensions (reliability, tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy). The samples consisted of 400 students in the university. The research instrument was a questionnaire that had the overall reliability of 0.94. The statistics used in this research were percentage, mean, standard deviation and hypothesis testing by ANOVA and Regression coefficient

The research results found that; 1) student' satisfaction of the service provided by university, overall, at a high level. In addition to, the highest level of satisfaction was the convenience; the subordinate aspects were the courtesy, the coordination and the information. 2) Service quality of Student affairs office in university, overall, at a high level. In addition to, the highest level of service quality was the responsiveness and empathy of service quality and 3) The overall relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction of the service provided by university in the whole have the positive correlation as a high level.

Keywords: Service Quality, Student' Satisfaction, Reliability

Introduction

With the increasingly competition in recent years, the once quality- and scientific-achievement-oriented universities are now shifting gears to focus more on the students' satisfaction with service quality. University students are recipients of services and have the attributes of consumer. Students' satisfaction is an important index for university quality

evaluation. Therefore, improving the service quality has become a main focus that universities are paying attention to. The student affairs department of universities serve as Front door to take care of students first impression, and the quality of student service affects the level of student satisfaction. However, in real life, there are many problems occurs such as low service efficiency, out of dated service facilities, poor personal service quality and student satisfaction, etc. In order to continuously improve the service quality and student satisfaction, this research is carried out. (Liu, & Xie, 2017) (Kuo, & Wu, C. 2015) (Leblanc, & Nguyen, 2018).

A. Parasuraman, Valarie Zeithaml and Leonard L. Berry (1985) released the SERVQUAL questionnaire for the first time to measure the quality of the service sector. Many subsequent scholars have carried out related research on service quality in different fields, but most research focused on business services, which may not represent those of the student affairs department in a university. (Liu, & Chen, 2020) (Chen, et al., 2019) (Shao, & Qi, 2017).

In short, the importance of this research is to discuss the existing problems in the current students' satisfaction with service quality based on an actual case study and propose solutions accordingly.

Objectives of Research

1. To study student' satisfaction of the service provided by university

2. To study service quality of Student affairs office in university

3. To study relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction of the service provided by university

Scope of the study

The main contents of this paper are as follows:

Firstly, we use the service quality evaluation model to study the student satisfaction. The student satisfaction with service quality is a systematic and complex project with many influencing factors. However, college students are typically proactive about learning, having diverse needs, and yet have their individual requirements. Some special students also have different levels of service needs. Therefore, it is necessary for the University student affairs department to improve and perfect the service quality in order to better adapt the satisfaction of college students at different stages.

Secondly, by reviewing the literature and sorting out relevant materials with the help of the SERVQUAL model, we construct a research framework and put forward hypotheses from the five dimensions of service quality: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

Thirdly, we design relevant questionnaires and conduct actual research. The content of the questionnaire mainly includes: comprehensive consideration of questions from the above-mentioned five aspects of service quality, with the purpose of understanding their impact on student satisfaction through the questionnaire.

Fourthly, we conduct statistical analysis on the survey results presented in the questionnaire.

Lastly, on the basis of the analysis results of the questionnaire on the influencing factors of student satisfaction, the data are summarized, and the comprehensive conclusions about the quality of service are obtained from the five aspects. The conclusion of influencing factors of college students' satisfaction is given, and suggestions are given.

Empathy in service quality: Student services are not highly individualized, and students cannot be given sufficient concern and self-sacrifice for students.

In short, this research mainly studies the Service Quality of a university student affairs department, explores the impact of the problem on the factors of student satisfaction, and continuously understands the problems of service quality in various aspects.

Literature Review

Service Quality

According to Tjiptono (2004), service quality is the level of quality that consumers expect to meet ones' desires. If consumers claims that the services, they receive has met their needs and expectations or even exceed their expectations, then the quality of services is considered good, excellent, or satisfactory. Besides, the definition of service quality according to Mauludin shows that service quality is the difference between the reality and the customer's expectations of the subscription received or obtained. According to Tjiptono's Lewis & Booms (2012), service quality is simply a measure of how well the level of service provided meets customer expectations". According to Harfika and Abdullah (2017), there are five dimensions of service quality shown as below: (Tjiptono, 2004; Trakulkasemsuk, Sinjindawong and Manisri, 2010; Mauludin, 2019; Harfika, and Abdullah, 2017; Navavongsathian, Vongchavalitkul and Limsarun, 2020; Limsarun, Navavongsathian,

Vongchavalitkul and Damrongpong, 2021; Chavengsup, Rungrueng and Wonglek, 2021).

1) Tangibility: The ability of a company to demonstrate its existence to the outside world. The appearance and competence of employees, the reliable physical facilities and infrastructure of the company, and the state of the surrounding environment are one way in which service companies provide quality service to their customers.

2) Reliability: A company's ability to deliver services exactly as promised. Reliable performance must meet customer expectations, which is reflected in equal service to all customers in a timely, error-free manner and with a high degree of accuracy.

3) Responsiveness: The willingness to help customers and the ability to provide service quickly and accurately. Delivering a clear message, ignoring and keeping customers waiting for no reason can lead to negative perceptions of service quality.

4) Assurance: The knowledge, courtesy and competence of the company's employees in order to develop customers' trust in the company.

5) Empathy, provide customers with sincere services that are more in line with individual needs, pay attention to the specific needs of customers, and provide customers with comfortable operating hours.

Through the above literature, service quality plays a vital role in student satisfaction, and the tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy of service quality directly determine the quality of service.

Student Satisfaction is one's feeling of pleasure or disappointment after comparing something. It is based on the comparison between the expected performances (results) of the product with the actual ones. If the performance underachieved than expected, customers would be dissatisfied. If the performance meets its expectations, the customer would be satisfied. Customers are very satisfied or happy if performance exceeds expectations (Kotler, 2016). According to Kotler and Keller (2015), consumer satisfaction is a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment after comparing the performance (result) of another product to achieve the expected performance. (Homburg and Giering, 2001); (Oliver, 1993); (Zhang, Fan, & Zhou, 2014)

From the above definitions, we can see that students' satisfaction with service quality is the feeling when students receive the services provided by the University and compare the service quality. If the service quality is lower than the students' expectations, then the students will be dissatisfied. If the service quality meets the student's expectation, the student is satisfied. If the service quality exceeds the student's expectation, the student is very satisfied.

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A. Parasuraman, Valarie Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry, (1985), though with the intention for the service sector, the SERVQUAL questionnaire represented a breakthrough in the methodology applied in measuring service quality. SERVQUAL is a multidimensional research tool designed to capture consumer expectations and perceptions of services across five dimensions considered to represent service quality. SERVQUAL is based on the expectation-disapproval paradigm. To be more specific, it scales service quality based on the degree to which consumers' expectations of quality before consumption are confirmed or negated by their actual perception of the service experience. The diagnostic value of the instrument is supported by a model of service quality that forms the conceptual framework for developing the scale (i.e., instrument or questionnaire). This tool has been used in a wide variety of environments and cultures and has been found to be relatively robust. It has become the main measure in the field of service quality. (Zeithaml, et al., 1990; Oliveira, et al., 2017; Hsu, et al., 2021)
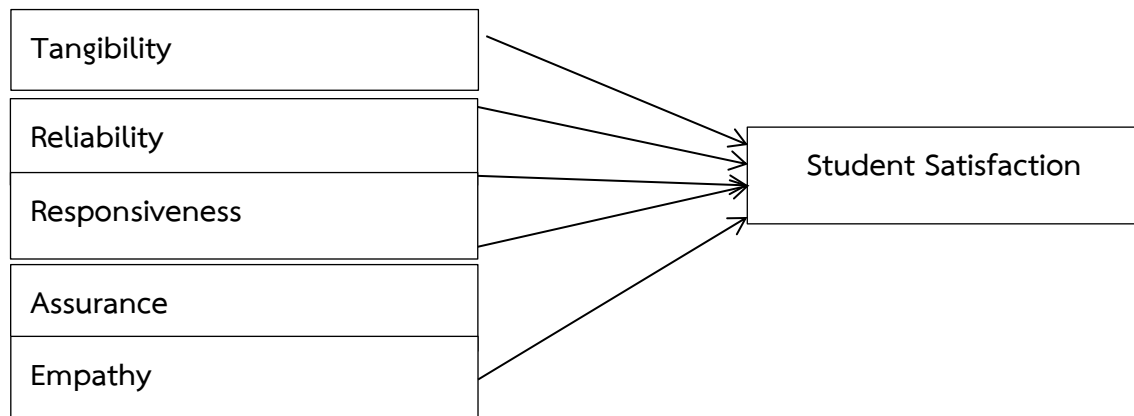
Related Concept, Theory and Previous Researches

Since its debut, many similar researches have on the influencing factors of students' satisfaction with service quality been conducted. When exploring the influencing factors of college students' service quality, it mainly revolves around the five dimensions of service quality, namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The research results are also mainly used in the University's reforms to improve the quality of student services in order to improve the satisfaction of college students.

Hypothesis

There is a positive relation between the service quality of a student affairs department in a university and their impacts on student satisfaction by Linyi University. That is, the five dimensions of service quality, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, having a certain impact on student satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Tangibility             │────┐
├─────────────────────────┤    │        ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Reliability             │────┤        │                          │
├─────────────────────────┤    ├───────▶│   Student Satisfaction   │
│ Responsiveness          │────┤        │                          │
├─────────────────────────┤    │        └──────────────────────────┘
│ Assurance               │────┤
├─────────────────────────┤    │
│ Empathy                 │────┘
└─────────────────────────┘
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Research Methods

This research uses quantitative research as the survey method. Through questionnaire survey, the study interviews college students in a university to understand the students' satisfaction with the service quality of their department and identify factors affecting the service quality. The collected data is statistically analyzed.

Research Basis and Purposes

University students' satisfaction with service quality has attracting more and more attention. Although there are many studies on service quality satisfaction, they're still at the level of service quality analysis, which cannot be directly used for reference and implementation. This pitfall leads to a lack of the actual data to link the theoretical and pragmatic sides. There is an urgent need for more effective investigation of the University's own situation to form more complete and practical data chain, to comprehensively discuss the current status of the service quality of a student department in a university, to accurately grasp the real problems in the service quality, and to further discuss them.

This research conducts mainly through the survey of college students with different majors and different grades in a certain university, by distributing questionnaires to understand their cognition of service quality and the current status of service quality satisfaction. Through the above investigations, multi-dimensional and multi-level analysis and research, we aim at obtaining detailed and accurate results, which will become the most accurate data source for the paper.

Questionnaire Design and Survey Implementation

The design of the questionnaire is oriented toward the survey of students in a certain university, with the intention to understand the service quality of the student affairs

department and student satisfaction. The content of each questionnaire has its own emphasis. The questionnaire focuses on the influence of five dimensions of Service quality, Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy, on student satisfaction through personal basic information, service quality, and student satisfaction. In this survey, random sampling was carried out, and the sampling number was decided base on the proportion of students in university. The surveys were subdivided according to different majors and different grades. The questionnaires are released online through "Questionnaire Star", and the online questionnaires are sent to students according to different majors and grades through student counselors or class teachers to ensure the speed and authenticity of the survey.

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, and 400 questionnaires were recovered, of which 400 were valid questionnaires, and the total effective recovery rate was 100%.

Main Research Questions and Assumptions in Questionnaire

The questions designed in the questionnaire are mainly applied to investigate service quality and student satisfaction, etc., and to comprehensively evaluate their impact on student satisfaction from the five dimensions of service quality, tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Assuming that service quality will certainly affect the satisfaction of college students, these five dimensions positively correlated with student satisfaction, and improving service quality can effectively improve student satisfaction

Research Results

Reliability analysis

Table 1 Reliability Statistics

variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Tangibility	.88	4
Reliability	.94	4
Responsiveness	.96	4
Assurance	.95	4
Empathy	.97	4
Student Satisfaction	.96	10

It can be seen from Table 1 that the overall reliability of 0.94 and the variable coefficient is greater than 0.85, indicating that the internal consistency of the questionnaire is very high and almost completely acceptable. The reliability and quality of the research data was also high.

Validity Analysis

The thesis improves the validity of the forecasting questionnaire by cross-validating a large number of relevant literature and works and consulting relevant experts, adopting the expert judgment method. At the request of the three experts, the names of the interviewed experts were anonymized, and the evaluation results are shown in Table 4-2.

Table 2 Expert validity test evaluation form

Evaluation of the Overall Validity Design of the Questionnaire

Expert number	Very suitable	Suitable	basically suitable	Not suitable	Very unsuitable
1	√				
2	√				
3	√				

Analysis of basic information of samples

analysis on the basic information of the sample, and the results are shown in Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5.

Gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	162	40.5
	Female	238	59.5
	Total	400	100.0

Category of Student

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Freshman	109	27.3
	Sophomore	127	31.8
	Junior year	130	32.5
	Senior year	34	8.5
	Total	400	100.0

You are Major in

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Physics	100	25.0
	Biology	100	25.0
	Humanities	100	25.0
	Art	100	25.0
	Total	400	100.0

It can be seen from Table 3 that the sample selection is based on the ratio of male and female students in the surveyed colleges and universities. The ratio of the sample to the total number of students is close to 1:2, suggesting that the data is reasonable.

It can also be seen from Table 4 that the survey objects are distributed in each grade, which can clearly explain the views and requirements of students at different stages on service quality, ensuring the accuracy of the data.

Finally, we showed in Table 5 that in order to ensure the cognition of service quality by students of different majors in the whole University, the survey and statistical analysis of students in the four major categories are carried out to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the sample, which is more representative of the University overall level.

Result analysis
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.924[a]	.855	.853	.30996

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sumresponsiveness, SumTangibility, SumEmpathy, SumReliability, SumAssurance

It can be seen from the above table that the service quality (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) is used as the independent variable, and student satisfaction is used as the dependent variable for linear regression analysis. It can also be seen from the above table that the model The R-squared value was 0.855, meaning that service quality explained 85.5% of the variation in student satisfaction.

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ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	222.521	5	44.504	463.218	.000b
	Residual	37.854	394	.096		
	Total	260.375	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Sumsatisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Sumresponsiveness, SumTangibility, SumEmpathy, SumReliability, SumAssurance

It can be seen from the above table that when the F test is performed on the model, it is found that the model passes the F test (F=463.218, p=0.000<0.05), which means that the model construction is meaningful.

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.096	.091		1.052	.293
	Tangibility	.187	.032	.193	5.843	.000
	Reliability	.083	.049	.086	1.677	.094
	Assurance	.095	.058	.092	1.631	.104
	Empathy	.300	.042	.318	7.226	.000
	responsiveness	.305	.061	.298	4.977	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sumsatisfaction

As can be seen from the above table, $Sum_{Tangibilty}$. $Sum_{Relliabilty}$. $Sum_{Assurance}$. $Sum_{Empathy}$. $Sum_{responsiveness}$ is used as an independent variable, whereas $Sum_{satisfaction}$ is used as a dependent variable for linear regression analysis. As can be seen from the above table, the model formula is as follows: satisfaction = 0.096 + 0.187*Tangiblty + 0.083* Reliabilty+0.095*Assurance+0.300*Empathy+0.305*responsiveness,

the R square value of the model is 0.855, which means that Tangibilty, Reliability, Assurance, Empathy. responsiveness can explain 85.5% of the changes in satisfaction.

When the F test was performed on the model, it was found that the model passed the household test (F=463.218, p=0.000<0.05), which means that at least one of Tangibilty.

There is autocorrelation, there is no correlation between the sample data, and the model is better. The final specific analysis shows that:

The regression coefficient of Tangibllty is 0.187 ((=5.843, p=0.000<0.01), which means that Tangibllty will have a significant positive effect on satistaction.

The regression coefficient of Reliabilty is 0.083 ((=1.677, p=0.094>0.05), which means that Reliabilty will not affect satisfaction.

The regression coefficient of Assurance is 0.095 (=1.631, p=0.104>0.05), which means that Assurance will not have an impact on satisfaction.

The regression coefficient value of Empathy is 0.300 (=7.226, p=0.000<0.01), which means that Empathy will have a significant positive impact on satisfaction.
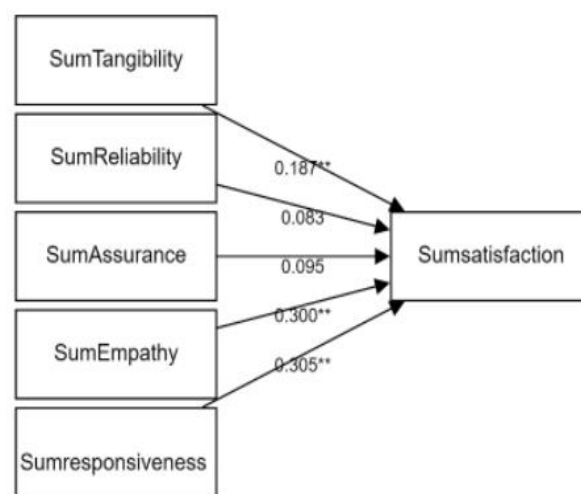
The regression coefficient value of responsiveness is 0.305 ((=4.977, p=0.000<0.01), which means that responsiveness will have a significant positive impact on satisfaction.

The summary analysis shows that: Tanglbily. Empathy, responsveness will have a significant positive impact on sattstaction. But Relabilly, Assurance will not affect sallsfaction.
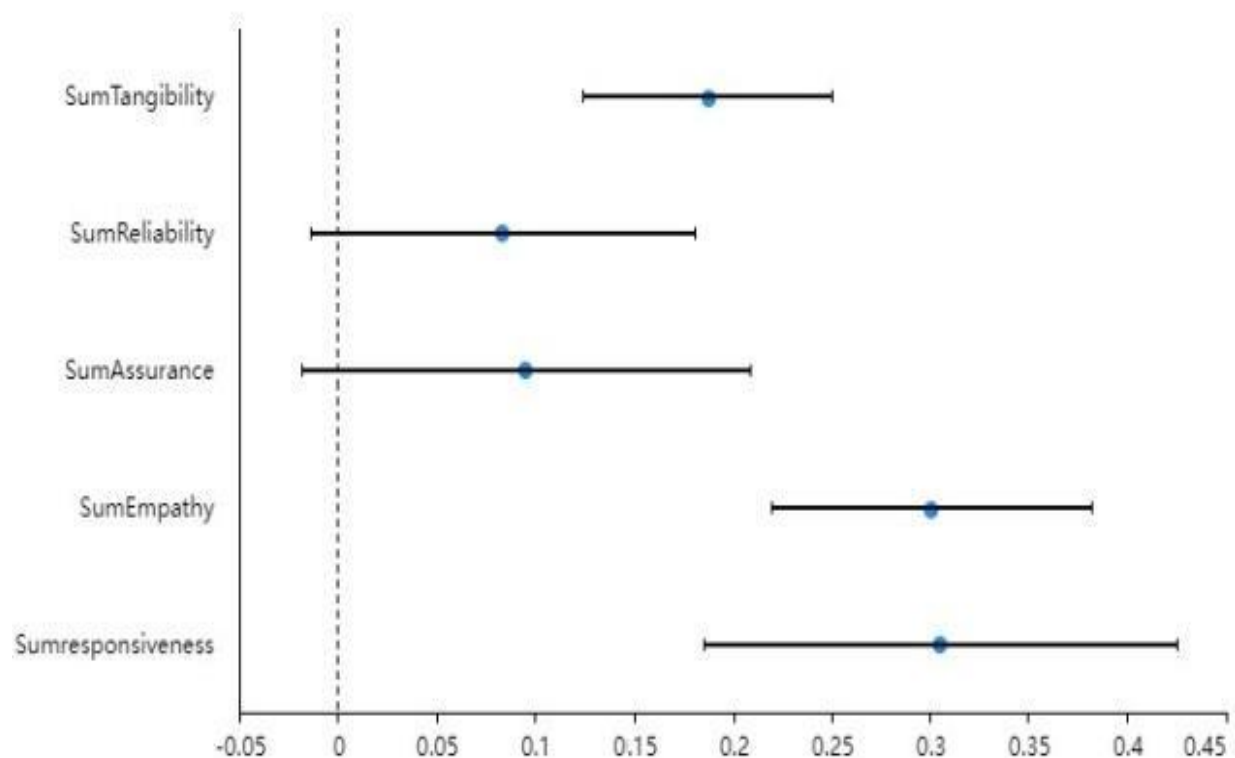
Conclusions

The results of this study showed that the service quality of a student affairs department in a university is better, and the student satisfaction is higher. The responsiveness and empathy of service quality have the greatest impact on student satisfaction, followed by the impact of tangibles, with the impact of reliability and assurance being lowest. It is suggested that the student affairs departments of colleges and universities improve the response efficiency of service quality, put themselves in the consideration of students, continuously improve service facilities, and improve student satisfaction.

From the above figure, we've shown that the regression coefficients of service quality are 0.187, 0.083, 0.305, 0.095, and 0.300 for tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, respectively. We found that responsiveness and empathy had the greatest impact on student satisfaction, followed by tangibility. Assurance and reliability had the lowest impact on student satisfaction. Therefore, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibility will have a significant positive impact on student satisfaction. But reliability and assurance did not affect student satisfaction.

We also found that responsiveness, empathy, and tangibility of the service quality of a student affairs department in a university are positively correlated with the impact of student satisfaction, suggesting that these three traits of student service quality are the main concerns of student satisfaction.

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Suggestion

1. Establish correct service concept and service awareness

The service personnel of the student affairs department need to strengthen the "student-oriented" service concept and should always implement the service awareness of "for all students, for all students, and all for students" in service work. Correcting working attitudes, adjusting working mentality, and constantly exploring new ways of working and respond to students' needs in a timely and efficient manner are also considered important. We also suggest that the university continuously improve the assessment mechanism and incentive mechanism, clarify the work objectives and responsibilities of each service position, and incorporate service efficiency, service level, and student satisfaction into the scope of the assessment work.

2. Develop smart campus services

Through the Internet of Things (IoT) and intelligent perception technology, we recommend building a smart campus management and information support platform, integrating campus resources, and developing smart services.

These could be accomplished by using big data technology to mine campus operation rules, develop smart social services, and use information technology (IT) to accelerate scientific and technological achievements.

By using big data technology to provide support for decision-making of university managers, smart campuses can promote continuous optimization or re-engineering of management service processes, while innovating management service models, realizing business collaboration, and unifying service platforms within university and departments.

3. Strengthening Humanistic Care for Student Services

University service personnel should have a comprehensive understanding of students in their daily work, implementing hierarchical daily management and services according to the individual conditions of different students, so that students can truly feel the warmth from the University from the bottom of their hearts. University should carry out more projects for personalized services such as students' mental health and employment guidance. It is also recommended that effectively implementing the comprehensive service system for students, requiring teachers to provide guidance and assistance to students, assisting counselors to look after students' development, and resolving students' practical problems are all crucial.

4. Improving the status for student services

We suggest optimizing the student service infrastructure, creating a "one-stop" service community for students, improving the intelligence level of the service community, and providing students with a warm, comfortable, good and practical service environment. Other measures include: to purchase modern service facilities that meet the needs of students, and improve the conditions for serving students; to increase investment in service infrastructure and enrich the types of student service facilities; require student service personnel to pay attention to external appearance, emphasize dress etiquette and other requirements in the daily service process, and respect the rights and interests of students as service objects.

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