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Assessment of Predictors that Influence Parents' Satisfaction towards Private Kindergartens: A SERVQUAL Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines parents' satisfaction towards the service quality of private kindergarten in Kuching. Five dimensions in SERVQUAL are applied as the indicators that influence parents' satisfaction. In total 400 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Data collected is analyzed by employing descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation and multiple linear regressions. In this research, the Pearson Correlation shows the five SERVQUAL dimensions have a positive and relationship on parents' satisfaction. In order to identify the best predictor that contributes to parents' satisfaction, the multiple linear regressions are used to predict the impact on the five SERVQUAL dimensions on parents' satisfaction. In a nutshell, responsiveness is the most significant and dominant dimension that influences parents' satisfaction. The results suggest the private kindergarten operators emphasize more on ensuring continuous communication with parents. Teachers play an important role as they should regularly tell and ask parents in order to understand each child's situation. Teachers are suggested to promptly respond to children's needs and make efforts to address them.

Keywords: SERVQUAL Model, Service Quality, Early Childhood, Parents' Satisfaction

Introduction

Pre-school is known as a kindergarten, a program for early childhood education for children aged four to six. There are about 3000 kindergartens in Sarawak, most of which are managed by the government (Pre-school, 2018). This includes more than 1,000 in the education department and another 1000 in the community development department. There is also a large number of registered private kindergartens operate in residential areas in Sarawak. All public and private kindergartens must implement the National Pre-school Curriculum standard set out in the 1996 National Education Act. The National Pre-school Curriculum is based on the national principles of Malaysia (known as Rukun Negara) and the National Education Philosophy to seek at developing children's social capabilities, intellectual ability, physical attributes, spiritual