



A MULTI-GROUP ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES QUALITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to uncover the relationship between organizational commitment of academic and non-academic staff and higher education service quality, by investigating under which mechanism that organizational commitment effect service quality. Data were collected by means of self-administered survey, total 247 academic staff and 1235 of their student, and total 155 non-academic staff and 775 of their customer complete responses were obtained from Aden University. The results of this study show that, organizational commitment (affective and continece) effect higher education service quality by social mechanism (social exchange). Furthermore, this study revealed that, organizational commitment of academic staff have more effect on higher education service quality than non-academic staff.

1. Introduction

Service organizations dependent on human interaction to deliver services to the customer. Hence, delivering the required level of service quality determined by employee and customer interaction through service encounter. Throughout crucial service encounter between employee and customer, it is employee's willingness to involve in discretionary effort that influences the level of service quality that delivered to the customer (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990; Boulding, Kalra, Staelin and Zeithaml, 1993; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; Chand, 2010; Tsaur and Lin, 2004; Sarkey, Turkson and Ansah, 2013; Larivière, 2017), Which mean organizations services will face more difficulties to delivering the desirable level of service quality to their customers when their frontline employees uncommitted and dissatisfied or not happy (Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman, 1996; Al-Refaei and Zumrah, 2019a), or unwilling to exert any additional effort to benefit there organization (Al-Refaei and Zumrah (2019b). Furthermore delivering desirable level of service quality heavily depends on the frontline employees (Al-Refaei and Zumrah (2019b), delivered service process depends on the way that employee deal with customer.

However, previous studies argued that, customers' experience considered as the key issue to understanding service quality (Schneider, Parkington and Buxton, 1980; Schneider and Bowen, 1993; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988; Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Schneider, White and Paul, 1998; Gazzoli, Hancer and Kim, 2013; Jaakkola, Helkkula and Aarikka-Stenroo, 2015). Therefore, the key to managing the customer's experience of service quality is to manage frontline employees' experiences within their own organization, due to employee experiences, attitudes and behaviors is the critical link to the customer's perception of service quality (Parkington, and Schneider, 1979; Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Gazzoli, Hancer and Kim, 2013; Oh and Kim, 2017). Furthermore, employee perceptions of organizational practices and procedures influence customer perceptions of service quality (Schneider, Parkington and Buxton, 1980). However, customers preferring to build their perception of services quality on specific employee performance rather than on global assessments of services quality (Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005). In addition researchers such as (Alshaibani and Bakir, 2017, Liao and Chuang, 2004; Liao, Toya, Lepak and Hong, 2009; Raub and Liao, 2012) argued that customer perception of service quality directly affected by service performance of front-line employees, Therefore, previous studies did not matched customers perception of service quality to perception of employee who provide service toward organizational practices and procedures, which make the relationship between organizational practices, procedures, employee attitudes and behaviour on customer perception of service quality unclear.

Higher education institutions are described as labour-intensive (Küskü, 2003), due to institutions activities in higher education sector are more dependent in the human factors, huge amount of the institutions activities performed by employees. Moreover, improve higher education service quality lies in the ability of the institution to provide an overall climate (Trivellas and Dargenidou, 2009). Hence, institutions can only successful dependent on their employee's attitudes and behaviour and perception towards the institutional practices and overall climate. However, relationship between employee attitudes and services quality still unclear, previous studies don't explained how organizational commitment effect service quality. However, previous studies in higher education service quality paid less attention to the impact of academic and ono-academic staff attitude, and don't investigate which group has more effect on service quality, although they are critical factors in service quality, because academic staff performed academic activates such as research and teaching, while non-academic staff performed activities that support the academic staff to complete their tasks successfully. Therefore, higher education institutions can only success depend on the academic and ono-academic staff attitudes.

Organization in the public sector in Yemen facing lack of employee's organizational commitment (Ahmad and Gelaidan, 2011), while increasing organizational commitment of Yemeni employees will guaranteed organizational performance (Alsamawi, Mohd, Shrikant and Al-Refaei, 2019). However, according to The Supreme Council of Education Planning (TSCEP, 2014), higher education sector in Yemen suffers from many complex academic and administrative problems, such as lack of organizational commitment among the employee in Yemeni universities (Saeed, Gelaidan and Ahmad, 2013; Al-Refaei and Zumrah (2019b), and a weakness of academic administrative staff performance as well as institutional performance as whole (TSCEP, 2014; Muthanna and Karaman, 2011; Muthanna, 2015; Al-Refaei and Zumrah (2019b). It has been conform that, lack of employees commitment effects organizational performance (Meyer et al, 1989; Wright and Bonett, 2002; Sharma and Dhar, 2016; Woznyj, Heggstad, Kennerly and Yap, 2019), all which weaken the service quality of higher education (TSCEP, 2014), this situation compatible with previous argument which conformed that lack of organizational commitment leads to weakness of service quality (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; Dhar, 2015). However, literature in the context of Yemen found lack of studies investigated the effect of organizational commitment on service quality in higher education sector.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to uncover the relationship between organizational commitment of the academic and ono-academic staff and service quality, in addition investigate which group has more effect on service quality, and by investigate under which mechanism that organizational commitment effect higher education service quality.

2. Literature Review

Based on social exchange theory, Eisenberger and Huntington (1986) argued that, when employee perceived their organization valued their effort, recognized their contributions, and investment in them, and take care about their wellbeing, hence, employee will feel obligated to reciprocate that to the organization through positive attitude and behaviour, and superior efforts to help their organization to achieve its objectives. However, when employees feel obligated to their organization, and want to benefit their organization, then they will perform good service quality to the customers. Al-Refaei and Zumrah, (2019) conformed that, employee commitment to their university due to university initiative for recognize the employees effort, and reword them based on that, and take care about their well-being, then the employees reciprocate that by organizational commitment and performed better service quality.

Many researches in the literature of services quality discussed the relationship between organizational commitments on service quality, many studies provided evidence conformed the significant impact of organizational commitment on service quality (Gazzoli, Hancer and Kim, 2013; Chu, Tseng and Tsai, 2014; Al-Refaei and Zumrah, 2019a). According to Gonzalez and Garazo (2013) organizational commitment of customer contact employees is very important, because it will positively effects behaviour that related to work and practices desired of service encounter. In addition Chu, Tseng & Tsai (2014) found that, organization elements such as affective organizational commitment of frontline employees has significant and positive impact on both service delivery and service quality.

Furthermore, Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004) found that three component of organizational commitment (continuance, affective and normative) have a significant influences on delivering service quality. In addition, Malhotra and Mukherjee (2003) found organizational commitment (continuance and affective) have positive and significant impact on service quality, and don't found any significant impact of normative commitment on service quality. while Kansal (2012) found significant relationship between normative commitment and service quality, while Wong and Cheung (2014) found that affective commitment are more contributing to service quality besides that, Wong and Cheung (2014) noted that affective commitment of employee are critical factors for service quality. Moreover, Little and Dean (2006) and Ashill, Rod, & Carruthers (2008) found that employee's organizational commitment has positive correlation to employee capability to deliver service quality, and they suggest that increasing employee's organizational commitment is likely to contribute to value feeling of employees and as consequently delivering high level of service quality to the customer.

More specifically, (Chughtai and Zafar, 2006; Narimawati, 2007) found that organizational commitment of lecturers has significant and positive influence toward performance. It means that lecturers who has high level of organizational commitment, will show to have high level of job performance as well. And also found that organizational commitment has negative influence on lecturer's turnover intention. Likewise, Thornhill, Lewis and Saunders (1996) found that organizational commitment of higher education employees have significant relationship to achieve high level of quality.

More recently, (Al-Refaei and Zumrah (2019b) found that organizational commitment of academic staff has significant effect on service quality, they argued that, when academic staff commitment to their organization due to got care from their organization about their well-being and valued their effort than employees reciprocate that by more effort to improve service quality. Besides that, (Al-Refaei and Zumrah (2019a) found that effective organizational commitment of non-academic staff has significant effect on higher education service quality, Therefore, this study investigate the effect of organizational commitment of the academic and ono-academic staff and service quality, in addition it is investigate which group has more effect on service quality.

3. Research Model and Hypotheses

This study investigate the effect of organizational commitment on higher education service quality in Yemen, by investigate the effect of academic and non-academic staff organizational commitment on service quality they performed to student as customers of academic staff , and different customers of non-academic staff (academics, administrators, and students). Furthermore, this study conducted multi-group analysis of the effect of organizational commitment within academic and non-academic staff on higher education service quality, therefore, the hypothesis of the study as the following:

- H1: There is positive effect of organizational commitment of academic and non- academic staff on higher education service quality.
- H2: There is different effect of organizational commitment on higher education service quality within academic and non-academic staff.

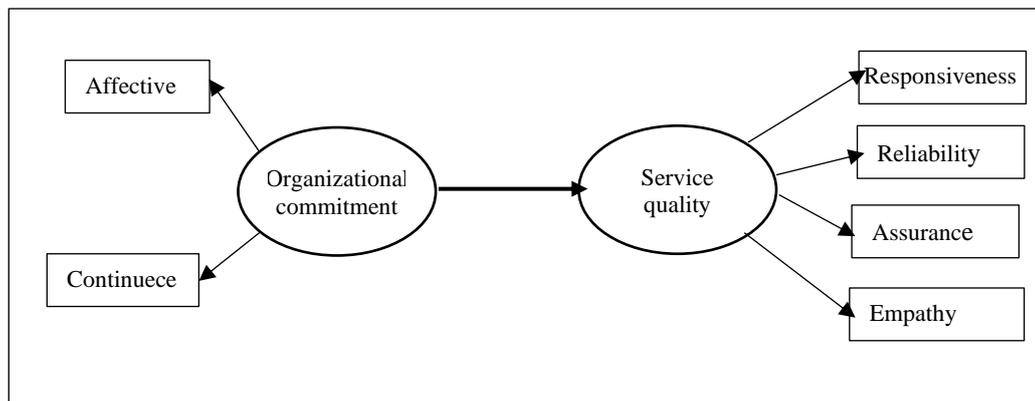


Fig. 1. Research conceptual model

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sampling

This study aims to investigate the direct effect of organizational commitment of academic and non-academic staff on higher education service quality, therefore, the data of this study was collected through questionnaire. Four survey instruments were used to test the hypotheses: first instrument to measure organization commitment, and second to measure their student perceptions about service quality. And third instrument to measure non-academic staff organization commitment. Fourth instrument to measure their customer's perceptions about service quality. The questionnaires distributed personally to the respondents. The questionnaire hand-distributed in the classes before or after lecture for the academic staff and their students, and after get the service for the customers of non-academic staff. During this process, each employee and their customer's surveys were coded to assure ease of matching, moreover survey cods were used to matching customer's perspective to the specific employee who provided the service. 400 questionnaire were distributed to the faculty members, and 257 questionnaires was return response was rate 61.7%, and 247 were used. In addition, distributed 2100 questionnaires to the faculty customers (students), 1250 questionnaires were return response rate was 60%. In addition, 250 questionnaire were distributed to the employees, and 172 questionnaires was return response rate was 68.8%, and 155 questionnaires were used. In addition, distributed 1250 questionnaires to the customers, 860 questionnaires were return and 775 were used for analysis. During each employee and their customers surveys were coded to assure ease of matching, moreover survey cods were used to matching customer's perspective to the specific employee who provided the service.

4.1 Measurement

organizational commitment and service quality scales that used in this study have been widely used in previous studies in the fields of management and marketing, some of the items used in scales organizational commitment and service quality were modified to reflect universities setting and our research goals and hypothesis.

Organizational commitment: Organizational commitment measured using 8 items developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). These items shown in appendix. These 8 items include questions related to two types of commitment known as affective (4 items), and continuance (4 items). This measure has been used by previous research such as (Wang, 2015; Narang, 2011; Goyal, 2014; Gaskin and Lim, 2016; Al-Refaeli and Zumrah (2019a).

Service quality: The objective of current study was to measure the customer perception of service quality delivered directly from contact employees, thus, current study adopted 18 items from SERVQUAL by disregard tangible dimension to measure service quality in higher education. Therefore the dimensions of this study will be responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy, due to tangibles dimension did not play any role in measuring the performance service quality of customer-contact employees (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; Alshaibani and Bakir, 2017), the final items shown in appendix. Cronbach's Alpha for each dimensions from previous studies (Trivellas and Dargenidou, 2009) was between ($\alpha = .833-.968$).

5. Data Analysis and Results

5.1 Data Preparation Prior to Analysis:

Data preparation prior to data analysis is very important for getting the data ready for analysis. Therefore, in this set of data which gathered to investigate the effect of organizational commitment on service quality. Scholars argued that, customer perception of service quality directly affected by service performance of front-line employees (Alshaibani and Bakir, 2017, Liao and Chuang, 2004; Liao, Toya, Lepak and Hong, 2009; Raub and Liao, 2012), in addition, evaluate customer perception about performance service quality should matching with the specific employee performance rather in global or group assessment (Gould-Williams and Davies, 2005). Therefore, as mentioned earlier in data collection process, we matching customers' perception of service quality with specific employees who provide the service to that customer (see data collection procedure). Therefore, Data preparation process starts with coding and entering the data into database in SPSS 25.0. Coding the data is done by used the survey code that given to each employee survey and customer survey that given in data collection process, that has been done to ensure matching each customer perception of service quality to specific provider. In addition, we enter a unique identification for each item by given unique short and easy understood abbreviation by the first one to three letters of words in the name of the construct.

Analysis descriptive statistics and reliability analysis have been done by used SPSS 25.0 to. Used descriptive statistics to disclose employees and customer's profile. Hypotheses analyzed by using AMOS 24 to test the effect of organizational commitment on service quality, and to test which group has more effect on service quality by using multi-group analysis tool which developed by Gaskin, & Lim (2016).

5.2 Descriptive Statistics/Other

Descriptive statistics by SPSS 25.0 was used to describe the profile of the sample participated in this study, the descriptive statistics of employees participated in this study was 402 academic staff were 247 and non-academic staff were 155, which 59.7% of employee participated were male, and 40.3 were female. The age of employees participated were 46.7% under 40 years old, while 53.3% more than 40 years old. Regarding the qualification of the employees participated, 8.5 of participated were Secondary school, and majority of the respondents 46.5 % were bachelor, 27.1% were PhD or equivalent, while 15% were master's degree. Concerning the experience of the respondents, 42.3 % have been working with their respective university less than 10 years, 57.7% have been working more than 10 years in this university.

5.3 Measurement Model/Other

The result of the measurement model which constructed by organizational commitment (affective and continue), service quality (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy). Concerning model fit, the result shows an acceptable fit in which the χ^2 statistic was 613.378, (DF=2.167, $p < 0.000$), CFI=0.971, TLI =0.967, SRMR = 0.031, RMSEA =0.054, and PClose =0.13. These indices showed excellent model fit as shown in table (3) which is the output of model fit measure plugin tool which developed by Gaskin, & Lim (2016), researcher add TLI to this output as recommended by (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2010; Kline, 2011).

Results of reliability, convergent and divergent validity, and correlation summarized in the Table (1), which shown that, composite reliability (CR) was between 0.881 -0.968, which were much higher than 0.70, and Average variance extracted (AVE) was above 0.50 as recommended by (Fornell, C., & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al, 2013) Average Shared Variance

(ASV) was bigger than Maximum Shared Variance (MSV), (Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson, 2010; Kline, 2011; Malhotra, Naresh and Dash, 2015). Therefore, according to the table (1), the measurement model of this study achieved reliability, convergent and divergent validity by means of (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al, 2010). Convergent Validity and Reliability shown in table (1).

Table 1: Reliability, Convergent and Divergent validity, and Correlation

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Cont	Aff	Res	Ass	Emp	Rel
Cont	0.881	0.650	0.161	0.888	0.806					
Aff	0.893	0.678	0.161	0.905	0.402***	0.824				
Res	0.964	0.872	0.376	0.967	0.292***	0.369***	0.934			
Ass	0.965	0.873	0.381	0.965	0.301***	0.251***	0.283***	0.934		
Emp	0.968	0.860	0.376	0.971	0.302***	0.394***	0.613***	0.402***	0.927	
Rel	0.962	0.835	0.381	0.963	0.332***	0.320***	0.363***	0.617***	0.405***	0.914

*Cont = Continuance, Aff = Affective, Res = Responsiveness, Ass = Assurance, Emp = Empathy, Rel = Reliability.

5.3 Structural Model/Other

After checking the reliability, the convergent validity and discriminant validity, the structural model was conducted to examine the effect of organizational commitment on higher education service quality. The hypothesized structural model showed consistency of the hypotheses with the data (χ^2 statistic was 731.382, normed Chi-square = 2.505; CFI .962; LTI .956; RMSEA = .061). All these fit indices for the organizational commitment and service quality model met the statistical recommended values which indicated a fitting structural hypothesized model.

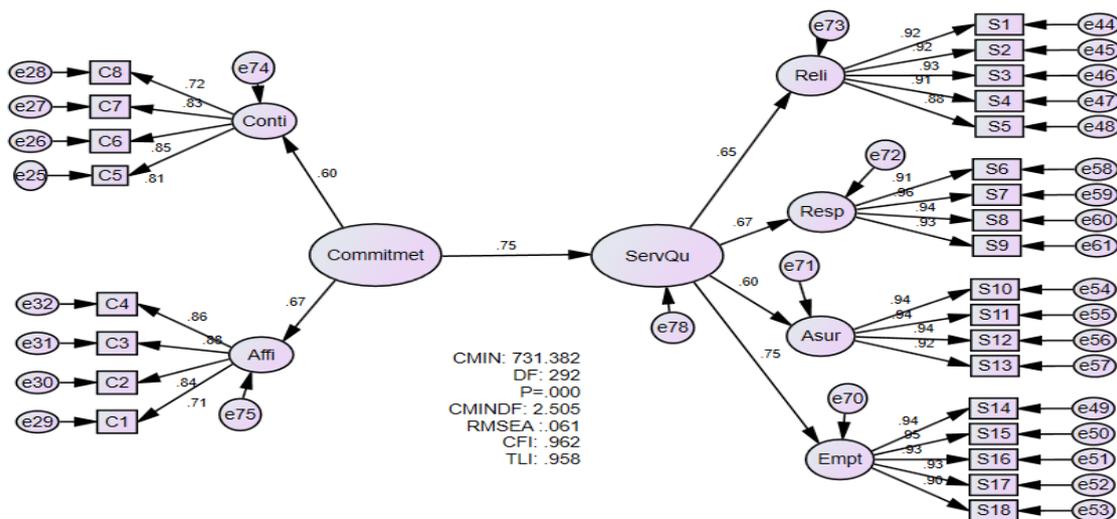


Fig.2. The Hypothesized Model of the Study

From the standardized regression estimation provided in the Table 2, for testing the direct effect of organizational commitment on service quality. Standardised path coefficients $\beta = .75$, $t = 6.350$, $p = .000$), hypotheses the effect of organizational commitment in service quality was supported, the result shown in table 2.

Table 2: Standardized Regression Estimation

	Estimate		Standard Error	t-value (C.R)	P Value	Result
	Unstandardized	Standardized				
Commitment → ServQual	0.82	0.75	0.028	6.350	0.000	Supported

In addition this study investigate which group (academic or non-academic staff) has more effect on service quality, From the standardised regression estimation provided in the Table 3, for testing the direct effect of organizational commitment on service quality. Standardised path coefficients for the effect of organizational commitment of academic staff in service

quality $\beta = .67$, $t = 11.194$, $p = .000$), while Standardised path coefficients for the effect of organizational commitment of non-academic staff in service quality $\beta = .607$, $t = 11.959$, $p = .000$). this result shown different effect of organizational commitment of the academic and non-academic staff on service quality, this result shown in table (3).

Table 3: Standardised Regression Estimation Academic and Non-Academic Staff

	Estimate		Standard Error	t-value (C.R)	P Value
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
Academic Commitment → ServQual	0.805	0.670	0.072	11.194	0.000
Non-Acad Commitment → ServQual	0.455	0.607	.038	11.959	0.000

Furthermore, table (3) shown the size different of the effect of organizational commitment on service quality between the two groups (academic and non-academic staff), the result shown significant different of the effect of organizational commitment on higher education between academic and non-academic staff, this result shown in table (4).

Table 4: The different effect of organizational commitment in service quality through two groups

Path Name	Academic Beta	Non-academic Beta	Difference in Betas	P-Value for difference	Interpretation
Commitment → ServQual	0.670***	0.607***	0.063	0.000	The positive relationship between ServQual and Commitment is stronger for Academic

*** $p < 0.001$

6. Discussion and implications

The hypotheses which investigate the effect of organizational commitment on service quality was supported, the effect explains 75% of the variance in organizational commitment ($r^2=.63$). This empirical result confirms the previous theoretically that established the relationship between organizational commitment and service quality, organizational commitment of customer contact employees largely determine customer perceptions of service quality (Boshoff and Tait, 1996; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004), when academic staff commitment to their organization due to get care from their organization about their well-being and valued their effort than employees reciprocate that by more effort to improve service quality (Al-refaei and Zumrah, 2019a). Nevertheless, it will be more difficult to delivering the desirable level of service quality when the employees unwilling to exert any additional effort to improve service quality (Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry, 1990). Therefore, employee commitment is very important to deliver the desirable level of service quality. However, the result of this study confirmed previous research has shown that organizational commitment positively and significantly affect service quality (Boshoff and Tait, 1996; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004; while Kansal, 2012; Wong and Cheung, 2014; Little and Dean, 2006; Chu, Tseng and Tsai, 2014). Furthermore, the result of this study shown that, organizational commitment of academic staff shown have more effect on service quality, this may due to the academic staff got more benefit from their universities such as the salary and other benefits.

7. Conclusion

This study concludes that, when employee commitment to their organization due to organization initiative to recognize the employees effort, and reward them and take care about their well-being, then the employees reciprocate that by organizational commitment and performed better service quality. Therefore organization has to offer more initiatives as recognize employee effect, such as offer internal or external training can enable the employee to obtain new knowledge, skills and attitudes which is important to enhance ability of the employees to use various behaviour to apply their training outcomes to their job (Zumrah, 2014), able to demonstrate quality of service to their customers (Zumrah, 2013). Moreover, organization have empowered their employee to participate in decision making, and recognize their effort by justice performance appraisal, and reward them, that can shape the employee attitude and behaviour, because the employee will reciprocate that practise by more commitment, consequently employees who are more commitment to their organization are more likely to provide higher service quality (Snipes, Oswald, LaTour and Armenakis, 2005), because they exert extra effort to perform better service quality to benefit their organization.

8. Limitations and directions for future research

The uniqueness of this study is matching customer perceptions of service quality with organizational commitment of the employee who performs the service in higher education, therefore, the sample was chosen from only one industry, in

individual level of analysis, therefore, we can't conform if the result of this study can be generalized across all industries. However, future studies can replicate this study across service industries that offering a variety of services to variety of customers to provide validation. In addition, this study investigate two kind of organizational commitment (affective and continece), future studies have to include the three kind of organizational commitment (affective, continece, and normative).

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Appendix

Research Questionnaire

(This is for only academic research & no intention to disclose any personal information)

Items Measuring Organizational Commitment

No	Variable
1	I am very happy to be a member of this university.
2	I feel great loyalty toward this university.
3	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now
4	I owe a great deal to my organization
5	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my university right now
6	It would be very hard for me to leave the university right now, even if I wanted to.
7	It would be too costly for me to leave my university right now
8	I would be spending the rest of my career in this university

Items Measuring Service Quality

No	Variable
1	When the lecturer promise to do something by a certain time. He/she does so
2	When I have problems the lecturer is sympathetic and reassuring
3	The lecturer is dependable
4	The lecturer provides series at the time he/she promised to do so
5	The lecturer keep their work accurately
6	The lecturer does not tell others exactly which series will be preformed
7	I don't resave prompt series from the lecturer
8	The lecturer is not always willing to help others
9	The lecturer respond to other request prompt even if he/she is too busy
10	I can trust the lecturer
11	I feel safe in my transactions with the lecturer
12	The lecturer is polite
13	I get adequate support from the lecturer to do my job
14	The lecturer gives me individual attention
15	The lecturer gives me personal attention
16	The lecturer knows my needs
17	The lecturer has my best interests at heart
18	The lecturer has operating hours convenient to all their customers