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## Determinants of Participant Satisfaction in Mandarin Language Courses

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**Abstract:** Participant satisfaction is a key indicator of educational service quality and institutional sustainability in non-formal education. The growing demand for Mandarin language proficiency in Batam has intensified competition among course providers, making it essential to understand the factors influencing participant satisfaction. This study examines the effects of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence on participant satisfaction at LKP Maitreyawira Batam. A quantitative survey was conducted with 88 participants enrolled in Mandarin language courses, and the data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. The findings reveal that service quality and learning facilities positively influence participant satisfaction, with learning facilities emerging as the strongest determinant. In contrast, instructor competence does not show a significant independent effect on satisfaction. Collectively, the three variables significantly explain participant satisfaction, indicating that institutional quality depends on the combined contribution of academic services, physical learning environments, and instructional support. The study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from a non-formal Mandarin language training institution, a context that has received limited scholarly attention. It also identifies learning facilities as the primary driver of participant satisfaction, offering practical guidance for managers of course and training institutions in prioritizing resource allocation and service improvement to enhance participant satisfaction and institutional competitiveness.

**Keywords:** Learning Facilities, Mandarin Language Courses, Non-Formal Education, Participant Satisfaction, Service Quality.

### INTRODUCTION

Non-formal education has become an important component of the educational system in supporting lifelong learning and improving human resource quality. In Indonesia, Course and Training Institutions (Lembaga Kursus dan Pelatihan/LKP) play a strategic role in providing educational services that complement formal education and respond directly to labor market demands. One area that has experienced significant growth is foreign language education, particularly Mandarin language courses. The increasing economic cooperation between Indonesia and China has created greater demand for Mandarin language proficiency, especially in industrial and commercial cities such as Batam.

Batam is one of Indonesia's major industrial and international trade centers. The presence of multinational companies and foreign investments has increased the need for workers who possess Mandarin language skills. Consequently, various educational institutions have developed Mandarin language programs to meet this growing demand. However, increasing competition among course providers requires institutions to continuously improve their service quality in order to attract and retain participants. In this context, participant satisfaction becomes a key indicator of institutional performance and sustainability.

Participant satisfaction reflects the extent to which educational services meet or exceed participant expectations. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), satisfaction is a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing perceived performance with prior expectations. In educational settings, satisfaction is closely related to the quality of learning experiences, institutional services, and supporting facilities provided by educational organizations. Participants who are satisfied tend to continue their learning activities, demonstrate loyalty to the institution, and provide positive recommendations to others.

Several factors have been identified as determinants of participant satisfaction. One important factor is service quality. Parasuraman et al. (1988) introduced the SERVQUAL model, which consists of five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions have been widely used to evaluate service quality across various sectors, including education. High-quality services can improve participant trust, increase comfort, and enhance overall satisfaction.

Another important determinant is learning facilities. Educational facilities provide the physical environment and resources necessary to support effective learning processes. According to Tjiptono (2011), facilities are physical resources that must be available before a service can be delivered effectively. In educational institutions, facilities include classrooms, learning media, internet access, instructional equipment, and supporting infrastructure. Adequate facilities create a conducive learning environment and contribute positively to participant satisfaction.

Instructor competence is also considered an essential factor influencing educational outcomes. Competent instructors are expected to possess pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies that enable them to facilitate effective learning. In Mandarin language courses, instructor competence is particularly important because participants must master not only vocabulary and grammar but also pronunciation, tones, and cultural aspects of the language. Therefore, instructors are expected to demonstrate strong teaching skills and subject-matter expertise.

Previous studies have consistently reported that service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence influence learner satisfaction in educational settings. However, most of these studies were conducted in formal education, higher education, or general vocational training institutions, where learning objectives, participant characteristics, and service delivery differ substantially from those of specialized non-formal language courses. As a result, existing findings cannot be directly generalized to Mandarin language training institutions.

Moreover, previous research has typically examined these factors independently or in broader educational contexts without identifying their relative importance within a specialized language-learning environment. In Mandarin language courses, participant satisfaction may be influenced by unique instructional characteristics, including pronunciation accuracy, tonal mastery, interactive learning activities, and specialized teaching resources, which distinguish them from other educational settings. Consequently, empirical evidence on the combined effects of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence in this context remains limited.

To address this gap, the present study simultaneously examines the influence of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence on participant satisfaction in a non-formal Mandarin language training institution in Batam. In addition to extending the literature on educational service quality, this study identifies the most influential determinant of participant satisfaction, providing practical evidence to support managerial decision-making and quality improvement in non-formal language education.

Although these studies provide valuable insights, most previous research has focused on formal educational institutions, higher education, or general training services. Research examining participant satisfaction in Mandarin language courses within non-formal educational institutions remains limited. Furthermore, studies that simultaneously investigate service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence in the context of Mandarin language education are still relatively scarce. This situation indicates the existence of a research gap that requires further investigation.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence are important determinants of learner satisfaction in educational institutions. Most of this evidence, however, has been generated from formal education, higher education, or general vocational training settings, where institutional characteristics, learning objectives, and participant expectations differ from those of specialized language training institutions.

Despite these contributions, limited empirical research has examined participant satisfaction in non-formal Mandarin language courses. Furthermore, existing studies rarely investigate the simultaneous effects of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence within a single analytical model or identify which factor has the greatest influence on participant satisfaction. Consequently, it remains unclear whether findings from formal education can be generalized to specialized Mandarin language training institutions.

Addressing this gap is important because Mandarin language courses involve distinctive learning characteristics, including pronunciation accuracy, tonal mastery, and intensive classroom interaction, which may influence participant satisfaction differently from other educational contexts. Understanding the relative importance of institutional service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence is therefore essential for improving educational quality and maintaining competitiveness among non-formal education providers.

LKP Maitreyawira Batam provides an appropriate context for investigating these issues due to the growing demand for Mandarin language education and increasing competition among course providers in Batam. Accordingly, this study examines the simultaneous influence of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence on participant satisfaction. By identifying the most influential determinant, this study extends the literature on participant satisfaction in non-formal language education and offers practical evidence to support managerial decision-making and quality improvement in course and training institutions.

The novelty of this study extends beyond its research setting by providing a comprehensive analysis of participant satisfaction in non-formal language education. While previous studies have generally examined service quality, learning facilities, or instructor competence separately or within formal educational contexts, this study integrates these three determinants into a single analytical model to evaluate their relative contributions to participant satisfaction in Mandarin language courses. Furthermore, the study identifies learning facilities as the most influential determinant, offering new empirical evidence on the relative importance of institutional factors in shaping participant satisfaction. These findings contribute to the literature on educational service quality by extending existing knowledge to specialized non-formal language education and provide an evidence-based framework that can guide strategic quality improvement and resource allocation in course and training institutions.

Based on the research background, literature review, and identified research gap, this study aims to analyze the influence of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence on participant satisfaction at LKP Maitreyawira Batam, both partially and simultaneously. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of educational management literature and practically to the improvement of service quality and participant satisfaction in non-formal education institutions.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the effects of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence on participant satisfaction in Mandarin language courses at LKP Maitreyawira Batam. More specifically, the study investigates the extent to which each variable contributes to participant satisfaction and identifies the most dominant factor influencing satisfaction. Theoretically, this research contributes to the enrichment of educational service quality studies by integrating service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence within the context of non-formal language education. It also provides empirical support for the relevance of learner satisfaction models in course-based educational institutions. Practically, the findings are expected to assist LKP Maitreyawira Batam and similar non-formal education providers in formulating improvement strategies, particularly in service management, facility development, instructor professional development, and participant-centered learning services.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design using a survey approach. The research was conducted at LKP Maitreyawira Batam. The population consisted of all active participants enrolled in Mandarin language courses during the study period. Because the total population comprised 88 participants, this study employed a total sampling (census) technique, in which all members of the population were included as research respondents. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The independent variables consisted of Service Quality ( $X_1$ ), Learning Facilities ( $X_2$ ), and Instructor Competence ( $X_3$ ), while Participant Satisfaction ( $Y$ ) served as the dependent variable.

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Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from established measurement scales in the literature. The Service Quality construct was adapted from the SERVQUAL dimensions developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), while the Learning Facilities construct was based on the educational facilities concept proposed by Tjiptono (2011). Instructor Competence was measured using indicators reflecting pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies as outlined in the Indonesian National Education Standards (Government of Indonesia, 2005). Participant Satisfaction was measured based on the customer satisfaction concept proposed by Kotler and Keller (2016). The questionnaire consisted of four constructs: Service Quality (15 indicators), Learning Facilities (10 indicators), Instructor Competence (8 indicators), and Participant Satisfaction (12 indicators). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Prior to hypothesis testing, the instrument was evaluated for validity using item–total correlation and for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analytical procedures included descriptive statistics, validity testing, reliability testing, classical assumption testing, multiple linear regression analysis, partial hypothesis testing (t-test), simultaneous hypothesis testing (F-test), and coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### Respondent Characteristics

A total of 88 respondents participated in this study. Respondent characteristics were summarized based on demographic variables such as gender, age, educational background, occupation, and course level to provide an overview of the study sample.

#### Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the distribution of responses for each study variable. Table X presents the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values for Service Quality, Learning Facilities, Instructor Competence, and Participant Satisfaction. The results indicate that all variables obtained relatively high mean scores, suggesting that respondents generally perceived the quality of educational services positively.

#### Instrument Validity and Reliability

Instrument validity was assessed using item–total correlation, with all questionnaire items exceeding the minimum acceptable correlation coefficient, indicating satisfactory construct validity. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha showed that all constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming that the measurement instrument possessed good internal consistency.

### Classical Assumption Tests

Prior to multiple regression analysis, the regression assumptions were evaluated. The normality test indicated that the residuals were normally distributed. Multicollinearity diagnostics showed tolerance values greater than 0.10 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below 10, indicating no multicollinearity among the independent variables. The heteroscedasticity test also demonstrated no significant heteroscedasticity, confirming that the regression model satisfied the classical assumptions.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to examine the influence of Service Quality, Learning Facilities, and Instructor Competence on Participant Satisfaction. The regression results are presented in Table X.

**Table 1.** Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Variable	B	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Constant	7.051	1.656	0.102	-
Service Quality (X <sub>1</sub> )	0.234	2.492	0.015	Accepted
Learning Facilities (X <sub>2</sub> )	0.428	2.918	0.005	Accepted
Instructor Competence (X <sub>3</sub> )	0.325	1.642	0.104	Rejected

Source: Processed Primary Data (2026)

Based on Table 1, the multiple regression equation can be formulated as follows:

$$Y = 7.051 + 0.234X_1 + 0.428X_2 + 0.325X_3$$

The regression equation indicates that all independent variables have positive coefficients. Learning facilities (X<sub>2</sub>) have the highest regression coefficient (B = 0.428), followed by instructor competence (B = 0.325) and service quality (B = 0.234).

The partial hypothesis testing results indicate that service quality has a significant effect on participant satisfaction (t = 2.492; p = 0.015). Learning facilities also have a significant effect on participant satisfaction (t = 2.918; p = 0.005). However, instructor competence does not significantly affect participant satisfaction (t = 1.642; p = 0.104).

**Table 2.** Simultaneous Hypothesis Testing Results

F-value	Sig.
46.301	0.000

Source: Processed Primary Data (2026)

The simultaneous hypothesis testing result shows that service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence collectively have a significant effect on participant satisfaction (F = 46.301; p = 0.000).

**Table 3.** Coefficient of Determination

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
0.789	0.623	0.610

Source: Processed Primary Data (2026)

Table 3 shows that the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) is 0.623. This indicates that 62.3% of the variation in participant satisfaction can be explained by service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence. The remaining 37.7% is explained by other variables outside the scope of this study.

### Dominant Predictor

The relative contribution of each independent variable was evaluated using the **standardized regression coefficients (Standardized Beta)** rather than the unstandardized coefficients (B). The variable with the largest standardized beta coefficient was considered the most dominant predictor of participant satisfaction because standardized coefficients enable direct comparison among variables measured on different scales.

**Table 4.** Standardized Beta Coefficient

Variable	B	Standardized Beta
Service Quality	0.234	0.281
Learning Facilities	0.428	0.392
Instructor Competence	0.325	0.174

Source: Processed Primary Data (2026)

## Discussion

### 1. Service Quality and Participant Satisfaction

The findings indicate that service quality positively and significantly influences participant satisfaction. This result supports the SERVQUAL framework (Parasuraman et al., 1988), which proposes that satisfaction arises when educational services consistently meet or exceed participants' expectations across the dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. From the perspective of Expectation Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980), participants evaluate their learning experience by comparing their expectations with the actual services received. When administrative services are responsive, communication is clear, and staff demonstrate professionalism, positive expectation confirmation occurs, leading to higher satisfaction.

The findings are consistent with Maknurah and Astuningtyas (2021), Rahayu et al. (2021), Htang and Khaing (2021), and Seitova et al. (2024), who reported that educational service quality significantly influences learner satisfaction. However, this study extends previous findings by demonstrating that the SERVQUAL dimensions remain applicable within non-formal Mandarin language education, where participants evaluate not only instructional quality but also institutional responsiveness and learning support throughout the educational process.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the applicability of SERVQUAL and Expectation Confirmation Theory in explaining participant satisfaction within non-formal language education. Practically, they suggest that institutions should continuously improve administrative responsiveness, communication, and learner support services to enhance participant satisfaction and institutional competitiveness.

Overall, these findings indicate that service quality functions as a core institutional mechanism through which participant satisfaction is developed in non-formal language education. Consistent with SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and Expectation Confirmation Theory (Oliver, 1980), participant satisfaction is achieved when educational services consistently meet or exceed learners' expectations throughout the learning process. Therefore, this study generalizes that institutional responsiveness, reliability, and learner-centered services are fundamental determinants of participant satisfaction regardless of the specific language being taught.

### 2. Learning Facilities and Participant Satisfaction

Learning facilities were found to have a positive and significant effect on participant satisfaction and emerged as the strongest predictor among the variables examined. This finding indicates that participants attach considerable importance to the physical learning environment and educational resources that support effective learning. According to Tjiptono (2011), educational facilities represent an essential component of service delivery because they directly shape learners' experiences during the educational process.

From the perspective of educational service quality, learning facilities function as tangible evidence of institutional commitment to quality. Well-equipped classrooms, instructional media, internet access, and comfortable learning environments facilitate interaction, improve learner engagement, and reduce barriers to language acquisition. In Mandarin language education, these facilities are particularly important because effective language learning relies heavily on audiovisual media, pronunciation practice, interactive learning activities, and access to appropriate instructional resources.

The findings are consistent with Imelda et al. (2024), Junanda and Suryani (2025), Hai (2022), and Bolatimi (2025), who reported that learning facilities significantly improve learner satisfaction. Nevertheless, this study contributes additional evidence by demonstrating that learning facilities constitute the most influential determinant of participant satisfaction within non-formal Mandarin language education, highlighting the central role of tangible educational resources in specialized language-learning environments.

Practically, these findings suggest that investments in educational infrastructure, digital learning technologies, classroom facilities, and instructional resources should be prioritized to maximize participant satisfaction and strengthen institutional competitiveness.

Overall, the findings suggest that learning facilities represent more than physical infrastructure; they constitute tangible evidence of institutional quality that directly shapes participants' learning experiences. This finding extends educational service quality literature by demonstrating that tangible learning resources become the strongest determinant of participant satisfaction within specialized non-formal language education. Consequently, educational institutions seeking to improve participant satisfaction should prioritize investments in learning environments that facilitate active engagement and effective language acquisition.

### 3. Instructor Competence and Participant Satisfaction

Contrary to expectations, instructor competence did not have a statistically significant effect on participant satisfaction. Although competent instructors remain essential for delivering effective learning, their competence alone may not differentiate participants' overall evaluations of the institution.

This finding can be interpreted through Expectation Confirmation Theory. Participants generally expect instructors in professional language institutions to possess adequate pedagogical and subject-matter competence. When this expectation is consistently met across instructors, competence becomes a basic service requirement rather than a distinguishing factor influencing satisfaction. Consequently, participants are more likely to evaluate aspects that vary more noticeably during their learning experience, such as service quality and learning facilities.

Another possible explanation relates to the characteristics of non-formal language education. Participants interact not only with instructors but also with administrative staff, learning resources, classroom environments, scheduling systems, and supporting services. Their overall satisfaction therefore reflects the complete educational experience rather than instructional competence alone. In this context, institutional service quality and learning facilities become more salient determinants of satisfaction.

Although this result differs from Suhartini et al. (2022), it does not necessarily contradict previous literature. Instead, it suggests that the influence of instructor competence may depend on educational context and participant expectations. In specialized non-formal language institutions where instructor competence is relatively homogeneous, institutional factors may explain greater variation in participant satisfaction.

Theoretically, these findings indicate that instructor competence should not always be assumed to be the dominant determinant of participant satisfaction. Instead, its influence may be contingent upon contextual factors and participants' baseline expectations. Practically, non-formal language institutions should continue maintaining high instructor competence while simultaneously strengthening institutional services and learning facilities to achieve greater improvements in participant satisfaction.

Overall, these findings suggest that instructor competence functions as a threshold factor rather than a differentiating factor in participant satisfaction. When participants perceive instructor competence to be consistently adequate, their evaluations of satisfaction are more strongly influenced by institutional services and learning facilities. This finding refines Expectation Confirmation Theory by indicating that attributes fulfilling participants' minimum expectations contribute less to satisfaction than institutional attributes that exceed expectations and create distinctive learning experiences.

#### **4. Simultaneous Effect of Service Quality, Learning Facilities, and Instructor Competence on Participant Satisfaction**

The findings demonstrate that service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence collectively explain a substantial proportion of participant satisfaction, indicating that satisfaction is a multidimensional construct shaped by both instructional and institutional factors. This result supports educational service quality literature, which emphasizes that learner satisfaction arises from the interaction of academic quality, institutional services, and learning environments rather than from any single dimension.

Theoretically, this study extends previous research by integrating service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence into a single analytical model within the context of non-formal Mandarin language education. The findings also demonstrate the relative importance of these determinants, identifying learning facilities as the strongest predictor of participant satisfaction. This contributes empirical evidence to educational management literature by showing that tangible educational resources play a particularly important role in specialized language training institutions.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide evidence-based guidance for managers of course and training institutions. Investments should prioritize improvements in learning facilities and service quality while maintaining instructor competence as a foundational requirement. Such an integrated quality improvement strategy is expected to enhance participant satisfaction, strengthen institutional competitiveness, improve participant retention, and support the long-term sustainability of non-formal language education providers.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that participant satisfaction in non-formal Mandarin language education is multidimensional and results from the interaction of instructional quality, institutional services, and learning environments. Although all three variables contribute collectively to participant satisfaction, institutional factors represented by learning facilities and service quality exert greater influence than instructor competence alone. This finding extends educational service quality theory by emphasizing that participant satisfaction should be understood as an institutional outcome rather than solely an instructional outcome. Consequently, quality improvement initiatives should adopt an integrated institutional approach that simultaneously enhances educational services, learning facilities, and instructional support.

#### **5. Theoretical and Practical Contributions**

The findings of this study contribute to the educational management literature in several ways. First, they provide empirical support for the applicability of SERVQUAL and Expectation Confirmation Theory within the context of non-formal Mandarin language education, demonstrating that participant satisfaction is influenced not only by instructional processes but also by institutional service delivery and learning environments. Second, by integrating service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence into a single analytical model, this study extends previous research that has generally examined these determinants separately or within formal educational settings. Third, the identification of learning facilities as the strongest predictor provides new empirical evidence that tangible institutional resources play a more prominent role in shaping participant satisfaction than instructor competence in specialized language training institutions.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that managers of course and training institutions should adopt an integrated quality improvement strategy. While instructor competence should be maintained as a fundamental quality standard, greater strategic emphasis should be placed on improving learning facilities and institutional service quality because these dimensions have the greatest potential to enhance participant

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence on participant satisfaction at LKP Maitreyawira Batam. The findings indicate that service quality and learning facilities have positive and significant effects on participant satisfaction, while instructor competence does not have a significant independent effect. Among the three independent variables, learning facilities emerged as the strongest predictor of participant satisfaction. Simultaneously, service quality, learning facilities, and instructor competence significantly influence participant satisfaction, with the regression model explaining 62.3% of the variance in participant satisfaction. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating institutional service quality and learning environments in improving participant satisfaction within non-formal language education.

From a practical perspective, the results suggest that managers of course and training institutions should prioritize investments in learning facilities while maintaining high standards of service quality and instructor competence. Such an integrated quality improvement strategy is expected to enhance participant satisfaction, strengthen institutional competitiveness, and support the long-term sustainability of non-formal education providers.

This study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted in a single non-formal Mandarin language training institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. Second, the study employed a cross-sectional survey design, preventing the examination of changes in participant satisfaction over time. Third, participant satisfaction was explained using only three independent variables, whereas other potentially influential factors, such as institutional image, tuition fees, learner motivation, service value, participant loyalty, and learning outcomes, were not included in the analytical model.

Future research is therefore encouraged to examine participant satisfaction across multiple course and training institutions, employ longitudinal or mixed-method research designs to gain deeper insights into participant experiences, and incorporate additional institutional, psychological, and behavioral variables to develop a more comprehensive understanding of participant satisfaction in non-formal education.

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