



Service Quality of Web Information Systems

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Background: It is essential that web designers understand what users expect of web services, how they perceive service dimensions such as security, usability and information quality, and which ones they value most.

Research question: How do users perceive the service quality of web sites in terms of information quality, usability and service interaction?

Setting/Participants/Resources: Data were obtained from 1,900 users of web sites of a for-profit online bookstore and a non-profit national information center through the E-Qual Index that was administered online. An online questionnaire was used to gather data on demographic characteristics of web site users.

Methodology: In order to identify the service dimensions that both for-profit and non-profit web site users valued most, factor analysis was applied to data. Significance tests were carried out to see if there was a relationship between demographic characteristics of users and the service dimensions.

Results: Users of both web sites valued the service dimensions of trust, information quality, usability, design and empathy. Statistically significant correlations were observed between sex, education, experience and age of web site users and their expectations and/or perceptions of service dimensions.

Discussion/Conclusion: Findings indicate that users tend to rate the service quality of web sites on the basis of their personal characteristics and experiences. Hence, users' expectations should be regularly measured to revise the design and structures of both for-profit and non-profit web sites.

Keywords: web service quality, usability, information quality, trust, E-Qual Index, web information systems.