

## **ABSTRACT**

The primary purpose of this research was to study parents' expectations and perceived service quality on the awarded nurseries of 2001, Bangkok. The research focused on five dimensions of service quality; tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy including demographic factors. This study was conducted on the awarded childcare nurseries from which eleven from nineteen were selected with a total of 350 parents who participated in this research.

SERVQUAL survey instrument was taken to measure the expectation and perception of parents' views. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: expectation, perception, and personal information. Paired Samples Test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) methods were employed for testing the hypotheses. From the results presented, there was a difference between parents' expectations and perceived service quality of the awarded childcare as segmented by five dimensions; tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Also, there was a difference between parents' expectations and perceived service quality of the awarded childcare when classified by income levels, education levels, and occupation while there was no significant difference between parents' expectations and perceived service quality of the awarded childcare when classified by age levels, purpose of using the service, and number of children parents have in the childcare.

From the findings, childcare should close the gap between expectations and perception by improving service quality in the most concerned area, reliability, in order to obtain trust from parents and be able to compete further in childcare business.