

A LITERATURE REVIEW: SERVICE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Service quality in simple term means "what is expected and what is provided by the organization". The main motive of the research paper is to boost basic knowledge of service quality factors and models. This paper discusses the different variables of service quality facilities and the factors that affect the improvement of service quality and student achievement and well-being. This paper aims to assess as to how students perceive the service quality and their overall satisfaction. It is proposed to discuss the student's perception in each service area/ dimension measured with previous studies. This paper focuses on discusses different service quality representative models and dimensions for higher education.

Keywords: Higher Education, SERVQUAL, Service Quality, Gap Analysis, Student Satisfaction, Perception.

Introduction

The conventional system for imparting higher education which comprises colleges, universities and other institutions are facing tough competition among the institutions. To sustain in the current competitive scenario, the institutions shall have to focus on their primary stakeholders the students. This is why quality enhancement is an integral concern for most of the higher education institutions. Many authors have tried to explain and define the term 'Service Quality' which is a very difficult task. A number of authors have given different definitions and different perspective on service quality. Service Quality refers to the difference between students' expectations of what a firm should provide (i.e. expectations) and the perceived service performance. (Parsuraman *et. Al*, 1988) [2]. Service Quality is the difference between students' expectations for service performance prior facing every service encounter and their perceptions of the service received. (Hung, Y. H., Huang, M. L., & Chen, K. S. 2003). [3].

In mathematical equation, it is given by:

$$SQ = E - S \quad (1)$$

Where, SQ = Service Quality

E= Expectation

S= Satisfaction

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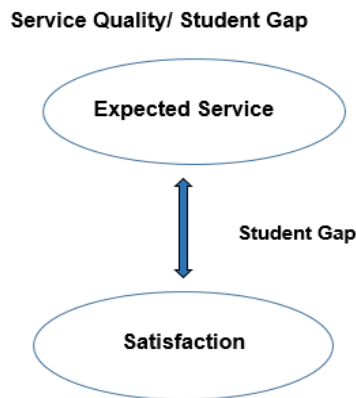


Figure.1: Service Quality Student Gap

Literature Survey

Different researchers have defined service quality differently. Based on published work, some of the well-known definitions of service quality in higher education. The empirical work done by well-known researchers have been reviewed in the subsequent paragraphs along with some of the well-known definitions of service quality.

Mahapatra et al. (2007) suggested and developed a measuring scale. Which is known as EduQUAL and used for evaluation of service quality in Technical Education institutes. He suggested that the attributes of “Opportunities of knowledge up gradation” should be implemented first and then the attributes of “Continuous evaluation” by the administrators of a TES. Next, “Industry–Institute Interface” and “Technology-driven teaching aids” can be taken up simultaneously in the next step/phase of the quality implementation programme. Thus education quality is adequate for predicting the overall evaluation of the technical education system by their stakeholders. but not the booming enough for desirable analysis which is a need for future research [4].

Ramseook-Munhurrun et al. (2010) examined educators’ concept of quality-of-service in the intermediate schools. EDUSERV, which measures educators’ predictions and judgement of quality of good services in the intermediate schools in Mauritius. He suggested the EDUSERV instrument may not guarantee improved levels of service quality but it may serve as a dynamic guidance in the weaker areas of secondary education and provide the better opportunities to improve and implement the better service quality [5]

Senthilkumar et al. (2011) developed a new model, to measure the good quality of service in higher education in universities in India. The constructs of service quality linked between the elements/sub-dimension variables. It is essential for developing the good quality of education in universities in India. According to him, education is a behavioral modification of students. The findings suggest to make proposal to modify the sub-dimensions/elements of quality to boost up the results of education [6].

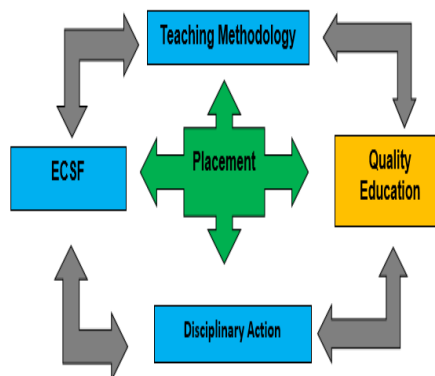


Fig.2: SQM-HEI Model

Table 1: Dimension of SQM-HEI Model

S. No.	SQM-HEI Model Dimensions	Description
1	Teaching Methodology	To focus on sub dimensions like; Expertise in skills, develop knowledge, use of libraries and up to date information, database, video conferencing, scholarship and research.
2	Environmental change in study factor	basic facilities, academic activities like workshops, conferences, overseas collaborations and seminars enrich the learning ambience To ensure the basic facilities, academic facilities, conferences and seminars, and required skills e.g., Information Technology
3	Disciplinary Action	objective of guiding the student to attain the outcome of education. Main motive is to give direction to students is to achieve their educational outcome.
4	Placement as the mediating factor	Industry institute interactions is on top priority.

Chuah (2011) investigated the link between service quality (SQ) and the student's satisfaction (SS) using a field study of 100 undergraduate students in one of the universities in Malaysia. The research findings presented here contributes to the existing knowledge of service quality & customer satisfaction both theoretically and practically. They suggested to make significant contribution to the body of knowledge in student's satisfaction management in higher education institutions. The findings suggest that there is also made practical implication to management of higher education especially in the area where SQ improvement is needed [7].

Garwe (2015) proposed to check out the impression of the student statement in increase of the service condition of education in universities. The outcomes revealed that the significant issues affecting in many areas e.g.; quality of teaching & learning, inadequate assignments, absentee lecturers, poorly qualified lecturers, sexual harassment and the lack of public address systems for mass lectures. But at the time of second survey, the results explained that all universities had communicate the concerned students'. But new issues raised by the new increasing enrolments [8].

Sadeh, E., & Garkaz, M. (2015) explained to bridging the gap through explaining the importance and role of service quality in HEIs as a mediating effect. This study showed how service quality played an important mediating role in students' satisfaction level. This study provided better knowledge and an idea for how to increase the level of fulfilment by providing the better service quality [9].

Menon (2015) proposed that many higher educational institutions in India, measure quality of service and give least importance to students. He demands for their educational services is insufficient. Students are like imprisoned audience. The institutions will have to give greater emphasis on improving service quality, pay proper attention and focused students too. To survive in the current competitive scenario institutions should have to focus on their primary stakeholders-students [1].

Ashish et al. (2016) empirically examined the critical service quality dimensions that contributes to student perspective in higher education and to analyse whether satisfaction with service delivery leads to behavioural intentions. The study also brings out interesting deductions about the relative importance of different quality dimensions in higher education. Finally, in future researchers could initiate comparative studies between government and private sector educational institutions to gain further insights into service quality dimensions and its impact on student perspective and other connected outcomes [10].

Rombe et al. (2016, December) explained that leadership plays very essential aspect in quality improvement. It is followed by customer service and process management. The results suggested that decision making authority in higher education can identify the quality issues. Then it will improve the accreditation system. They also suggested that researchers should give weightage to quality issues to find the relationship between factors involve in quality improvement [11].

Akareem et al. (2016) identified the demographic background information of students. According to demographic information to differentiate their perception about service quality of higher education. A sample from five top private universities to check out their perspective toward dimensions of service quality in higher education. The results explained that rank of students for university have a

symbolic influence on perception about quality of higher education. This research shows that the importance rate of education. They explained about how policy-makers and university authorities should establish a favourable academic environment and increase the brand image of the universities [12].

Weerasinghe, I. S., & Fernando, R. L. (2017) Students' satisfaction can be defined as a brief viewpoint resulting from an evaluation of students' educational experience, resources and facilities. Prior it was check out by common perceived plans but later it was measured through developed models for higher education. The goal of this analysis is to contribute all available valuable literature about students' satisfaction with a sound analytical and experimental background [13].

Deuren, R., & Lhaden, K. (2017) determined the dimensions of students' satisfaction in public and state colleges. The main goal of this analysis is to impart the better recommendations to the institutions. The findings explained that there were both, equalities and gaps between the specific institutions. The perception towards quality of factors are different from the overall student satisfaction. So, they defined mainly some factors show contribution towards students' satisfaction in both the institutions. But all other factors show that they are only relevant for the institutions [14].

Sefer Ada et al. (2017) evaluated the service quality in higher education Universities' department of education. This study was carried out by using a screening model from quantitative research methods. This research involved university students as sample who take part in the higher education institutions mentioned. The measuring tool of Service Quality in Higher Education Institutions is comprised of total 6 dimensions. The survey of this research was done during the 2016-2017 educational scholastic year. The findings showed that no. of girls were higher than no. of males as for the academic position and institutional role. On the other hand, the academic success of university students increased regarding all factors and total scores [15].

Evans et al. (2017) examined quality of service and student perspective in higher learning educational institutions. It shows the reviews of the literature on its influence on student satisfaction and the service quality variables in higher education. The conclusion of this research paper defined that service quality in higher education has a significant influence on student perception. Therefore, higher education institutions should create a technique to collect feedback from students. They should also develop their interest to determine the service quality dimensions so that they can make the essential advancements on the compatible dimensions of service quality [16].

Dewi et al. (2017) determined the factors of service quality and the outcome of quality of service on student satisfaction and dedication. The quality of service has an influence on perception and faithfulness. So that the service needs could be upgraded continuously. Based on the analysis, the things need to be improved on the accessibility of sufficient facilities, tools, instruments, and the human resources problems. They suggest to overcome this problem university should regularly conduct training for the staff in order to raise the importance of student satisfaction that will affect the loyalty. So they explained that university should conduct loyalty programs, such as giving a discount of tuition, and reward those who have been willing to invite relatives to join with the university [17].

Saleem, M., & Ch, H. (2017) proposed that to measure the gaps in service quality of higher education by using SERVQUAL. The findings show that there are gaps in all the five dimensions and found significant difference between students' perceptions and expectations. In this study, students' expectations exceeded their perceptions Therefore, the university should do improvement in all the five dimensions [18].

Aggarwal, D., & Sharma, D. (2018) purposed to identify the factors and the main elements to influence the students 'choice for admission or enrolment. The result of this research is that the institutions who are providing higher education courses should have to define the admissions approach, strategy and planning [19].

Farhana et al., (2018) studied the gap between students' expectation and perception towards the quality of service delivery in UNISEL. This research based on five dimensions of SERVQUAL. The questionnaires were, adapted from Parasuraman et al. (1985) distributed and mould to all the students from three faculties of UNISEL (University of Selangor) academic location, Shah Alam campus. He defined the students have negative perceptions of service quality delivery. Reliability, which had the largest gap, was found to be the superb dimension for all students. Hence, the university has to make more efforts especially in the selection of administrative officers and improve their level of independence in their work. The university should provide them proper training and motivate them. To enhance student perceptions of service quality the behaviour and presence of their employees matters a lot. As a result, it will create a good image among student and will reflect the image of the university [20].

Ganić et al. (2018) examined the impact of higher education services quality dimensions on student satisfaction and loyalty using an example of a private university in a developing country. The results of the analysis show that each quality dimension is directly, positively and significantly related to satisfaction. In addition, the difference with regard to previous studies concerning to analytical approach regarding the evaluation a contact between individual variables of service quality and student perspective, devotion and dedication. [21].

Al-Haddad et al. (2018) proposed that to find out the impact of the educational services level of quality in the business school of universities. The findings showed that the quality of services provided by the faculties were moderate, so there is a dire need to increase the pitch of quality in all these areas to get the highest satisfaction from students [22].

Fatima et al. (2018) proposed to introduce the mechanism of service quality in government and private higher education institutions. The universities have already been given the certain set of rules to meet the standards of quality as maintained as internationally. The findings explained that training towards to give quick response to students' problems and their needs will get better satisfaction and the infrastructure facilities will also improve the satisfaction proportion of the students towards the higher education quality services [23].

Ramya et al. (2019) delivered services properly and meet the expectations of the student's efficiently. This study explained to know about the basic knowledge of different models of service quality and the different dimensions in Service quality. In the recent competitive scenario, it is essential to give special attention and focus on service quality, success and survival of an organisation. They suggest that management should have to maintain quality, service and delivery properly and meet the expectations of the student's efficiently. [24].

Munshi, R. (2019) proposed to develop a HESQUAL model which is used to measure service quality of higher education institutes taking idea from the SERVQUAL scale developed by Parasuraman et al. in India. A conceptual model was built on the basis of literature survey consisting a no. of attributes related to service quality. 200 students were selected as Sample size and data were analyzed by using EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis). The final model consisted of 5 dimensions with 45 items. Therefore, this model should be used to measure the service quality for (HEI's) higher education institutes to improve in the areas which are lagging in terms of service quality performance [25].

Perera, M. R., & Abeysekera, N. (2019) the main aspect is to find out the factors of service quality. The modified SERVQUAL model used to measure the relationship between Perceived Service Quality (PSQ), (SAT) Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention (BI). Here, it is suggested that to increase the sample size and select more SQ variables for more accuracy in future [26].

Latif et al. (2019) developed a new construct and validate the variables HiEduQual (Higher Education Service Quality) to check the service quality in higher education (HE) institutions. They explained measuring scale/model was validated by questionnaire and focus group discussion with management and stakeholders. The study focuses on three very important conditions that come up from existing studies.

Firstly, current studies focused only on the students and other stakeholders to measure HE service quality to develop a questionnaire. The second current point is to ignore the reality that how the level of service quality has changed over time. They suggest the third current study construct leadership as a convincing and powerful dimension of service quality in Higher education [27].

Suprianto et al. (2020) investigated whether there is an effect of the service quality on the students' satisfaction in Medan State Polytechnic (MSP). This study showed that the level of students' satisfaction is 81.39% from the overall dimensions of service quality in the academic section. They concluded that the variables of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangible have a significant effect on the students' satisfaction at MSP which indicates that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected [28].

Ranjan et al. (2020) examined the relationship between the dimensions (tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy) and student satisfaction. As well as, this study also finds out the more critical factors that contributes most to student satisfaction. The main motive of this study is to understand the relationship of student Satisfaction with service quality of Amity University, Patna. The results showed that most of the students were satisfied with the facilities provided by the university. Therefore, university should make a strategy to overall success and improve student retention also. Hence, the result showed that all five dimensions of service quality is correlated with student satisfaction [29].

Gunaseelan et al. (2020) investigated the influence of the institution's locations on the service quality in educational institutions. The study focused on the quality of service between professional universities. They defined this study involved the estimation and hypothesis testing inferences on the significance of unknown population parameters. The findings explained that there was a difference in service quality between rural and urban students. They suggest location also plays an important role. So, the students should give importance based on their location to avail the facilities expected to professional higher educational institutions [30].

Mahesh Hooda, & Ajay Jain. (2020) defined how service quality played an important role in higher education among the Indian universities. They explained in this study all the dimensions affecting highly in service quality. They defined in findings that among all the dimensions of service quality the great impact of reliability affects service quality among the private universities of north India [31].

Yahaya et al. (2020) evaluated the service quality by students in HEIs. They suggest to measure or increase the level of importance and system of investment in the management institutions and administration also. The study defined that most of the students were very convinced with the services which were provided by the University. So they were well pleased and want to recommend the university and share their experiences with others. Therefore, they mentioned that the Universities should focus on improving its quality of services and delivery. Because these are related to the dimension's empathy and assurance. Both two factors were rated low. The findings explained that all the dimensions have a collective effect on the satisfaction and overall service quality [32].

Río-Rama et al. (2021) this research proposed to validate a model. They defined the explanatory model, which is used to measure the service quality and how it influences student's loyalty. They suggest the model as well as used to check the retaining the students through mediating variables i.e., perceived value, expectations, and satisfaction. The results defined that these variables were important for the higher management institution. This study is very useful to understand and check the relationship between service quality, student's satisfaction and their loyalty. They also suggest that the institutes managers should also focus on improving the student's satisfaction [33].

Luo, J., & Photchanachan, S. (2022) proposed to evaluate the service quality by using the scale named HESQUAL model. The research was conducting on the basis of literature review on worldwide students in higher education in China. The findings explained that there were gaps between the perceptions of international students and the service quality. which is provided by the organisation. So he suggests that the institutes should conduct not only the theoretical research as well as empirical research. Then it will be possible to fill the gap between perception and service quality [34].

Table 2: Different Service Quality Model Dimensions

Method/ Model	Author & Year	Dimensions
SERVQUAL	Parsuraman et al., 1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangibles • Reliability • Responsiveness • Assurance • Empathy
SERVPERV	Cronin & Taylor et al., 1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangibles • Reliability • Responsiveness • Assurance • Empathy
HEdPERF	Abdullah, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non –academic aspects • Academic aspects • Reputation • Access • Understanding
EduQUAL	Mahapatra et al., 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcomes • Responsiveness • Physical facilities • Personality development • Academics

EDUSERVE	Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academics • School facilities • Reliability • Responsiveness • Assurance-discipline
SQM-HEI	N. Senthilkumar et.al., 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Methodology • Environmental change in study factor (ECSF) • Disciplinary measure taken • Placement-related activities • Overall rating of service quality and satisfaction level.
HiEduQual	Latif et al., 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Quality • Administrative services • Knowledge services • Activities • Continuous improvement • Leadership quality

Conclusion

This paper focussed on different service quality models which researchers use to measure the service quality in higher education. Developed models are reliable and validated by questionnaire and many experts. The main motive of this paper is to understand the concept of service quality in higher education with less efforts and money in India HEIs. This paper also focused on the improvement in service quality in the higher education in India. Service quality in HEIs (SQM-HEI) will be of a major support in improving quality of higher education. The models cover most of the relevant factors and extend to modification for including more factors required for the Indian scenario and this model seems to suit the most in higher education. The first two scales which are SERVQUAL scale and SERVPERF scale are very common measurement scales that apply across the sectors. Both instruments have been applied in the education sector with some modification of the items. SQM-HEI model follows the perspective of students exclusively in the field of education. SQM-HEI model helps to identify the key areas of service quality to be focused in the higher educational institutions for enhancing the quality of education. The service quality variables correlated between the sub-dimension variables are essential for enhancing the quality of higher education in India. There are many educational institutions who focused their efforts on campus placement but the main focus of the organisation should be on creating maximum employability courses. Therefore, the educational institutions should target on skill development courses through better service delivery. The proposed model HiEduQual allows for the evaluation of service quality through various dimensions. The researchers may use different sub-dimensions of service quality to enhance the service quality which will further help in every educational institution to provide better service quality and delivery as a brand ambassador.

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