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“PERCEPTION OF SERVICE QUALITY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF UNDER GRADUATE STUDENTS OF BHAVNAGAR CITY”

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Abstract:

In the context of the educational service quality become a major issue to the students' academic achievement within the higher education worldwide. Consequently, institutions have to work hard to improve the academic achievement and have to take the feedback of the services provided to the students. Service quality is widely used and examined in various sectors whether service sector or manufacturing or agricultural sector. The purpose of this study to examine the quality of services on the students' academic achievement and other factors that contributes to the academic achievement of the students. An essential instrument, **SERVQUAL given by Parasuraman et al. (1988)** is used in this study. The aim of this study to examine the service quality and academic achievement in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The population of this study was 172 students of the Bhavnagar city among the different courses. The data analyzed and interpreted through the SPSS. The data were collected by the structured questionnaire. The data analysis done by using different techniques like descriptive analysis, Pearson Correlation analysis and ANOVA.

Keywords: Service Quality, Academic Achievement, Bhavnagar City, Higher Education, SERVQUAL

Introduction: Education sector is playing most important role in the economic development. Competition is now increasing within the industries in service sector. Researchers and academicians are emphasizing their attention towards educational sector. In this competitive environment, the services offered are the main base for the survival

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For the institutions in the educational sector. Institutions are evaluating the services provided by them and comparing with competitors for competitive advantage. In this context, service quality model given by Parasuraman et al. (1988) is widely used. Demin (2000) said that this sector should apply service quality concept as other sectors of economy. SERVQUAL model consist of five main dimensions i.e. Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy. Various researchers have used this model in from the different perspective like Hill utilized in higher education (1995), Anderson used SERVQUAL (1995) in educational set up, Banwet and Datta used in library (2002). Students are considered most important as they are directly affected by service quality. This paper is aimed to study impact of service quality on academic achievement of students with teaching quality of higher learning institutes. This would be a valuable contribution in the educational researcher and it will show importance of service quality for better performance of students.

Perception of students regarding service quality in higher education is not directly related with content and delivery of course units, but it related with tangible and intangible service. Individual academic achievement and satisfaction with quality of services are playing an important role in every institution. Every Institution, Department, business are trying to enhance service quality in order to fulfill the customer needs. They are comparing the services from their experience and their expectations; if it does not match it will cause a gap. The educational industry is facing rapid changes with high competition in order to attract the new students and retention of present students. Service quality is one of the most important tools that affect the students' decision.

Previous research done by some authors and they have told that SERVQUAL lacks generality and identified new model named SERVPERF to measure only performance excluding the expectations. Moreover, Bhavnagar city is one of the developing cities in Gujarat that challenge with nations education development. Government trying to improve the level of education in Bhavnagar city in comparison of other developed cities of Gujarat like Ahmadabad, Vadodara, Surat, and Rajkot. An institution in higher education seeks to deliver high quality services through educations curriculums. SERVQUAL model is effective in the measurement of service quality and useful to guide for changing environment to reduce

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weakness and increase strength. In Africa, Mbua (2003) implies that motivated and satisfied teachers are most likely to affect the students' learning positively while the opposite of that may have negative impacts on students' performance. Educational leaders and administrators/managers have to pay special attention to the phenomena of motivation and job satisfaction. Quaglia, Marrion & McIntire (2001) suggest that future research should consider whether teachers who are dissatisfied with their jobs negatively affect students' academic performance and whether teachers who are satisfied with their jobs have a positive impact on students' academic performance. At the end, the measurement of dimensions of the service quality of academic achievement will judge and compare between what they want and expect with what they perceived.

Literature Review: One of the most relevant stakeholders in educational quality is students. One of the primary goals of education is to please students. Students that are satisfied are a source of comparative advantage and word-of-mouth promotion for educational institutions. The availability of excellence at the institute can be attributed to student satisfaction and encouragement in the educational field. The standard of the institute should be assessed in order to see what quality satisfies or motivates students. Because of its broad acceptability and usage, the SERVQUAL model could be the best choice for measuring efficiency. The literature on service quality and its effect on satisfaction and motivation is presented in the following section.

➤ **Academic achievement:**

Without students schools, colleges, and universities are worthless. Any educational institution's most valuable commodity is its students. The country's social and economic growth is inextricably related to student academic achievement. Academic achievement of students is essential in producing high-quality graduates who will serve as great leaders and manpower for the nation (Ali et.al, 2009).

Previous research has focused on student academic performance measurement; it is one of the most difficult aspects of academic literature, and science student performance is influenced by social, psychological, economic, environmental, and personal factors. These

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factors have a significant impact on student achievement, but they differ from individual to person and country to country (**Mushtaq & Nawaz Khan, 2012**).

Various socioeconomic, neurological, and environmental influences influence students' academic success in higher education (**Hijazi & Naqvi, 2006**). Measuring students' academic success is often in the best interests of educators. This helps them to assess not just the knowledge levels of their pupils, but also the success of their own instructional methods, and possibly provide a gauge of student motivation (**Martirosyan, Saxon, & Wanjohi, 2014**).

Student success often closely related to the faculty in University being successful in retaining the best educators, programs and enrolments of the best. Students rely on the university's ability to provide them with the best available programmes as a stepping stone to their potential success, allowing them to acquire the best skills and knowledge possible throughout their working lives (**Waggoner and Goldman, 2005**).

The one criterion that made a difference in their academic success at university level was the student attitude toward their studies, where there was a positive relationship between the variables (**Kamariah et al., 2010**).

Andon et al., (2010) stated that companies and professional accounting bodies are seeking to acquire and retain the most flexible graduates with wide range of skills and knowledge. They also stated that the new era breeds extensive demand for this type of graduates and these corporate organization have started to go to extra length for the sake of finding the best talent with distinctive values (Andon et al., 2010).

➤ **Service quality**

Service quality has become a subject of concern for many scholarly scientists as a result of the fierce rivalry on the market, and it has been recognised as the key to maintaining excellent profit and a reliable connection in order to achieve customer satisfaction (**Kiran & Diljit, 2016**).

The service quality gaps model, according to **Bozoglu & Bilgic (2016)**, is the conceptualization of service quality as the difference between expected and perceived service. Furthermore, the importance of service quality can be seen in the service sectors, and

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service providers should be aware of the concept in order to explain to their clients the differences. Many research examined service quality by developing new models and hypotheses to resolve the importance of implementation and the widespread availability of high-quality services. Furthermore, many scientists looked into the efficiency of the services in various ways.

Kadhim et al., (2019) some scientists indicated that customer service is an extension to satisfy customer desires and needs, while others defined service quality as a general assessment of customer service. Furthermore, the standard of service was used to distinguish between consumers' expectations for services and their understanding of how such services were implemented.

Students rarely get optimistic about their tough successes in the short term, but in the long run, they become appreciative of those who trained them to face the real world, **according to Turban et al. (2002)**, as quoted in **Emery, Kramer, and Tian (2001)**. These schools need not be only concerned with obtaining a diploma or degree; they should also conduct tracer tests and see how their students do outside of the classroom.

The SERVQUAL model has been used in many observational experiments to measure service efficiency in educational establishments such as universities. The majority of these studies consider students to be educational service users (**Rigotti & Pitt, 1992; Ford et al., 1993; McElwee & Redman, 1993; Foroughi Abari et al., 2011; etc.**).

Kitchroen (2004) cited **Zammuto et al. (1996)** who have argued that perceived poor service quality will ultimately affect funding and viability in the university sector by reducing the popularity of the institution and thus the number and standard of applicants, but that the effect is indirect and relatively slow. The conducted researches show service gaps in different dimensions of service quality in their case studies.

In educational service quality measurement, as well as service quality measurement in other service sectors, perceived service quality is used to equate service expectations with perceptions of actual service efficiency (**Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990**).

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As actual performance exceeds students' expectations, there is positive confirmation, which leads to happiness (Buttle, 1996). This level of satisfaction will decide the university's long-term competitive advantage and viability.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Objectives of the Study:

1. To determine the relationship between dimensions of the service quality and academic performance of the students.
2. To study the difference between observation and expectation among the age group.
3. To study the difference between observation and expectation among the income group.
4. To study the difference between observation and expectation among the gender group.
5. To study the difference between observation and expectation among the course group.

SERVICE QUALITY DIMENSIONS

The appearance physical facilities, equipments, personnel, communication material

The aptitude to perform the promised services precisely.

The readiness to help customers and provide punctual service

The knowledge and politeness of employees and their capacity to communicate trust and confidence

The caring, individualized attention the institution provides its students.

Hypothesis:

H1: There is no correlation between observation of service quality and academic achievement of the students

H2: There is no significant difference of observations of service quality among different age groups.

H3: There is no significant difference of observations of service quality among different income groups.

H4: There is no significant difference of observations of service quality among different gender groups.

H5: There is no significant difference of observations of service quality among different years and course groups.

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Analysis and Interpretation

Table: 1: Difference between Observations and Expectations:

The Educational institutions should pay high attention to the following criteria where expectation is much more than the observations.

Criteria	Observation - Expectation
Well Infrastructural Campus	-17
Well Maintained Classrooms	-30
canteen Facilities	-48
Fast response to your request	-19
Your feedback is taken	-35
Academic staff provides professional answers	-22
Academic staff understands students' need	-38

Table: 2: Reliability of Data:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.878	50

The total reliability of expectations and observations is measured here using cronbach's alpha. It is 0.878 which tells that the data are reliable.

Table: 3: Correlation of percentage of the students and their observations.

		Correlations	
		Observations	Average percentage
Observations	Pearson Correlation	1	-.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.816
	N	172	172
Average percentage	Pearson Correlation	-.018	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.816	
	N	172	172

The pearson correlation coefficient here is -0.018 which tells that there is no significant correlation between the two variables.

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Table: 4: Age wise analysis.

Age groups.	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
17-19 years	55	87.7091	23.19377	3.12745
20-22 years	114	97.0614	20.57720	1.92723
22-25 Years	3	102.0000	5.19615	3.00000
Total	172	94.1570	21.68120	1.65318

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3432.846	2	1716.423	3.770	.025
Within Groups	76949.916	169	455.325		
Total	80382.762	171			

The F value here is 3.770 which are significant at 95 % confidence. Thus, we can conclude that there is a significant difference of observations according to different age groups

Table: 5: Gender wise analysis.

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Observations	Male	25	88.8400	15.97049	3.19410
	Female	147	95.0612	22.42712	1.84976

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Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.864	.354	-1.329	170	.186	-6.22122	4.68001	15.45965	3.01720
Equal variances not assumed			-1.685	42.021	.099	-6.22122	3.69105	13.66996	1.22751

The t value here is -1.329 which tells that there is no significant difference in observations between male and female.

Table: 6: Income wise analysis.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
1,00,000 to 3,00,000	129	94.2636	21.35910	1.88056
3,00,000 to 5,00,000	24	95.1667	22.77807	4.64955
5,00,000 to 10,00,000	16	91.9375	24.85013	6.21253
10,00,000 & above	3	93.3333	18.50225	10.68228

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Total	172	94.1570	21.68120	1.65318
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ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	106.785	3	35.595	.074	.974
Within Groups	80275.976	168	477.833		
Total	80382.762	171			

The F value here is 0.074 which is not significant at 95 % confidence. Thus, we can conclude that there is no significant difference of observations according to different income groups.

Table: 7: Year Wise Analysis:

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
First Year	17	103.2941	19.71283	4.78106
Second Yea	64	88.0313	21.83922	2.72990
Third Year	91	96.7582	20.99753	2.20114
Total	172	94.1570	21.68120	1.65318

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4436.613	2	2218.307	4.936	.008
Within Groups	75946.148	169	449.385		
Total	80382.762	171			

The F value here is 4.936 which is significant at 95 % confidence. Thus, we can conclude that there is a significant difference of observations according to different year groups.

Table: 8: Course Wise Analysis:

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
B.com	11	95.000	22.4360	2.0831
B.B.A	3	85.200	21.1813	3.8671

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		1	20.95	7
.C.A		00.0000	233	.91924
		7	7.778	5
.A.		7.5000	17	.50000
		1	11.00	2
ther	7	03.7647	301	.66862
		9	21.68	1
otal	72	4.1570	120	.65318

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4852.403	4	1213.101	2.682	.033
Within Groups	75530.359	167	452.278		
Total	80382.762	171			

The F value here is 2.682 which are significant at 95 % confidence. Thus, we can conclude that there is a significant difference of observations according to different course groups.

Conclusion: The five-dimensional SERVQUAL model can be used to assess the level of service quality in educational institutions and academic achievement of the students. The number of computed service gaps shows the educational center's top priorities for service adjustment and enhancement. The study revealed the fact that students' expectations were higher than the performance of the educational instructions. This study showed that students were given high importance to the criteria like well infrastructure, canteen facility, students' feedback, staff's behavior. This study revealed that there was significant difference among the different age groups. While gender and income were not much affecting to the service quality. It was to say that educational institutions should provide high quality of service not only to meet the expectations of the students but to build the strong relationship with them.

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