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Service Quality and Student Engagement in Higher Education

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Abstract: *The interdisciplinary research aims to investigate the perception of students about perceived service quality and measure the individual effect of each of the six factors of service quality on student engagement. The study was quantitative in nature and cross-sectional survey design was used in the paradigm of positivism. The researchers used the cluster sampling technique and sample comprised of 500 students from six public universities of Lahore. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to find out the factors of satisfying and dissatisfying in higher education through six dimensions of quality services (infrastructure, teachers teaching, academic planning, campus life, leadership, quality management). The data was collected using a close-ended questionnaire and subjected to different statistical analyses. The findings of the research indicated that students were satisfied with perceived services except infrastructure and quality of management. Management of these universities should handle strategically problems related teaching and learning process and they should always listen to their students complains. Practically, this study enables the management of these universities to identify the strength and weaknesses and make necessary improvements to increase student's satisfaction. This study helps to other universities to improve service quality and students to make wiser choices.*

Keywords: Higher education, service quality, student satisfaction, perceived service quality, public university.

Introduction

Service quality is a developing concern of higher education institutions throughout Pakistan (Arif, Ilyas, & Hameed, 2013). Today higher education institutions face competitive pressures to enroll and retain quality students; therefore, they are giving greater importance to their primary customers and meeting and exceeding customer needs (Helgesen & Nettet, 2007; Letcher & Neves, 2010). Service quality plays an important role in higher education sector used as an instrument for attracting potential students and retaining existing ones; thus contributing to the overall success of the institutions. Today, it is an essential strategy to deliver service quality has become an important agenda item for survival and success of higher education organizations to sustain in local as well as global competitive environment (Duque & Weeks, 2010) and Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan reinforces the use of such strategies to boost countrywide status of higher edu-

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cation. Therefore, it is mandatory for each university to establish measures for student satisfaction fulfilling their requirements and needs (Bayraktaroglu & Atrek, 2010; Gul, Jan, & Shah, 2019).

A student can choose among public and private institutions according to his choice in the home country or abroad due to vast information available on media (Munteanu, Ceobanu, Bobâlcă, & Anton, 2010). This competition is pushed higher education institutions to follow market orientation and consider the needs and interests of students. As the primary customers of higher education are students, therefore it is vital for universities to keep a record of student satisfaction with the status of service quality; increased dissatisfaction level of students would lead to unwanted student turnover (Kuo, Wu, & Deng, 2009). Previous years, higher education looked at traditional areas like teaching and research, accreditation but today higher education needs to must look at the students as customers and service quality (Tan & Kek, 2004).

While to improve the quality of higher education of Pakistan, HEC claims, quality is at the top of the agenda in today's world. Higher education is a service sector that holds all the unique characteristics that distinguish the intangible goods from tangible services. Tangible goods are physical (cash, building, vehicles etc) and intangible goods are not physical. However, intangibles include, heterogeneous, inseparable and perishable. A service is characteristically intangible and only estimated when combined with other functions, that is related to other tangible productive processes and products. Service quality is considered in higher education the difference between student expectations to receive services and their perception of the actual delivery.

"Higher education has been increasingly recognized as a service industry and, as a sector, it must strive to identify the expectations and needs of its clients, who are the students" (Mello, Dutra, & Oliveira, 2001). From the last three decades, these two constructs (service quality and customer satisfaction) are under the scope of higher education (Devasagayam, R. Stark, & Valestin, 2013). The number of researchers discovered strong links between service quality and customer satisfaction. The importance of the service sector is increasing day by day and its focus on service quality is broadly acknowledged (Petruzzellis, d'Ugento, & Romanazzi, 2006). The improvement of service quality can improve the institution's competitive position and will add to its success (Elliott & Healy, 2001). Service quality is not about something, which naturally happens, but it is directed and managed. The service quality first component is to gain an understanding of student's needs and expectations. The second component is to make a service strategy that communicated in policies and procedures, which will reflect the institutions' service proposition (Brown & Mazzarol, 2009). In addition, service quality has developed to increase customer satisfaction and focus on their attraction and also create customer loyalty. A study claimed that the key element of provision of service quality is retaining and attracting students.

Hence, higher education institutions are confronting new challenges by their customers and the competitive business environment because of globalization. Due to this challenge, higher education in Pakistan, especially in public universities are also facing pressures from their customers and their competitors from public sectors. Today, the major challenge for public universities of Pakistan is to maintain or establish quality assur-

ance and quality culture systems as to forward the sense of ownership among all the customer of higher education such as students, academic, professional and administrative staff and its funders. It is the need of an hour that public sectors need to appropriate strategies to monitor their all quality services and satisfy their customer and through proper strategy, they can stand over on their competitors.

Literature Review

Service Quality and Student Engagement in Higher Education

In higher education, service quality is generally new as compared to other commercial sectors (Sultan & Wong, 2013). Today, the most important goal of higher education institutions is achieving quality (Abdullah, 2006). Therefore, if higher education needs to succeed in the competitive service environment, its focus must be on delivering high-quality service and meeting students' diverse needs and to engage them. Therefore, it is compulsory to measure the service quality level and identifying how many factors of services effecting on overall service quality. Thus, in this way, higher education can be managed their service in the best appropriate way.

In higher education, academic and administrative issues are extremely important in getting the good performance of students, development of quality assurance and institution's image (Douglas, Douglas, & Barnes, 2006). A higher education institution needs the student's better performance, engagement and satisfaction. Hence, institutions must provide the standard academic facilities like the intellectual ability of faculty, knowledgeable advisor and career counsel department. It is realized that higher education as "experienced goods" (Petruzzellis et al., 2006), and it provides different tangible services like, technology, infrastructure facilities, and offers its core service teaching and learning.

Higher Education as a Service

Higher education institutions are service organizations and its service quality is not only focused on tangible issues but also intangible issues. Tangible issues are such as notes during class and venues of lecture and intangibles issues are such as human resources that provide good services to students. Today, higher education's sectors are going to change and become more oriented towards the primary customer and their results/grades.

Numerous studies focus on customer as a key determinant of higher education service quality (Tan & Kek, 2004). Quality improvement programs focus on identifying the needs and expectations of customers. Furthermore, every higher education sector must establish measures to satisfy the students and fulfil their requirements and needs (Bayraktaroglu & Atrek, 2010). In addition, there is need to engage the students' voice towards the improvement of quality teaching and learning and also learning environment which will result in quality perception towards institution. According to Bomani, Fields, and Derra (2015), the concept of quality in higher education is identified by Harvey and Knight (1996). They argued that quality indicates, consistency, transformative, value for money,

exceptional, fitness for purpose. According to [Duque and Weeks \(2010\)](#) stated that it is made up of three factors, “the technical quality of the outcome”, “the functional quality of the encounter” and “the company corporate image”.

In traditional society of Pakistan, people expect regarding higher education as a service not only value for money but social responsibility and also character building. The higher education has confronted with global competition and reduced subsidies. In this response, higher education has moved to market-oriented or marketing mechanism like many other industries. The higher education needs to keep endeavoring to convey high-quality services to their customers and fulfilling or satisfying the needs of customers to gain sustainably in the competitive environment ([DeShields, Kara, & Kaynak, 2005](#)).

Higher education institutions possess all unique characteristics of services and it can be seen as pure service. Furthermore, higher education is a service because of heterogeneous, perishable and intangible services. Thus, it is difficult to standardize and also service experiences vary from situation to situation. With the characteristics of higher education is considered as a service. It is essential to appreciate that higher education has services like other business services and also have different customers that vary from different agendas and their interests.

Service Quality at Private and Public Higher Education Institutions

Service quality at the public and the private institution is totally different. Literature suggests that private higher education sectors motivate students to better result and develop interactions with them than public higher education institutions. Students have higher expectations and requirements at private higher institutions than students from public higher education institutions.

Public institutions have fewer issues of adequate planning and resources than private higher education institutions ([Kuo et al., 2009](#)). Public higher education enrolment rates depend on students capacities, on the hand private institutions focus on enrolment rates without knowing students capacities. In the same way, many private higher education institutions have not enough infrastructure that provides support vocational training and professional development for faculty, management and practitioners.

However, private higher education institutions are better accessed the students’ perceptions than public higher education institutions ([Mukhtar & Anwar, 2016](#)). A study by [Calvo-Porrall, Lévy-Mangin, and Novo-Corti \(2013\)](#) found that private higher education institutions have a good evaluation process about perceived quality dimensions than public institutions. Similarly, a study found that students were satisfied with teacher support and involvement, cooperation and task orientation at private higher education institutions than public institutions students. Past literature showed that environment at public higher education institution is not enough encouraging interaction between for staff and students and also their involvement each other ([Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005](#)).

Service Quality and its Importance in Higher Education

In the view of improving quality in higher education of Pakistan, HEC claims, quality is at the top of agenda in today's world. Quality improvement identifies that the responsibility of quality depends on higher education institutions. It also depends on their ability to develop and proper and effective policies, self-regulation mechanism and preferences towards quality. In addition, quality is considered not only a single thing but an aura, an overpowering feeling and an atmosphere that institutions should be done with excellent. HEC requires that universities must have to be proactive in making quality assurance cells at their institutions and also at the program level. Today, the major challenge for public universities of Pakistan is to maintain or establish quality assurance and quality culture systems as to forward the sense of ownership among all the customer of higher education such as students, academic, professional and administrative staff and also its funders. The second big challenge for higher education sectors is the prioritization of quality and linking quality measures with strategic planning of the sectors. In order to fulfill these two challenges, a top to bottom and bottom to the top combination is required. Similarly, many authors have expressed that sentiments have importance to create a quality culture in Pakistan higher education (Khatoon & Usmani, 2014).

The aforementioned discussion about higher education of Pakistan is being forced to meet the quality service requirements and on the other hand, due to higher education, student satisfaction is becoming more competitive, increase the quality assurance concerns and also change the market demand patterns. Furthermore, providing service quality is a basic purpose of higher education sectors as perceived service quality effect or influence student satisfaction and it may be returned to profitability.

It is an important factor of service delivery, quality as a key aspect that effect on the student decision making in the learning process and overall experience of students. Thus it is considered as a critical program success. Hence, service quality would play an important role in higher education sectors and also want to keep and attract students in the overall success of these institutions (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2006).

Every nation wants to develop such institutions, which produce professionals of high quality in every field (Batool & Qureshi, 2007; Latif, Latif, Farooq Sahibzada, & Ullah, 2019). From the last few years, Pakistan has increased such institutions who are delivering higher education in it. As well as the students' enrollment has also increased in these institutions (HEC Pakistan, 2010). According to a report, Pakistan needs 1.3m students in higher education (Sedgwick, 2005). Thus, students are considered as customers of higher education and their service is considered as a genuine business service. The basic goal of these institutions is to satisfy the needs of their customers and try to meet the students' expectation, which they demand in higher education (Nadiri, Kandampully, & Hussain, 2009).

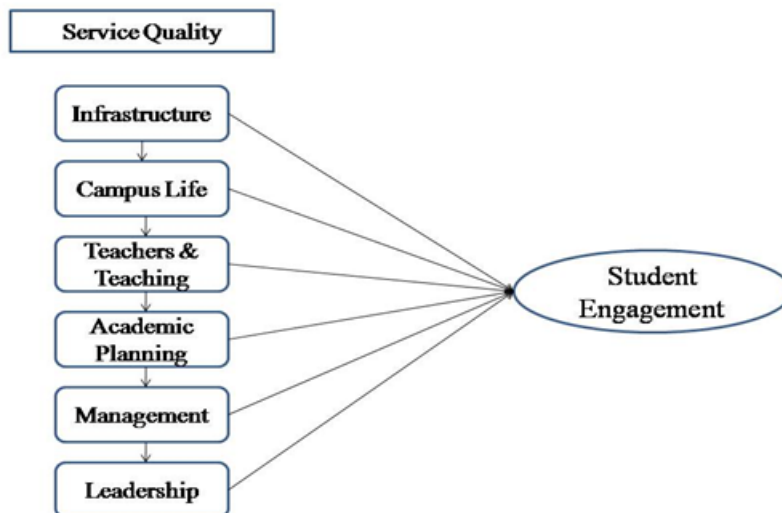
Service quality is the key to survive in higher education and to achieve student satisfaction in Pakistan. This is due to the effect of globalization that is strongly existed. This commits higher education institutions in Pakistan to need to be aware and more concerned with the competitive environment. Therefore, this study intends to measure how services effect upon students satisfaction in public universities because the enrollment of

public institutions has increased very much, so satisfying the needs of customers, which are their students, is the basic goal of these institutions.

Conceptual Framework

Arif, Ilyas, and Hameed (2017) have measured student satisfaction with service quality across six broad constructs: 1) infrastructure, assessing satisfaction with tangible facilities, 2) campus life, assessing social aspects of university life, 3) teaching, assessing general satisfaction with the people (teacher) and the process (teaching), 4) academics, assessing academic planning, program of study, and possible outcomes (e.g., employability), 5) management, assessing service delivery quality related to various processes (e.g., admission, fees, job placement, and complaint handling), and 6) leadership, including vision and mission, and broader planning regarding service delivery and organizational improvement (Dado, Taborecka-Petrovicova, Riznic, & Rajic, 2011). This study adapted their conceptual framework excluding image, reputation and loyalty as shown in Fig 1 below:

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

In social sciences, descriptive research is the most common method to use in data collection from a sample of a population at a specific time (Amin & Isa, 2008). The vast literature on this topic indicates two quantitative techniques. First is to measure the perception or expectation gap (Young & Varble, 1997; Appleton-Knapp & Krentler, 2006; Alves & Raposo, 2007) and secondly, to measure the perception only. The study used a cross-sectional

survey design in the paradigm of positivism as it has been recommended by researchers of service quality (Alves & Raposo, 2010).

The researchers used the cluster sampling technique, taking each university as a cluster. It was used because the population shares the basic characteristics like students of a public university, belonging to same age. Moreover, each university has more than 10,000 students enrolment dispersed widely within different faculties and departments; hence, simple random or systematic sampling was deemed difficult (Barbie & Mouton, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2019) keeping in view limited access to universities because of tight security.

There are 13 public universities in Lahore, which are accredited by HEC. Six general universities have been selected, the University of Education, University of Punjab (Quaid-e-Azam Campus, Lahore), Government College University (GCU), COMSATS, Lahore College for Women University, and Forman Christian College University (FCC). All the selected universities are of highest rank providing standardized quality education according to HEC. Tool for data collection was a questionnaire adapted from Arif et al. (2017) comprising 47 items constructed on 7 points Likert Type Scale. The questionnaire had 3 sections, 1) to collect demographic information, 2) measure students' perceptions of satisfaction with the service quality, and 3) to assess student engagement. The questionnaire was used for pilot test amongst 100 students of higher education, only those students who have spent in that university at least one year. Researchers conducted a pilot test before using it for the final study. The reliability coefficient was found .950 in pilot study. The purpose of pilot testing was to know the reliability coefficient whether meeting the criterion reliability or not and developed items were understandable and also considered the time was taken to fill the questionnaire. After pilot testing, questionnaire coefficient reliability was found sufficient and valid. Initially, 10 minutes were selected to fill a questionnaire but after the pilot test, it was considered to adjust for 15 minutes duration. The questionnaire was also used to judge with the provided literature and similar with research objectives. The questionnaires were distributed to 150 students of each university who were students of Masters or MPhil and had completed at least 1 year of education in the university. Out of 900 questionnaires distributed, only 600 were returned at the spot. Only 500 were considered for further analysis because they are were completely filled.

Results and Data Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. All the data analysis was performed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) 21 version. In the part of inferential statistics, correlation coefficient and step-wise regression analysis were used to find out the results.

Demographic Information

Demographics information of the participants include age, gender and CGPA. The details are presented below:

Table 1
Participants' Demographics Information

Demographics	f	%
Gender		
Male	215	43%
Female	285	57.00%
Total	500	100.00%
Age		
20-22	263	52.60%
23-25	128	25.60%
26-28	109	21.80%
Total	500	100.00%
CGPA		
1.00-2.00	6	1.20%
2.1-3.00	154	30.80%
3.1-4.00	340	68.00%
Total	500	100.00%

Table 1 shows that sample of the study included 43% of male and 57% of female students. It shows that 52.6% of the participants were from the age of 20-22 years old, 25.6% were 23-25 years old and 21.8% were from the age of 26-28. The table also shows that 1.2% of the participants were getting 1.00-2.00 CGPA, 30.8% were getting 2.1-3.00 and 68.0% of the participants were getting 3.1-4.00 CGPA.

The results demonstrated that more than 80% students of higher education wanted to continue their future education at the national level, while more than 19% students of higher education wanted to get their future education at international level. These findings indicated that students wanted to get their future education at the national level rather than international level. Thus, there is need to fulfill the student's needs.

According to results, 37% students of higher education considered that they will easily secure job worth 70000 PKR at local level / international after completion of their degree programs. While more than 32% students secure job worth 50000 and more than 15% students considered that they will secure job worth plus 25000 and 13% students of higher education from public universities get job worth plus 100000, however more than 2% students consider they will secure job worth below 25000.

Figure 2
Students' Aspiration for Further Studies

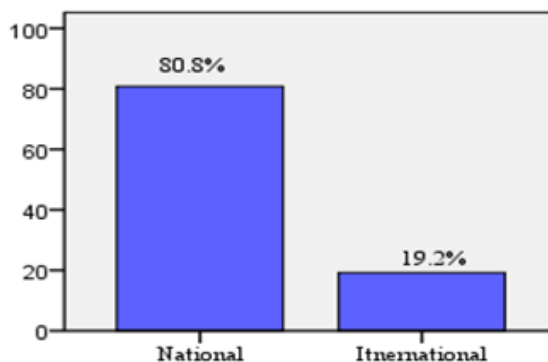
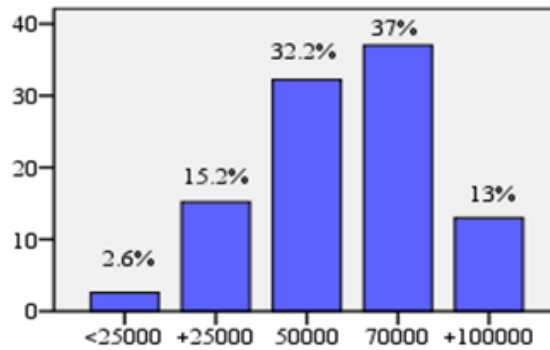


Figure 3
Students' Expectations for Future Job



Factor Analysis

To identify the factors in the questionnaire of service quality and student engagement, exploratory factor analysis was done. The results showed a total of seven factors in which all 49 items were falling. KMO and Bartlett test was applied to examine the relationship between items of scale. The value of sig. was .000 which is less than .05. It showed that items of the scale had at least one significant correlation. The value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy was .920 which shows that sample size of the study was adequate for survey research, e.g. the value is greater than .5. Following were the factors which were explored by using exploratory factor analysis. Only those factors were considered suitable whose Eigen value was equal to or greater than +1.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson Product Moment correlation was applied to check inter-relationship between the variables of the study. The results are presented and discussed below:

Table 2
Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Infrastructure	1	.479**	.450**	.324**	.477**	.474**	.480**
Campus life		1	.545**	.414**	.680**	.640**	.744**
Teachers Teaching			1	.348**	.523**	.532**	.596**
Quality Management				1	.552**	.576**	.490**
Academic planning					1	.610**	.696**
Leadership						1	.699**
Engagement							1

The above table indicates that the highest correlation is found between engagement and campus life i.e. $r=.744^{**}$ $p<.000$. In addition, the positive correlation is found between engagement and leadership i.e. $r=.699^{**}$ $p<0.000$, between engagement and academic planning i.e. $r=.696^{**}$ $p<.000$ and between engagement and teachers teaching i.e.

$r = .596^{**}$ $p < .000$. However, a weak correlation is found between engagement and infrastructure i.e. $r = .480^{**}$ $p < .000$. Similarly, the correlation between quality management and engagement indicates weak correlation i.e. $r = .490^{**}$ $p < .000$.

Regression Analysis

Linear regression was calculated using step-wise method to know which of the factors of service quality are the most predictive of student engagement in the universities of Lahore. The results are presented and elaborated below:

Table 3
Step Wise Regression

	Model	Beta	t-value	p-value	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		10.807	0.000		
	Campus Life	0.744	24.884	0.000	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)		6.9	0.000		
	Campus Life	0.503	14.325	0.000	0.590	1.695
	Leadership	0.377	10.717	0.000	0.590	1.695
3	(Constant)		3.453	0.001		
	Campus Life	0.378	9.89	0.000	0.456	2.192
	Leadership	0.301	8.527	0.000	0.534	1.874
	Academic Planning	0.255	6.886	0.000	0.486	2.059
4	(Constant)		1.699	0.090		
	Campus Life	0.340	8.903	0.000	0.437	2.289
	Leadership	0.263	7.409	0.000	0.506	1.974
	Academic Planning	0.224	6.082	0.000	0.471	2.125
	Teacher & Teaching	0.153	4.799	0.000	0.626	1.597

The above table shows that model one explains that campus life is the single most important factor which influences 74% of variance students behavior regarding engagement ($r = .744$, $p = .000$). The overall student satisfaction is significantly predicted by campus life. Model two explains that campus life ($r = .503$, $p = .000$) and leadership ($r = .377$, $p = .000$) collectively influence 87% of variances students' behavior regarding engagement.

Model three explains that campus life ($r = .378$, $p = .000$) 37%, leadership ($r = .301$, $p = .000$) 30% and academic planning ($r = .255$, $p = .000$) 25% influence on students' behavior regarding engagement. This model indicates that all independent variables have significant impact on dependent variable (engagement) and on student satisfaction of higher education. Model four indicates that campus life ($r = .340$, $p = .000$) 34%, leadership ($r = .263$, $p = .000$) 26%, academic planning ($r = .224$, $p = .000$) 22% and teacher & teaching ($r = .153$, $p = .000$) 15% influence on students' behavior regarding engagement.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that public universities of Lahore providing some better quality services and getting student engagement. These higher education institutions have a good history and their graduates have better jobs opportunity in the competitive market. Hence, intellectual and highly skilled faculty are working in these institutions. Students are satisfied with these institutions due to their skilled faculty, quality education,

reputation, scholarships and low fees. Thus, with this, these public universities are able to attract talented students, which will help to get or enhance the reputation of the institutions and satisfaction. However, these institutions make efforts to provide appropriate infrastructure, management services and positive leadership. It also needed in these institutions to develop quality learning environment, campus life, and quality of education because students place importance on this and to compete for the other growing private sectors.

Dimensions Rating of Service Quality

The dimensions of service quality highly rated by the students were campus life, leadership, academic planning and closely related to teachers and teaching. On the other hand, low dimensions were infrastructure and quality management. Students' interest in their organization will increase, if their institutions provide the quality-learning environment that facilitates with intellectual faculty and considers their individual freedom (Meštrović, 2017). Institutions should provide relax learning environment to students and get more positive emotions of their customers (Dunne & Owen, 2013). Arif et al. (2013) conducted a study into private universities of Lahore, in which campus life was the second-highest-rated dimension. Similarly, the lowest dimensions were infrastructure, quality management and leadership. In contrast, a study was conducted into private and public universities by Malik, Danish, and Usman (2010) in Gujranwala region. This study found that students were satisfied with the services of tangibles, assurance and reliability but low services were parking facilities and computer labs.

The campus life is highly correlated with the variable engagement. Hence, students get more satisfaction and engagement with their studies and institutions, if they have the safety on campus, nonacademic activities, sports, individual freedom and expression of ideas. Elliott and Shin (2002) found safety in campus directly effect on the overall students' satisfaction and engagement with university performance. Quality management and infrastructure dimensions of service quality were rated low by students at public universities of Lahore. Similarly, finding obtained by the study of Arif et al. (2013) at private universities of Lahore, students rated the low quality of services were tangibles, quality management and leadership. Students were also not much satisfied with these services provided at private universities of Lahore. Management cooperation is important for educational support and development (Iro-Idoro & Ayodele, 2014).

Moreover, there is a need to improve the infrastructure and management system of public universities. If universities have not proper infrastructure and its fitting are poor and old, if management is not facilitative and cooperative, if universities premises are under groomed and unclean, what message they are conveying to their students and other stakeholders (Soni & Govender, 2018).

Factors of Service Quality as a Predictor of Overall Student Satisfaction

Based on the results of the regression analysis, it is clear that all the independent variables have an influential relationship with dependent variable engagement and have sig-

nificant at the level of .000. A study conducted by Wei & Ramalu (2011), the finding of the study was similar to this study. They found that empathy, assurance, responsiveness and reliability was the significant predictor of service quality. Tangibles have a significant predictor of student satisfaction. This finding is similar to the results of Sultan and Wong (2013), they found tangible facilities are the core dimension of service quality at Central Queensland University.

A study conducted by Calvo-Porrall et al. (2013), found that the most important dimension of service quality is tangible. In the South African study (Green et al., 2014), tangible is a positive significant predictor of student satisfaction at The University of Technology. With the intangible nature of services, the customer of higher education makes inferences about service quality such as place, equipment, people and other cues of tangible. Thus, the service provider should manage tangible or physical evidence (Lee, Kim, Ko, & Sagas, 2011).

Campus life is a significant predictor of overall student satisfaction. Some studies revealed similar importance that students want personal attention, safety, and freedom of thought and also want to appreciate their ideas (Mukhtar & Anwar, 2016; Radder, Han, et al., 2009). The finding of quality teacher and teaching process, it is another significant predictor of overall student satisfaction. Similar to the findings of Al-Alak and Alnaser (2012) they found teacher and teaching the largest and important predictor of service quality.

The importance of academic planning found in quantitative and qualitative studies in the view of Al-Mushasha and Nassuora (2012). However, this finding, in the context of Pakistan is different. Quality of management and leadership is also a significant predictor of service quality and overall student satisfaction (Arif et al., 2013). Quality of management and infrastructure are not significant predictors of the variable of engagement at Public universities of Lahore. The practice of supportive management is important to maintain service quality and its external customers (Al-Alak & Alnaser, 2012). This discussion suggests that due to the four out of six quality dimensions are the significant predictor of service quality. In this study, this tool is applicable for measuring student satisfaction regarding service quality. This finding is similar to the result of Arif et al. (2013) research work.

Conclusion

Higher education sectors have recognized the concept of quality and now its focus on making efforts to get engagement of students by delivering quality services (Petruzzellis et al., 2006). The findings of the study revealed that student engagement lies in the quality of campus life in these universities, as students want a safe and secure campus, support service facilities, also accommodation and social facilities. They also demand skilled and knowledgeable faculty for academic as well as professional development.

In this study, the dimensions of service quality highly rated by the students were campus life, leadership, academic planning and teachers and teaching. However, students were less satisfied with the infrastructure and quality management of these universities.

Students seek the cooperation, nobleness and supportive behavior of management staff and this positive behavior plays an important role to get the students interest and engagement. Therefore, management staff should be cooperative and responsible to provide all the necessities that are required for the quality-learning environment and student engagement. The study concludes that lack of interest; lack of initiative, inefficient management; uninterested authorities and unmotivated attitudes are the constraints due to which quality of services in these public universities is not developing efficiently and effectively in particular areas. Being the part of a globalized world, there is an urgent need for all the stakeholders to play their vital role for the sake of gaining student engagement and to compete in the international education market.

Suggestions for Improvement

The findings of the study sought to find out the problematic areas and offer some suggestions to improve the service quality in public universities of Lahore. Public universities need to change in following respects: The first is to quality management needs to strengthen the management tasks of these universities. Management should improve the effectiveness of higher education expenditure and planning. There is also a need to strengthen the students' scholarships with collaboration for innovation and interdisciplinary practice. The second is to scale up and modernize the infrastructure of higher education. Management should handle strategically problems related teaching and learning process and they should always listen to their students complains. Their actions and communications towards students should be empathetic. HEC and these public universities leaders need to encourage and provide better opportunities to participate in academic activities. They should provide more conferences at the national or international level and publication opportunities in National and International journals. Furthermore, these contributions should be awarded and evaluated in some annual increments.

Recommendations for Future Research

In future research, the impact of demographic variables on student engagement can be investigated. The demographics such as gender, ethnicity and religion impact on satisfaction with the provided services to students. There should be the investigation of student motivation, engagement and development with the role of libraries, seminars and research conferences in student learning, grooming and also their satisfaction. A comparison should be done between public and private universities regarding perceived service quality. A study should be conducted with longitudinal data collection and qualitative research should be done for wide applicability of research findings.

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