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## MEASURING STUDENT SATISFACTION AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL STUDENTS: EVIDENCE FROM UNIVERSITY OF GUJRAT, PAKISTAN

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### Abstract

Purpose of this study is to measure the impact of different services and facilities offered by university on overall satisfaction of students of bachelor level. This study used the concept of service-product bundle to measure the satisfaction of students through the survey. SPSS was used to analyze the results to determine the aspects of services and facilities provided by universities to which students were satisfied. Multiple regression and correlation analysis were employed to determine the relationships between dependent and independent variables. The aspects of services and facilities which contribute significantly towards student satisfaction are lecture room facilities, facilitating goods and implicit services, while additional facilities and explicit services were the facilities which do not contribute significantly towards student satisfaction at university level. The service-product bundle concept is a reliable and valid tool or method to design a survey for measurement of student satisfaction at university level and to facilitate management of universities to determine the areas, where they need to utilize their resources for improvement to capture the perceived level of student satisfaction. Concept of service-product bundle utilization puts responsibilities strictly on the service provider, rather than the service user for questionnaire design and content.

**Keywords:** lecture room facilities, additional goods, facilitating goods, implicit services, explicit service, and service-product bundle

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### INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study is to explore the perception about services offered by universities to their students and satisfaction of students with respect to these services, studying in higher educational institutions of Pakistan.

To find out level of satisfaction and services perceived about universities to be offered, surveys are being conducted throughout the whole world. Now a very strong competition has started among educational institutions in providing services to their students. Performance of students and competitive advantages of universities in an increasing competition are not only issues which are affected by satisfaction or dissatisfaction of students with a university or faculty, student's physical and psychological health is also affected by it (Pike, 1991; Bean and Bradley, 1986).

In the same way, Pakistani higher educational institutions are operating in an extensive competition. Universities need to focus and understand the target market (needs and perception) to get a competitive edge over other higher educational institutions. According to Keegan and Davidson (2004), higher educational institutions need to identify the target market, improve their offerings to meet needs of target market and then enhance customer satisfaction by delivering services with better quality. According to Anderson and Sullivan (1993), to satisfy admitted students is important for student satisfaction as it is important to satisfy customers to retain them for profit making organization.

In universities and colleges, students are considered as their customers because they are directly involved in taking or receiving services from them, that's why now institutions are more conscious about

satisfaction of their students. Some of colleges and higher educational institutions have started to get feedbacks from their students on weekly and monthly basis to correct mistakes and further improvements in their methods of providing services. "To conduct surveys on student satisfaction, university management is encouraged by providing feedback to explain the way to overcome the discrepancies which are disclosed by the survey" (Watson, 2003).

As universities and other higher education institutions are expecting to provide their students the best learning environment by offering well trained and experienced teaching faculty who are more supporting and encouraging for students inside the class and outside the class, implicit and explicit services and other facilitating goods. Most of Pakistani higher educational institutions are still not paying sufficient attention to this aspect of student satisfaction. This research study has the point of view that satisfying students, attracting new students for enrollment and retaining the students who are already studying in institutions are associated with greater extent to the image of the institution. There is another aspect, if image of institutions and that is tuition fees charged by them according to Rolfe (2002), perception of student has been changed from this thing that they are free service recipient to paying customer with introduction of tuition fees in higher education. According to Williams and Cappuccini (2007), universities should play with greater extent as service providers as they are being paid in terms of tuition fees and they should also be more responsive to students' requirements.

Now in this increasing competition in education sector, only those institutions can survive which are providing quality education and competitive environment for students. There are some factors, which can increase satisfaction and dissatisfaction of students regarding their institutions. To explain this aspect, higher education institutions are paying attention to the aspects of importance of activities and services near students and the satisfaction of students with respect to these activities. With growing education concern, institutions providing higher educational programs are facing more challenges to enhance their reputation and satisfaction of students.

In Pakistan, establishment of higher education commission (HEC) has encouraged students to study in competitive environment. With the help of western countries and foreign educational institutions, HEC is encouraging Pakistani students to struggle hard to come forward by awarding foreign study scholarships. By taking this step students are becoming more competitive in field of study. Finally by this, status of education in Pakistan is getting higher very quickly.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Previous Researches**

For the purpose of defining the concept of satisfaction, a number of attempts have been made by many researchers at different times with change in time. The final findings of all researchers called it as psychological attribute. Hamner and Organ (1978), stated "attribute of any person towards anything is satisfaction; it is a complex combination of beliefs (cognition), sentiments (emotions) and capacities to behave." Student satisfaction is attitude which has always given different impact factors every time, whenever, any researcher tried to examine it. According to Pennington, Zvonkovic and Wilson (1989), determinants of satisfaction change with change in time. Harvey (2001), Benjamin and Hollings (1995, 1997) argued about student satisfaction that it is important matter, which is not completely explained up till now. Different researchers defined student satisfaction in different ways. According to Elliot and Healy (2001:2), attitude resulting after short term interpretation of educational experience by students is satisfaction of students. Satisfaction is mindset of consumers about consumption which provides results against pleasure v/s displeasure (Oliver, 1999, p34). To retain an existing customer costs less than it does to attract a new customer (Gemme, 1997). Customer satisfaction was defined by (Metawa and Almoosawi, 1998) as customer satisfaction is an attitude or feeling of customer towards a service or product after they use it. Bolton (1998), elaborated the relationship between intention, retention and satisfaction of customer. According to Hamner and Organ (1978: 217), asking individuals questions about the extent to which they are satisfied with a given object is simplest and straightforward method to measure satisfaction. According to Naser, Jamal and Al-Khatib (1999), service quality and service facilities are some factors which relate to the customer satisfaction.

Satisfaction of students also plays positive role in generating funds and increasing motivation of student (Elliot and Shin, 2002). The concept of student satisfaction, now relates to the customer

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satisfaction as they are considered to be the customers of higher education. According to Marzo-Navarro et al (2005 a) and Richardson (2005), limited research conducted up till now on student satisfaction suggests that the matter of satisfaction of students is complicated and comprises of a number of dimensions. Results of recent researchers disclose that satisfied students can play role of magnet for new students by doing positive word of mouth communication to inform their friends (Marzo-Navarro et al. 2005, Helgesen and Nettet, 2007).

Research has been conducted at different times to find out the issues having impact on students' satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Universities and colleges can align their processes, procedures and organizational structure to become more customer-oriented by focusing on previous records of student's satisfaction (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2004). According to Okun and Weir (1990), it can be said that student satisfaction regarding university is an important outcome of education in its own right. Austin (1977) says that "..... It is not easy to say about student satisfaction that any other educational outcome is justifiably superior to student satisfaction." Student satisfaction and student performance are related to each other (Bean and Bradley, 1986; Howard and Maxwell, 1982; Pike, 1991). Satisfaction is considered to be an instrument to know about the future position of student's regularity at university (Aitken, 1982; Edwards and Waters, 1982; Pascarella, 1985; Terenzini and Pascarella, 1991; Tinto, 1993). Satisfaction shows a stronger impact on grades than grades have on satisfaction (Pike, 1991).

According to (Harvey, 2001, 1997; Lee et al., 2000; Donald and Denison, 1996; Morrison, 1999; Marsh, 1991; Rich et al., 1988; Guolla, 1999; Feldman and Theiss, 1982), student satisfaction is affected by four groups of factors, which are 1) student expectations, 2) institutional factors, 3) demographic factors of students and 4) extracurricular factors. Student satisfaction is also affected by academic factors like quality of education provided by professors, text books selected by them and communication with instructors inside and outside the classrooms (Hong, 2002; Fredericksen et al., 2000). Student satisfaction is increased by rightly selected books (Rich et al., 1988). Mamun and Das (1999) studied and mentioned that some factors like library facility, internship guidance for students and lab facilities are basic factors regarding student satisfaction. Zahid, Chowdhury and Sogra (2002), identified factors of student satisfaction like quality of teaching, medium used for instructions, size of campus and its location, course system (semester system or annual system), hostels for students, facilities in campus like canteen, parking area and auditorium in the deep qualitative study of business education performance in Bangladesh. According to Navarro et al. (2005), courses of administration, teaching staff and their method of teaching are basic factors to get student satisfaction. According to Letcher and Neves (2010), quality of teaching, career opportunities for students and extracurricular activities show greater effect on satisfaction of students.

Now a number of commercial institutions are available for measurement of students' satisfaction. The institutions, which generate these questionnaires, also provide benchmarks to help client institutions to approach their position with respect to their competitors and colleagues.

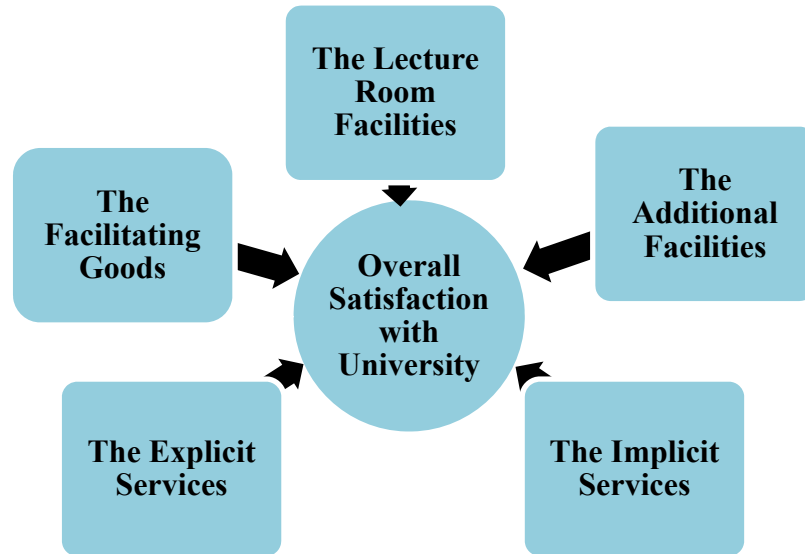
Taking these all issues and criticisms in view the instrument is used for perception about performance of different services their importance in this survey being conducted presently and questionnaire was designed according to service-product bundle concept.

Service-product bundle is a bundle which consists of tangible goods as well as intangible services, which are associated with each other and cannot be separated. The service-product bundle in this survey comprises of following elements;

- Lecture room facilities
- The explicit services
- The implicit services
- The facilitating goods
- Additional facilities

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure I: Proposed Framework



To measure relationship between services offered by university and student satisfaction, five hypotheses were developed presenting five forms of services offered by university to its students and their effect on satisfaction of students both, male and female.

H1: there is a positive relationship between the lecture room facilities and satisfaction of students.

H2: there is a positive relationship between the additional facilities and satisfaction of students.

H3: there is a positive relationship between the facilitating goods and satisfaction of students.

H4: there is a positive relationship between the explicit services and satisfaction of students.

H5: there is a positive relationship between the implicit services and satisfaction of students.

In this study primary data on one dependent and five independent variables was collected from students studying from different departments of University of Gujrat, Pakistan.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to measure student satisfaction at university level in University of Gujrat, Pakistan and also to determine the relationship between services provided by university and overall satisfaction of students.

Population of this study comprises all students of University of Gujrat, Pakistan. Sample was selected on the basis of easy availability of students for response. In this sample students were selected from different departments, who had spent at least six months or had cleared at least one semester of their study. For this, overall four batches were selected, studying recently in different departments of University of Gujrat, Pakistan. All batches were from bachelor level. Primary data was collected through questionnaire and Likert scale was used as scale of measurement. About 1100 questionnaires were distributed among students. Section A contained questions about demographics of students and responses are presented in table 1;

**Table 1:** Demographic Detail of respondents

		Total	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	721	71
	Female	294	29
<b>Program</b>	Bachelor	1015	100
	Master	0	0
<b>Age</b>	17-20	426	42
	21-24	545	54
	25-29	44	4
	30-34	0	0
	35-above	0	0
<b>Nationality</b>	Home students	1015	100
	Foreigners	0	0

Out of 1100 questionnaires, 1015 were completely filled by students and these responding students became sample for this study and were used in it, which is about 6% of overall population of University of Gujrat, Pakistan of 17500 students. Result of responses was 92.27%. According to Babbie (1998), rate of more than 70% response is considered to be very good, if response rate is 60% it is considered as good, rate of 50% responses is considered as adequate. The reason behind this good response is the personal interaction with respondents.

There are overall six variables examined in this study, out of which independent variables are the lecture room facilities, additional facilities, the facilitating goods, the explicit services, implicit services and dependent variable is satisfaction of students. These variables were measured by different questions filled by students.

Questionnaire used for this study was taken from one which was used by Mr. Douglas and Douglas (2006) at UK University titled as "Measuring student satisfaction at UK University". Some amendments were made in this questionnaire according to educational environment of Pakistan. The right and reliable information which was collected from the sample which was selected for this purpose can be considered as gathered from whole population (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000).

### DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in this study has been done in three stages. At first stage SPSS (statistical package for social sciences) has been used to check the reliability of data by applying Cronbach's alpha. It measures the average correlation of variables. Its value ranges from "0" to "1". If value of alpha is higher than instrument used for measurement is considered as reliable (Sekaran, 2003). In next stage, extent of relationship between dependent and independent variables has been measured by applying Correlation analysis. According to Crammer (1983), correlation demonstrates the extent and nature of linear relationship between variables. It varies from "-1" to "+1" as perfect indirect correlation to perfect direct correlation respectively among variables.

The Pearson Correlation is used for interval scaled variables. According to Sekaran (2003), Pearson Correlation Co-efficient is suitable for interval scaled variables. In third stage, multiple regression analysis of variables has been applied to check the extent of association between variables and extent of variance through co-efficient of determination (R-square). Mean significance between groups of variables has been tested by using ANOVA (analysis of variance). As it was said by Sekaran (2003), that significant mean differences between sets on an interval scaled dependent variable can be investigated with help of ANOVA.

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis**

Variables	No. of items	Alpha
The lecture room facilities	8	0.844
Additional facilities	6	0.788
The facilitating goods	8	0.835

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The explicit services	14	0.909
The implicit services	10	0.903

**Table 3: Results of Correlation Analysis**

Variable title		Overall satisfaction	Lecture Room	Facilitating goods	Additional facilities	Explicit services	Implicit services
Overall satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.371	0.368	0.322	0.393	0.442
Lecture room facilities	Pearson Correlation	0.371	1.000	0.568	0.584	0.513	0.513
Facilitating goods	Pearson Correlation	0.368	0.568	1.000	0.631	0.702	0.602
Additional facilities	Pearson Correlation	0.322	0.584	0.631	1.000	0.526	0.503
Explicit services	Pearson Correlation	0.393	0.513	0.702	0.526	1.000	0.773
Implicit services	Pearson Correlation	0.442	0.513	0.602	0.503	0.773	1.000

**Multiple Regression Results**

Table 4, demonstrates the results of multiple regression analysis. The table 4, Related to model summary tells about the results of five independent variables entered. Multiple correlation coefficients of predictors is represented by (R). This table shows that the value of R (multiple correlation coefficients) after simultaneous use of all five independent variables is 0.48. In next column, value of R-square is mentioned which is 0.23 and it is squared value of 0.48. It explains the value of variance is 23% that lecture room facilities, facilitating goods, additional goods, explicit services and implicit services mutually predict overall satisfaction. In statistical model, R-square is used with a main purpose of predicting future results based on other related information. R-square, in case of linear regression is simple a square of correlation coefficient of sample between the results and values predicting them.

**Table 4: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.479 <sup>a</sup>	.230	.226	1.0412	.230	60.137	5	1009	.000	1.842

a. Predictors: (Constant), Implicit Services\_ S, Additional facilities\_ S, Lecture room\_ S, Facilitating goods\_ S, Explicit Service\_ S

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b. Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

**Analysis of variance (ANOVA)**

In table 5, related to ANOVA test results, first cell in which degree of freedom is mentioned demonstrates number of “5”, which are number of independent variables. In cell below this cell 1009 is equal to the number of cases minus total number of independent variables minus one (N-5-1). In the last column, the goodness of fit of model is shown and the lower this number better is fit. The results in table V, show the significant F-value 60.137 at 0.0001 level, which demonstrates that the dependent variable (overall satisfaction) is significantly predicted by bundle of independent variables (lecture room facilities, facilitating goods, additional facilities, explicit services and implicit services). Result of ANOVA show that variance is significant and supports our hypothesis which is elaborated by the predictor independent variables in overall satisfaction.

**Table 5: Analysis of variance**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	325.968	5	65.194	60.137	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	1093.845	1009	1.084		
	Total	1419.813	1014			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Implicit\_Service\_S, Additional\_facilities\_s, Lecture\_room\_S, Facilitating\_goods\_S, Explicit\_Service\_S

b. Dependent Variable: Overall Satisfaction

Five hypotheses about the relationship among overall satisfaction of students and services and facilities offered by the university to its students were developed in this research study. Value of beta for the predictor variables used in this study is mentioned in this table 6 presented below;

**Table 6: Results of beta values, VIF and Tolerance level**

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	.531	.170		3.121	.002					
Lecture_room_S	.228	.055	.152	4.155	.000	.371	.130	.115	.567	1.764
Facilitating_goods_S	.108	.066	.072	1.637	.002	.368	.051	.045	.397	2.517
Additional_facilities_s	.040	.051	.030	.780	.436	.322	.025	.022	.519	1.928
Explicit_Service_S	.045	.074	.030	.607	.544	.393	.019	.017	.314	3.189
Implicit_Service_S	.382	.061	.283	6.309	.000	.442	.195	.174	.380	2.632

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	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	.531	.170		3.121	.002					
Lecture_room_S	.228	.055	.152	4.155	.000	.371	.130	.115	.567	1.764
Facilitating_goods_S	.108	.066	.072	1.637	.002	.368	.051	.045	.397	2.517
Additional_facilities_s	.040	.051	.030	.780	.436	.322	.025	.022	.519	1.928
Explicit_Service_S	.045	.074	.030	.607	.544	.393	.019	.017	.314	3.189
Implicit_Service_S	.382	.061	.283	6.309	.000	.442	.195	.174	.380	2.632

a. Dependent Variable  
(overall satisfaction)

Significant results are also shown in column B by the values of beta coefficient for facilitating goods and we can say that estimates except two variables (additional facilities and explicit services) can be considered to be true. This is all due to the no significance values of beta, which means that these variables contribute less in measuring the overall satisfaction and no reliable estimates, in comparison with facilitating goods, implicit services and lecture room facilities the other three independent variables. So with reference to the results, the hypothesis which are not substantiated are hypothesis “2” and “4”, while the substantiated hypothesis are “1”, “3” and “5”, as it is mentioned above in table.

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

A positive correlation is explored in the present study between the variables selected as independent (services and facilities offered by university) and dependent variable (student’s overall satisfaction) and multiple regression analysis facilitated in determining the causal relationship between variables.

The results of present study validated the researches already conducted on this issue, which also concluded that there is a positive relationship between overall satisfaction and services and facilities offered by the universities.

If universities want to compete and remain at top in present competitive environment then they must provide services and facilities to their students to make them satisfied. So the basic or primary objective of universities is to retain existing students by maximizing their satisfaction and by minimizing dissatisfaction to enhance their performance. Depending on the results of outputs of the study on students satisfaction learning in University of Gujrat, Pakistan, it is clear that number of facilitating goods like availability if textbooks inside the library and their value for money and physical facilities (classroom decoration, furnishing and layout) are not having importance with respect to the satisfaction (Banwet and Datta; 2003), who found that the aspects which are most important are associated with overall lectures, staff’s ability to teach, learning and teaching equipments, lab facilities and library.

Catering facilities in campus and lightening are considered important by students of University of Gujrat, Pakistan, but these facilities were not considered to be important by students of U.K. electricity problems can be the reason behind this importance of lightening near Pakistani students as they feel uncomfortable. Therefore when a student gets admission in a university for higher education, he or she can be satisfied or dissatisfied by services and facilities like library, overall lab facilities, staff’s quality of teaching ability and overall lectures as these services and facilities considered to be more important by students of Pakistan.

Satisfaction level of students of University of Gujrat was high with implicit services and the lecture room facilities offered by the university as well as with facilitating goods. Significant contribution of independent variables the implicit services and lecture room facilities was explored. Feedback of students



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confirms that they have good and positive experience with the implicit services (competence of teaching staff, availability, approachability and friendliness).

Students of University of Gujrat think that by providing the sense of confidence, competence and professionalism, their best interests are being served.

Additional facilities and the explicit services (independent variables) were not found to contribute at significant level in overall satisfaction (dependent variable) for students of University of Gujrat, Pakistan. That's why it is duty of university to facilitate students by providing additional facilities and explicit services to approach satisfaction level of students.

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