



Effect of Service Quality on Student Satisfaction in Private Higher Education Institutions in Addis Ababa

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(A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Marketing Management, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Masters Degree In Marketing Management).

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

June, 2017

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

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PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN ADDIS ABABA**

*A Thesis Submitted to Department of Marketing Management, for the Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Masters of Arts Degree in
Marketing Management*

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MARKETING MANAGEMENT POST GRADUATE PROGRAM

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Declaration

I, Girum Melese G/mariam, declared that this research paper entitled “effect of service quality on student satisfaction in private higher education institutions in Addis Ababa” is my own original research work. I have been produced it independently through the use of significant contribution of my research advisor and all sources of information used and quoted in the study has been appropriately acknowledged.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I would like to thank Almighty God for giving me the opportunity to join and complete this study.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor Dr. MESFIN WORKNEH for his constructive suggestion, encouragement and guidance during the writing of this thesis.

Special thanks also go to all undergraduate students in the different institutions who were involved in this project for their cooperation in responding to the questionnaire and sharing the information they have.

In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to the managers of the institutes for allowing me to collect the necessary data.

Lastly I wish to express my gratitude to beloved families and friends; for their understanding & endless love, through the duration of my studies.

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ACRONYMS

PHEI—Private Higher Educational Institute

HERQA—The Higher Education Quality and Relevance Agency

HEDPERF—Higher Education Performance

TQM— Total Quality Management

SERVPERF – Service Performance

SERVQUAL –Service Quality

IPA— Importance Performance Analysis

SPSS— Statistical Package for social science

UNICEF— United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

Key words: Satisfaction, Service Performance and Service Quality

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to evaluate effect of service quality over the satisfaction of students' in private higher educational institutions in Addis Ababa. For this purpose the study used the HEDPERF variables of service quality instrument. Among the dimensions of HEDPERF developed by Firdaus (2005) the following five factors were used for this study namely non-academic aspects, academic aspects, program issues, reputation and access. A sample of 200 respondents was selected using a non-probabilistic/convenience sampling technique. According to the findings of the study all the five dimensions of HEDPERF have shown slightly above average mean score. This indicates that students of private higher educational institutions are not satisfied enough with the service provided to them hence; their perception is good.

The dimension with the lowest mean score is access followed by program issue and non academic aspect. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between HEDPERF variables and service quality the results shows that all the five dimensions of service quality have a positive significant relationship with student satisfaction where academic aspects, non-academic aspects and reputation have a strong and positive significant correlation with satisfaction while program issues and access have a weak positive correlation with student satisfaction. For that academic aspect, reputation and non-academic aspects of HEDPERF service variables have shown statistically significant impact on student satisfaction. Accordingly private higher educational institutions in Addis Ababa should give more emphasis and due attention to those dimensions of service quality to improve the level of their student satisfaction.

CHAPTER ONE

I. Introduction

In this chapter background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research question, definition of terms, significance of the study, limitation of the study, delimitation of the study and organization of the paper will be discussed.

1.1. Background of the Study.

Services are all around us – as consumers we use services every day. The growth in the service economy is widely recognized and increasingly contributes to the economic development of many regions. Nowadays, Education is an important instrument for social and economical development of a society. It must be understood that the level of development that our world reaches these days would not be possible if knowledge and wisdom were not there. Today education can contribute a lot more if it is administered with quality. Quality related with education takes a broader perspective and demonstrates that programs must encompass a broader definition involving quality learners, content, processes, environments and outcomes “(UNICEF, 2000)”

Quality service has direct impact on performance and hence on customer satisfaction. Especially in service giving companies, customer satisfaction should be given a huge attention and must pay attention to three more Ps in addition to 4P's which are people, physical evidence, and process. Because most services are provided by people, the selection, training, and motivation of employees can make a huge difference in customer satisfaction (Kotler, 2003)

The knowledge of the current levels of satisfaction and in particular the key determinants of satisfaction help for decision makers to focus on the key areas that lead to a highly satisfied customer. Because customer satisfaction and customer focus are so critical to competitiveness of firms, any company interested in delivering quality service must begin with a clear understanding of its customers (Zeithaml&Bitner, 2003.)

Service quality and customer satisfaction are very important concepts that companies must understand in order to remain competitive in business and hence grow. It is very important for companies to know how to measure these constructs from the customers' perspective in order to

better understand their needs and satisfy them. Service quality is considered very important because it leads to higher customer satisfaction. Many studies show that, higher level of satisfaction lead to greater customer loyalty, which in turn results in better company performance “Kotler& Armstrong, 2012”. At the same time if customers perceive quality as unsatisfactory, they may be quick to take their business elsewhere (Lovelock & Right, 1999). Since the 1980s service quality has been linked with increased profitability, and it is seen as providing an important competitive advantage by generating repeat sales, positive word-of-mouth feedback, customer loyalty and competitive product differentiation (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

This is true for every industry, including the education sector. As the world becomes more connected, the global economy gets more competitive, and the challenges to be addressed more complex, education has become the most powerful tool in providing solutions to various challenges (Semela, 2011). The increasing demand for higher education has normally resulted in the transformation of the education system from being selective and competitive to being massive and diversified.

In Ethiopia Modern and secular higher education was introduced in 1950 with the establishment of the University College of Addis Ababa with about 1000 students and less than fifty teachers, most of whom were foreigners (Wondimu, 2003).

The Commission for Higher Education in Ethiopia was established in 1977 with the objective to manage higher education institutions. But the commission was very weak as well as it had not supported with clear and forward looking policies and strategies to expand and reform higher education sector in the country ‘(Teshome, 2007)’. The year 2003 Higher Education Proclamation was the first national higher education regulation in Ethiopian history that accorded autonomy of administration, academic freedom and accountability to universities. This diversification is also an observable fact in Ethiopia. Private higher education institutions did not exist until the mid 1990s but between the years 1996 and 2003 about 37 private institutions were founded (World Bank, 2003); in 2005, the number rose to 60 (Daniel, 2010:51) and reaches 89 (HERQA,2015). While institutions grow in number tremendously, the biggest question need to focus is that whether the significant expansion in education has promoted the students’ perceived quality or not?The private higher education sector started in Ethiopia only few decades ago and

its size is growing continuously, it accounts for 23% of the students' enrolment (Tessema, 2009). Most of the private HEIs are for-profit.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

According to Hill (1995), Students were considered to be the "primary customers" of a university. As argued by Berry (1995), service is one of the important factors enhancing value and can positively influence a college's success. The student perception about satisfaction can act as an essential tool to enhance the universities service quality.

Negi (2010) in his work which was about Educational Quality and Students' Complaints handling in the case of private university colleges in Addis Ababa; revealed that the major focus of private higher educational institutions under study is on attracting new enrolments rather than handling the existing complaints of students effectively. Therefore, currently as well as in the long term, the most important factor affecting business performance is the quality of goods and services offered by the organization, relative to its competitors. Student satisfaction plays a crucial role for the success of a university/college.

Even if education sector in Ethiopia shows significant increment in number over the past two decades. The main concern is expansion of higher education system without improvement in service quality which may not lead to attain the objectives of the education system. Due to this many concerned body and the society at large complains about inefficiency and poor performance of the Private Higher Education Institutions currently in Ethiopia. There are different complains of customers heard through different media outlets about their dissatisfaction in service provided by educational institution, especially in private institutions in Ethiopia

As the reports of (World Bank, 2004; Saint, 2004) Limited autonomy, a shortage of experience in both academic and non-academic staff, poor service delivery, declining educational quality, lack of access and outdated curricula all have characterized Ethiopian higher education.

Furthermore, studies conducted on this subject have been very few in the context of Ethiopia.

Hence, this research was conducted to find out the quality of service provided in Private Higher Education Institutions context in Addis Ababa; this study were make an attempt to assess the level of service quality in relation to customer satisfaction in case of Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEI) in Addis Ababa by using HEDPERF model. Therefore, the dependent

variables of the research were the overall student satisfaction. While, independent variables were comprises five variables of service quality, as academic factors, non-academic factors, program issues, reputation and access in Higher Education context.

1.3. Research Questions

Based on the problem area discussed above, the researcher were try to answer issues related to the following research questions

1. To what extent students' satisfaction can be explained by five service quality variables?
2. Which service quality attributes are considered as important to students?
3. How do students evaluate the perceived service quality in Private Higher Education context?
4. Which areas and priorities do the institutions consider crucial in improving the service quality in Private Higher Education context?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The main purpose of the research is to evaluate effect of service quality over the satisfaction of students' in three of private higher institutions in Addis Ababa and to measure the relative performance of the five service quality variables on students' satisfaction.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

Specific objectives of the study are derived from the general objectives and they are stated as follow.

1. To assess the extent of association between students' satisfaction with each of the service quality dimensions.
2. To evaluate which service quality dimensions are more related to overall student satisfaction in Private Higher Education.
3. To explain perceptions held by students towards the service quality Private Higher Education.
4. To suggest priority areas for improvement and changes in institutional policies for successful implementation of the service quality improvement

1.5 Significance of the Study

Review of several literature showed that few researches have been done about quality related issues in Ethiopian higher education in general and service quality issues in particular. In addition to this, most their works are concentrated on public higher institutions; therefore this research tries to narrow such gap in some extent. Different stakeholders benefit from this study, especially students and the university management. The findings of this research will also help the universities in Ethiopia to serve students more effectively in the future, and develop their quality of service to increase the satisfaction level of its students. Moreover, the study could contribute much for future researchers who wish to conduct research on service quality in general and Educational Institutions service quality in particular.

1.6. Delimitation /Scope of the Study

This research were limited to assessing the service quality related issues among the private higher institution located in Addis Ababa specifically in case of Admas ,Alpha and Rift valley university while, public higher educational institution are excluded. The target groups of this research are only regular undergraduate students' of the private higher institution from the selected campus.

1.7. Limitation of the Study.

It study does not represent the whole population of the students studying in Ethiopia. Thus, the primary limitation of the study is its narrow scope and sample size. There are other variables related to service quality which are not included in this study. In PHEI there are a number of stakeholders like instructors, staff members and others. But this research is only conducted on students.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter deals with introductory part consisting of introduction/background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, scope and limitation of the study, significance of the study, plan of the study and definition of terms. The second chapter reviews literatures related to the study. In this chapter various theoretical concepts that relates with service quality and its measurement and dimension of service quality and issues related with quality service are reviewed with emphasis on the educational center. The third chapter presents the research design and methodology. The fourth

chapter reveals the data analysis and interpretation of the result; and finally the fifth chapter focuses on conclusion, recommendation and implication of the research.

1.9. Operational Definition of Terms

Service: Service is time-perishable, intangible experience performed for a customer acting in the role of co-producer (Fitzsimons)

Service Quality: means the difference between the customer expectation of service and their perceived service (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

HEDPERF (Higher Education Performance): is a new and more comprehensive performance-based measuring scale that attempts to capture the authentic determinants of service quality within higher education sector (Firdaus, 2005).

Customer Perception: means customer's feelings of pleasure /displeasure or the reaction of the customers in relation to the performance of the University (Kotler and Armstrong 2001)

Service Delivery: It refers to the act and activities of operators in making ready the services for consumers (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

Non-academic aspects: refer to aspects that relates to duties carried out by nonacademic staff (Firdaus, 2005).

Academic aspects: includes positive attitudes, good communication skills, sufficient consultation, regular feedback to students, and outsourcing ability of teaching staffs which relate to the responsibilities of academics (Firdaus, 2005).

Program issues: were defined as offering wide ranging specializations, program with flexible structures, counseling service (Firdaus, 2005).

Reputation: is the professional image projected by the university (Firdaus, 2005).

Access: was interpreted as approachability, accessibility and ease of contact of both the academics and non-academics staffs (Firdaus, 2005)

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In this chapter definition of service, integrated service management, the characteristics of service, factors affect customer perception and expectation, relationship between service mix and service quality and customer satisfaction, customer expectations, perception, and satisfaction measurement of service quality, customer of HEI, Instruments to Measure Service Quality in HEI and related issues are addressed.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Definition of Service

Because of their diversity, services have traditionally been difficult to define. Literary, service means something, which is done by individual or group to help or benefit others, either freely or with payment, through systematically arranged way, or in informal way to meet individual or public needs. Members of societies, individuals or groups who are direct recipients or users of these services are customers for those who supply the services.

Kotler (2000) defines service as work carried out for others by an organization where no transfer of goods is involved. It consists of social processes that involve a physical or informational interaction between a service provider and a client (user), the interaction of client and employees really lies at the heart of most service system. The Ethiopian Management Institute (2003) defines customer as a person who buys (external customer) and a person with whom one deals (internal customer or employees).

Services are economic activities that create value and provide benefits for customers at specific times and places, as a result of bringing about a desired change in—or on behalf of—the recipient of the service (Lovelock & Wright, 1999). So the definition of customer is not limited only to someone who is a direct user of services or products and outside of the organization but it includes the organization's employees who render the service to direct users. The relationship

between the two creates the customer chain and if the relationship is smoother the chain is stronger. Personnel selection, training the staff, recognition/motivation of good work and control are conditions that lead to smooth relationship between the internal and external customers; and the design and implementation of these conditions require commitment of management team. (Kotler 2000)

2.1.2 Characteristics of Services

According to Kotler (2000) services have the following four major characteristics these are:-

I. Intangibility

The literature highlights intangibility as one of the key characteristics of services.

Kotler, introduced the idea of services being activities, benefits or satisfactions which are services offered for sale, or are provided in connection with the sale of goods. Services are intangible unlike physical products, they cannot be seen, tasted, felt heard or smelled before they are bought. Because this characteristic of service buyer can't evaluate before purchase of service, so that uncertainty is increased. To reduce uncertainty, buyers look for 'signals' of service quality. They draw conclusions about quality from the place, people, equipment, communication material and price that they can see. Therefore, the service provider's task is to 'manage the evidence' – they try to 'tangibles the service' or to provide concrete evidence of the benefits offered "Kotler, Wong, Saunders and Armstrong, 2005". Teaching is an intangible service. So, intangibility applies to higher education because most but not all of the services are courses. It is not possible to measure them precisely. They cannot be evaluated as outcomes other than in terms of course classifications or grades.

II. Inseparability

Services are typically produced and consumed simultaneously. This is not true of physical goods that are manufactured, put into inventory, distributed through multiple resellers and consumed still later. For instance, the student in the university is an inseparable part of the service offering. Inseparability is taken to reflect the simultaneous delivery and consumption of services. Customers participate in the production process or delivery process; there is an interaction between the service provider, the service environment and the customer. Goods are first produced, then sold and then consumed; services are first sold, then produced and consumed simultaneously. In higher education terms it is probably widely accepted that, as yet, there is

less managerial control over the actual content of course and modules. The assumption is that the people who deliver the courses have some degree of expertise and academic knowledge. Thus the monitoring of the student/lecturer or teaching/learning interface is minimal.

III. Variability

Services are highly variable, since they depend on who provides them and when and where they are provided. Service buyers are aware of this high variability and frequently talk to other before selecting a service provider. Services are not homogeneous and are less standardized and uniform. Heterogeneity reflects the potential for high variability in service delivery. For example: the quality and essence of a service can vary from producer to producer, from customer to customer, and from day to day, and people's performance fluctuates up and down.

For higher education institutions, the services can include postgraduate courses; vocational courses; graduate courses; miscellaneous others such research, consultancy and other support activities. According to Parasuraman, et al. (1985): "consistency of behavior from service personnel (i.e. uniform quality) is difficult to assure because what to deliver may be entirely different from what the consumer receives". So, the teacher who gave a superb lecture in your last class may behave a little differently the next time or different teachers who give you different subjects may differ in their way of teaching.

IV. Perish Ability

The fourth characteristic of services highlighted in the literature is perish ability. In general, services cannot be stored and carried forward to a future time period. Services are item - dependent and item- important which make them very perishable. Services depend on time which makes them very perishable.

The perish ability of services is not a problem when the demand is steady but when demand fluctuates, service companies have difficult problems. Thus, service marketers need to manage the demand but also the supply in order to obtain a profitable equilibrium.

V. Lack of Ownership

When customers buy physical goods, such as cars and computers, they have personal access to the product for an unlimited time. They actually own the product. They can even sell it when they no longer wish to own it. In contrast, Service products lack that quality of ownership. By buying a ticket you can see the evening film show in the local cinema theater, by paying tuition

fee students can get education from institutions, etc. In case of a service, the payment is not for purchase, but only for the use or access to or for hire of items or facilities.

2.1.3 Integrated Service Management (the service mix)

According to Lovelock and Wright (1999) when discussing strategies to market manufactured goods, marketers usually address four basic strategic elements: product, price, place (or distribution), and promotion (or communication). Collectively, these four categories are often referred to as the "4Ps" of the marketing mix. However, the distinctive nature of service performances, especially such aspects as customer involvement in production and the importance of the time factor, requires that other strategic elements be included by extended 4ps of service marketing in 8ps. Integrated service management is: the coordinated planning and execution of those marketing, operations, and Human resources activities those are essential to a service firm's success. According to them there are 8ps that creates the integrated service marketing this are

Product: all components of the service performance that create value for customers. Managers must select the features of both the core product and the bundle of supplementary service elements surrounding it, with reference to the benefits desired by customers and how well competing products perform.

Place: management decisions about when, where, and how to deliver services to customers.

Delivering product elements to customers involves decisions on both the place and time of delivery and may involve physical or electronic distribution channels (or both), depending on the nature of the service being provided

Price: expenditures of money, time, and effort that customers incur in purchasing and consuming services. This component addresses management of the outlays incurred by customers in obtaining benefits from the service product.

Process: a particular method of operations or series of actions, typically involving steps that need to occur in a defined sequence. Creating and delivering product elements to customers requires the design and implementation of effective processes. A process describes the method and sequence in which service operating systems work. Badly designed processes are likely to annoy customers because of slow, bureaucratic, and ineffective service delivery. Similarly, poor

processes make it difficult for front-line staff to do their jobs well, result in low productivity, and increase the likelihood of service failures.

People: customers and employees who are involved in service production. Many services depend on direct, personal interaction between customers and a firm's employees (like getting a haircut or eating at a restaurant). The nature of these interactions strongly influences the customer's perceptions of service quality. Customers often judge the quality of the service they receive largely on their assessment of the people providing the service. Successful service firms devote significant effort to recruiting, training, and motivating their personnel, especially—but not exclusively—those who are in direct contact with customers.

Promotion; all communication activities and incentives designed to build customer preference for a specific service or service provider. No marketing program can succeed without an effective communication program. This component plays three vital roles: providing needed information and advice, persuading target customers of the merits of a specific product, and encouraging them to take action at specific times. In service marketing, much communication is educational in nature, especially for new customers. Companies may need to teach these customers about the benefits of the service, where and when to obtain it, and how to participate effectively in service processes.

Physical Evidence: visual or other tangible clues that provide evidence of service quality. Service firms need to manage physical evidence carefully because it can have a profound impact on quality, customers' impressions. Physical evidence consists of facility exterior, facility interior and tangibles. Facility exterior includes the exterior design, parking, landscaping; facility interior includes the interior design, equipment used by customers and tangibles includes like, stationery and brochures.

Productivity: how efficiently service inputs are transformed into outputs that add value for customers.

2.1.4 Service Quality in Higher Education Institution (HEI)

Service Quality is multidimensional concept; it means different things to different people. Firstly service is abstract as a result; service is difficult for suppliers to explain and for customers to assess (Edvardson, 1994). Secondly, no global definition of quality has been established until the time of speaking even though this has been the focus of discussions throughout history. Higher

education is a service since it exhibits all the classical features of services: it is intangible and heterogeneous, meets the criterion of inseparability by being produced and consumed at the same time, satisfies the perishability criterion and assumes the students' participation in the delivery process "(Cuthbert 1996a)". The concepts of service quality are therefore directly applicable to higher education. Quality has been defined variously as excellence, value, conformance to specifications, conformance to requirements, fitness for use, loss avoidance and meeting and or exceeding customer's expectation.

several 'university characteristics' can help to explain the perceived quality among students, like competent teaching, the availability of staff for students' consultation, library services, computer facilities, recreational activities, class sizes, level and difficulty of the subject content, and students' workload 'Adee (1997)". However, there is a considerable debate about the best way to define service quality in HEI "(Becket and Brookes, 2006)". Service quality literature suggests the importance for educational institutions to monitor the quality of the services they provide in order to commit themselves Service quality in higher education to continuous improvements. It is pointed out that the "education quality is a rather vague and controversial concept" (Cheng and Tam, 1997).

2.1.5 Customers of the Educational Institution

Griffin (1996), defined a customer as anyone who pays money to acquire an organization's products or services. "Stanton, Etzel, and Walker (1994)" suggested that customer is the individual or organization that actually makes a purchase decision, while a consumer is the individual or organizational unit that uses or consumes a product. In education students are customers who come to contact with service providers of an educational institution for the purpose of acquiring goods or services. Students were considered to be the "primary customers" of a university (Hill, 1995), being the direct recipients of the service provided, student-perceived service quality has turned out to be an extremely important issue for universities and their management. The study by Owlia and Aspinna (1997) surveyed 124 people involved in educational quality efforts in United States, Europe, India, and Australia. The results identified students as primary customers, followed by employers, society, faculty and families in descending order of relative importance. "Waugh (2002)" however, suggested that viewing students as customers created some tensions in universities by making universities seem to be too aligned with businesses. Some researchers also view academic faculties as customers of

university administration. “Pitman (2000)” examined the extent to which university staff perceived students and academics as customers in Australia. Although the primary participant in the service of education is the student, there is also a strong underlying assumption that the “customer” of education includes industry, parents, Government, and even society as a whole.

Regarding students as customers and conducting students' evaluations of teachers and teaching practice, according to Emery (2001), result in lowering of academic standards. Whereas in the private sector the issue of customer is clear and unambiguous, in the context of public services it is difficult to define customers and the term itself may be inappropriate. Individuals, government agencies and society as a whole may as well be regarded as customers.

There are many beneficiaries of higher education and thus it is claimed that defining and managing quality in higher education call for less controversial term, such as stakeholders. It is clear that the interests of students and their families should not be neglected. In addition, interests of prospective employers who are looking for quality human capital should be safeguarded, as well as requirements of funding bodies seeking for good return on investments and job satisfaction of the employees of higher education sector. Society as a whole should also be taken into consideration since better-educated workforce is expected to lead to stronger economy (Srikanthan and Dalrymple, 2003).”Athiyainan and O’Donnell (1994)” highlighted that higher education institutions seeking to assess quality must first identify the institutional characteristics that are most valued by its clients and then measure the clients’ perception of the institution performance against these characteristics. This raises the issue of “who is the customer in education”. According to “Kara &DeShields (2004)” educational institutions have many customers: students, staff, faculty, alumni, donors, and others.

2.1.6 Customer Expectation

Customer expectations are understood as “desires -or wants of consumers” or “what they feel the service provider should offer rather than would offer” (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Customer expectations are internal standards that customers use to judge the quality of a service experience. Customers' expectations about what constitutes good service vary from one business to another. Expectations are created by several factors and it embrace several different elements, including desired service, adequate service, predicted service, and a zone of tolerance that falls between the desired and adequate service levels (Lovelock and Wright, 2001).

Desired Service: the "wished for" level of service quality that a customer believes can and should be delivered

Adequate Service: the minimum level of service that a customer will accept without being dissatisfied

Predicted Service: the level of service quality a customer believes a firm will actually deliver

Zone of Tolerance: the range within which customers are willing to accept variations in service delivery.

2.1.7 Dynamics of Expectation

The dynamics of customer expectation classified as Fuzzy expectation, explicit expectations and implicit expectations. Fuzzy expectation exists when a consumer expects the service provider to solve a problem but does not have a clear understanding of what should be done. An explicit expectation refers to clear understanding by customers as to what should be done in advance. They can be classified under realistic and unrealistic expectations. Implicit expectations on the other hand refer to elements of service which are so obvious to customers that they do not consciously think about them but take them for granted. Implicit expectations may become relevant when they are not fulfilled: e.g. the student may mistakenly expect that a support service like tutor class with free of charge. Implicit expectation should therefore be made explicit and it must be clarified whether they are realistic or not. Overtime, expectations, that were once explicit, may become implicit and out of control: e.g. a certain level of quality and empathy is taken for granted, but may decline as a consequence of frequency of the service (Gronroos, 2000).

2.1.8 Customer Perception

Perception is the process by which people select, organize, and interpret information to form a meaningful picture of the world (Kotler and Armstrong 2001). Customer perception is defined as customer's judgment of how service or product fulfills their needs, wants and desire. Perceived quality is the consumer's assessment of an entity's overall excellence or superiority (Zeithaml, 1988). Thus, if perception of the actual service delivered by the supplier falls short of expectation, a gap is created which should be addressed through strategies that affect the direction either of expectations or perceptions, or both (Parasuraman et al.1988).

2.1.9 Dimensions of Customer Perceptions

The customers' perception of the service process are divided into two dimensions: the process dimension and, or how the service process functions, and the outcome dimension, or what the process leads to for the customer as a result of the process. The two quality dimensions are termed technical quality (what the service process leads to for the customer in the technical sense) and functional quality (how the process functions). Customers perceive the quality of the service in these two dimensions, what they get and how they get it. Technical quality is a prerequisite for good perceived quality, but it is seldom enough. In addition, functional quality aspect of a service must be on an acceptable level. More frequently, the perceived technical quality aspect of the service become visible for customers as soon as it is good enough, and after that the functional qualities aspects determine the level of perceive quality of service in the minds of consumers (Gronroos, 1982).

However, customer perception is influenced to a large extent by the image a company has in the eyes of the public. The image of a company serves as a filter that influences the quality perception favorably, neutrally or unfavorably depending on whether the customer considers the service provider good, neutral or bad. For example the lapses in a service process, causing delay may be eclipsed by the good image the company enjoys in the eyes of the public but overtime image changes (Gronroos, 1982).

2.1.10 Factors Affecting Perception of Customers

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (1996:104), four factors that influence customers' service perceptions are image, price, and service encounters (moments of truth) and the evidence of service.

- **Image**

Customer perceptions can be affected by the image or reputation of the organization. Keller (1993) defines organizational image as "perceptions of an organization reflected in the associations held in customer memory." The associations can be reflected through contacting with employees and even the service experience itself. Organizational image can assist an organization to build positive customer perceptions of service.

- **Price**

The price of service can also influence customer perceptions. Because of the intangible nature of the service, customers rely on price as an indicator to judge whether the service can meet their expectations or not. If the price is higher than average price, customers are likely to expect higher quality than others; if price is too low, customers may doubt the ability of organization to deliver the service appropriately. For both situations, the higher or lower expectations will greatly influence customer perceptions of service. For example Cost of courses offered in HE institution has the greater influence on student perception. According to the research carried out by “Ford, et. al. (1999)”, reasonable cost of education influences the overall students’ perceived service quality. In addition, the provision of financial services such as scholarship is indicated as one of the important determinants of the overall students’ perceived service quality (Hill, 1995). The cost of courses offered has been tested by some researchers in the extant literature as one of the important determinants of the overall students perceived service quality” (Hill, 1995; Ford, et. al., 1999; and Joseph, et. al., 2005)’

- **Service Encounters (moments of truth)**

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (1996:105), when customers have service transactions with a service organization, they can judge the quality of service provided by this organization, through evaluating the concrete service encounters. Customers can receive a snapshot of the organization’s service quality through interactions. Thus, adequate service encounters will improve the positive relationships between the service provider and the customer. There are three types of service encounters, namely remote encounters, phone encounters and face-to-face encounters ‘Zeithaml & Bitner (1996:107)’

- **Evidence of Service**

The last factor of influencing customer perceptions of service is regarded as the evidence of service. Because services are intangible, customers not only rely on price to evaluate service quality, but also seek for evidence of service in every interaction they have with an organization to build an impression of service perceptions.

2.1.11 SERVQUAL Application and Criticisms

Although SERVQUAL has been widely used by service companies, doubts have been expressed about both its conceptual foundation and methodological limitation. Majority of researchers

using SERVQUAL have omitted from, added to, or altered the list of statements purporting or falsifying to measure service quality. Another difficulty is that SERVQUAL was developed primarily in the context of face to- face encounters. In the electronic age, more dimensions would have to be looked at in respect of virtual services and transactions such as web sites availability, privacy, system efficiency to be able to measure electronic service quality. Another area of criticism has been SERVQUAL scale's dimension of comparison of a customer's expectation and their perceptions. Cronin and Taylor (1992) have suggested that it is not necessary to include a customer's expectation, arguing that modeling perceived performance is sufficient. So that the research at hand will follow measuring service quality of private higher institution based on the perceived performance of HEDPERF dimension.

2.1.12 Perceived Service Quality

The term perceived service quality has been frequently used by practitioners and academicians in the past few decades, whereas there hasn't been any generally accepted definition yet. The consensus about perceived service quality is that it is a consumer's evaluative judgment or impression regarding a service provider's overall performance or excellence (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Perceived service quality refers to the customer's evaluation of an organization's service based on his or her overall experience of the continuous service encounter (Woodruffe, 1995). Chowdhury and Abe (2002) state that customers' perceptions of quality are generally formed on the basis of an array of cues. These cues basically fall into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic cues. Intrinsic cues refer to attributes that cannot be changed without changing the physical characteristics of the product. Extrinsic cues, however, are attributes that are not part of physical product.

However, we can consider intrinsic cues as the fundamental service qualities and extrinsic cues as external or non-fundamental service characteristics of a university. For example the classroom facilities, library and laboratory facilities, facility and staff services, program and curriculum design, and extra-curricular activities are considered as intrinsic cues. On the other hand, location, building, price, and image dimensions can be considered as external cues.

2.1.13 the Gap Analysis

Berry and his colleagues developed the gap analysis model intended to help managers analyze sources of quality problem and how service quality can be improved (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Zeithaml et al., 1985). They develop a model called “the gap analysis model” which explains that the quality of a service (customer satisfaction) is a function of expected service and the perceived service. The expected service depends on the customer’s past experiences, personal needs and word-of-mouth communication as well as external marketing communication by the service provider. The perceived service is the result of a process of affective analysis of the service after experience in relation to expectation of service performance before encounter. If the perceived performance of a product or a service is less than expected, customers will be dissatisfied. On the other hand if the perceived performance exceeds expectation, customers will be satisfied (Lin, 2003).

Kotler (1984) also thinks that, the buyer’s satisfaction depends on the closeness between the customer expenditure and the service perceived performance. If performance falls short of expectation, the customer is dissatisfied and if performance matches expectation, the customer is satisfied and if performance exceeds expectation customer is highly satisfied and delighted.

Gap-1 consumer expectation – management perception gap

Discrepancies between executive’s perception and consumer’s expectation exist. In essence service firm executives may not always understand what futures connote high quality to consumers in advance, what features a service must have in order to meet consumers need and what and what level of performance on those features are needed to deliver high quality service. The gap between consumer expectation and management perception of those expectations will have an impact on the consumer’s evaluation of service quality.

Gap-2 management perception – service quality specification gap

A variety of factor-resources, market conditions, and / or management indifference may result in discrepancy between management perception of consumer expectation and the actual specifications established for a service. This gap between management perception of consumer expectation and the firm’s service quality specifications will affect service quality from the consumer view point.

Gap-3 service quality specification – service delivery gaps

Even when guide lines exist for performing service well and treating customers correctly, high quality service may not be a certainty. Executives recognize that service firm employees exert a strong influence on the service quality perceived by consumers and employee's performance cannot always be standardized. The gap between service quality specification and actual service delivery will affect service quality from consumers stand point.

Gap-4 service delivery – external communication gap

Media advertising and other communications by a firm can affect consumer's expectation. If Expectation plays a major role in consumer perception of service quality firms need to be certain not to promise more in communication than it can deliver in reality. Promising more than can be delivered will raise initial expectation but lower perception of quality when promises are not fulfilled. External communications can affect not only consumer expectation about service but also consumer perception of delivered service. Alternatively, discrepancies between service delivery and external communication in a form of exaggerated promises and / or the absence of information about service delivery aspects intended to serve consumers well can affect consumer's perception of service quality. So this gap between service delivery and external communication will affect service quality from consumer's point of view.

Gap-5 expected service – perceived service gap

The key to ensuring good service quality is meeting or exceeding what consumers expect from the service. Judgments of high and low service quality depend on how consumers perceive the actual service performance in context of what they expected. This gap is the central focus of gap model

The quality that a consumer perceives in a service is a function of the magnitudes and direction of the gap between expected service and perceived service.

2.1.14 Customer satisfaction

In recent years, many companies have adopted total quality management (TQM) programs designed to constantly improve the quality of their products, services and marketing processes. The emergence of total quality management (TQM) has been one of the major developments in management practice in the last two decades. The recognition of TQM as a source of competitive advantage has been widely promoted around the world, especially in Western countries, and today very few (especially manufacturing) companies can afford to ignore the term (Dean and

Bowen, 1994). Quality has direct impact on product performance and hence on customer satisfaction. Higher levels of customer satisfaction sustain customers' confidence, which is essential for competitive advantage (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001). To understand satisfaction, we need to have a vivid picture of what customer satisfaction means. Customer satisfaction is the result of cognitive and affective evaluation of a service or a product. In other words the basic theory in customer satisfaction is the concept of expectation and perception.

Several authors have defined customer satisfaction in various ways. According to Kotler (2001), satisfaction is a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectation. Gaither (1994) defines customer satisfaction as the determination of customer requirements and demonstrated success in meeting them. Kotler (2001) again defined customer satisfaction by giving details on the attributes of a highly satisfied customer. According to him, a highly satisfied customer stays loyal, longer, and buys more as the company introduces new products and upgrades existing products; talks favorably about the company and its products, pays less attention to competing brands and is less sensitive to price, offers service or product ideas to the company and costs less to serve him than new customers because transactions are routine. Kotler and Armstrong (2001) in their Principles of Marketing, define customer satisfaction as the extent to which a product's perceived performance matches a buyer's expectations. They continued that, if the product's performance falls short of expectations, the buyer would be dissatisfied but if performance matches or exceeds expectation, the customer will be satisfied or highly satisfied (Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman 1991).

2.1.15 Relationship between Service Quality and customer satisfaction

Defined service quality and customer satisfaction as "service quality is a global judgment, or attitude, relating to the superiority of the service, whereas satisfaction is related to a specific transaction" Satisfaction is a "post consumption experience which compares perceived quality with expected quality, whereas service quality refers to a global evaluation of a firm's service delivery system" (Parasuraman et al, 1988). There is also a lot of argument regarding whether customer satisfaction is the antecedent of service quality or the outcome of service quality. "Initially, scholars take the position that satisfaction is an antecedent of service quality since to

reach an overall attitude (service quality) implies an accumulation of satisfactory encounters “Bolton & Drew, 1991”

Customer satisfaction “is a broader concept than service quality which focuses specifically on dimensions of service (Zeithaml et al.2006).

2.1.16 Modern Trend in Customer Satisfaction

In the early era of marketing, manufacturers of products and service providers did not place so much emphasis on customer satisfaction because they believed their notion about the product or service was the best and that customers did not know what was best for them. However, today, customer satisfaction is no longer a slogan. It has become a very important concept in all societies. As Kotler and Armstrong (2001) note “it is becoming a way of life in corporate America as embedded into corporate cultures as information technology and strategic planning.” In any free market economy, it is obvious that only the fittest can survive and this makes the issue of customer satisfaction very important in competitive markets (Kotler&Armstrong, 2001).

2.1.17 Cost Saving of High Customer Satisfaction

According to Kotler (1989) the importance of retaining a customer is that there is strong evidence that there is a positive correlation between customer retention and profitability. They contend that the longer a customer stays with the company, the higher the likelihood that she/he will place a greater amount in the business which means higher market share, which in turn means higher revenues. In addition, lower costs are incurred in advertising and promotion in order to attract the customer. Selling cost can also be lower due to salesperson not having to call on as many prospective new customers. Lower product development and design costs can accrue due to fewer modifications being required from prospective new customers. In the long run the revenue of the company increases leading to high profit margin (Kotler, 1989). Kotler (1989) also observed that, the average unhappy customer may tell nine other people about his/her experience, whereas the average happy customer will tell only five other people.

Organizations lose customers for various reasons including death, customer moving away from their locality, the company being insensitive to customers’ complaints, among others. It has been observed that 3% of customers move away, 9% of the customers could buy cheaply elsewhere and 84% of the customers were not satisfied because they have much complaints and the company failed to address them. Managers and marketers should therefore be much concerned

about actions and reactions of customers since these forms the basis of growth and survival of every organization (John, 1997).

2.1.18 Instruments to Measure Service Quality in HEI

Although many studies supported the SERVQUAL, the use of gap scores was opposed. The empirical research of Cronin and Taylor (1992) suggested measuring service quality only perceptions of the service experience. For more consistent results of the analysis of a structural model, they recommended using “SERVPERF” -a modified SERVQUAL instrument to measure service quality. Instead of measuring both customer expectations and perceptions as in the SERVQUAL, the SERVPERF was operational zed by only one part of the perceived performance on the differently labeled 7-point scale.

Different researchers have different views on measurement of service quality in higher education. Most of the studies employ SERVPERF, HEDPERF, SERVEQUAL, and Importance Performance Analysis.

- **SERVPERF**

An alternative instrument to measure service quality was introduced by one of the SERVQUAL’s critics – Cronin and Taylor (1992). Instead of SERVQUAL introduced the performance - based measure of service quality, SERVPERF which is composed of 22 perception items defined in SERVQUAL scale, and excludes any consideration of expectations. In other word, SERVPERF differs from SERVQUAL in that; SERVPERF does not assess gap scores because the expectation portion of pairing is not included. The research of Cronin and Taylor (1992) suggested that although expectations can have unique effect on customers’ perception of service quality, the performance minus expectation is an appropriate basis for use in the measurement of service quality. Moreover, there were many emerging literature supported the performance-based paradigm over the disconfirmation based SERVQUAL paradigm.

However, Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1994) criticized the SERVPERF instrument that the marketing literature appears to offer considerable support for the superiority of the simple performance-based measures of service quality was surprising and questionable. Parasuraman et al. (1994) also revealed that through the practice of measuring only perception was widespread, such a practice did not necessarily mean performance based measures were superior to discontinuation – based measures. In fact, service quality measurements that incorporate customer expectations provided richer information than those that focus on perceptions only.

- **HEDPERF (Higher Education Performance) model**

In view of that, Firdaus (2004) proposed HEDPERF (Higher Education Performance), a new and more comprehensive performance-based measuring scale that attempts to capture the authentic determinants of service quality within higher education sector. The 41-item instrument has been empirically tested for dimensionality, reliability and validity using both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Therefore, the primary question is directed at the measurement of service quality construct within a single, empirical study utilizing customers of a single industry, namely higher education. Specifically, the ability of the more concise HEdPERF scale is compared with that of two alternatives namely SERVPERF instrument and the merged HEDPERF –SERVPERF as moderating scale. The goal of HEDPERF to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of each instrument in order to determine which instrument had the superior measurement capability in terms of dimensionality, reliability, validity and explained variance of service quality. Eventually, the results of this comparative study were used to refine the HEdPERF scale, transforming it into an ideal measuring instrument of service quality for higher education sector. Firdaus categorized 5 determinants of service quality in higher education. They are nonacademic aspect, academic aspect, reputation, access and program issues.

1. Non-academic aspects: This aspect relates to the duties that are carried out by non-academic staff. This contains variables that are essential to enable students fulfill their study obligations and it relates to duties and responsibilities carried out by non – academic staff. In other words, it is concerned with the ability and willingness of administration (or) support staff to show respect, provide equal treatment and safeguard confidentiality of information

2. Academic aspects: It consists of the items that describe the factor that are solely the responsibilities of academics (instructor). This factor represents the responsibilities of academics and it highlights key attributes such as having positive attitude, good communication skills, allowing sufficient consultation, and being able to provide regular feedback to students. Other important elements center on the academic reputation of the institution, notably its ability to offer prestigious and wide ranging program with flexible structure, degrees that are recognized locally and internationally and finally having highly educated and experienced academic staff

3. Reputation: The factor consists of the item that is important for higher learning institutions in projecting a professional image

4. Access: It includes issues as approachability, ease of contact, availability and convenience of academic and non-academic staffs.

5. Program issues: It includes the item related to program flexibility, offering wide range of programs/ specialization, and quality program.

- **Service Quality Model (GAP model)**

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) defined service quality ‘as perceived by consumers, is the result of a comparison of expectations of a service they will receive and perceptions of the performance of the firms providing the service’. In fact, service quality is an abstract and elusive construct because of three features unique to services: intangibility, heterogeneity and inseparability of production and consumption. Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate as different customers have different perceptions of service quality. Further research of Parasuraman et al,(1988) led to the deletion of certain items from the ten dimensions and the reassigning of other items, and resulted in the current SERVQUAL instrument that consists of five key dimensions of service quality: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

- **Importance Performance Analysis(IPA) Model**

According to Joseph and Joseph (1997:161), the importance-performance analysis (IPA) paradigm is the most suitable model for measuring service quality satisfaction in education. The objective of the IPA is to identify which attributes or combinations of attributes are most influential in stakeholder satisfaction. IPA tries to assess the underlying importance accorded by consumers to the various quality criteria under judgment.

The Importance-Performance Analysis conceptually rests on multi-attribute models. This technique identifies strengths and weaknesses of a market offering in terms of two criteria that consumers use in making a choice: the relative importance of attributes and evaluation of the offering in terms of those attributes. A particular application of the technique starts with an identification of the attributes that are relevant to the choice situation being investigated. The list of attributes can be developed after canvassing the relevant literature, conducting focus group interviews, and using managerial judgment.

2.1.19 Customer service standards and accountability

A core component of a customer-focused organization is a clear set of customer service performance standards that is systematically reinforced. Standards of customer service identify and communicate what constitutes satisfactory performance for all employees and customers. They provide uniform measures for all staff and promote consistently strong customer service. According to Schneider and Bowen, 1995, satisfaction consultant to the hospital industry, “Behavioral change requires standards, not suggestions.” Once those are in place, an organization can develop consistency by clearly communicating what is expected and, based upon those expectations, reinforce positive behaviors and hold employees accountable for sub-standard service delivery. According to Center for the Study of Social Policy to satisfy customers staffs need tools including thorough training, flexibility and empowerment to solve problems and satisfy customers. To know that the organization values them, Frontline staffs also need recognition and rewards for strong performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

According to the research by Mulu (2012), which was on quality and quality assurance in Ethiopian higher institution academic staffs across the public universities are not properly trained and engaged to face challenges and improve quality education to the level it should be.

In his research Solomon (2012) that was on stakeholder’s perception of service quality improvement in Ethiopian public higher education institutions; reveal that the reason for the highest gap between perception and expectation is that the stakeholders expect more from the service quality improvement initiative and this expectation is because of implementation of BPR. He also suggested that further research should be conducted on private higher institutions.

A research by Krisana Kitcharoen (2004) on IPA analysis of service quality of PHEI in Thailand; in the study modified IPA model was used for a sample of students and staff of ten randomly selected Thai universities to investigate the importance of service attributes for service providers’ and student’s evaluation of services.

Many studies in the past were conducted specifically about service quality, student satisfaction and higher education. Some of them are: Firdaus (2005), in his paper “The development of HEdPERF: a new measuring instrument of service quality for higher education sector”, found HEdPERF (Higher Education Performance) to identify the authentic determinants of service quality in higher education institutions. He did his survey among the six higher learning

institutions students. The survey was done on one private university, two public universities and three private colleges in Malaysia. He found five factors non-academic, academic, reputation, access, and program issues to be the determinants of service quality in higher education. Qi Huang (2009) conducted a study on “The relationship between service quality and student satisfaction in higher education sector: a case study of undergraduate sector of Xiamen University of China”. The research studied the undergraduate student satisfaction in service quality of Xiamen University, which was the first university in china founded by an overseas Chinese. The service quality sub variables used in the research was the combination of variables developed by Firdaus (2005). The data was collected through questionnaires. A 7 point Likert Scale was used to record the responses with 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The SPSS program was applied in analyzing the data. The study showed that the undergraduate student of Xiamen University of China was satisfied with the quality service provided by the university. The main sub- variable for the student satisfaction was the academic aspects followed by non-academic aspects, cost, and access, teaching methods, industry links, program issues and reputation. The study showed that academic aspect to be most important for the student satisfaction in Xiamen University of China. According to the results of this analysis, it showed positive correlation between the overall service quality and student satisfaction, which is consistent with the findings of Anderson and Sullivan (1993), that satisfaction is a function of perceived service quality.

The better the service quality, the higher will be satisfaction of the students. This research was based on the past studies of Firdaus (2005), and Qi Huang (2009). Qi Huang (2009) conducted the survey using the model developed by Firdaus (2005), Angell, Heffernen and Megicks (2008) and Navarro, Iglesias and Torres (2005). The study showed the academic aspects, non-academic aspects, access to be most important for student satisfaction in Xiamen University of China. As those three variables were of HEdPERF and was developed by Firdaus (2005), HEdPERF model was adopted to conduct this research. The next part discusses more about the theoretical framework and conceptual framework, on the basis of hypotheses to be tested are developed.

2.2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research was mainly based on Firdaus (2005) “The development of HEdPERF: a new measuring instrument of service quality for higher education sector”. In study by Firdaus (2005),

he found out HEdPERF (higher education performance). HEdPERF is the service quality measuring tools in the field of higher education. Later in the study by Brochado (2009), he proved HEdPERF to be an effective tool for measuring the service quality in higher education.

The variables of HEdPERF regarding service quality are:

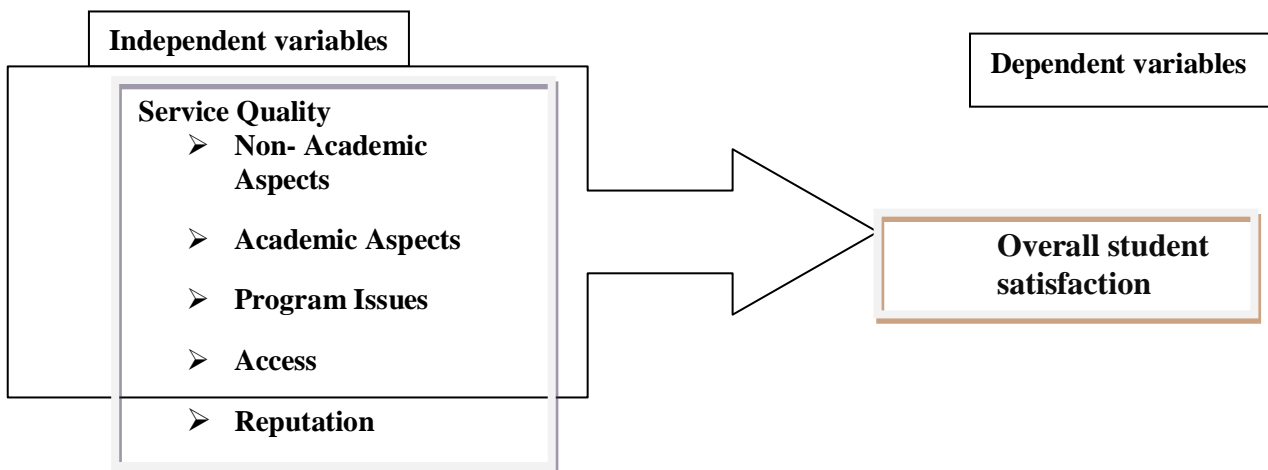
- a. Non-academic aspects
- b. Academic aspects
- c. Reputation
- d. Access and
- e. Program issues.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

“A conceptual framework indicates how the researcher views the concept involved in a study, especially relationships between concepts” (Veal, Business research methods, 2005, p.51).

This study was developed mainly based on Firdaus’ HEdPERF (2005). He has measured service quality in higher education in five aspects as non-academic, academic, program issues, reputation and access. These aspects are the instruments for measuring the service quality in higher education. All these five aspects were adapted for the conceptual framework. After reviewing various literatures of service quality and satisfaction the following frame work is adapted inconsideration of the study of Qi Huang (2009) on “The relationship between service quality and student satisfaction in higher education sector”.

Fig 2.2 conceptual Framework



Source: own survey 2017

In this research, the independent variables are the five variables of service quality, as academic factors, non-academic factors, program issues, reputation, and access and the dependent variable is overall student satisfaction. Based on this frame work the following hypotheses are developed.

H 1-The more quality service provided in non-academic aspects of Higher Education Institutes (HEI)result in greater levelof overall student satisfaction.

H2-The more quality service provided in academic aspects of Higher Education Institutes (HEI) will result in greater level of overall student satisfaction.

H 3- The higherReputation of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) result in the higher level overall student satisfaction.

H 4- The better the program issues in the Higher Education Institutes (HEI) has better effect on overall student satisfaction.

H5- Access contributes positively to overall student satisfaction in the Higher Education Institutes (HEI).

2.4 Summary

The chapter is presented with the theoretical framework that was made from the literature reviewed, what services means and its major features, service quality clarification, service quality measurement and criticism of service quality measurements. In the same way, service expectations that clarified what expectation means and the service quality models that discussed a few of relevant models were presented. The gap model of service quality discussed the service provider and the service receivers' gaps and the service quality dimensions were discussed. Modern trend in customer satisfaction and Cost saving of high customer satisfaction Ethiopian Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEI) were also discussed and presented. Finally, empirical review that gave the shortest summary of some of relevant studies and the conceptual frame work ,which clearly conceptualized what to be done in this research were clearly discussed and presented

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter research Design and Approach, the Target Population, Sampling Technique, Sample Size, Instrument of Data Collection, Sources of Data Collection, Reliability and Validity and finally ethical consideration about the research were presented.

3.1. Research Design

There are different types of scientific research design. Namely exploratory research, Descriptive research and Explanatory research (Anol Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Explanatory research aims at establishing the cause and effect relationship between variables. The researcher uses the facts or information already available to analyze and make a critical evaluation of the data/information.

On the other hand, Descriptive research sets out to describe and to interpret what is. It looks at individuals, groups, institutions, methods and materials in order to describe, compare, contrast, classify, analyze and interpret the entities and the events that constitute the various fields of inquiry. It aims to describe the state of affairs as it exists. Whereas, exploratory research is less formal, sometimes even unstructured and focuses on gaining background information and helps to better understand and clarify a problem.

Accordingly, this research was conducted by using explanatory form of research design to provide solutions to the research problems. Explanatory form of research enables to explain the relationship between the five variables of HEDPERF and customer satisfaction as well as the impact HEDPERF dimensions on customer satisfaction in private higher educational institution.

3.2. Research Approach

There are two basic approaches to research, quantitative approach and the qualitative approach (Kothari, 2004). The former involves the generation of data in quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion. Quantitative surveys are designed to fit a questionnaire schedule. This is the most commonly used technique in research (Veal, 2006). The later qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. This research is conducted using quantitative research approach hence; it examined and measured the effect of service quality on student satisfaction in relation to private higher educational context in Addis Ababa.

3.3. Target Population

According to Keller (2009, p.5), “a population is the group of all items of interest to a statistics practitioner”. According to McDaniel (2001) target population is a total group of people from whom the researcher may obtain information to meet the research objectives. This research aims at measuring the overall student satisfaction towards the service quality of Private higher Education Institutes (PHEI) in Addis Ababa. So, the target population is the students attending universities in PHEI in Addis Ababa. There are more than 83 PHIE in the country. Since total students study in these PHEI too many in numbers and since it is very difficult to approach and address all them for this research 3 Institutions were selected to conduct the research. The target population includes those undergraduate regular students of the three private higher educational institutions which are located in Addis Ababa. The total targets numbers of population are 2840 which is the sum of the three selected university students

3.4. Sampling Technique

As the total undergraduate students of the private higher educational institutions are too many in number and since it is very difficult to approach and address all them, it is necessary to have a sample of students for the purpose of the study.

Taking in consideration of the researcher available time, resource and also willingness of the managements of the university the final sample size obtained were 200 respondents. These are selected by using convenient sampling technique. Convenience sampling is non-probability sampling method by which the researcher will selects the proper population of student from which to obtain information from. This method were used in order to get reliable & accessible data to insure the completeness of the research and combat the rationality of consistent data limitation and it is also the most useful sampling method because it is the easiest and cheapest method to conduct a survey (Cooper, 2000).

The student respondents were selected from final year, this is due to the students’ familiarity with the institution and their perceptions of institutions’ service delivery that were dependable over time. In their final year, students would have been at the university for last three years, thus, they should have an accurate perception of the service quality. Mostly, students in their final year also have some critical viewpoints, and for this reason, their perceptions are usually more critical than the fresh student’s.

3.4. Sample Size Determination

Based on “Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970)” sampling table, it was appropriate to select sample size of 140 from the given target group. Roscoe (1979) proposed that the rules of thumb for determining the sample size which more than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for the most research as cited on “(John., Cheng., Huck., 2011)”. accordingly, 200 undergraduate student of private higher educational institutions are selected for questionnaires and based on these determination 200 questionnaires were distributed to the selected campus student according to the number of undergraduate student they have. Target Numbers of student in Admas University were 1030 and number of student in Rift Valley University College 670 and in Alpha University College are 1140. The total population of the study is the sum of all students in the three institutions, which is 2840. Accordingly, sample size was taken from each institution with their respective number of students through stratified sampling technique. Here is the formula for taking sample of student from each institution with their respective number of students.

Sample from x university = no of students from x university /total population*sample size.

- ❖ Admas University(kality campus): Number of students 1030 ($1030/2840*200 = 73$)
- ❖ Alpha University (Lancha campus) : Number of students 1140 ($1140/2840*200 = 80$)
- ❖ Rift Valley University (kality campus) : Number of students 670 ($670/2840*200 = 47$)

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

In this research, there are 5 variables of service quality. They are academic aspects, non-academic aspects, program issues, reputation and access. Dependent variable is the overall student satisfaction. As per Cooper (2006), Likert scale is the most frequently used variation of the summated rating scale and it is also simple to construct and likely to produce a high reliable scale .as a result questionnaire containing the five dimensions of HEDPERF variables were prepared and measured on a five- point of scale ranging from 1 (one being strongly disagree) to 5 (five being strongly agree) and similarly a questionnaire that measure the overall student satisfaction ranging from 1 (one being Highly dissatisfied) to 5 (five being Highly satisfied) are distributed to the sample of student being chosen for this research.

The questionnaire was distribute to students at the end of their class in collaboration with the administration of the campus and their instructors

3.6 Sources of Data Collection

There are two types of sources of data. These are primary and secondary sources of data.

“Primary data involves the collection of data that does not already exist. It is collected through questionnaires. Berg (2001), points out that if the researcher wants to administer the results easily and to collect deep going information from a smaller number of individuals questionnaire and interviews are suitable respectively.

Secondary data are existing data but that can be used in the current project (Veal, 2006). In this report secondary data from different website were used to collect the background information. Moreover, this study also uses the external secondary data such as books, journals, online database via internet, past research and the like.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

“Descriptive statistics deals with methods of organizing, summarizing, and presenting data in a convenient and informative way” (Keller, 2009, p.2). The variables which are analyzed using interval scale of measurement, tables of percentage and arithmetic mean were applied to summarize the data. Table of frequency and percentage will be applied to summarize the data.

Descriptive method of data analysis is preferable to analyze and interpret the collected data by converting the large data into small understandable and predictable through tabulation and percentages. All the data collected from both primary and secondary source were arranged orderly and summarized in tables after being processed. Percentage is necessary where the processed data would be expressed in relative to relevant.

“Inferential statistics is a body of methods used to draw conclusions or inferences about characteristics of populations based on sample data” (Keller, 2009, p.3). Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient were used to examine the scores between the between (X) variables of service quality and (Y) overall student satisfaction of students of Universities in PHEI in Addis Ababa.

The rule for testing the hypothesis is, if the P-value (significance of correlation) is less than the value of Alpha, the null hypothesis (H_0) will be rejected, which means the alternative hypothesis (H_a) will be accepted. All collected data were computed and analyzed using the SPSS computer program. Descriptive statistics was also applied as statistical treatments this study.

3.8 Reliability and Validity

Content validity is an assessment of how well a set of scale items matches with the relevant content domain of the construct that it is trying to measure. Validity and reliability tests were conducted first. Cronbach alpha with acceptable cut off points above 0.7 demonstrate that all attributes are internally consistent and the reliability test for the instrument used for the study was conducted using SPSS the results shows that the items used are reliable

Table 3.2 Reliability test

HEDPERF dimensions	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Non-academic aspect	5	.797
Academic aspect	5	.850
Program issue	5	.781
Access	4	.722
Reputation	4	.812
Overall items	23	.928

Source: own survey, 2017

3.9 Ethical Consideration

In the context of research, according to Saunders, Lewis and Thorn hill, (2001:130), “ethics refers to the appropriateness of your behavior in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it”. The data will collected from those of volunteer sample respondents without any unethical behavior or forceful action. The results or a report of the study is used for academic purpose only and response of the participants is confidential and being analyzed as it is without any change by the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

This section attempted to present the outputs of analyzed information and their interpretation. The analyzed data were summarized under descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis described the demographic profile of respondents, the summary of responses in each item, the responses in service quality, the responses in students' perception and the responses in students' satisfaction in selected university. On the other hand the inferential analysis was attempted to present the sample tests, the multiple partial correlation outputs and the multiple linear regression outputs. Two hundred questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the students of Higher Education Institutes (HEI) out of the two hundred questionnaires 193 were collected and out of this 193, four questionnaires were not valid because they were not fully completed.

4.2. Descriptive Analysis

In this section, the demographic profile of respondents of this research and their responses in Service quality, students' perception and satisfaction were summarized and presented. The summarized responses of these respondents were also described in line with the basic research questions and the objective of this research.

4.2.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 4.1 Summary of Respondents' Profile

Demographic Variable	Category	Total	Percentage
Gender	Male	91	48.1
	Female	98	51.9
	Total	189	100.0
Age	18-21	79	41.8
	22-24	86	45.5
	25-27	17	9
	>27	7	3.7
	Total	189	100.0
University Category	Admas	67	35.5
	Alpha	76	40.2
	Rift valley	46	24.3
	Total	189	100.0

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.1 the properties include the gender and age of the sampled students. The results reveal that 48% of the students were male and almost 52% were female. This showed that the majority of the students are female which indicated females are becoming more participative in learning.

As for the age distribution, almost 45.5% of the respondents were young and between 22 and 24 years old, followed by 41.8% between 18 and 21 years. Only 9% of the sampled students fell into the 25 to 27 age group while the rest 3.7% were older than 27 years. From this we can depict that majority of the students are youngsters.

When we see the summary of university category respondents from Alpha University tend to higher 76(40.2%) followed by Admas university respondent 67(35.5%) And the rest 46(24.3%) of respondents were from Rift Valley University.

4.2.2. Perception towards Service Quality

The overall students' perception towards service quality has been assessed using a five point Likert scale ranging from very high, high, medium and low as shown below.

Table 4.2 Analysis of Perception towards service quality by frequency

Scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very high	40	21.2	21.2	21.2
High	42	22.2	22.2	43.4
Medium	74	39.1	39.1	82.5
Low	33	17.5	17.5	100
Total	189	100.0	100.0	

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.2 shows that students are pleased with the service being provided by Institutions since 21.2 percent of the respondents said their perception about service quality is very high and 22.2 percent of the respondents thought it is good. The service rated medium 39.1 percent which is the highest score of all and 17.5 percent thought about the service is low. More than half of the respondents thought the service provided is either medium and above represents 82.5 percent, so overall students' perception about the institutions over all service is satisfactory in general.

4.2.3: Non-academic Aspects

Table 4.3: Analysis of Non-academic aspects by Average Mean and Standard deviation

	N	mean	Std deviation	Ranking
The staff respect rule of confidentiality when I disclose information to them	189	3.63	1.032	1 st
Administrative staff communicates well with students	189	3.05	1.141	4 th
When the staff promise to do something by a certain time, they do so	189	2.99	1.099	5 th
Administrative staff provide caring attention	189	3.61	1.013	2 nd
Students are treated equally by the staff	189	3.21	1.161	3 rd
Non academic aspect	189	3.3	0.3306	

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.3 presents the perception of the respondents in term of non-academic aspects.

From the table we can see the mean score of the non academic aspects was 3.3, with the standard deviation of 0.3306. There were 5 items (questions) under non-academic aspects.

Out of 5 questions “The staff respect rule of confidentiality when I disclose information to them” and “Administrative staff provides caring attention” scored the highest with the mean of 3.63 and 3.61, and standard deviation of 1.032 and 1.013 respectively.

The items which were scored the lowest were “When the staff promise to do something by a certain time, they do so” and “Administrative staff communicates well with students” with the mean score of 2.99 and 3.05, and standard deviation on 1.099 and 1.141 respectively. As looking at the above table we can conclude all the questions mean score are 3.3 which means, it is slightly above the neutral.

4.2.4 Academic Aspects

Table 4.4: Analysis of academic aspects by Average Mean and Standard deviation

	N	mean	Std deviation	Ranking
Instructor show positive attitude towards students	189	3.91	.999	3 rd
Instructor allocate sufficient time for consultation	189	3.59	1.021	4 th
Instructor has the knowledge to answer my questions relating to the course content.	189	3.96	.883	1 st
Instructor are highly educated in their respective fields	189	3.74	.923	4 th
Instructor provide feedback about my progress	189	3.94	.960	2 nd
academic aspect	189	3.83	0.61852	

Table 4.4: presents the perception of the respondent's in terms of the academic aspects.

The mean score of academic aspects variable is 3.833 with the standard deviation of 0.61852. There 5 items (questions) under this service quality variable. The question "Instructor has the knowledge to answer my questions relating to the course content" has the highest mean score of 3.96 and standard deviation of .883. The question "Instructor allocate sufficient time for consultation" has the lowest mean score of 3.59 and the standard deviation is 1.021. Here, in the above table the mean score of overall academic aspects is near to 4 i.e. 3.83. So, we can conclude that academic aspects lie on "agree level".

4.2.5 Program Issue

Table 4.5 Analysis of program issue by Average Mean and Standard deviation

	N	mean	Std deviation	Ranking
The university operates an excellent counseling service	189	2.55	1.128	5 th
Curriculums designed by the university are up to dated	189	3.21	1.161	2 nd
The university runs excellent quality program	189	2.97	1.079	4 th
The university offers a wide range of programs with various specializations	189	2.99	1.099	3 rd
The university offers programs with flexible structure	189	3.56	1.033	1 st
Program issue	189	3.056	0.5528	

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.5 shows the analysis of the perception of the respondents in term of program issues. The program issues have the mean score of 3.056 which is slightly above “neutral” with standard deviation of 0.5528. There are 5 items under this service quality variable. “The university offers programs with flexible structure” scores the highest mean i.e. 3.56 and standard deviation is 1.033 and “the university operates an excellent counseling service” has the lowest mean of 2.55 and standard deviation is 1.128. So, we can conclude program issue is slightly closer to “neutral level”

4.2.6 Access

Table 4.6: Analysis of Access by Average Mean and Standard deviation

	N	mean	Std deviation	Ranking
The handouts are provided adequately by the Instructor	189	2.23	1.123	4 th
The staff are easy to contact	189	3.21	1.044	1 st
Teaching Methodology is appropriate.	189	2.55	1.218	2 nd
The timing of the class is suitable	189	2.30	1.143	3 rd
Access	189	2.56	0.5061	

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.6 represents the analysis of the perception of respondents in term of access.

Access has mean score of 2.56 and standard deviation is 0.5061. There were 4 items under this variable. “The staffs are easy to contact” has the highest mean score of 3.21 and its standard deviation is 0.044. Under this variable all the rest items mean score is below 3. So, we can conclude access is slightly closer to “disagree level”.

4.2.7 Reputation

Table 4.7: Analysis of Reputation by Average Mean and Standard deviation

	N	mean	Std deviation	Ranking
The university graduates are easily employable	189	2.93	1.327	4 th
The university has a professional image	189	3.56	1.033	2 nd

The proportion between theory and practice are appropriate	189	4.19	.908	1 st
The academic program run by the university is reputable	189	3.50	1.065	3 rd
Reputation	189	3.54	0.5954	

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.7 represents the analysis of perception of respondents in term of reputation.

The reputation has the mean score of 3.54 and standard deviation of 0.5954. There were 4 items under this service quality variable. “The proportion between theory and practice are appropriate” scored highest mean i.e. 4.19 And its standard deviation was 0.908. “The university graduates are easily employable” has the lowest mean score of 2.93 and the standard deviation of 1.327. So, we can conclude reputation is nearest to “agree level”.

4.2.8 Analysis of Each Service Quality Dimension by Average Mean and Standard deviation.

Table 4.8 Analysis of Each Service Quality Dimension Mean Score

Scale	mean	Std deviation	Ranking
Mean Non-academic aspect	3.33	.3306	3 rd
Mean Academic aspect	3.83	.6182	1 st
Mean Program issue	3.05	.5528	4 th
Mean Access	2.56	.5061	5 th
Mean Reputation	3.54	.5954	2 nd

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

As table 4.8 indicates among the dimensions Academic aspect has the highest score with 3.83 and STD of .6182 which ranked the first, which includes the performance of instructor and their knowledge. Reputation to dimension ranked second with 3.54 it is expressed like as the university has a professional image and goodwill. Non-academic aspect and Program issue also ranked from third to fourth with respective mean value of 3.33 and 3.05.

The variable Access has got the lowest score of 2.56 and which makes it the last from the attributes. This indicated that Access with the elements like as the handouts are provided adequately by the Instructor and the timing of the class is suitable in line with the service they give are less satisfied the students as per their response.

4.2.9 Overall Students' Satisfaction by frequency

The Overall students' satisfaction on service quality has been assessed using a five point Likert scales ranging from Highly Dissatisfied to Highly Satisfied as shown below;

Scale	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Highly Dissatisfied	28	15	15	15
Dissatisfied	41	21.7	21.7	36.7
Neutral	59	31.2	31.2	67.9
Satisfied	37	19.4	19.4	87.3
Highly Satisfied	24	12.7	12.7	100
	189	100.0	100.0	

As table 4.9 indicates respondent's overall level of satisfaction with respect to the service provided by the section. a cumulative of 36.7% of the respondents are agreed that they are not satisfied with the service provided by the section, and 31.2% of the respondents have a moderate or neutral filling meaning they are neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with the service while 32.1% of the total respondents are satisfied. Thus, when we see the overall level of student satisfaction the institution is performing not so bad, but still it have a lots of things to improve the quality of service and the level of satisfaction to convert those indifferent students and those who are dissatisfied with the service of institutions.

4.2.10 Overall Satisfaction

Table 4.10: Analysis of Overall Satisfaction by Average Mean and Standard deviation

	N	mean	Std deviation
Overall, I am satisfied with the university	189	3.21	0.5667
Overall satisfaction	189		

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Table 4.10 represents the analysis of the overall student satisfaction with the university.

The mean score of this item is 3.21 which is slightly above 3 and standard deviation is 0.5667 . We can infer most of the respondents are at satisfied level with the university service.

Though there are some respondents who are not satisfied with the university in which the

minimum score for this item is 1 i.e. “Strongly disagree” and the mean score is 3.21 which is slightly above “neutral”level.

4.3 Analysis of Association

Correlation analysis is one of the most widely used and reported statistical method in summarizing scientific data (Richard Tyler, 1990). It is used to test the relationship between the service quality variables (Non-academic aspects, academic aspects, program issues, access, reputation and overall student satisfaction).

- Positive correlation: an increase in values for one variable is associated with an increase in values for the other variable,
- Negative correlation: an increase in values for one variable is associated with a decrease in values on another variable.(Greasley, 2008).

The strength of a correlation is indicated on a scale ranging from -1 to +1 as a general guideline, a value ranging from 0.1 to 0.4 would be classed as a weak correlation, and anything above 0.5 would be regarded as a strong correlation (Cohen, 1988)as cited on (Greasley, 2008). A value approaching zero indicates the absence of any relationship between two variables, in other words no correlation (Greasley, 2008).

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis between each service Dimension and Overall satisfaction.

Table 4.11: Correlation Analysis between HEDPERF Dimension and Overall student satisfaction

		Overall student satisfaction
Non academic Aspects	Pearson Correlation	..581^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N		189
Academic Aspects	Pearson Correlation	..608^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N		189
Program Issue	Pearson Correlation	..443^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N		189
Access	Pearson Correlation	..332^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N		189
Reputation	Pearson Correlation	..593^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
N		189

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

The above table shows the significance is equal to .000 for all items.

According to the rule if sig. it is less than alpha ($.000 < .001$), we reject null hypothesis, Since the p-value (sig.) is less than 0.01, we can say that there is acceptable evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis is true. We can also say that there is significant positive correlation between non-academic aspects and overall student satisfaction which is moderate positive correlation of 0.581 of Higher Education Institutes (HEI) in Addis Ababa. There is also significant positive and strong correlation between academic aspects and overall student satisfaction with moderate positive correlation of 0.608. Similarly there is also significant positive and strong correlation between Reputation and overall student satisfaction with moderate positive correlation value 0.593. As well as there is also significant positive correlation between Program Issue and Access dimensions of HEDPERF with moderate positive correlation value of 0.443 and 0.332.

Hence, we can infer that an increase in quality of HEDPERF dimensions may lead to a high increase in student satisfaction.

4.3.2 Correlation analysis between overall service quality and student satisfaction

Table 4.12 Correlation between Overall Service Quality and Student Satisfaction

	Overall, I am satisfied	Overall quality service
Overall, I am satisfied with the university- Pearson Correlation	1	.521*
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	189	189
Pearson Correlation	.521*	1
Overall there is quality service Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	189	189

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

The result in table 4.12 indicates that there is a positive and strong correlation between service quality and student satisfaction a moderate positive correlation of 0.521, $p < 0.01$ which means that increase in the level of service quality will result in an increase in the level of student satisfaction.

4.4. Differential Analysis

4.4.1 Paired Sample t-test

The paired-sample t test is used to compare the means of two variables within a single group; in this research it is employed to compare mean of performance and satisfaction. The confidence interval of 95% is taken to compare the means.

Table 4.13 Paired Sample t-test

HEDPERF dimensions	Performance		Satisfaction		Difference	t.	Overall Sig.
	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev			
Non-academic aspect	3.33	.3306	3.87	.723	-0.54	-9.728	.000 ^d
Academic aspect	3.83	.6182	4.11	.832	-0.28	-4.788	
Program issue	3.05	.5528	3.74	.621	-0.69	-10.045	
Access	2.56	.5061	3.46	.552	-0.9	-10.54	
Reputation	3.54	.5954	4	.772	-0.46	-9.277	

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

As we can see from the table above the paired difference for all attributes indicated negative sign which means the mean score of Performance is less than the mean score of student's Satisfaction of actual performance. The highest difference is possessed by Access (-0.9) and the lowest is Academic aspect (-0.28). The t- test result shows negative for all attributes, this show that the mean score of Satisfaction is greater than expected performance. The p value of service quality dimension is lower than .05 which indicate the sig divergence between expected performance and perceived performance of the institutions, all of them are 0.000

4.4.2 Multiple Co linearity Statistics

Table 4.14: Analysis of Co linearity Statistics

Dimensions	Tolerance	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Constant		
Non-academic aspect	.390	2.56
Academic aspect	.476	2.10
Program issue	.351	2.84
Access	.325	2.076
Reputation	.480	2.08

Source: questionnaire survey result (2017)

Tolerance is an indicator of how much of the variability of the specified independent is not explained by the other independent variables in the model and is calculated using the formula $1 - R^2$ for each variable. If this value is very small (less than .10), it indicates that the multiple correlation with other variables is high, suggesting the possibility of multi co linearity. The other value given is the VIF (Variance inflation factor), which is just the inverse of the Tolerance value (1 divided by Tolerance). VIF values above 10 would be a concern here, indicating multi co linearity. Since the lowest tolerance is .325 (i.e. $>.1$) and the highest VIF is 2.84 (i.e. <10) there no problem of multi co linearity. This shows that the assumption of multi-co linearity is not violated.

4.5 Regression Analysis

Regression is a technique that can be used to investigate the effect of one or more predictor variables on an outcome variable. Regression allows you to make statements about how well one or more independent variables will predict the value of a dependent variable.

4.5.1 The impact of service quality dimensions on student satisfaction

To investigate the relationship between HEDPERF dimensions and student satisfaction, linear regression models was applied. By taking HEDPERF dimensions as independent variables and taking overall satisfaction as dependent variable.

Table 4.15 the Relation between HEDPERF dimensions and Overall student satisfaction

HEDPERF dimensions	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t.	Sig.	Overall Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Mean Non-academic aspect	.296	.146	.188	1.982	.048	.000 ^d
Mean Academic aspect	.337	.106	.254	.3.155	.002	
Mean Program issue	.028	.137	.015	.176	.845	
Mean Access	.014	.11	.016	.048	.954	
Mean Reputation	.456	.134	.308	3.411	0.01	

$R=.723$ $R^2=.522$ $F=29.934$, where d. Dependent variable (overall satisfaction)

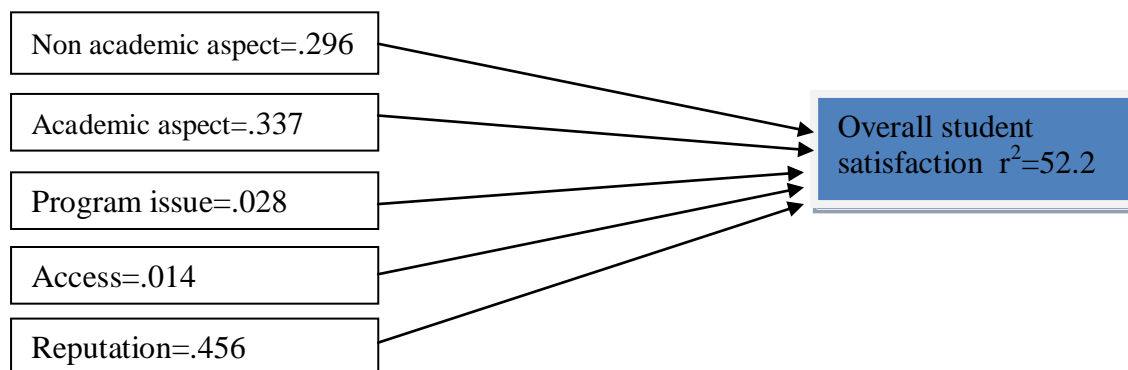
Source: own survey, 2017

Table 4.15 shows that satisfaction is explained by the HEDPERF dimensions, which indicates 52.2% ($r^2=0.522$) of the variance in the overall satisfaction is explained by the HEDPERF dimensions. In addition, the results demonstrate that there is positive and statistically significant

($p < 0.05$, $F = 29.934$) relationship between the HEDPERF dimensions and overall customer satisfaction. The value of r^2 is 0.52 which tells us that these five service quality variables can account for 52.2% of the variation in the overall student satisfaction. This means that 48.8% of the variation in overall student satisfaction cannot be explained by these five service quality variables. So, there must be other variables that affect student satisfaction. Therefore the three HEDPERF dimensions (Non academic aspect, academic aspect and reputation) collectively have significant to private higher educational student satisfaction while the remaining dimensions (program issue and access) do not have significant positive relationship with student satisfaction since they have p-value (> 0.05). when we see each dimensions individually there is a positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.456$) relationship between reputation and student satisfaction which supports Hypothesis 5 and also there is a positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.337$) relationship among academic aspect and student satisfaction which supports Hypothesis 2 as well as there is a positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.296$) relationship among non-academic aspect and student satisfaction which supports Hypothesis 1 where as HEDPERF dimensions (program issue and access) weak positive relationship with student satisfaction.

4.5.2 Summary of the model

Fig 4.1 Results of Regression analysis



Source: own survey, 2017

The Beta-values (standardized coefficient) in the table 4.17 can tell us the effect of change in the independent variables on dependent variables, which represent the relationship between overall student satisfaction and each determinant of service quality variables. If the value is positive we can tell that there is a positive relationship between the independent variable and the outcome whereas negative coefficient represents a negative relationship. (Field, 2005).

In the table 4.15 all five service quality variables have positive b-values; which indicates the positive relationships between the service quality variables and overall student satisfaction.

As non-academic aspects quality increases, student's satisfaction increases; as academic aspects increases, student's satisfaction increases; similarly as reputation, access, program issue increases, the student's satisfaction also increase. Here, for e.g., if reputation increases by one unit, student satisfaction will increase by 0.456, other variables being constant. Higher beta value reflects stronger correlation with the dependent variable.

In table 4.15 reputation have the highest beta (0.456), followed by academic aspects (.337), non academic aspects (.296), program issue (.028) and access (.014). This represents as if the quality of reputation increases by one standard deviation, overall student satisfaction standard deviation increases by 0.456, if the academic aspects increases by one standard deviation, overall student satisfaction standard deviation increases by 0.337, if the non-academic aspects increases by one standard deviation, overall student satisfaction standard deviation increases by 0.296 and so forth. But the interpretation is true only if the other variables are held constant while measuring the relationship between dependent variables and one of the independent variables. Hence, from the results of regression analysis we can infer that reputation influences the graduate student's satisfaction followed by academic aspects, non-academic aspects, program issue and access.

4.6 Summary of Hypothesis Results

Table 4.16 Summary of the Tested Hypothesis

	Hypothesis	Tested Hypothesis	Supported?
1	H _O	There is no significant positive relationship between Non-academic aspects and Overall student satisfaction	NO
	H _A	There is significant positive relationship between Non-academic aspects and Overall student satisfaction	YES
2	H _O	There is no significant positive relationship between Academic aspects and Overall student satisfaction	NO
	H _A	There is significant positive relationship between Academic aspects and Overall student satisfaction	YES
3	H _O	There is no significant positive relationship between Program issue and Overall student satisfaction	NO
	H _A	There is significant positive relationship between Program issue and Overall student satisfaction	YES
4	H _O	There is no significant positive relationship between Access and Overall student satisfaction	NO
	H _A	There is significant positive relationship between Access and Overall student satisfaction	YES
5	H _O	There is no significant positive relationship between Reputation and Overall student satisfaction	NO
	H _A	There is significant positive relationship between Reputation and Overall student satisfaction	YES

Source: own survey, 2017

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Introduction

In this chapter Summary of major Findings, conclusion about the study are formulated and based on this conclusion possible recommendations are drawn.

5.1 Summary of Major Findings

The objective of this study is to measure effect of service quality provided and the level of student satisfaction in private Higher Education Institutes (PHEI). The study was conducted by distributing 200 questionnaires to students of 3 private Higher Education Institutes (PHEI) in Addis Ababa among this 200 questionnaires distributed 189 (94.5%) was collected and was useable.

Descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing were performed. Descriptive analysis helped to see perceptions of the respondents towards service quality.

Hypothesis testing was under take to find the out relationship between the service quality variables and overall student satisfaction.

The service quality was measured using HEDPERF dimensions or variables (non academic aspect, academic aspect, program issue, access and reputation) measured using a five point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree(1) to strongly agree(5) and overall satisfaction level of respondents was measured scale ranging from highly dissatisfied(1) to highly satisfied (5). Accordingly 36.7% of the respondents are dissatisfied by the service provided by private Higher Education Institutes (PHEI) currently in Addis Ababa, 31.2% of the respondents have a neutral filling meaning that they are neither dissatisfied nor satisfied by the service while 32.1% of the respondents are satisfied by the service.

The relationship between HEDPERF dimensions and student satisfaction and overall service quality and student satisfaction was measured by testing Hypothesis through Correlation analysis. The results indicate that there is a positive ($p < 0.01$) relationship between overall HEDPERF dimensions and student satisfaction.

The result of the linear regression analysis indicates that there is a positive relationship between overall service quality and customer satisfaction ($p < 0.05$).

5.2 Conclusion

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate effect of service quality on student satisfaction in private higher educational institution in Addis Ababa by using the HEDPERF model. From the analysis of the survey of all the collected data, we can conclude that these service quality variables have significant relationships with the overall satisfaction of the graduate students who were studying in private universities in Addis Ababa.

The findings of the study show that there is a positive relationship between the overall five HEDPERF dimensions combined and student satisfaction.

Furthermore, the findings of the study show that student satisfaction has a strong positive relationship with the three HEDPERF dimensions of service quality academic aspects, non-academic aspects and reputation. This indicates that these three dimensions are the most important ones for student satisfaction in the private higher educational institution in Addis Ababa. However, the result showed student satisfaction is influenced by other service quality variables that are not included in this study. Therefore, in measuring customer satisfaction the institution should take a care for all the factors that can affect their student satisfaction.

In addition to this the findings of the study shows that the most important factors that contributes largely to their satisfaction are the fact that in the private higher educational the staff respect rule of confidentiality when I disclose information to them and Instructor has the knowledge to answer my questions relating to the course content. And also the proportion between theory and practice are appropriate in the institution has also play an important role for satisfying the student. The result also demonstrate that there is a weak positively significant relationship between student satisfaction and the remaining two HEDPERF dimensions namely program issue and access, this finding lead to the conclusion that the student give much emphasis to the academic aspects and non-academic aspects of the service private higher educational institution.

The findings of the study also indicate that there is positive and significant relationship between overall service quality and student satisfaction. It implies that service quality factors and student satisfaction are highly related in educational sector.

In conclusion this means that delivering academic service with good quality in private higher educational institution will lead to student satisfaction.

5.3 Recommendations

The study confirms the overall five HEDPERF dimensions of service quality (academic aspects, non-academic aspects, program issue access and reputation.) are positively correlated with the student's satisfaction. So improving the overall quality of service can leads to improving the level of customer satisfaction.

Since this study indicate that even if overall student satisfaction have positive relation with all of service quality dimensions, private higher educational institution does not recognize and consider this issue.

- So, private higher educational institution needs to improve their service quality in all of the five dimensions of service quality in order to meet and improve the satisfaction level of their student.
- As Academic aspects and reputation are the most predictors of satisfaction as it is shown in the results followed by Non-academic of the university. But when we see their mean scores these three dimensions score slightly above the neutral. So private higher educational institution needs to improve and give emphasize for these three aspects of service dimension throughout their service deliver. The institution can achieve this by formulating training and development program for both academic and non academic staff staffs to equip them with the knowledge of service quality and customer handling on the continuous basis.
- And also private higher educational institution improving their service process and extra priority must also give to service related problems and method of solving them. Because from this research one can infer that the higher the service quality will lead to the higher the student satisfaction.
- For that all private higher educational institution in Addis Ababa should work hard to improve the satisfaction of their student since the students are the primary customer of their institution.
- The institution should invest to improve the entire service quality to attract new student and to maintain their enrollments.

- To meet and exceed in student attraction and satisfaction the private higher educational institutions should develop and follow good program issue like in areas of offering programs with flexible structure, up to dating Curriculums designed by the university and operating an excellent counseling service beside their reputation and accessibility.
- Delivering excellent quality service must be taken as the competition weapon to survive and succeed in the ever growing and dynamic environment. So all private higher educational institutions especial located in Addis Ababa needs to monitor and measure the level of service quality they delivers to their student on a regular base by conducting different action research.
- Finally, as the service provider's private higher educational institutions should have to consider their students as a customer since the institutions cannot survive without them. Hence, further researches must be conducted by the institutions in order to get comprehensive knowledge on the issue as well as to provide quality service for their students.

5.4 Limitation and Implications for Future Research

This study measures effect of service quality on student satisfaction only in private higher education context in Addis Ababa. The study only included three private educational institutions which are located in Addis Ababa. Therefore, Future researchers who want to investigate on similar area may include students of other more private university and public university students.

And also future researchers may conduct comparison on the impact of service quality on student satisfaction between private university and public university which are located Addis Ababa and/or in Ethiopia context.

There are few studies on service quality of higher education institutions in this country; this may be due to the view that may not consider the sector as service. As a result, more researches can be conducted by future researchers to narrow such gap.

Finally, future researchers can further investigate the levels of service quality and student satisfaction among different higher educational institutions using other service quality measurement tools or dimension.

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APENDIX I

Appendix-1 Questionnaire

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

Masters of Marketing Management Program

4.1. English Version Questionnaire

I am master's student at Addis Ababa University and I am doing my post graduate thesis under the supervision of Dr. Mesfin. W

Dear respondents;

First of all I would like to forward my heartfelt gratitude and respect to you for administering this questionnaire honestly and responsibly. The questionnaire is designed to collect the necessary information to undertake a research on the topic “*effect of service quality on customer satisfaction in Private Higher Education context.*”

” Your response is highly valuable for the study and there are no identified risks from participation in the survey. Participation in the study is completely voluntary it will take you approximately 8- 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of three parts (personal information, your perception and satisfaction level and lastly your overall satisfaction level).Therefore; your genuine answer to the questions in the questionnaire has an enormous value to the completion of this study.

Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation and valuable time.

Remark:

- No need to write your name

Part I; personal information:

Please put a tick (✓) mark corresponding to your response

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age:

18 - 21 22 -24

24 -27 above 27 years

3. Name of your university:

Admas Alpha Rift valley

4. What is your level of awareness about the concept of service quality?

Very-High High medium Low

PART II SERVICE QUALITY ATTRIBUTES

The following statements relate to your feelings about your University. For each statement, please show the extent to which you believe your University has the feature described by the statement. Circle on “1” means that you strongly disagree/SD/, “2” disagree/D/, “3” neutral/N/, “4” agree/A/, and “5” strongly agree/SA/.

Service attributes	Measurement variables	Measurement scales				
		Strongly disagree(1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	strongly agree(5)
Non academic aspect	The staff respect rule of confidentiality when I disclose information to them	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Administrative staff communicates well with students	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	When the staff promise to do something by a certain time, they do so	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Administrative staff provide caring attention	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Students are treated equally by the staff	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Academic aspect	Instructor show positive attitude towards students	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Instructor has the knowledge to answer my questions relating to the course content	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Instructor allocate sufficient time for consultation	1	2	3	4	5
	Instructor are highly educated in their respective fields	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Instructor provide feedback about my progress	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The university operates an excellent counseling service	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>

Program issue	Curriculums designed by the university are up to date.	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The university runs excellent quality program	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The university offers a wide range of programs with various specializations	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The university offers programs with flexible structure	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Access	The handouts are provided adequately by the Instructor.	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	When the staff promise to do something by a certain time, they do so	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	Teaching Methodology is appropriate.	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The timing of the class is suitable	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Reputation	The academic program run by the university is reputable	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The university graduates are easily employable	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The proportion between theory and practice are appropriate	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
	The university has a professional image	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>

Part Three: Overall satisfaction

DIRECTION: The following statement relates to your feeling about your University.

Please respond by circling the number which best reflects your own perceptions.

Your feelings towards the overall services of about the University can be best described as,

1. Highly dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. Neutral
4. Satisfied
5. Highly satisfied

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire!