

Determining Drivers of Student Satisfaction among Coaching Institutes of North India

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Abstract - Education has played an essential part in the overall development of an individual. The education industry in India is growing at a swift pace. Satisfaction of the students is very important in this context since high levels of satisfaction are positively correlated with the profitability of an organization. This paper attempts to identify various drivers of student satisfaction and also examines the impact of these drivers on overall student satisfaction. The findings of the study reveal that effective designing of curriculum, physical facilities, instructor support, support services, teaching quality and management of the institute are very vital in order to achieve the overall student satisfaction. The study also brings out an important fact from the literature that the majority of students is found to be satisfied with their academic programs, but are less satisfied with support services such as academic advising and career counselling. Inadequate support services at the educational institutions have influenced the student satisfaction score. The study also highlights that the continuous and effective dialogue between the instructor and students is also very important in order to achieve the expected satisfaction level of the student. The management role is very vital in this regard and it must regularly invest in training and development of instructor in order to ensure high quality of teaching skills.

Keywords: *Curriculum, Physical facilities, Student Satisfaction, Support Services.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Indian education system is growing and developing continuously. The education system in India is a multi crore industry. The education industry was worth US\$ 100 billion in 2015-16 and is likely to reach US\$ 116.4 billion in 2016-17 [3]. Since education industry is growing at a good pace but interesting fact is to examine whether the students are satisfied with the services offered by Indian education system or not. Different stakeholders are involved in an education system and the satisfaction of all the stakeholders involved is an important factor need to be studied. Student satisfaction is the considered as nuclei in the efficient working of educational institution. Logically satisfaction may at best be defined as a feeling which is intrinsic to the activity sensed differently by the different people. This may be a function of the outcome achieved in reality and hence inferred from expressive behaviour. Satisfaction takes place when the perceived outcome is achieved or outcome exceeds the expectation level of students [4]. The satisfaction of students is very vital for the long term survival of educational institutions. If student is not satisfied then they cannot position their heart and soul in the process of learning and hence the desired outcome cannot be accomplished. Educational institutions

offer students with opportunities to compete with peers, to make friends, earn status, and thus meet their social need of approval and recognition. The degree to which the expectations of students are achieved is a good predictor of satisfaction.

The coaching industry is likely to grow up exponentially owing to the rise in income, increase in the proportion of expenditure on education and improved awareness regarding competitive higher educational institutions. Furthermore, the rising demand for engineering and medical as a profession has emerged as one of the major reasons of students choosing coaching classes. Classroom coaching is the most important component of the coaching industry and creates most of its revenue. The classroom coaching industry is divided into private tuition industry and preparation for entrance exam. Student satisfaction cannot be enhanced merely by focussing upon academic factors only. Non academic factors such as services offered and learning environment etc. are equally important. The education institutions must frequently appraise student expectations so that student retention can be minimised and course quality can be enhanced. The student is considered as a most important customer in the educational institutes [6]. Previous researchers have also stressed upon

the need of examining the student satisfaction [1]. It is important to identify how students perceive their study experiences [2]. In such severe competition and various options available in this sector a student's and their parents' satisfaction is of utmost importance. So in view of above facts the educational institutes must formulate appropriate strategies to enhance the level of satisfaction among students and reduce dissatisfaction.

The researcher has come across numerous studies conducted on customer satisfaction in the service industry but a few studies are found on examining the student satisfaction in coaching industry. So, present study will identify various determinants of the student satisfaction so that the educational institutes can design their strategies in accordance with the satisfaction levels. This will enable them to gain competitive advantage over others and institutes will be able to retain the students, acquire the new ones and to achieve the long run success in the business. The broad purpose of the study is to identify various drivers of student satisfaction and their impact on overall student satisfaction. The broad objectives of the study are:

- i. To examine the impact of students' perception of quality of service on the overall student satisfaction.
- ii. To provide the recommendations to the coaching industry for improvement in the quality of services offered.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A study conducted by Hartman and Schmidt (1995) found that satisfaction of student is multi-dimensional and relied upon the many determinants. Numerous studies have been carried out on different populations [17, 13, 11] has studied dimensions of student satisfaction across different organizations. The major dimensions identified are (1) achievement; (2) Recognition; (3) possibility of growth; (4) personal life (5) status; (6) interpersonal relationship; (7) organizational policy and practices (8) College Environment.

Achievement: Achievement can be defined in terms of (a) success or failure in academic work (b) successful completion of set objective and (c) living up to the expectations of teachers and friends. **Recognition:** Recognition is referred to as admiration/criticism for academic and/ non-academic activities by teachers and peers.

Possibility of growth: This factor focuses on the learning of academic and social skills; confidence in solving problem, opportunity for independent thinking and action.

Personal Interest: Personal interest refers to pressures in the personal and social life of the student influencing his choice of joining the institute. **Status:** Status indicate the

student's position in the class in relation to his class work as perceived by teachers/students and his participation/membership in other social groups.

Interpersonal relationship: It indicates the interpersonal relationships at three levels (1) interpersonal relationship with teachers (2) interpersonal relationship with peers, and (3) interpersonal relationship with administrative staff.

Organizational policy and practices: Organizational policy referred to policies of admission and evaluation. Admission policy is considered in terms of adopting objective and fair procedure of admission; evaluation policy in terms of fairness and objectivity in grading.

Organizational Environment: The Organizational environment was conceived in terms of study space available to students, facilities, physical layout of the organization and its rank in relation to the other organizations.

Curriculum

Curriculum is considered as an academic program offered to students in educational institutions. It can also be defined as an attractive content that has the capability to keep the students' interest. Curriculum is also considered as one of the important variables of perceived service quality in educational institutions. Sahin (2007) examined the relationship between student satisfaction and various variables like curriculum, teacher support, student relations and association, individual significance, true and learning, and student independence. The variables namely active learning, individual significance, teacher support and true learning were found to be positively and significantly related to the satisfaction of students. Curriculum as another important variable was examined by Bernath in 2003. The study confirmed that well managed curriculum is positively related to the student satisfaction. The findings of his study are also in line up with [23, 27, 14, 18].

Physical Facilities

The previous studies have also established relationship on physical facilities available at the educational institutions with the overall satisfaction of the students. Physical facilities available in the educational institution include conducive class room, sports and recreational facilities, cafeteria etc. Aldridge & Rowley (1998) found that physical facilities such as technology facilities, library services and lecture rooms have affect on student happy experience. The facilities at library include availability of textbook and learning materials, easiness of issuing the learning material, suitable operational hours of library etc. Lee et al. (2000) found that overall layout of the school and quality education is important variable in predicting the overall satisfaction of the student. Sohail and Shaikh (2004) states that the physical facilities of education

institutions include the campus look, lighting and designing of the lecture halls and cleanliness of the campus as well as of the classrooms. The study is found to be having significant positive relationship between physical facilities and satisfaction of student.

Instructor Support

Instructor support is another determinant found to be affecting student satisfaction. Wagner et al. (2005) revealed that instructor support was significantly and positively related to student satisfaction. Instructor support is always required in terms of imparting knowledge and skills among the students, efficient two ways contact with the student, timekeeping and easy availability to the students. Burgess (2006) has also emphasized upon the importance of continuous and effective dialogue between the instructor and students in order to achieve the expected satisfaction level of the student.

Support Services

Many previous researchers have emphasized upon the role of student support services and its influence on the satisfaction of the students. Support services at educational institutes include effective counseling, effective induction programs for new students, effective career guidance and attitude of support staff [29, 30]. Kotler and Fox (1995) examined the relationship between support services offered by the educational institutions and overall satisfaction of the students. The finding of the study revealed that greater part of students are satisfied with their academic programs offered, but are found to be less satisfied with support services such as career counselling and academic advising. A study conducted by Elizabeth et al. (2005) found inadequate support services at the educational institutions which as a result have influenced the student satisfaction score.

Teaching Quality

The quality of teaching is another important determinant which has largest positive effect on student satisfaction in educational institutes. The management role is very vital in this regard and it must regularly invest in training and development of instructor in order to ensure high quality of teaching skills. The competency of instructor is decisive to ensure the effectiveness of the students' learning process. Marzo-Navarro et al. (2005) found that the instructor, teaching process, and institution administration influence student satisfaction. The delivery of the content is one of the parameters of quality of teaching and it includes usage of appropriate language in delivering the lecture, delivering the lecture as per schedule and should not burdensome the students' etc.

Quality of Management

The quality of management of the educational institute in offering services to students' is another important

predictor of students' satisfaction. The academic approach of the management and offering quality services to the student are important functions of the management of the educational institute. In addition to this satisfaction of all the stakeholders involved is another vital function of the management. Some of the important traits of management of the educational institute involve service provided within the time promised, convenient operating hours, effective feedback system, and ability to implement students' suggestion in effective manner.

Students' Overall Satisfaction

In addition to the above stated factors the overall student satisfaction also need to be examined. In the service industry if the key stakeholders are satisfied only then the organization will be able to retain their customers and as result profitability can be enhanced. So students' being an important stakeholder of the educational institutes, it is very important to put in the best efforts to achieve high levels of satisfaction among the students'. Douglas et al. (2006) provide various items related to the overall student satisfaction. Overall student satisfaction can be examined by measuring ssatisfaction towards overall training and service quality, satisfaction with the decision making of selecting the institute, satisfaction in regard to meaningful and exciting experience during the study period, intention to pursue further studies in this institute and to positively recommend the institute to relatives or friends.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire is used to assess opinions of student' towards service quality and overall student satisfaction. The measurement scale is based on a broad review of prior studies conducted by several authors [8, 12, 19, 32] and also on opinion of experts in the coaching industry. In addition to this, content validation is agreed on taking the help of three practitioners in coaching industry, and the questionnaire was modified as per the comments received. The constructs of the instrument included: institute environment; faculty; curriculum; attitude towards students; support services; library/digital content; and management of the institute. A service quality instrument having a five-point Likert scale is used to collect responses for each construct.

Population: The population in the present study is defined as the students who have adopted coaching for JEE and Medical students in Tricity and New Delhi, India at the time of the survey.

Sampling Frame: To choose students who have adopted coaching for JEE and Medical students in Tricity and New Delhi, random sampling method is used. The sample frame consists of the students of these coaching institutes only.

Sampling Design: The main rationale of any study is to find out principles that have widespread relevance, but at

times the population is so big that it turns out to be impossible to capture the entire ambit. Considering this sampling plays a significant part in the research. Sampling is a significant facet of life in common and investigation in particular. By examining the description of the sample, researcher can draw definite conclusion about the features of the population from where it is drawn.

The target population of the present study was defined as the students who have enrolled in the coaching institutes (JEE and Medical only) of Tricity and New Delhi, India at the time of the survey. To choose coaching institutes, random sampling method is used. The sample frame comprised of the students of these select institutes only.

Sample Size: The next step is calculating the adequate sample size and it depends on several factors such as the planned techniques of analysis, financial support and access to sampling frame [31]. The technique of analysis of data used in the present study is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and is susceptible to sample size. Also SEM is less stable when estimations are made on the basis of small samples [20]. In view of the fact that the target population of this study was approximately 2280. If we take up the sample formula then sample size will be very less. And SEM is very receptive towards the sample size. Therefore as a universal rule; data from at least 300 respondents is considered to be comfortable, 500 as very good and 1000 as excellent [7, 9]. Therefore it was determined to aim around 500 respondents from select coaching institutes of Tricity and New Delhi.

Final Sample: In all 500 students were randomly approached during the month of August, 472 of them gave their consent to take part in the study. At some point in editing stage of the questionnaires, it was experienced that 74 responses were deficient in various respects and therefore discarded. As a result a total of 398 responses were found to be useful. It included students from coaching institutes of Tricity and New Delhi. Of these, New Delhi accounted for around 41%, Tricity accounted for 59% (Chandigarh with 21%, Panchkula with 20% and Mohali with 18%).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The mean and standard deviation was calculated for various constructs. These constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale, in which five means strongly agree (SA) and one strongly disagree (SD). The majority of the constructs have mean value more than 3.00 which highlights that most of the respondents felt that these factors affect the student satisfaction. Further, the standard deviation shows the good variability in all questions which a good sign showing that there is no ceiling and flooring effect. Also, from the analysis, it was found that no construct had had skewness more than three and none had

kurtosis above six. Hence this can be inferred that data is normally distributed.

The correlation explains the association and direction of relationship which is present between the variables in the present study. Positive correlation depicts a rise in the value of one variable possibly will raise the value of another variable and negative correlation depicts the contrary behavior.

Results show that the strength and direction of linear relationship were significant in their positive values between the pairs such as, faculty and institute environment ($r = .614, p < .01$), curriculum and institute environment ($r = .794, p < .01$), attitude towards students and institute environment ($r = .611, p < .01$), support services and institute environment factor ($r = .765, p < .01$), library/digital content and institute environment ($r = .742, p < .01$), management of institute and institute environment ($r = .695, p < .01$), attitude and faculty ($r = .524, p < .05$), attitude and curriculum ($r = .607, p < .01$), support services and curriculum ($r = .744, p < .01$), library/digital content and curriculum ($r = .775, p < .01$), management and curriculum ($r = .621, p < .01$), support services and attitude ($r = .566, p < .01$), library/digital content and attitude ($r = .361, p < .01$), management and attitude ($r = .481, p < .01$), library and support services ($r = .784, p < .01$), management and support services ($r = .763, p < .01$), management and library/digital content ($r = .637, p < .01$). To check the internal consistency of scale, Cronbach alpha was estimated and it was found to be .959 for all 58 items.

Table 1. Reliability

Cronbach alpha	Number of Items
0.959	58

V. EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA)

Factor analysis is a technique used to describe variability amongst related variables in terms lowering the range of unobserved variables known as factors. It is a tool to understand the variable relationships for difficult tasks. Factor analysis can also be described as a procedure predominantly appropriate for investigating the trends of multifaceted multidimensional associations [10].

The eleven factors are extracted based on the eigen values greater than explaining more than 60 percent variation.

VI. CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (CFA)

The appropriateness of the model in the study needs to be examined first before the structural relationship can be assessed to examine the hypothesis. A CFA is carried out using AMOS 20.0. The Maximum Likelihood Estimation is the finest answer to fit the measures of model. The outcomes are highlighted and argued for the model's fit indices, factor loadings, and the variance extracted which

is the average square factor loading for each latent construct in the measurement model, particularly, the average variance extracted.

Table 2. CFA Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Recommended Estimate Values	Model Estimates
Chi Square	Significant P-values expected	.000
CMIN/DF	<3	
CFI	>0.92	0.746
GFI	>0.90	0.760
AGFI	>0.80, it is usually less than the value of GFI	0.685
RMSEA	Value ranges between 0 and 1; lesser it is the better it is. <0.07	.014

Note: CFI stands for Comparative Fit Index; GFI for Goodness of Fit Index; AGFI for Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index; RMSEA for Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

According to the Table 2, the majority of the model-fit indices do not exceed the respective common acceptance levels suggested by previous research, demonstrating that the measurement model exhibited an acceptable fit rather than a perfect fit with the data collected. For that reason, we proceeded to estimate the psychometric properties of the measurement model in terms of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity.

Reliability Measures

CR ranged from .826 to .921, which is more than the suggested value of 0.7 [16, 24]. AVE determines the variance given by the indicators and it should be higher than 0.50 to validate the use of a construct [21, 22]. AVE values are between .567 and .661. The findings reveal that all 8 constructs are valid measures on the basis of their parameter estimates and statistical significance. The values of Cronbach Alpha for all the constructs are also found to be satisfactory.

VII. RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

SEM was used to examine the proposed model with the help of AMOS. The first concern to be addressed in investigating a structural model is to look at the goodness of fit [5, 15]. The suggested values for an overall fit have been suggested by previous studies.

Overall Fit Indices

Table 3. The goodness of Fit Indices for the Structural Model.

Criteria for Goodness of Fit Measures	Recommended values	Values
CMIN/DF	P>0.5 (N<250) or P<0.05 (N>250)	1.908
GFI	>0.90	.831

AGFI	>0.80	.714
RMR	Ranges between 0 and 1, lower it is better is <0.1 Or 0.08	.123
RMSEA	Ranges between 0 and 1, lower it is better is <0.1 Or 0.08	.069
PNFI	<0.50	0.657
PGFI	<0.50	0.610

Table 3 indicates that Chi-square is significant which means that model does not have a good fit. Though, it is usually agreed that chi-square is expected to be significant where the supposition of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is violated or in case of large sample size. Since the present study uses a large sample size, so it might have caused the significance of chi-square value. Apart from Chi-square, other alternative values of the goodness of fit have shown that model is an acceptable fit. The badness of fit indices, RMR and RMSEA are also within the recommended value implying that the likelihood of the model to be bad is insignificant. The combined impact of all the seven independent variables on student overall satisfaction is 0.81 which indicates that all the select variables have a significant impact on student satisfaction in the coaching institutes.

Given the model has proven to have an acceptable fit, we proceed to examine the path coefficients to test the hypothesis.

Hypothesis Testing

The constructs of the instrument included: institute environment; faculty; curriculum; attitude towards students; support services; library/digital content; and management of the institute. A service quality instrument having a five-point Likert scale is used to collect responses for each construct. The following factors as suggested by literature are assumed to be significant predictors of student satisfaction:

H1: institute environment is a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

H2: faculty is a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

H3: curriculum is a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

H4: attitude towards students is a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

H5: support services are a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

H6: library/digital content is a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

H7: management of the institute is a significant predictor of student satisfaction.

These seven hypotheses formulated were tested using path analysis.

Table 4. Path coefficients and hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	t value	supported
H1	0.77	3.509**	Yes
H2	0.80	0.934	No
H3	0.85	1.851*	Yes
H4	0.77	1.817*	Yes
H5	0.91	1.832*	Yes
H6	0.64	0.886	No
H7	0.85	2.565*	Yes

Structural Model

The SEM model highlights causal relationships between constructs which includes the path coefficients, and the R² value that establishes the prophecy power of the structural model. Jointly, R² and values of path coefficients point towards how fit data support the hypothesized model (Chin, 1998). Table 4 reveals the findings of the structural model. Institute environment ($\beta = 0.77, p < 0.01$), curriculum ($\beta = 0.85, p < 0.01$), attitude towards students ($\beta = 0.77, p < 0.01$), support service $\beta = 0.91, p < 0.01$), management ($\beta = 0.85, p < 0.01$), were positively related to students' overall satisfaction, thus supporting H1, H3, H4, H5, and H7 of this study.

These results are in line with Ibrahim, Rahman and Yasin (2014); Josephat, Ismail and Martin (2014). Faculty ($\beta = 0.80, p > 0.05$) and library/digital content ($\beta = 0.64, p > 0.05$) were not significant predictors of students' overall satisfaction, thus H2 and H6 were not supported. These results are supported by [25, 26, 28, 33, 34].

The structural model supported H1, H3, H4, H5, and H7 of study. The structural model supported H1, H3, H4, H5, and H7 of this study. Faculty ($\beta = 0.80, p > 0.05$) and library/digital content ($\beta = 0.64, p > 0.05$) were not significant predictors of students' overall satisfaction, thus H2 and H6 were not supported. The results revealed that campus environment, management of the institute, and support services are the key drivers in the prediction of students' overall satisfaction.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The structural model supported H1, H3, H4, H5, and H7 of study. The structural model supported H1, H3, H4, H5, and H7 of this study. Faculty ($\beta = 0.80, p > 0.05$) and library/digital content ($\beta = 0.64, p > 0.05$) were not significant predictors of students' overall satisfaction, thus H2 and H6 were not supported. Therefore, it can be concluded that faculty should be able to generate interest in the students and should be able to address the need of Meritorious and average students. A good faculty is not only who takes care of the high performing students but also the average students. They should create a friendly atmosphere where student opens up and feels comfortable to put forward his doubts.

Recommendations

The coaching institutes need to take into consideration the following recommendations in order to strengthen the overall student satisfaction:

- The institute environment should be such which supports the student comfort and interaction. It should provide access to teachers and senior faculty members for open interactions. Apart from academics, institute should be able to understand student potential and work towards the same.
- Faculty should be able to generate interest in the students and should be able to address the need of Meritorious and average students. A good faculty is not only who takes care of the high performing students but also the average students. They should create a friendly atmosphere where student opens up and feels comfortable to put forward his doubts.
- Curriculum should address needs of meritorious and average students both. It should cover the basic fundamentals and competitive exams too.

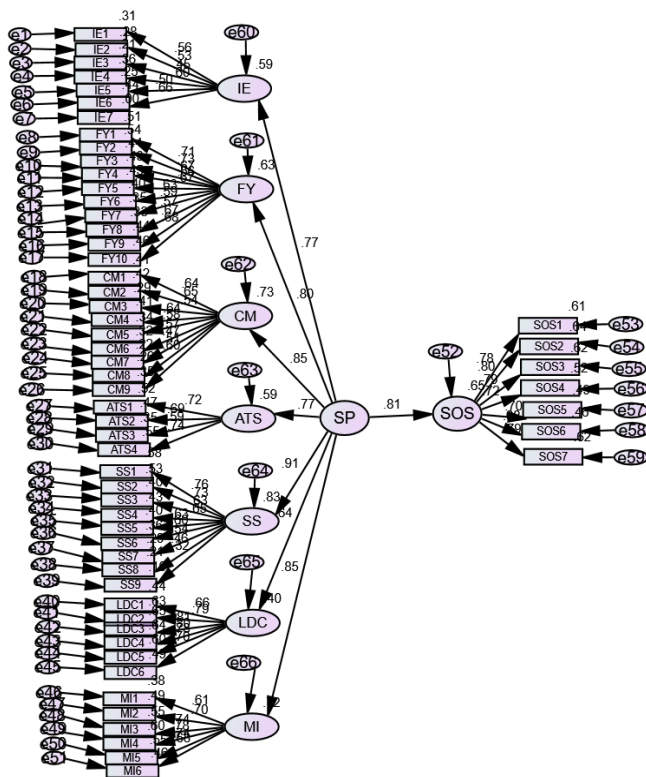


Figure 1: Structural Model showing the regression effect of Student Performance on Student overall Satisfaction

- Students of this stage (11th and 12th) class go through lot of stress. There are expectations from Parents, relatives, school teachers and coaching center faculties. Instead of adding to this stress, coaching centres should also focus on easing the students and ensure that they guide the students on how to handle this stress.
- The coaching institutes need to understand the importance of effective support services, offered to the students. The relationship with the students can be suitably managed to maximize the revenue and lifespan while keeping operational costs low. The support service must deliver a high level of student satisfaction even at a low cost.
- The management of the coaching institutes need to identify the major student satisfaction indicators that are quantifiable and can be measured over a period of time. There is a distinct need to keep an eye on such indicators continually and take corrective actions wherever variations are noticed.

IX. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present research takes into account only select variables and hence needs to be further tested by taking into account more variables and a large sample. Future research efforts need to focus on additional decisional variables pertaining to prediction of service quality. Also, the study has taken into account only perception of students towards various dimensions. Future researchers can expand the scope of study by taking the difference in GAP between perception and expectation with respect to service quality dimensions.

X. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major implication of study is that the managers of educational institutes must gain thoughtful insights from the previous researchers. The identified variables and their affects will help the managers of educational institutes to accept a holistic viewpoint to the student satisfaction. The literature will also be helpful for the managers to identify that in addition to the academic factors, the managers of the educational institutes also need to focus upon the non academic factors in order to achieve the higher student satisfaction levels. Learning from the determinants of student satisfaction from the literature will definitely offer the possibility to make an organizational environment where all stakeholder in the educational process offer services with high quality standards and student satisfaction.

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