ABSTRACT

Higher education plays a vital role in socio economic development of the nation. Indian education system has made a significant progress in higher education over the decades. Governments at the state and central levels, with various regulatory and accreditation bodies, monitor the higher educational institutions with a vision to ensure quality in educational services, yet, quality of higher education is struggling to attain the global level excellence in India. Therefore, quality has become an important drive for socio economic development and also, it becomes a competitive weapon for the institutions to attract and serve the student as primary customer. Over the years, inertia seems to have crept into the traditional set-up and despite having the faculty with better qualifications and experience, their systems for service delivery does not seem to be responding to the fast pace of change encompassing the education sector. The biggest expansion in higher education in India has been in the disciplines of engineering & technology and management education. Gujarat has traditionally been recognized for its entrepreneurial leanings and not for its ability to develop professionally trained human resources. This however, is likely to change very rapidly as the Government of Gujarat has embarked on a mission to make Gujarat an Education Hub for the country. The efforts are directed not only towards attracting students from other states within the country but also from other countries. Gujarat currently has about 21 State universities three are Agricultural universities, three Central Government Universities, 19 Private Universities out of which two are Private aided and six universities/Institutes of National Importance. Offering quality in the education is need of time. This issue has attracted both academicians and researchers. It seems that most of the management higher education institutions lack a systematic way of evaluating and monitoring the level of service quality being delivered to their students and therefore it is likely that a gap may exists. Hence, there is a necessity of carrying out a research that can analyze the extent of disconfirmation between expectations and perceptions of service quality and their relationship to customer satisfaction in the management institutes of Gujarat.
In this study, an attempt has been made to investigate how management educational institutes in Gujarat perform in terms of the service quality dimensions and which service quality dimensions are more significant. A final structure of seven dimensional fifty five statements Management Service Quality Scale (MSQSCL) was developed to measure perceived service quality of management higher education sector. The multidimensional context specific conceptualization of service quality will allow service providers to have a more detailed and clearer understanding of the various aspects of the construct. Seven dimensional, Fifty five item scale (MSQSCL) from students perspective can be used for measuring perceived service quality for Management Higher Education sector in Gujarat which can be used by universities, institutes for periodic monitoring of service quality as perceived by students. It will also provide directions to service providers (lecturers, management, directors, and deans) as to which particular dimension requires attention in terms of their importance and they can understand perceived gaps and improve upon those areas. Further, the service quality GAP derived by aggregating the scores on these dimensions can also be developed, which can be used for benchmarking their performance against competitors.

Today’s competitive world, everyday new management colleges, B schools, private institutes for management education, self financed institutes are coming up across Gujarat. At the same time every year so many colleges, private institutes, self financed institutes are closing down because of high service gaps in this sector. This research has contributed by developing a scale (MSQSCL) through which a university/institute can measure their own service quality and identify and analyze the GAP score between the perceptions and expectations of the students which will help the universities/institutes to identify the GAP and improve the Service quality in management higher education in Gujarat.