

STUDENTS' AND PARENTS' SATISFACTION PERSPECTIVE - THE SERVICE QUALITY OF SELF- FINANCING COLLEGES AT CHENNAI CITY.

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Abstract

The current environment presents intense competition for colleges. Parents should be satisfied by the improved environment that the students are in order to meet the challenges. Promoting Self-Financing Institutions is really the job of contented parents. The satisfaction that parents have with Self-Financing Institutions are highlighted in this paper. Two hundred respondents from the city of Chennai received a questionnaire. There was an usage of ANOVA, t test, correlation, and percentage analysis among other statistical tools. Students and Parents were contented and happy with the quality of services that Higher Education offers, according to the study.

Key words: Higher Education, Students'/Parents' Satisfaction (Customer Satisfaction) ,Service Quality and Self-Financing Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing demand for Higher Education, Self-Financing colleges have become popular options for students seeking a degree. These Institutions, which are privately funded and do not rely on government subsidies, have been on the rise due to their ability to offer diverse courses and flexible admission criteria. However, success in the Self-Financing college market requires more than just academic excellence - it hinges on providing exceptional service quality and

ensuring high levels of Customer Satisfaction. In this article, the researchers explored the importance of service quality and Customer Satisfaction in Self-Financing colleges, focusing on the perspectives of students and parents. This research aims to provide a summary of Higher Education system's quality based on student satisfaction and the areas that require the most focus in order to raise standards.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE QUALITY IN SELF-FINANCING COLLEGES

Service quality predominantly plays an integral role in the success of Self-Financing colleges. In this context, service quality refers to the level of excellence in all aspects of the student experience, from admission procedures to academic support and facilities. Self-Financing colleges must recognize that students are not only paying for education but also for a comprehensive experience that meets their expectations.

One of the key aspects of service quality is the admission process. Self-Financing colleges should ensure that it is user-friendly and transparent, providing clear guidelines and timely updates. The ease and efficiency of the admission process contribute to the overall perception of the Institution and affect students' initial satisfaction.

Once admitted, students embark on their academic journey, and service quality extends to the teaching-learning process. Self-Financing colleges must offer qualified and dedicated faculty who are well-versed in their field of specialization. Effective communication between faculty and students, both inside and outside the classroom, fosters a positive learning environment and enhances the overall quality of education.

Additionally, service quality encompasses the availability and accessibility of academic support services. Self-Financing colleges should provide assistance such as libraries, laboratories, counseling, and career guidance services. These resources contribute to the holistic development of students and play a vital role in their overall satisfaction.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer Satisfaction, in this case, refers to the level of contentment experienced by students and their parents with respect to the services offered by Self-Financing colleges. When students and parents perceive high-quality services, they are more likely to feel satisfied, fostering loyalty towards the Institution.

Customer Satisfaction is crucial for Self-Financing colleges as it directly impacts their reputation and brand image. Satisfied students tend to speak positively about their college, recommending it to their peers and boosting its enrollment numbers. On the other hand, dissatisfied students may speak negatively about their experiences, deterring potential applicants.

Furthermore, Customer Satisfaction influences the financial sustainability of Self-Financing colleges. Satisfied parents are more willing to continue to support their child's education financially, ensuring a steady stream of revenue for the Institution. Meeting the expectations of parents is as imperative as meeting the expectations of students, as their involvement and support play a vital role in students' educational journey.

SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION STRATEGIES

Self-Financing colleges must adopt strategies to improve service quality and enhance Customer Satisfaction. Here are a few recommendations:

- ❖ Continuous assessment and improvement: Regular evaluation and feedback from students and parents can provide valuable insights into areas that require improvement. Colleges should establish processes to collect feedback and take prompt action to address concerns and enhance service quality.
- ❖ Faculty development programs: Continuous professional development programs for faculty members ensure they are updated with the latest academic practices and pedagogical techniques. This, in turn, improves the quality of teaching and enhances student satisfaction.
- ❖ Robust communication channels: Self-Financing colleges should establish effective communication channels to keep students and parents informed about developments in the Institution. Regular updates, newsletters, and open forums can facilitate transparency and help manage expectations.
- ❖ Infrastructure and facilities: Investment in infrastructure and facilities, such as libraries, laboratories, and extracurricular spaces, creates a conducive environment for learning and overall student satisfaction.
- ❖ Comprehensive support services: Offering a wide range of support services, including academic counseling, career guidance, and mental health support, can contribute to the overall well-being of students and enhance their satisfaction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To comprehend how the level of service affects the level of satisfaction felt by Students' and Parents'.
2. Determining how Students' and Parents' socio-economic profile affects their level of satisfaction.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Holistic development in education creates the necessity of competent environment among colleges these days. Higher Education Institutions are striving to provide a larger range of services to students in order to stay competitive in the global market. Students' ,parents' are the educational Institution's Stake holders and end users, and this study finds out whether their satisfaction with the service quality meets their expectations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Malik, et al,(2010),Mulu, (2012), one important issue that service educational Institutions take into account when trying to draw in and keep students—as well as other stakeholders and customers in general—is the quality of their services. Maintaining service quality in Institutions of higher learning is not just important; it is also seen as a necessary component for achieving excellence in Higher Education. Universities should begin to prioritize

the success and well-being of their students, faculty, and other stakeholders while providing the service.

Kotler (2006), satisfaction can be defined as the emotion experienced by an individual when their expectations are fulfilled and the product performs as expected.

Deshields et al. (2005), Higher Education Institutions are placing a greater emphasis on meeting students' expectations.

Kristensen et al. (1999) reached the conclusion that consumer satisfaction may result from their expectations. However, consumer satisfaction could be a positive or negative consequence.

Zeithaml et al. (1985) reveals, Given that expectations appear to influence contentment, it is important to comprehend how expectations are formed also suggests that word-of-mouth, personal needs, communications, past experience of the service, price and external communications can have an influence on the consumer's expectations.

Berry et al. (1985); King (1985) who makes the argument, that a customer's expectations can be influenced by price, external communications, past service experience, word-of-mouth, personal needs, and communications.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main data used for this study came straight from the colleges in Chennai city that fund themselves. For this investigation, Researchers used Ramzi N. Nasser's (2006) satisfaction model. A systematic questionnaire was circulated to 120 respondents, where 100 Questionnaires were found suitable. Several online resources, including journals and magazines, were combed through in order to comprehend the idea of service quality and customer happiness. The results were interpreted using statistical methods including percentage analysis, T test, correlation, and ANOVA.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE NO: 1
GENDER

SL. NO.	GENDER	NO. OF RESPONDENT	PERCENTAGE
1	MALE	114	57
2	FEMALE	86	43
	TOTAL	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Based on the data shown in the table above, it can be deduced that the majority of respondents, at 57%, are male, while 43% of respondents are female.

TABLE NO: 2
INCOME

Sl. No.	INCOME (Rs)	No. Of Respondent	Percentage
1	Less than 20,000	24	12.0
2	20,001 to 30,000	50	25.0
3	30,001 to 40,000	38	19.0

4	40,001 to 50,000	36	18.0
5	Above 50,000	52	26.0
	Total	200	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Based on the data shown in the table above, it can be deduced that those with incomes of more than 50,000 Rupees make up 26% of the respondents, while only 12% of the respondents fall into the income bracket of less than 20,000 Rupees.

TABLE NO: 3
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

Sl. No.	Educational Qualification	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
1	Schooling	52	26.0
2	UG	82	41.0
3	PG	46	23.0
4	Professional	20	10.0
	Total	200	100.0

Source: Primary Data

It can be seen from the chart that 41% of the respondents had a degree that is below the graduation level. Ten percent of those who responded had professional certification.

TABLE NO: 4
NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

Sl. No.	Nature of employment	No. Of Respondent	Percentage
1	Self employed	34	17.0
2	Employed	106	53.0
3	Professional	60	30.0
	Total	200	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The figure that was just shown makes it quite evident that more than fifty percent of the respondents, fifty-three percent of them are employed. A mere 17% of those who participated in the survey are self-employed.

TABLE NO: 5
MODE OF ADMISSION

Sl. No.	Mode of admission	No. Of Respondent	Percentage
1	Direct approach	74	37.0
2	Reference from alumni	56	28.0
3	Student choice	10	5.0
4	Advertisement	34	17.0
5	All the above	26	13.0
	Total	200	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The data shown in the table above reveals that 37 percent of the respondents let their children to be accepted by direct approach. Twenty-eight percent of the people who responded joined the Institution because they were referred to it by former students. On the other hand, just five percent of the students chose to attend this particular Institution.

TABLE NO: 6
T TEST

QUALITY OF CAMPUS LIFE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	sig
Your child's undergraduate/ Post graduate programme so far	200	3.76	1.102	.110	34.118	.000
Intellectual atmosphere outside class room	200	4.05	.925	.093	43.773	.000
Opportunities & Exposures	200	3.96	.994	.099	39.834	.000
Co & extracurricular activities	200	4.00	1.005	.101	39.799	.000
Social life on campus	200	3.97	1.000	.100	39.718	.000
Your child's safety on campus	200	4.09	1.083	.108	37.753	.000

Source: Primary Data

The data in the table show that parents are quite satisfied with the intellectual environment and extracurricular activities their children obtain at this school, and they are also very satisfied with the campus safety measures taken by the administration. They also reached a consensus on the fact that college campuses provide students with great opportunities for socializing and exposure.

TABLE NO: 7
T TEST

QUALITY OF ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	sig
Overall quality of Teaching	200	3.89	1.072	.107	36.284	.000
Overall quality of instructions and communications	200	3.97	.969	.097	40.980	.000
Quality of academic advisers	200	4.09	.805	.081	50.793	.000
Mentoring/Motivation & other academic help	200	3.91	.986	.099	39.667	.000
Guidance for higher studies.	200	3.99	.990	.099	40.311	.000
Contact of HOD/Faculty	200	3.99	1.010	.101	39.505	.000
UG/PG Research opportunities& Internships	200	4.04	.984	.098	41.061	.000

Source: Primary Data

Students get personal interaction and advise from faculty, as well as opportunities for research and internships, as seen in the above table, which the respondents highly agreed with. They also felt that their teachers inspire them and that the level of instruction is high.

TABLE NO: 8
T TEST

QUALITY OF CAMPUS SERVICES AND FACILITIES	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	sig
Classrooms	200	3.88	1.066	.107	36.388	.000
Library	200	3.88	1.057	.106	36.716	.000
Laboratories	200	3.74	1.031	.103	36.274	.000
Internet facility	200	3.78	1.106	.111	34.169	.000
Security system	200	4.04	1.044	.104	38.709	.000
Canteen	200	3.79	1.274	.127	29.758	.000
Basic amenities (Rest room & Water facility)	200	3.88	1.066	.107	36.388	.000
Student Dress code	200	4.08	.800	.080	51.000	.000
Sports	200	4.01	.937	.094	42.779	.000
Discipline, rules & regulations	200	3.99	1.010	.101	39.505	.000
Administrative responsiveness to Parent concerns	200	3.98	.864	.086	46.047	.000
Career counseling services, Placement services.	200	4.08	.950	.095	42.944	.000
Psychological counseling services	200	4.10	.772	.077	53.110	.000

Source: Primary Data

Colleges provide services such as sports facilities, counselling, placement assistance, and security, as well as a dress code, as seen in the above table, which the respondents highly agreed with. All of the other services, including classrooms, cafeterias, basic facilities, administrative response, libraries, labs, and internet access, were all deemed feasible.

TABLE NO: 9
CORRELATION

	CAMPUS LIFE	ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	SERVICES AND FACILITIES
CAMPUS LIFE	1	.767	.691
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE		1	.612
SERVICES AND FACILITIES			1

Source: Primary Data

There is a favourable association between campus life and academic experience (76.7%), as seen in the correlation table, where the correlation value is 0.767. A favourable association between campus life, service, and facilities is shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.691, which equals 69.1%. There is a positive association between academic experience and services and facilities, as shown by the correlation coefficient of 0.612, which is 61.2%. All three factors have a positive correlation with each other, as was previously established. The results demonstrate a strong correlation between the two variables.

TABLE NO: 10

ANOVA INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CAMPUS LIFE	Between Groups	16.830	1	16.830	.786	.377
	Within Groups	2097.280	98	21.401		
	Total	2114.110	99			
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	Between Groups	111.002	1	111.002	4.405	.038
	Within Groups	2469.558	98	25.200		
	Total	2580.560	99			
SERVICES AND FACILITIES	Between Groups	27.011	1	27.011	.192	.662
	Within Groups	13774.779	98	140.559		
	Total	13801.790	99			

Source: Primary Data

Academic experience ($f=4.405$, $p=.038$) is statistically significant at the 5% level, according to the variance analysis table above. Thus, a substantial difference between the respondents' gender and Customer Satisfaction may be inferred.

TABLE NO: 11

DESCRIPTIVE			
		N	Mean
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	MALE	114	26.9649
	FEMALE	86	29.0930
	Total	200	27.8800

Source: Primary Data

Based on the descriptive analysis shown above, it can be concluded that masculine respondents report higher levels of satisfaction than feminine respondents.

INFLUENCE OF INCOME OF RESPONDENTS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
TABLE NO: 12

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CAMPUS LIFE	Between Groups	46.077	4	11.519	.529	.715
	Within Groups	2068.033	95	21.769		
	Total	2114.110	99			
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	Between Groups	96.252	4	24.063	.920	.456
	Within Groups	2484.308	95	26.151		
	Total	2580.560	99			
SERVICES AND FACILITIES	Between Groups	410.578	4	102.644	.728	.575
	Within Groups	13391.212	95	140.960		
	Total	13801.790	99			

Source: Primary Data

A substantial difference between the income of the respondents and their level of satisfaction with the quality of the service is not found to exist, as can be seen from the analysis of variance table that was shown earlier.

INFLUENCE OF EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
TABLE NO: 13

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CAMPUS LIFE	Between Groups	150.704	3	50.235	2.456	.068
	Within Groups	1963.406	96	20.452		
	Total	2114.110	99			
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	Between Groups	227.636	3	75.879	3.096	.030
	Within Groups	2352.924	96	24.510		
	Total	2580.560	99			

SERVICES AND FACILITIES	Between Groups	42.985	3	14.328	.100	.960
	Within Groups	13758.805	96	143.321		
	Total	13801.790	99			

Source: Primary Data

Based on the analysis of variance shown above, it has been determined that the amount of academic experience ($f = 3.096$, $p = .030$) is statistically significant at the 5% level. Because of this, it is possible to draw the conclusion that there is a substantial disparity between the educational qualifications of responders and the level of pleasure experienced by customers.

TABLE NO: 14

		N	Mean
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE	Schooling	56	29.5000
	UG	82	26.1951
	PG	34	29.4706
	Professional	32	27.8750
	Total	200	27.8800

Source: Primary Data

The above descriptive analysis demonstrates that the respondents who hold a degree or Diploma that is less than a bachelor's degree have a higher level of satisfaction than other respondents.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Educational Institution finds success as a result of the quality of the service. Therefore, the Higher Education Institutions place a greater emphasis on the quality of the services that they bring to the table. In addition, those who are parents become the yardstick by which the quality of the services is measured. A greater number of contented parents provide the Institution with additional strength. It can be deduced from the findings of the research that the parents are content with the level of service provided by the Institutions that provide Self-Financing plans. Additionally, it has been shown that the lifestyle of the campus, the academic experience, as well as the services and amenities, all have a substantial impact on one another. It is possible for the customer to be pleased with the Institution that places a greater emphasis on these aspects, and the customer who is content with the Institution will then become a cheerleader for the Self-Financing Institutions.

Service quality and Customer Satisfaction play a pivotal role in the success and sustainability of Self-Financing colleges in the Higher Education sector. To thrive in this competitive market, Institutions must prioritize academic excellence alongside exceptional service quality. By consistently delivering on students' expectations and ensuring high levels of Customer Satisfaction, Self-Financing colleges can secure their reputation, foster loyalty, and stay ahead in this ever-evolving educational landscape.

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