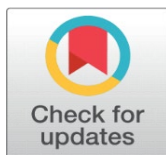
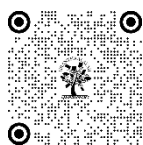


A ROLE OF QUALITY FACTORS AND MARKETING MIX TOWARDS THE STUDENT'S SATISFACTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIS): A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research article to explore the previous studies on the quality factors and marketing mix to increase the enrolment and satisfaction of the students in the field of higher education institutions. An exploratory research design was used to explore the new facts, new knowledge, new information related to the quality factors and marketing mix in the higher education institutions. A systematic literature review was carried out to find the research gaps from the various research articles published in reputed national and international journals from the Peer Reviewed, Google Scholar, UGC Care Scopus, Wave of Science. Science Citation Index (SCI), Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) and Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) etc. during 2012 to 2023. This study concluded that there was little work and research available regarding the quality factors and marketing mix in the higher education institutions using statistical descriptive and structural equation modelling approach. The limitation of this study was the duration from year 2012 to year 2023 to explore the research articles from the authentic database sources. The future researchers can use the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) model to get the more precise results.

Keywords: Quality Factors; Marketing Mix; Higher Education Institutions; Student's Perception; Student's Satisfaction; A Systematic Literature Review

1. INTRODUCTION

The satisfaction of students in higher education institutions (HEIs) has become a critical area of focus for both researchers and educational administrators, as it directly influences institutional reputation, retention rates, and student success. In the highly competitive education sector, HEIs are continuously seeking strategies to enhance student experiences, with particular emphasis on both quality factors and the marketing mix. (Qureshi et al., 2021) Quality factors encompass various dimensions such as academic services, faculty expertise, infrastructure, student support services, and learning environments, all of which are pivotal in shaping student perceptions and outcomes. The marketing mix, often conceptualized through the 7Ps—Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence—plays an integral role in aligning educational offerings with student expectations, thus driving satisfaction. (Tijjag et al., 2017) Over the years, numerous studies have explored these dimensions individually or in combination, but the dynamic and evolving nature of student expectations, coupled with the increased global competitiveness of HEIs, underscores the need for a more comprehensive analysis. (Setiawan et al., 2020) This systematic literature review

spanning from 2012 to 2024 aims to synthesize findings from existing research to critically examine how these two key factors quality dimensions and the marketing mix jointly impact student satisfaction in HEIs. By reviewing a broad spectrum of studies from different geographical, cultural, and economic contexts, this review seeks to provide an integrative understanding of the factors contributing to student satisfaction, offer insights into effective institutional strategies, and identify research gaps that future studies could address to further enhance the quality of education and the alignment of marketing practices in HEIs. **(Mishra & Kushwaha, 2016)**

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous authors worked on the quality factors and marketing mix towards the student's satisfaction, students' loyalty, and admission decision making in the higher education institutions. The Mendeley desk top and Mendeley reference manager was used for the American Psychological Association (APA) reference style. The chronological reviews and findings from recent to past are as follows: The results highlight major obstacles to the perception of service quality at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Bangladesh, such as a substandard learning environment, inefficient management of student relationships, student discontent, restricted student engagement, and insufficient emphasis on student needs. **(Rahman & Nasrin, 2024)** The previous research revealed that female students have a greater inclination towards choosing Humanities, Education, and Management (HEM) degrees. Additionally, it indicated a significant correlation between this choice and a higher likelihood of unemployment, as seen by the labour force participation rate in Sri Lanka. **(Lakshmi et al., 2023)** Education is the key to the advancement particularly higher education which gives the cutting edge and trained personnel. **(Kalaivani, 2022)** In another study, the Vietnamese individuals contend that User Generated Content (UGC) may impact the performance, social perception, value, credibility, and affinity of a Higher Education Institution (HEI) brand. Vietnamese individuals may be cultivating a more profound relationship with brand community members while engaging with like-minded individuals to experience the selection of a certain HEI brand compared to Sri Lankans. Sri Lankans are trailing behind Vietnamese in their engagement with Firm Generated Content (FGC) disseminated by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) on official social media platforms. Vietnamese individuals seem to have relied more on information disseminated by higher education institutions on their official social media platforms. **(Perera et al., 2022)** The pandemic era in education presented several obstacles to all institutions. The operations of higher educational institutions are being impacted, and this scenario may last for an extended duration. In these conditions, it is essential to transition to online learning and enhance educational processes across all organizational tiers. The companies needed to ensure an effective distant learning process by recognizing possibilities, addressing problems, and determining sustainable quality elements for remote education. **(Dagiene et al., 2022)** The quality of the educational process directly impacts students' level of engagement and enthusiasm towards their lectures and courses. **(Depoo et al., 2022)** The students' assessment of the service quality performance of Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University (IAU) was rated as 'acceptable'. There is no substantial disparity in gender when it comes to students' overall satisfaction with the service quality performance of IAU. **(Ramzi et al., 2022)** Education is crucial for advancement, particularly higher education, since it equips individuals with advanced knowledge and skills, making them highly competent. However, the decline in the quality of higher education is a cause for worry among all stakeholders and the whole country. The quantity of Indian higher education has increased, but it is lagging behind in terms of quality. **(Kalaivani, 2022)** In another previous study, the authors identified the significance of reputation management in the training process, emphasizing its influence on students' experiences, institution choice, and employment success rates. It underscores the significance of reputation management in student retention, corporate sector linkages, research progress, and media interactions. **(Amado Mateus & Juarez Acosta, 2022)** The use of digital media in developing and implementing a marketing plan is a burgeoning trend, as shown by its increasing prevalence in the product and service market. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of consumers' genuine requirements and maintaining a strong connection with them via a reliable communication channel are of utmost significance. Nevertheless, this study serves as a preliminary evaluation that may be expanded into a comprehensive empirical investigation to individually analyse the effects of these implications on both students and businesses. **(Biswas, 2021)** Higher education institutions are increasingly recognizing the significance of student happiness. To effectively manage service quality, which is the main factor influencing student satisfaction, a market-oriented and customer-oriented strategy is necessary. **(Qureshi et al., 2021)** A comparative examination of foreign students from the UK and Germany indicated that academic excellence is a shared criterion influencing their choice of destination. Career and financial considerations were recognized as paramount in Germany, whilst social connection was seen as the second most significant aspect in the UK. This research provides critical insights for academic policymakers to comprehend the

elements affecting students' decisions to study abroad, aiding in the mitigation of brain drain and ensuring a satisfactory academic experience. **(Abbas et al., 2021)** Research expenditures, terminal degrees, and employer reputation are key quality factors in higher education institutions. Graduation and retention are the most critical, indicating the institution's commitment to retaining students and ensuring graduation. **(Easley et al., 2021)** A previous research on brand equity in Egypt revealed that social image considerably influences brand value and perceived quality. In Vietnam, perceived quality has the most significant influence on brand equity. There was no direct correlation between perceived quality and brand equity; instead, both elements have indirect influence on brand equity via mediating variables. The research underscores the significance of comprehending the determinants affecting brand equity within the higher education industry. **(Thanh Truong, 2021)** Students depend on perceived institutional images to evaluate colleges; thus, universities must improve administrative, IT, academic, and student services to recruit enrollees. Qatar University (QU) has optimized services to fulfill student requirements and enhance satisfaction. **(Alhaza et al., 2021)** The research examined the correlation and influence of the processes on quality. The model may be expanded to determine the correlation between various academic processes and dimensions/aspects of quality in higher education institutions (HEIs). **(Mulay & Khanna, 2020)** Field managers in higher education are increasingly prioritizing marketing methods to improve academic quality and recruit elite students. This transition is propelled by massification, hyper-internationalization, and the diversity of student demographics. Universities must assess their previous strategies and use a market-oriented strategy to establish and maintain a strong institutional brand. Brand awareness, including both physical and intangible components, may enhance brand loyalty and elevate exposure via several techniques. **(Nguyen Tan Hung, 2020)** Higher education marketing emphasizes massification, hyper-internationalization, enhancement, and diversity of the student demographic. Field managers must have a market-oriented position, evaluating past strategies to proactively attain academic excellence and recruit premier prospects in the evolving sector. **(Setiawan et al., 2020)** Indian higher education is acquiring contemporary perspectives from overseas students, revealing that university-related attributes are the primary determinants in their decision-making process. This research underscores the need of comprehending consumer motivations in formulating an appropriate customer value offer for host nations and institutions, accentuating teaching quality, institutional ranking, and safety as essential value features. **(Pawar et al., 2020)** Service quality has a beneficial impact on student satisfaction, while student contentment has a favourable effect on student loyalty. Nevertheless, no correlations were discovered between student quality and student loyalty. **(Chandra et al., 2018)** The marketing mix and service quality have a substantial impact on students' decision-making. However, the marketing mix does not directly influence student happiness. Instead, service quality and students' decision-making play a considerable role in determining student satisfaction. The marketing mix and service quality have a substantial impact on student happiness, with student decision-making playing a mediating role. **(Tijiang et al., 2017)** The pleasure of students plays a crucial role in maximizing word-of-mouth advertising. Interviews conducted with students and parents provided us with insight into how the reputation of colleges was heavily dependent on the quality of their services, as communicated via word of mouth. **(Hartono, S.E., 2017)** Kasetart University in Hong Kong has shown that individual variables significantly influence the kind of institution selected by students. Yamchuti (2002) discovered that students' educational goals affect their decision-making. Lau (2016) discovered that marketing mix elements greatly affect the choosing of self-financing sub-degree programs. Sakkamonvaree (2011) and Kasdee (2011) revealed that marketing mix elements significantly impact academic decision-making at Kasetart University and Phetchbun Rajabhat University. **(Seehanate, 2017)** The performance in facilitating students' learning is still below expectations. The availability of Wi-Fi and the number of books in the library are the two qualities with the most significant disparity. These findings align with the CSI value of 71.37%, indicating that the CSI is now within a reasonably decent range. This suggests that the level of services offered to students at private colleges does not align with their interests or expectations. Consequently, all academic faculties are anticipated to enhance services for all students. **(Adinegara et al., 2016)** The importance of enhancing the reputation of engineering disciplines among schools and the need for career advising activities for students and their parents. **(Kalimullin & Dobrotvorskaya, 2016)** Higher education offers chances for lifelong learning, enabling individuals to enhance their knowledge and abilities periodically in response to societal demands. A comprehensive literature study was conducted to ascertain the key determinants of service quality. **(Mishra & Kushwaha, 2016)** Higher education is an essential element of the educational system, providing comprehensive knowledge across several academic areas. It cultivates students' cognitive faculties, empowers them to interrogate and pursue truth, and expands their viewpoint on current affairs. As a competitive university, the quality of information imparted is essential. **(Aithal et al., 2015)** Higher education institutions are now engaging in social media marketing trials. **(Constantinides & Stagno, 2012)**

3. RESEARCH GAPS

The research gaps found that there was little work and research available regarding the quality factors and marketing mix in the higher education institutions using statistical descriptive and structural equation modelling approach. The reviewed literature identifies several key gaps in understanding and addressing service quality in higher education institutions (HEIs). Many studies point out persistent challenges such as substandard learning environments, inefficient management, and lack of student engagement in countries like Bangladesh, Egypt, and Sri Lanka (Rahman & Nasrin, 2024; Lakshmi et al., 2023). The focus on student satisfaction, although widespread, is often examined through isolated factors such as academic excellence, reputation management, or digital marketing strategies, rather than integrating these components into a holistic framework (Amado Mateus & Juarez Acosta, 2022; Biswas, 2021). Moreover, variations in student perceptions and engagement across different regions, as observed in Vietnam and Sri Lanka, suggest a need for region-specific approaches to understanding HEI branding and student satisfaction (Perera et al., 2022). The impact of the pandemic has emphasized the importance of transitioning to online learning and sustaining educational quality, yet there is limited understanding of how this transition influences long-term student satisfaction and institutional reputation (Dagiene et al., 2022). Studies also underscore the growing importance of student-centric marketing, yet comprehensive research on how marketing mix elements and digital engagement directly impact student decision-making and satisfaction remains underexplored (Setiawan et al., 2020; Tijjang et al., 2017). Finally, while reputation management and student loyalty are identified as crucial factors in maintaining HEI success, there is a gap in empirical studies that examine how these factors interconnect and influence overall service quality in diverse cultural and economic contexts (Nguyen Tan Hung, 2020; Qureshi et al., 2021). This research seeks to address these gaps by exploring the relationship between service quality, student satisfaction, and institutional branding, while also considering the mediating effects of digital engagement and region-specific factors on these dynamics.

4. METHODOLOGIES

An exploratory research design was used to explore the new facts, new knowledge, new information related to the quality factors and marketing mix in the higher education institutions. A systematic literature review was carried out to find the research gaps from the various research articles published in reputed national and international journals from the Peer Reviewed, Google Scholar, UGC Care Scopus, Wave of Science. Science Citation Index (SCI), Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)) and Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE) etc. during 2012 to 2024. The flow diagram of the selection process of the research articles are as follows:

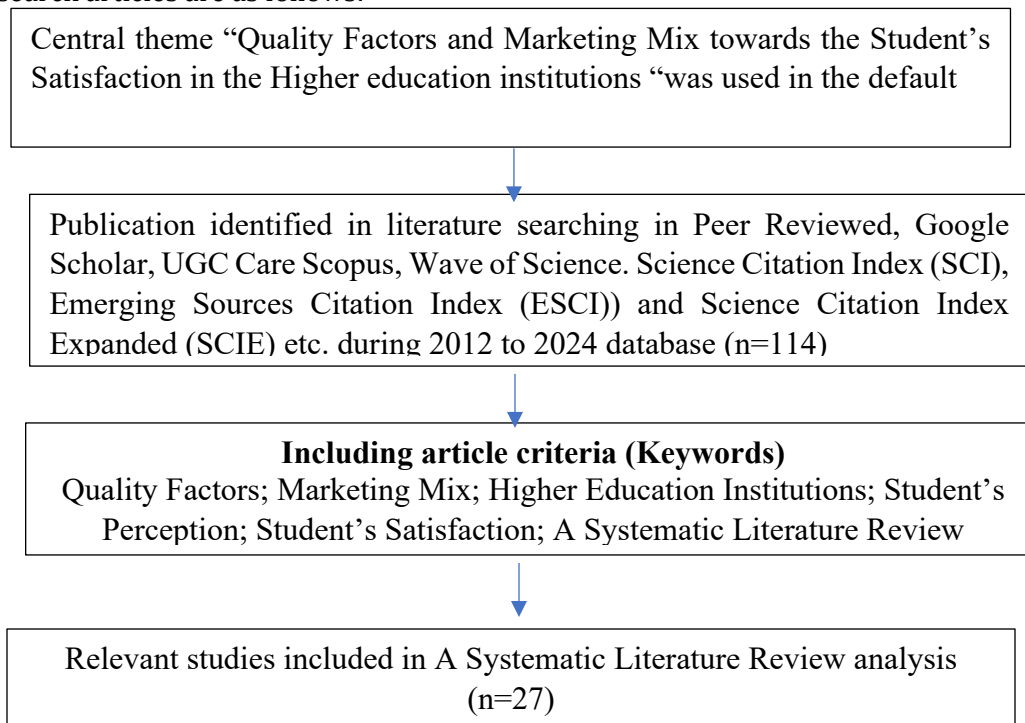


Fig: 1 Article section process

5. CONCLUSION

Despite confronting problems such as limited study spaces, inefficient student relationships, and restricted engagement, Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University (IAU) in the United Kingdom has shown an average level of service quality performance in the field of higher education. There is a transition taking place in the higher education sector of the United Kingdom towards online learning and the improvement of educational processes. The level of satisfaction experienced by students is impacted by a variety of issues, including gender, reputation management, and digital media. According to the findings of a comparative study of foreign students from the United Kingdom and Germany, academic excellence is a criteria that is most often considered when deciding where to study abroad. Expanding their products, adopting market-oriented strategies, and putting an emphasis on brand equity, perceived quality, administrative services, information technology support, academic resources, and student services are all necessary steps for universities to take in order to increase the quality of their services. It has been observed that there is no substantial correlation between student quality and loyalty; nevertheless, the quality of service has a favorable impact on the satisfaction and loyalty of students. The effectiveness of private institutions in boosting student learning continues to be poor, with the most obvious inadequacies being the accessibility of Wi-Fi and the materials available and available in libraries. It is essential for a successful higher education system that the material that is transmitted is of a high quality since the institution is a competitive one. The limitation of this study was the duration from year 2012 to year 2024 to explore the research articles from the authentic database sources. The future researchers can use the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) model to get the more precise results in the flow diagram under the methodology section of the articles selection process.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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