Assessment of Assurance Service Quality Dimension and Students Satisfaction in Higher Education - A Case Study of Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati

G. Janardhana, Dr. Mamilla Rajasekhar

Abstract— The word service is related to a task accomplished through human effort to provide assistance to the needy. In the higher education sector, it is difficult to manage the institutions from the marketing point of view because the concept of customer has not been clearly defined. Students are the "customer" of a university1 but it is suggested that viewing student as customers creates some tensions as universities seem to be too aligned with business.2 Developing customer (student) satisfaction at universities level is crucial. If this is achieved, it will facilitate realisation of the strategic objectives of the university more effectively. The higher education sector ensures quality of the educational process with the help of accreditation agencies established for the purpose. The main agency which accredits university and colleges in general education is the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) established on 16th September, in 1994, under section 12 (ccc) of the UGC Act of 1956, whereas such accreditation for technical education is done by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) set up by AICTE in 1994, and for agricultural education by National Accreditation Board (NAB) set up by ICAR in 1996. Some of the other professional regulatory bodies are attempting to set up their own accreditation agencies[3].

Index Terms- Service, AICTE, accreditation.

I. CONCEPT OF SERVICE

According to Adsin Palmer,[4] the services constitute "the production of an essentially intangible benefit, either in its own right or as a significant element of a tangible product, which through some form of exchange, satisfies an identified need."

"Services are economic activities that create value and provide benefits for customers at a specific time and place as a result of bringing about a desired change in or on behalf of the recipient of service.[5]

A service is an intangible equivalent of an economic good. Service marketers responded to these forces and began to work across disciplines and with academics and business practitioners from around the world to develop and document marketing practices for services. As the field continues to evolve in the 21st century, new trends will shape the field and accelerate the need for services marketing concepts and tools.

II. STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ASPECT

Quality of education is a rather vague and controversial concept. There are many ways to define quality in higher education; it depends on stakeholders' commitment to quality and the overall culture of the university. Stakeholders include

G. Janardhana
Dr. Mamilla Rajasekhar

students, their parents, the local community, society and the government.[6] Service quality of education is the exclusivity of experiences students engage in as part of their whole personality development.

Students assess of service quality dimensions, such as reliability, assurance, tangibility, empathy and responsiveness of university education.

Assurance: (Inspiring trust and confidence). Assurance is defined as employees' knowledge and courtesy and the ability of the university and its employees to inspire trust and confidence. This dimension is likely to be particularly important for service that customers perceive as high risk or for services of which they feel uncertain about their ability to evaluate outcomes.

III. DEFINITION OF SATISFACTION

"Satisfaction is a consumer's post-purchase evaluation of the overall service experience (process and outcome). It is an affective (emotion) state of feeling or reaction in which the consumer's needs desires and expectations during the course of the service experiences have been met or exceeded".[7]

Zeithaml, et al[8] defined satisfaction as an overall judgement, perception, or attitude on the superiority of service. The judgment is based on the discrepancy between expectations and actual experiences of customer.

The term, "student satisfaction," can be explained in many ways. Kaldenberg, et al[9], discussed and found that in the college, student satisfaction was driven by evaluating the quality of course work and other curriculum activities and other factors related to the university. Lecturers should treat students with sensitivity and sympathy, and assistance should be provided when necessary. Even simple listening is appreciated.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Universities today are facing fresh responsibilities and challenges to prepare students with employable skills and technological powers needed for the future. Similarly, service innovations have become significant and pose challenges to higher education institutions. Students' perception about assurance service quality dimension with academic standards of the university is one of the key dimensions of service quality. Every educational institution needs to understand its internal strength and weakness, and external opportunities and threats.

The researcher critically examined a number of leading studies in service quality and customer satisfaction in higher education. It is most important to determine the impact of various tangible and intangible benefits provided by

university on students' overall satisfaction. This study will also help the university to know the level of student satisfaction and also which aspects are the most important and develop the quality of university's service to increase the assurance and the satisfaction level of its students. These findings may also be useful to the students who want to join a Master's program in the university.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Santos (2002)[10]: The researcher studied the universities' education sector, wherein service providers perceived tangible dimensions at a level similar to that of consumers. Managers in universities rated tangibles as being one of the important dimensions in achieving good service quality, in particular, the service attributes having advanced facilities and equipment that are closely related.

Gutman, Jonathan and Miaoulis, George (2003)[11]This paper describes a method uniquely suited to the problem of coordinating quality service delivery with service quality positioning. The means-end chain model is used to develop a marketing communications strategy for a university. In this study, first-year students were asked about their goals in attending college as well as what attributes a college would have to have in order to be able to satisfy their goals. Because the means-end chain approach provides information about the linkage between attributes, benefits, and personal goals, it is well suited to the needs of service developers as well as those charged with the responsibility for designing the marketing communications that position those services.

Lagrosen, Stefan and others (2004)[12]: The purpose of this study has been to examine what dimensions constitute quality in higher education and to compare these with the dimensions of quality that have been developed in general service quality research. The focus has been on academic business studies and a student perspective was chosen.

Russell, Marilyn (2005)[13]: Primary research was undertaken to investigate the notion that customer satisfaction influences perceived quality and, in turn, affects profitability. The research methodology employs methods used by hospitality and tourism management students at Bournemouth University and it combines qualitative and quantitative methods. A student focus group and staff members with specialized knowledge were interviewed using a semi-structured approach to allow a pre-determined core of open-ended questions to be addressed, while enabling other related issues to be pursued.

Paswan, Audhesh K and others (2007)[14]: The purpose of this study is to focus on the feeling associated with being rejected by the preferred service brand, and its effect on consumer assessment of the alternate brand. Consumers who do manage to get their preferred service brand tend to be more satisfied with the features of the obtained brand and exhibit higher levels of brand loyalty towards that brand. In comparison, consumers who end up with a service brand that is not their first choice seem to have lower levels of satisfaction with and loyalty towards the obtained brand.

Simic, Mirna Leko and Carapic, Helena (2008)[15]: The aim of this research is to identify the model for education service quality evaluation applicable in Croatian circumstances and to apply the model and evaluate the education service quality at the faculty of economics in Osijek. Dramatic changes in the area of higher education are mainly due to market and institutional changes. One of the solutions to fight the market changes and challenges for institutions of higher education is the implementation of marketing concept in order to create a competitive, market-sensitive institution and satisfied customers. Quality is the key word in this process.

Khan, Hina and Matlay, Harry (2009)[16]: The purpose of this paper is to provide a critical analysis of the importance of service excellence in higher education. The research upon which this paper is based employed a phenomenological approach. This method was selected for its focus on respondent perceptions and experiences. Both structured and semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect relevant data on service excellence. The focus of the research study was on achieving and implementing service excellence in higher education.

Law, Dennis Chung Sea (2010)[17]: The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on studies addressing such a focus to shed light on how quality assurance (QA) practices can be improved. The paper reviews some of the approaches to addressing the quality issues from the viewpoints of students' total experiences, student satisfaction and service quality, and some of the quantitative instruments that have been developed for measuring the respective constructs.

Lin, Pei-Chun and Chiang, Mei-Hsin (2011)[18]: This research investigates the service qualities and values of voice over internet protocol and how these qualities and values affect customer behaviour, and then provided the inducements that attract the customers to purchase repeatedly. The study found that customer perceptions of sacrifice, satisfaction and behavioural intentions vary by education level and monthly disposable income. Education also caused variance regarding perceived service value. Users perceived higher value when they paid less and service value positively affected behavioural intentions. Both user service and quality perceptions had a positive influence on satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

Danjum, Ibrahim and Rasl, Amran (2012)[19]: The advent of globalization has led to demographic changes and changes in technology. Similarly, service innovations have become significant and pose challenges not only to profit-oriented businesses, but also to non-profit organizations like higher education institutions, thus, requiring a disruptive approach to innovation in the sector, with a view to target new customer groups, as well as enhancing service quality excellence to ensure satisfaction. Often innovation creates large pool of new customers, such as new students in the case of higher education institutions and fulfilling the new expectations of current customers. Conclusions were made regarding the implication for service innovation in fostering customer satisfaction.

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the gap between student expectations and student perception of assurance service quality dimension in the S. V. University.
2. To examine the student's perceived assurance service quality dimension in the S. V. University.
3. To measure the impact of assurance service quality dimension on student satisfaction in the S. V. University.

VII. HYPOTHESIS

H$_{01}$**:** There is no significant relationship between assurance service quality dimension and overall student's satisfaction in Sri Venkateswara University.

VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sri Venkateswara University was established on September 2, in the year 1954 in the temple city of Tirupati, in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Sri Venkateswara university campus is divided into four constituent colleges. These four colleges are: College of Arts, College of Commerce, Management and Computer Science, College of Engineering and College of Science. The total number of post-graduate students in all these 4 colleges put together is 2202. From this, a sample of 20 percent (440 students) of the universe was selected, employing stratified random sampling technique. The researcher met the respondents in person and their responses should be collected after clarifying all doubts about the purpose of the study. The schedules were issued to 475 respondents. Out of these data were collected from 440 respondents. Since the study is purely a qualitative study, Likert's five point scale is used to collect the primary data on the opinions of students.

IX. RESEARCH DESIGN

A conceptual framework indicates how the researcher views the concept involved in a study, especially the relationships between concepts. These aspects are taken as instruments for measuring the service quality in higher education. In the present research study, the independent variables are the five dimensions of service quality. Out of them assurance service quality dimension has been selected for this study and the dependent variable is overall student satisfaction, as shown in figure 1.

Independent variables   Dependent variable

Service quality dimensions
Assurance
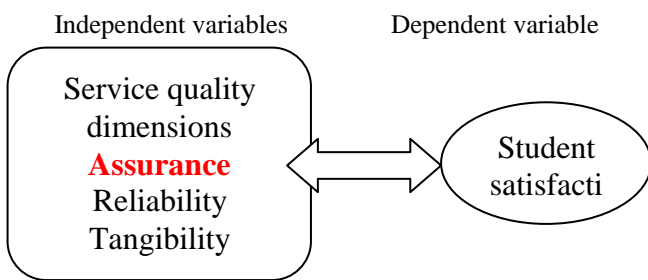Reliability
Tangibility

Student satisfacti

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of service quality of student satisfaction

Source: Firdaus, a (2005), the development of HEdPERF (higher education performance), "A new measuring instrument of service quality for higher education."

A large part of this analysis is based on the primary data. The survey method was employed; structured schedules were designed and used to collect data from the students in the select university to establish causal relationships among the dependent and independent variables.

X. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, the researcher has conducted a survey on assurance service quality dimension. The results define satisfaction attributes, indifferent attributes and dissatisfaction categories.

XI. EXPECTATION AND PERFORMANCE TOWARDS ASSURANCE DIMENSION

Assurance is the employees' knowledge, the courtesy of Professors and administrators and their ability to inspire trust and instil confidence.

A. Satisfying Attributes of Assurance Dimension

The information on the opinions about assurance dimension of service quality has been collected and computed with t-test for satisfying attributes of sample respondents and the results are presented in table 1.

Table 1: T-test for opinion on satisfying attributes of sample respondents on the assurance dimension

Statement No	Satisfying attributes	Students Expectation	University's performance	Mean difference (SE-UP)	t-value
1	Professors possess enough knowledge and competence in their chosen field of specification.	3.66 (1.09)	3.28 (1.18)	0.37	5.29**
2	Professors inspire confidence in the students.	3.64 (1.12)	3.40 (1.20)	0.24	3.23**
3	Professors and others possess up-to-date knowledge.	3.49 (1.19)	3.30 (1.17)	0.20	2.59*
4	Professors are courteous in their Behavior toward the students.	3.48 (1.12)	3.31 (1.12)	0.17	2.22*
5	Non-teaching staff are responsive to students' needs.	3.43 (1.18)	3.24 (1.19)	0.19	2.40*
9	Library's staff is polite and helpful	3.56 (1.10)	3.34 (1.13)	0.22	2.83*
10	Library staff possesses knowledge about the library facilities.	3.56 (1.18)	3.35 (1.16)	0.21	2.67*
12	Computer and lab technicians' help and guide you when conducting experiments in the lab.	3.27 (1.31)	3.05 (1.30)	0.21	2.52*
14	Hostel staff is courteous and polite towards students.	3.29 (1.34)	3.06 (1.31)	0.23	2.58*
16	Authorities ensure that students are assured of quality food in the mess.	3.43 (1.20)	3.22 (1.23)	0.21	2.57*
17	Health centre doctors and staff are courteous and efficient.	3.47 (1.22)	3.26 (1.27)	0.21	2.50*
18	The academic atmosphere on the campus inspires you.	3.58 (1.24)	3.20 (1.37)	0.38	4.11**
19	Professors adopt modern methods of teaching like power point presentation etc.,	3.56 (1.21)	3.18 (1.31)	0.38	2.88*
20	Professors provide better guidance to the students properly	3.56 (1.21)	3.38 (1.26)	0.18	2.16*

Source: Field survey
Note:
1. **significant at 1 per cent level; *significant at 5 per cent level, @ not significant
2. Standard deviations are in parentheses.
3. The mean of student's expectation ranges from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).
4. The mean of university performance ranges from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

The table 1 depicts the satisfying attributes of assurance dimension of service quality, as noted in the table from 1 to 20 attributes. The difference between student's expectation and university performance varies from 0.38 in the case of 'the academic atmosphere on the campus inspires you,' and Professors adopt modern methods of teaching like power point presentation etc. to 0.17 in the case of non-teaching staff are responsive to students' needs.' Moreover, the t-value is highly significant at 1 per cent level on the attributes of 'Professors possess enough knowledge and competence in their chosen field of specification,' 'Professors inspire confidence in the students, and "the academic atmosphere on the campus inspires you" and the remaining satisfying attributes are significant at 5 percent level of significance.

B. Indifferent Attributes of Assurance Dimension

The information on the assurance dimension of service quality of indifferent attributes has been collected and computed with t-test for assessing any difference in the opinions of respondents on indifferent attributes and the results are presented in the table 2.

Table 2: Results of t-test for opinions on indifferent attributes of sample respondents on assurance dimension of service quality

State-ment No.	Indifferent attributes	Students expectation	University's performance	Mean difference (SE-UP)	t-value
6	Non teaching staff of the university is trustworthy and competent.	3.35 (1.20)	3.24 (1.22)	0.11	1.35@
8	Professors are sincere and punctual when coming to the college.	3.43 (1.31)	3.28 (1.29)	0.15	1.83@
11	Library staff guides properly to the Students	3.34 (1.19)	3.31 (1.16)	0.03	0.39@

Source: Field survey
Note:
1. **significant at 1 per cent level; *significant at 5 per cent level, @ not significant
2. Standard deviations are in parentheses.
3. The mean of student's expectation ranges from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).
4. The mean of university performance ranges from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

The table 2 obviously shows that there is difference in students' expectation and university performance in all the indifferent attributes, namely 6, 8, and 11 as noted above. The difference is the highest at 0.15 in the attribute "Professors are sincere and punctual in coming to the college", and the lowest at 0.03 in the attribute of 'library staff guides the students properly'. The t-value is insignificant and, hence, it can be inferred that the difference in the indifferent attributes of service quality is not significant.

C. Dissatisfying attributes of assurance dimension

The opinions on the assurance dimension of service quality of dissatisfying attributes have been collected and computed with t-test for assessing any difference in indifferent attributes and the results are presented in table 3.

Table 3: T-Test for Opinion on Dissatisfying Attributes Of Sample Respondents on Assurance Dimension Of Service Quality

State-ment No.	Dissatisfying attributes	Students Expectation	University's performance	Mean difference (SE-UP)	t-value
7	Non teaching staffs are punctual in attending to their duties.	3.19 (1.33)	3.26 (1.20)	-0.07	-0.79@
13	Physical director trains you regularly on the playground.	3.17 (1.33)	3.20 (1.24)	-0.03	-0.37@
15	Cooks in hostel or canteen possess enough knowledge of cooking	3.23 (1.25)	3.29 (1.28)	-0.05	-0.61@

Source: Field survey
Note:
1. **significant at 1 per cent level; *significant at 5 per cent level @ not significant
2. Standard deviations are in parentheses.
3. The means of student expectation range from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).
4. The means of university performance range from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

The table 3 obviously shows that there is difference between students' expectation and university performance in all the indifferent attributes, viz. 'Non-teaching staff are punctual in attending to their duties,' 'physical director trains you regularly on the playground' and 'cooks in hostel or canteen possess enough knowledge of cooking.' The difference is the highest at -0.07 in the attribute of 'non-teaching staff is punctual in attending to their duties' and the lowest at -0.03 in the attribute of "physical director trains you regularly on the playground." The t-value is insignificant and hence it can be inferred that the difference in the indifferent attributes of service quality is not significant.
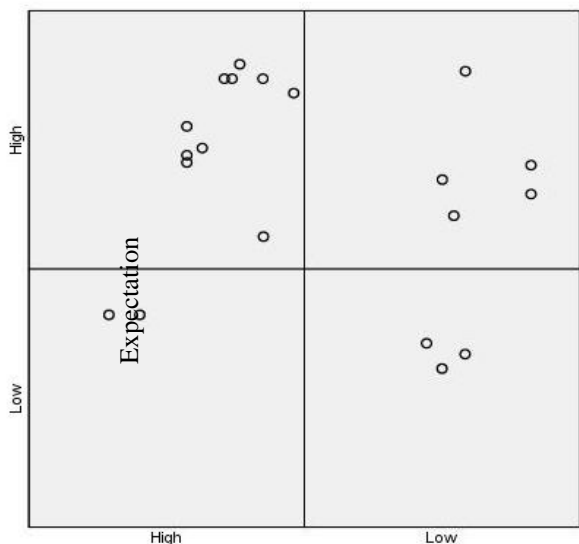
Fig.2: Performance–expectation graphical view
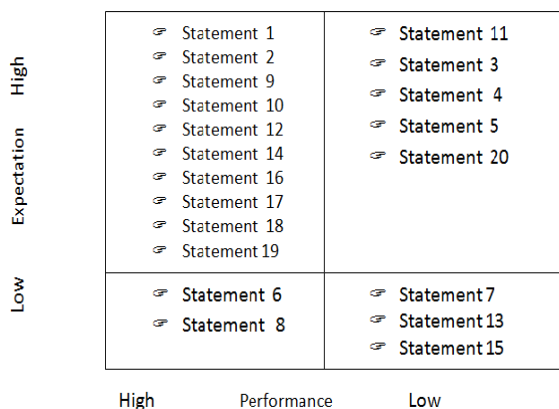Performance
Source: Field survey

Fig.3: Performance –expectation grid
Source: Field survey

Figure 3 is expectation-perception grid, showing the overall rating of students' perceptions of service quality dimension attributes in S.V. University. Students have identified three types of SQD attributes. They are satisfied with some dimensions, indifferent to some others and dissatisfied with a few more.

These opinions of the students were incorporated in the expectation-perception grid on the basis of their ratings. The average level of student's expectations from various attributes of SQ of the university and the average perception of these attributes was calculated for the overall sample. Grid consists of expectation-perception ratings and the overall ratings of students' perception of services. 5 SQAs are located in the upper right-hand corner of the grid. 10 SQAs were incorporated in the lower right-hand corner of the grid. 2 attributes, rated below average, are incorporated in the lower left-hand quadrant. Remaining 3 SQAs were incorporated in the higher left-hand quadrant.

XII.   FACTOR ANALYSIS: UNDERLYING DIMENSIONS OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ATTRIBUTES

The principal components factor method was used to generate the initial solution. The eigen values suggested that a four- factor solution explained 47.41 per cent of the overall variance before the rotation. The factors with eigen values greater than or equal to 1.0 and attributes with factor loadings greater than 0.4 were reported. From the results of the factor analysis, the four factors identified are: factor1, factor2, factor3 and factor4.

The overall significance of the correlation matrix was 0.000, with a Bartlett test of sphericity value of 2082.992. The statistical probability and the test indicated that there was a significant correlation between the variables, and the use of factor analysis was appropriate. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin overall measure of sampling adequacy was 0.837 which was meritorious (Hair, Anderson, and Black 1999).

From the Varimax-rotated factor matrix, four factors with 18 variables were defined by the original 20 variables that loaded most heavily on them (loading > 0.4). Two attributes were dropped due to the failure of loading on any factor at the level of 0.4 or less. These were "Professors provide better guidance to the student's properly.", "Professors adopt modern methods of teaching like power point presentation etc." There was communality range 0.298 to 0.320.

To test the reliability and internal consistency of each factor, the Cronbach's alpha of each factor was determined. The results showed that the alpha coefficients ranged from 0.415 to 0.587 for the four factors. The results were considered more than reliable, since 0.60 is the minimum value for accepting the reliability test (Nunnally, 1967). The four factors underlying students satisfaction of assurance dimension of service quality attributes in S.V.University, Tirupati, are as follows

Factor 1 contained 6 attributes but two attributes were dropped and explained 25.798 per cent of the variance in the data, with an eigen value of 5.160 and a reliability of 61.8 per cent. The attributes associated with this factor dealt with the required service items, such as "Professors and others possess up-to-date knowledge"," Professors possess enough knowledge and competence in their chosen field of specification", "Professors inspire confidence in the students", "Non-teaching staff are responsive to students' needs", "Professors are courteous in their behavior toward the students", and "Non teaching staff of the university are trustworthy and competent".

Factor 2 accounted for 8.251 per cent of the variance, with an eigen value of 1.650 and a reliability of 59.0 per cent, Compared to the factor2 assurance, factor 1 assurance is less. It shows moderate views compared to other factors. This factor was loaded with 6 attributes such as "Health centre doctors and staff are courteous and efficient", "The academic atmosphere on the campus inspires you", "Authorities ensure that students are assured of quality food in the mess", "Cooks in hostel or canteen possess enough knowledge of cooking", "Professors provide better guidance to the students properly", "Professors adopt modern methods of teaching like power point presentation etc"

Factor 3 was loaded with 4 attributes. This factor accounted for 7.305 per cent of the variance, with an eigen value of 1.461 and a reliability of 63.6 per cent. These four attributes are "Physical director trains you regularly on the

play ground", "Hostel staff are courteous and polite towards students", "Computer and lab technicians' help and guide you when conducting experiments in the lab", "Library staff guides students properly".

Factor 4 contained 4 attributes. This factor explained 6.051 per cent of the variance, with an eigen value of 1.210 and a reliability of 68.4. These attributes are "Library's staff is polite and helpful", "Library staff possesses knowledge about the library facilities", "Professors are sincere and punctual when coming to the college", and "Non teaching staff are punctual in attending to their duties". Hence it is concluded that the results showed above average levels.

A. Hypothesis 1

H_{01}. There is no relationship between selected Assurance service quality dimension in the higher education attributes and Overall students' satisfaction.

B. Correlation Analysis

A correlation coefficient measured the strength of a linear between two variables. In the study, a correlation coefficient measured the strength of a linear between the overall satisfaction of the respondents and four factors. The correlation between overall satisfaction of Students and two factors was positive and was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). For example, the correlation between overall satisfaction and factor 1 was $0.026^{@}$ (p=0.732); the correlation between overall satisfaction and factor 2 was 0.051@ (p=0.557); the correlation between overall satisfaction and factor 3 was 0.317* (p=0.003), and the correlation between overall satisfaction and factor 4 was 0.0.451* (p=0.001). Therefore, the study indicated that the correlation between overall satisfaction and assurance dimension attributes, Factor 3 and Factor 4 was significant at 1 per cent level and the correlation between overall satisfaction and factors1 and factor 2 was not significant. These results revealed support for hypothesis 1 that there seems to be a moderate correlation between overall satisfaction and the selected assurance service quality dimension attributes.

Table 5: Correlation between overall satisfaction of students and four factors

		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Fact or 4
Overall Satisfaction of students	Students Correlation	0.026	0.051@	0.317**	0.451**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.732	0.557	0.003	0.001
	N	440	440	440	440

Source: Field survey
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

C. Findings

1. The assurance dimension of service quality has been computed with t-test from sample respondents and the results show that, the difference between students expectation and university performance varies from 0.38 in the case of the attributes 'academic atmosphere on the campus inspires you,' 'professors adopt modern methods of teaching like power point presentation' etc. and 0.17 in the case of 'non-teaching staff are responsive to students' needs.' The t-value is significant at one percent level in the case of all attributes.

2. The difference is the highest at 0.12 with the attribute, 'professors are sincere and punctual when coming to the college' and the lowest at 0.03 with the attribute "library staff guides students properly". The t-value is insignificant and, hence, it can be inferred that the difference in the indifferent attributes of service quality is not significant.

3. The difference is the highest at -0.07 in the attribute of 'non- teaching staff is punctual in attending to their duties' and the lowest at 0.03 in the attribute of 'Physical director trains students regularly on the playground.' Table shows negative impact of these attributes. The t-value is insignificant and, hence, it can be inferred that the difference in the indifferent attributes of service quality is not significant.

4. The perception of the respondents in terms of assurance. This service quality dimension variable gains a mean score of 3.45 and standard deviation of 1.176. So the mean score of assurance is slightly above neutral. There were 5 items concerning assurance. Among 5 items, "university provides best services" scores the highest.

5. The correlation between overall satisfaction of students and two factors was positive and was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Factor 1 was $0.026^{@}$ (p=0.732); and factor 2 was 0.051@ (p=0.557); the correlation between overall students' satisfaction and factor 3 was 0.317* (p=0.003), and factor 4 was 0.0.451* (p=0.001). Therefore, the study indicated that the correlation between overall satisfaction and Factor 3 and Factor 4 was significant at 1 per cent level and the correlation between overall satisfaction and factors1 and factor 2 was not significant.

D. Suggestions

• It is suggested that the university authorities should motivate existing as well as new employees to participate in all types of activities and reduce their level of dependence in their work by providing various services to students.

• To improve university growth, it has to design the objectives of different courses. The management should bring in innovative methods, and new courses, focusing on the other variables also, such as regarding govt., policies, process and implementation of higher education.

• It is suggested that, the university has to consider demographic characteristics or aspects related to male & female, government & private, and rural & urban. These are areas where the university can make some improvements to increase the satisfaction level of the students more. They might try to provide various counselling services about career, education and perhaps finance or other issues.

• It is suggested that as "assurance" constitutes one of the very important dimensions of service quality in the sphere of higher education, the university has to make more efforts especially in the selection of non-teaching staff and technical staff, identify employees with lower educational qualifications and improve their level of independence to help them excel in their work by providing them suitable training and motivate the existing non-teaching staff. In

other areas considerable efforts are very much essential to improve their service quality in terms of assurance.

- The study indicated that the correlation between overall satisfaction and Factor 3 and Factor 4 was significant at 1 per cent level while the correlation between overall satisfaction and factor1 and factor 2 was not significant. Therefore, they should focus on these factors as they contribute to the overall student satisfaction.

- The results of the study revealed that even if four factors have significant relationship with the overall student satisfaction, factor 3 and factor 4 are more important factors that influenced overall student satisfaction but it shows low mean scores. The university should improve factor 1 and factor 2 variables for the purpose of providing better service quality to freshers.

- Therefore, it is suggested that the university may undertake "organization and method" study to identify excess or surplus staff in some branches and transfer them to the needy branches; maintain day wise work done statement of each one of the employee; and inculcate the habit of working for institution.

- It is suggested that the university authorities should lay emphasis on existing as well as fresh students participating in all types of activities, exposing them to modern opportunities.

XIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is restricted to students only, and does not include teaching and non-teaching staff members of university. Besides, this study does not cover the students of undergraduate, medicine, pharmacy, B.Ed. and law courses and the students of colleges that are affiliated to Sri Venkateswara University.

XIV. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study provided a general picture of the relationship between assurance service quality attributes of reality and students overall satisfaction with the S.V. University. The survey was conducted only among post-graduate students. Future studies might be conducted with only one category of academia, or more detailed comparisons might be made between science and arts courses. The future research may be focused on other private universities and to try to find out if the findings are similar. Researchers might expand the scope of the survey and increase sample size. Future research can be conducted by adding other service quality variables that influence student satisfaction. This study only finds the satisfaction of the student with the universities service quality of assurance dimension.

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