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Quality Measurement of External Degree Programme in Trincomalee Campus

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Abstract

This study discusses a key activity in the higher education institution of the future Quality measurement of study progamme. It will be argued, is central to the quality of higher education. The way it is considered and delivered of service by university staff, owes a lot to the students frame work and condition of service.

Trincomalee campus one of the prominent in Trincomalee district. Three ethnics communities studies in this institution. At presently this institute successfully runs the internal and external degree programmes.

Problem statement includes the Pilot study revealed that most of student's perception towards quality of external degree programmes is poor.

Objectives of the study, relationship between the satisfaction and loyalty and how to improve the external degree programme. Overall analysis of this study external degree programme is moderately satisfied.

The study suggests that there is significant scope for improving the quality of study programme. Teaching staff improve their knowledge through the teaching methodology, master degree programme & workshop. Adopt the changes in teaching methods Quality Assurance programme, subject review, subject benchmark. Implement the infrastructure plan as soon as possible. In addition to special care of students motivation includes students' feedback, workshop and cooperative learning.

Overview

Quality in higher education is a multi dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, building, faculties, equipment, services the community and the academic environment. Achieving quality in education involves two steps. The first step is for institutions to set objectives that embody what is expected and required by the stakeholders, in addition to responding to broader issues, such as the demands arising from the characterizes nature of academic activity and the rapid development of knowledge. The second step is for the institution to ensure that it attains its objectives.

Introduction to the Trincomalee Campus

In its formative years the Trincomalee Campus functioned as an Affiliated University College (AUC) operating under the umbrella of affiliated colleges funded by the University Grants Commission in the early nineties to help those to whom the conventional universities closed their doors.

The Trincomalee AUC, in its turn, conducted two diploma programmes viz. Diploma in English and Diploma in Accountancy and Financial Management, the former under the supervision of the University of Sri Jayewardenapura and the later under the supervision of the Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

When the AUC system was abolished, Trincomalee AUC found itself vested with the Eastern University and the two degree programs initially conducted here then under two different faculties of the Eastern
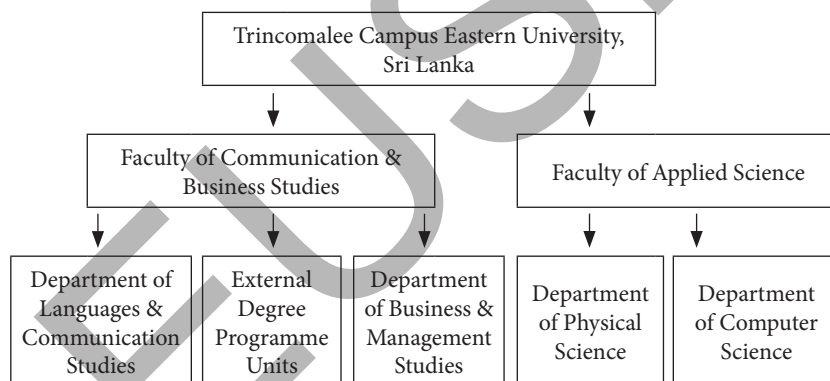
University has as their fortunate forerunners the diploma holders of the AUC.

Subsequently, this college was gazettes as a Campus of the Eastern University, Sri Lanka with provision for two faculties as shown below.

Motto   :   Ever Challenging

Vision   :   Formation of Ever Challenging Intellectual Capital

Mission :   Faculty of communication and Business studies with its dedication aims to offer market driven study program that open up opportunities of employment and productivity through systematic and innovative knowledge management with proper training in conducive environment and research with linkage of firms to all who seek betterment through higher education.

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│  Trincomalee Campus Eastern          │
│  University, Sri Lanka               │
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Faculty of Communication & Business Studies

Faculty of Applied Science

Department of Languages & Communication Studies

External Degree Programme Units

Department of Business & Management Studies

Department of Physical Science

Department of Computer Science

(Source- Hand Book-Trinco Campus 2006/2007)

Research Area

Trincomalee campus one of the prominent in Trincomalee district. Three ethnics communities studies in this institution. At presently this institute successfully runs the internal and external degree programmes.

Problems Statement

Pilot study revealed that most of student's perception towards quality of external degree programmes is poor.

Research Questions

- How the teaching staff, teaching methods and course administration is contributing to achieve student's satisfaction and their subsequent loyalty?

- Is there a positive relationship between the satisfaction and loyalty?

Objectives of the Study

To measure the effects of quality on the External Degree programme in Trincomalee Campus.

- To analyze the elements which determine the student's satisfaction.

- To analyze the relationship between the satisfaction and their loyalty to the institution.

- To suggest ways how to improve the quality of external degree programme.

Methodology

It includes the sampling process, data collection, data analysis and data evaluation respectively.

Sampling process

Batches	Bachelor of Science	Sample	Bachelor of Arts	Sample
Batch-I 2006/2007	60	49	22	18
Batch-II 2005/2006	24	20	16	9
Batch-III 2003/2004	28	22	34	33
Total	**112**	**91**	**72**	**60**

(Source- Trincomalee Campus, External unit)

The reliability and creditability of this research is depending on data collection. The data are collected from the external students.

Data Collection Method

Types of data

- Primary data
- Secondary data

Primary Data

Consists of information collected for the specific purpose at hand this comprises of direct interview with the student in Trinco campus. Issuing questionnaire to the External degree programme students to get their response through discussion with them.

Secondary Data

Consists of information that already exist some where have been collected for another purpose and this will mostly depend on the desk research including websites (internet) and books containing the suitable data.

Data Analysis

The sample will be analyzed by univariation (mean, median, standard deviation, etc). The research questionnaire to be used will be designed taking in to account the variables that are to be measured. Likert scale rating (1-5) will be used to measure variable through relevant statements. (1-Strongly disagree, 5- Strongly agree)

Data Evaluation

Based on the variant analysis consists of mean, median, standard deviation and will be analyzed using computer based statistical data, analysis package (SPSS, 14.0) for validity, reliability and relationships testing. Conclusions are to be drawn from the findings. There of, if denotes the mean value then decision will be,

If $X_i < 3$ then the variable denotes less satisfaction………………….
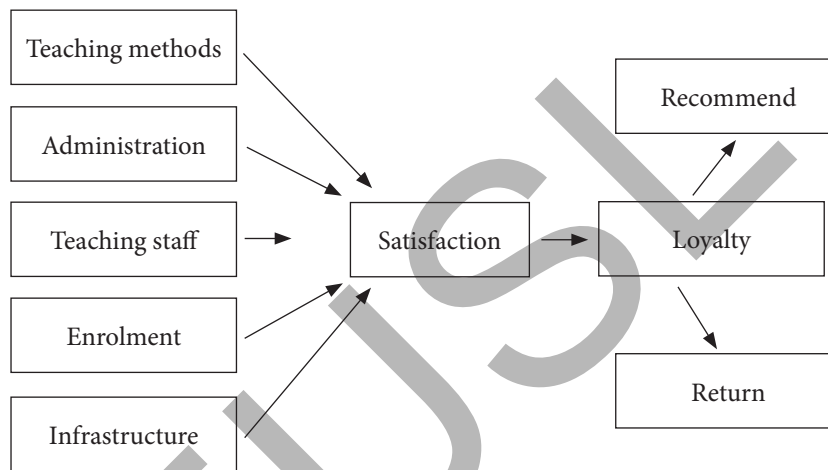
If $X_i = 3$ then the variable denotes moderately satisfaction…………....

If $X_i > 3$ then the variable denotes high satisfaction…………………

The range for $Xi < 3$ is $1.5 < Xi \leq 2.5$
$Xi = 3$ is $2.5 < Xi \leq 3.5$
$Xi > 3$ is $3.5 < Xi \leq 5.0$

The mean value of them (Xi where I = 1, 2, 3…) are taken into consideration in order to evaluate the quality of students in trinco campus.

Conceptualization

(Source –Developed for research purpose)

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

Overall Analysis

Research Information	BSc		BA	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Teaching Methods	3.6	0.9	3.4	1.3
Course Administration	3.4	0.9	3.4	1.0
Teaching Staff	3.2	0.9	3.4	1.1
Enrolment	3.2	1.0	3.3	1.1
Infrastructure	3.2	1.2	3.4	1.1
Satisfaction	3.3	0.9	3.5	1.1
Loyalty	3.4	0.9	3.5	0.9

(Source –Developed for research purpose)

The teaching staffs, teaching methods used by the staff and the administration of the course are aspects directly controllable by universities, which aspects facilitate the decision making that leads to student satisfaction.

In addition analyzed courses have a duration that is far shorter than an academic year. In a short period of time, infrastructure.improvement is important to the student

An analysis of the effect exercised by student satisfaction with higher education institutions on the levels of student's loyalty, which is hereby understood as both the student's intention to return to attend the courses and the exercise of positive interpersonal communication, is vital to guaranteeing the survival of universities in the competitive environment where they operate. Therefore, the administration of university institution should analyze the factors that determine this satisfaction, given that satisfaction is a key element to obtaining student loyalty as empirically verified in this study.

In the analyses, loyalty is also directly and positively affected by the dimension that determines satisfaction. This means that institutions that would like to achieve the loyalty of their students must not only have an impact on student satisfaction, but they must also have an impact on the part of loyalty that is explained by aspects pertaining to the essential service.

In the overall analysis external degree programme is a moderately satisfied.

Recommendation

Academic institutions reflect and refine the priorities of the society in which they function. A variety of factors determine the success of sustainability initiatives in higher education

Provide some recommended solution to solve the problems

Teaching Staff

- Staff should have opportunities for specialized career training, locally and overseas and staff development programmes for

new academic staff should include elements on providing good career guidance.

E.g.: MBA, MSc, Ph.D

- Improve the quality of teaching and research

E.g.: Teaching methodology, conduct the annual research sections, publication, etc

- Continuous professional development. E.g.: workshop, seminar

- Opportunities for staff to work together as they learn, plan to use and implement their new knowledge and practices; and also participate in decisions about what they will learn, how they will learn and how they will use what they learn

Teaching Methods

Quality Assurance activities

1) Awareness programmes

   Academic and administration staff

   Non academic staff

   Students

2) Workshops

   Teaching and learning process

   Subject review training

   Student feed back

3) Subject benchmark

Teaching staff, teaching methods and course administration is main contribution to the satisfaction. Moreover it is verified that satisfaction with the course positively affects customer loyalty, which is measured through favorable interpersonal communication and the intention to return to attend courses offered by the same institution.

Infrastructure

Implement the below plan to early as possible

Planned infrastructure project (in million rupees) 2004-2008

Trincomalee, EUSL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Administrative block	2	3	15	10	4	1	35
Library	-	5	10	5	5	3	28
Lecture hall	3	7	8	-	-	-	18
Student recreation centre & canteen	-	1	2	2	5	-	10
Laboratories	-	5	5	5	4	3	22
Faculty building	4	20	20	30	30	30	134
Grounds	-	1	3	1	1	-	6
IT center	-	2	2	4	10	10	28
Health Center	-	1	3	-	-	-	4
Infrastructure development	3	2	5	10	10	10	40
Total infrastructure expenditure	12	47	73	67	69	57	325

(Source-Corporate plan, Trinco Campus)

In addition to establish the External study centre with 5M.

Students Motivation

Most of the students are working people; and also they coming from various streams. They feel they can't spend the time to study.

- Students should receive constructive feedback on assessed work in a way that promotes learning and facilities improvement. Particular care should be taken to support weaker students by providing full feedback on their work in a way that gives them every encouragement to improve their performance.

- Conduct the subject related workshop and seminar.

- Make arrangement to provide the flexible time to using the library and computer unit.

Use cooperative learning

Cooperative learning (CL) is instruction that involves students working in teams to accomplish an assigned task and produce a final product (e.g., a problem solution, critical analysis and laboratory report, or process or product design.

Under the following factors are encourage the team work of students.

1. *Positive interdependence*. Team members are obliged to rely on one another to achieve the goal. If any team members fail to do their part, everyone on the team suffers consequences.

2. *Individual accountability*. All team members are held accountable both for doing their share of the work and for understanding everything in the final product (not just the parts for which they were primarily responsible).

3. *Face-to-face promotive interaction*. Although some of the group work may be done individually, some must be done interactively, with team members providing mutual feedback and guidance, challenging one another and working toward consensus.

4. *Appropriate use of teamwork skills*. Students are encouraged and helped to develop and exercise leadership, communication, conflict management and decision-making skills.

5. *Regular self-assessment of team functioning.* Team members set goals, periodically assess how well they are working together and identify changes they will make to function more effectively in the future.

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