

Quality of Assessment System-A Comparative Analysis of Hindi and English Medium Students' Perception

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the study is to identify the difference between the perceptions of English and Hindi medium regarding assessment and evaluation system. This study is based on descriptive-analytical method. After validity and reliability tests, the adapted SERVQUAL questionnaire used for gathering data from 250 students, using an online survey. SPSS 23, descriptive statistics and paired *t*-test were used for data analysis. Negative gaps observed regarding the assessment, as the expectations of the students, from both the mediums of instruction, were more significant than their perceptions. There is no statistically significant difference in the students' overall expectations found; however, there was a statistically significant difference between English and Hindi Medium students' overall perceptions and overall gaps. The findings suggest that institutes need to improve all the dimensions of service quality. The results of the study indicate that the SERVQUAL model may be used for scrutinising the assessment and evaluation system as well as findings differences, if any, between the perceptions of students from different mediums of instruction.

Keywords: Assessment and evaluation system, English and Hindi Medium students, Higher education, Quality, SERVQUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Education services have a more significant impact on the overall development of an individual's personality. At present, the higher education institutions are becoming more competent by placing greater emphasis on meeting students' expectations and needs. As they are becoming more students oriented, the need to enhance the quality of education services is acquiring

higher significance. As language plays a vital role in education and learning, proficiency in the English language needed for higher studies; however, the mother tongue remains the basis of thought. The usage of mother tongue as coaching medium improves cognitive abilities as it is easier for an individual to comprehend a lesson in his mother tongue, thus leading to faster learning. It has found from various researches that changing the schooling medium from

mother tongue to a different language makes students scared and leads to low self-confidence. Students stop appreciating school, education and teachers, and the change in teaching medium deteriorates the learning quality and has an adverse impact on the students, in academics and social aspects (Coleman, 1982, 2003). Language or average change can adversely affect the students in acquiring information and hamper the development of abilities like reading (Patil and Motiram, 2013). The significance of language in education inspired the researchers to investigate the impact of the medium on the perceived quality regarding assessment and evaluation system in higher education.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Measuring the quality of education services has received extensive attention because of the intense competition among the educational institutions and the desire for the attainment of excellence in training and education. In the area of higher education, the adoption of quality control has been superficial and diluted by the exercise of academic freedom (Largosen *et al.*, 2004). Education is a sophisticated venture with numerous interacting dimensions of quality in several diverse contexts. However, higher education is a part of service sector; therefore, viewing higher education as a service may promote generalising service quality dimensions for this sector, but a more particular generalisation is needed for higher education due to its complicated characteristics (Owlia and Aspinwal, 1996).

Quality dimensions has been categorised into several groups by previous researchers such as security, consistency, attitude, completeness, condition, availability and training by Sasser *et al.* (1978); technical quality, functional quality and corporate image by Gronroos (1990); physical quality, interactive quality and corporate quality by Lehtinen and Lehtinen (1991); and outcome and process dimensions

by Ghobadian *et al.* (1994); 18 service quality measurements- attentiveness/helpfulness, responsiveness, care, availability, reliability, integrity, courtesy, friendliness, communication, competence, functionality, commitment, access, flexibility, aesthetics, cleanliness, comfort and security by Johnston (1995). Rust and Oliver (1994) recommended that it is an element which consists of three parts viz., Service Product, Service Delivery and Service Environment. Brady and Cronin (2001) suggested three factors of service quality: ambient conditions, facility design and social factors.

Over the years, estimating service quality because of its intangible nature has been a subject of countless discussions by academician and expert (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Prabha *et al.*, 2010). Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) distinguished five measurements which have been extensively utilised by researchers to measure service quality. The estimating instrument is named the 'SERVQUAL'. It is based on Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy dimensions. In the sector of Higher education, this instrument is more pertinent and significant as the circumstances are similar to those of any service sector. In researches related to education services, Carney (1994) proposed far-reaching nineteen factors to understand an institute's image, that is, academic qualification, students personal quality, faculty students interaction, quality instruction, variety of courses, class size, career preparation, athletic programs, students activities, community service facilities and equipment, location, physical appearance, on-campus residence friendly caring atmosphere, safe campus and financial aid. Owlia and Aspinwall (1996) identified six dimensions, that is, academic resources, support services, competence, attitude, content, delivery and reliability. Athiyaman (1997) identified eight qualities to look for in higher education service, that is, an institution's teaching standard and its students, availability of staff, consultation, class size, computing facilities,

recreational facilities, subject content level and student workload. Hadikoemoro (2002) recognised five dimensions of quality in education, that is, Academic service, Readiness and attentiveness, Fair and impartial, Tangible and General Attitude. Brooks (2005) expressed that the estimation of quality should be based on reputation, faculty research productivity, student educational experiences and outcomes, program characteristics, program effectiveness, student satisfaction and student outcome.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION SYSTEM AND SERVICE QUALITY

Assessment and evaluation system play a vital role in imparting education as well as in evaluating the students' knowledge, understanding and learning. The assessment and evaluation is a useful instrument to assess the quality and quantity of information or study of the students in a specific field (*Mishra, 1988*). In the last few of years, the assessment and evaluation structure of in the country as well as in the State of Rajasthan has observed significant changes. Many areas of knowledge have been combined in the educational program, which has expanded the number of assessment and evaluations. The number of students appearing, the variety of assessment and evaluations conducted, and variety of assessment and evaluation centres etc. has further expanded exponentially. Therefore, the assessment and evaluation system has become relatively tricky and complicated. Till date, no precise study has been conducted to identify the difference in the expectations and perceptions of the students from different backgrounds, concerning the assessment and evaluation services provided to the students, based on the medium of education/ instruction. It is pertinent to highlight that assessment and evaluation render feedback to expand development, for the teachers, whereas it provides input for students, to develop learning, to boost up study process, to motivate them towards their specified goals.

Assessment and evaluation not only guide students towards systematic studying but also encourage them to learn effectively. It is almost impossible for the students to think of education without checking results which are the outcome of the assessment and evaluation process. As such, assessment and evaluation effect may be regarded as a synonym of education.

The assessment and evaluation system guides the students in organising their knowledge and minimising their mistakes. It helps them in developing their effectiveness in studies, in directing them towards desired actions for further development, in determining their level of achievement and in acquiring satisfaction by achieving the desired final results. To fulfil all these objectives, the assessment and evaluation process must be fair, transparent and holistic. It should provide appropriate evaluation; serve as a reward, as a motivation and as an encouragement for boosting their knowledge and skills. However, the students' perception of the process and their expectations from the assessment and evaluation are extensive and sundry. In educational services, students weigh the standard of organisation on the basis of their proficiency to achieve success in the competitive market (*Crawford and Shutler, 1999*), teachers' ability, excellence, coordination and reasonability and their influence on students' class performance (*Sproule, 2000*), relevant facilities of learning and infrastructure (*Alridge and Rowley, 1998, 2001*), tangibility (teachers), reliability and responsiveness, methods of tutoring and management of the institution (*Navarro et al., 2005*). The trained staff members create a sense of facilitation, and their coordination, cooperation, compassion and empathy are integral to the system (*Hasan et al., 2008; Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978*).

Students are vital stakeholders in education (*Kasetwar, 2008*). The knowledge of how students perceive or expect the quality of academic services may contribute a great deal in improving the standard of educational

and academic services in Institutions of Higher education across the world (*Gopalakrishnan, 2014*). Hence, service quality, its measurement and its subsequent management have become an issue of utmost importance. Service quality is linked directly to the students' satisfaction. The students are conscious of the standard and level of the assessment and evaluation system. Therefore, the concept of finding the quality of evaluation and assessment and evaluation system through SERVQUAL dimensions may prove to be very useful.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to collect empirical data on the difference, if any, in perceptions of the students of varied medium regarding assessment and evaluation process in Higher education. It tries to examine the gaps, if any, between the students' expectations and perceptions with regards to the characteristics of assessment and evaluations process, the overall quality of evaluation process, considering its various dimensions: tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy dimensions. The study scrutinises the differences between the expectations, perceptions and quality gaps among English and Hindi medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system. At the primary/secondary school level, the students may have different mediums of instruction, that is, Hindi, English, Gujarati, Marathi and others. However, at the higher education level, students from different mediums struggle to become competent in the adopted medium, that is, English, therefore, it is highly significant to find out the differences in their understanding and observations regarding the assessment and evaluation. This study tries to find out the difference between Hindi medium and English medium students' expectations, perceptions and perceived service quality gaps as the present assessment and evaluation system

don't distinguish among the students by the medium of their studies.

HYPOTHESIS

Following hypotheses are formulated:

H1a: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions and expectations of Medium Hindi students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

H1b: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions and expectations of English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

H2: There is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

H3: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

H4: There is no statistically significant difference between the perception of quality gaps of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This survey for the comparative analysis of the Hindi and English medium students' perception regarding the quality of the assessment system followed the fundamental structure of the SERVQUAL instrument as created by Parasuraman *et al.* (1991). An online questionnaire comprising of two segments (1) expectation and (2) perception, based on an adapted SERVQUAL instrument with a 7-point scale, where the endpoints 1 and 7 strongly disagreed and strongly agreed, respectively, with the items.

The samples comprised of students from Hindi and English medium schools from a major city from the State of Rajasthan. The sampling technique used for this investigation was non-probability convenience sampling. Convenience samples were chosen at the ease of the researchers (Neelankavil, 2007).

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Demographics

The demographic information collected from the students included the following characteristics: gender, age the semester of studies and locality/domicile, etc. For this study, only one vernacular Hindi selected for comparison with English medium. The respondents consisted of 135 students. All the 135 respondents, who finished the survey, were considered for further analysis, 94 were from English medium and 41 from Hindi medium. SPSS version 23.0 used to analyse the data collected.

Reliability of the Scales

IBM SPSS Version 23 was used for computing and measuring Cronbach's Alpha, the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument and its dimensions. Comparatively high values were detected indicating reliability for both sections of the questionnaire (Table 1) for the two groups. The reliability estimates for English medium of 0.763–0.902 for expectations and of 0.714–0.866 for perceptions shows data reliability. The reliability estimates for Hindi medium of 0.632

at the least and to 0.759 at the most for the expectation scale and of 0.767–0.935 for the perception scale shows the satisfactory reliability of data for exploratory purposes. In such studies, the significance of 0.60 and above is considered acceptable for internal consistency.

H1a: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions and expectations of Hindi medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system

To calculate the service gaps, the expectation score of Hindi medium students ($N=41$) was subtracted from perception score, as tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2 indicates no real gaps are noticed, only negative gaps are seen, which are indicative of the negative perception among the students. It can be stated that in the opinion of the Hindi medium students, the least gap exists for the Pair 2 (-1.0244) which refers to the Tangibility, that is, the quality of materials and products. The gap between students' observation and expectation is greatest for Pair 6 pertaining the dimension Reliability (-2.2927), which refers to the timely delivery of services about assessment and evaluation at the promised time. This shows that in the perception of the students the system fails to deliver the services promptly, which may be considered as the critical factor for the students' disappointment. The scores for each of the dimensions were negative suggesting that the performance in all dimensions, in the perception of the students was not as much as they

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha for Expectation and Perception of Hindi and English Medium Students

Dimension	English medium		Hindi medium		No. of items
	Expectation	Perception	Expectation	Perception	
Tangibility (TAN)	0.763	0.812	0.759	0.767	4
Reliability (REL)	0.902	0.758	0.739	0.871	5
Responsiveness (RES)	0.893	0.714	0.678	0.878	4
Assurance (ASS)	0.847	0.866	0.632	0.923	4
Empathy (EMP)	0.845	0.865	0.642	0.935	5

Table 2: Mean Expectations, Perceptions and Gaps of Hindi Medium Students

Items	Scales	Mean	Gaps
Pair 1	Expectation	6.610	-1.4146
	Perception	5.195	
Pair 2	Expectation	6.707	-1.0244 (Lowest Gap)
	Perception	5.683	
Pair 3	Expectation	6.585	-1.1707
	Perception	5.415	
Pair 4	Expectation	6.634	-1.4878
	Perception	5.146	
TANGIBILITY (TAN)	Expectation	26.1915	-7.53191
	Perception	18.6596	
Pair 5	Expectation	6.585	-1.2439
	Perception	5.341	
Pair 6	Expectation	6.561	-2.2927 (Highest Gap)
	Perception	4.268	
Pair 7	Expectation	6.610	-1.6829
	Perception	4.927	
Pair 8	Expectation	6.537	-2.0244
	Perception	4.512	
Pair 9	Expectation	6.610	-2.0000
	Perception	4.610	
RELIABILITY (REL)	Expectation	32.5851	-12.6596
	Perception	19.9255	
Pair 10	Expectation	6.561	-1.8049
	Perception	4.756	
Pair 11	Expectation	6.439	-2.1220
	Perception	4.317	
Pair 12	Expectation	6.683	-1.4634
	Perception	5.220	
Pair 13	Expectation	6.512	-1.3902
	Perception	5.122	
RESPONSIVENESS (RES)	Expectation	25.9468	-9.74468
	Perception	16.2021	
Pair 14	Expectation	6.707	-1.4634
	Perception	5.244	
Pair 15	Expectation	6.659	-1.3415
	Perception	5.317	
Pair 16	Expectation	6.537	-1.4146
	Perception	5.122	

Table 2 contd.....

Items	Scales	Mean	Gaps
Pair 17	Expectation	6.707	-1.6341
	Perception	5.073	
ASSURANCE (ASS)	Expectation	26.1809	-8.23404
	Perception	17.9468	
Pair 18	Expectation	6.610	-1.5610
	Perception	5.049	
Pair 19	Expectation	6.610	-1.4634
	Perception	5.146	
Pair 20	Expectation	6.659	-1.6098
	Perception	5.049	
Pair 21	Expectation	6.707	-1.9024
	Perception	4.805	
Pair 22	Expectation	6.585	-1.5122
	Perception	5.073	
EMPATHY (EMP)	Expectation	31.3191	-10.4894
	Perception	20.8298	

desired. Based on these findings hypothesis, 'H1a: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions and expectations of Medium Hindi students regarding assessment and evaluation system' was rejected.

H1b: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions and expectations of English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

The scores for every item of the instrument bears a negative sign implying that the expectations of the students, from English medium of instruction ($N=94$), regarding the assessment system are higher than their perceptions.

From Table 3, it can be stated that in the perception of the Medium English students the least gap exists for the Pair 2 (-1.6277) which refers to the Tangibles. The gap between students' perception and expectation is greatest for the Pair 6, about the dimension Reliability (-3.0745). A comparison between the low

expectations and the mean perceptions of students from English mediums for each dimension of the SERVQUAL instrument demonstrates that their expectations were higher than their perception on all the five dimensions of service quality. This means that the students are not happy with the quality of service offered to them. The gap between perception and expectation for the dimension of Tangibles is the lowest, and the gap is the highest for the dimension of Reliability. Based on the findings hypothesis, 'H1b: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions and expectations of English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system' was also rejected.

H2: There is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

A working model based on Standard SERVQUAL dimensions of higher education assessment and

Table 3: Mean Expectations, Perceptions and Gaps of English Medium Students

Items	Scales	Mean	Gaps
Pair 1	Expectation	6.543	-1.8936
	Perception	4.649	
Pair 2	Expectation	6.532	-1.6277 (Lowest Gap)
	Perception	4.904	
Pair 3	Expectation	6.532	-1.6489
	Perception	4.883	
Pair 4	Expectation	6.585	-2.3617
	Perception	4.223	
TANGIBILITY (TAN)	Expectation	26.5366	-5.0976
	Perception	21.4390	
Pair 5	Expectation	6.553	-1.7872
	Perception	4.766	
Pair 6	Expectation	6.447	-3.0745 (Highest Gap)
	Perception	3.372	
Pair 7	Expectation	6.628	-2.2021
	Perception	4.426	
Pair 8	Expectation	6.436	-2.6809
	Perception	3.755	
Pair 9	Expectation	6.521	-2.9149
	Perception	3.606	
RELIABILITY (REL)	Expectation	32.9024	-9.2439
	Perception	23.6585	
Pair 10	Expectation	6.500	-2.5426
	Perception	3.957	
Pair 11	Expectation	6.394	-2.9681
	Perception	3.426	
Pair 12	Expectation	6.564	-1.9894
	Perception	4.574	
Pair 13	Expectation	6.489	-2.2447
	Perception	4.245	
RESPONSIVENESS (RES)	Expectation	26.1951	-6.7805
	Perception	19.4146	
Pair 14	Expectation	6.436	-1.9362
	Perception	4.500	
Pair 15	Expectation	6.596	-2.0851
	Perception	4.511	
Pair 16	Expectation	6.543	-2.1170
	Perception	4.426	

Table 3 contd.....

Items	Scales	Mean	Gaps
Pair 17	Expectation	6.606	-2.0957
	Perception	4.511	
ASSURANCE (ASS)	Expectation	26.6098	-5.8537
	Perception	20.7561	
Pair 18	Expectation	6.117	-2.0000
	Perception	4.117	
Pair 19	Expectation	6.468	-2.2234
	Perception	4.245	
Pair 20	Expectation	6.128	-1.9574
	Perception	4.170	
Pair 21	Expectation	6.372	-2.2447
	Perception	4.128	
Pair 22	Expectation	6.234	-2.0638
	Perception	4.170	
EMPATHY(EMP)	Expectation	33.1707	-8.0488
	Perception	25.1220	

evaluation system is shown in Figure 1. It is based on the mean scores of Hindi and English medium students' expectations in all dimensions of SERVQUAL. For simplicity, only the mean scores of one of the two scales, that is, expectations and perceptions are displayed; a cursory glance shows no significant differences between the expectations of the students from the two selected mediums (Figure 1).

The independent sample *t*-test was used to find out if there were any statistically significant differences between Hindi medium and English medium students' expectations. Table 4 shows the result of the *t*-test and the differences in expectation between English and Hindi medium students.

From Table 4, it is seen that in the expectations of the students from English medium, the scores for dimension Assurance, the attributes of which primarily guarantee equality and promptness were the highest among all dimensions for service quality (6.5452) and the scores are lowest for Empathy (6.2638). In the

perception of the students from English medium, the scores for dimension Assurance (6.6524) were the highest and are the lowest for Responsiveness (6.5488). However, the Table 4 demonstrates that no statistically significant differences exist between English and Hindi Medium students' expectation, at $p < 0.001$ in the dimensions of service quality, except for the dimension Empathy. Along these lines, the null hypothesis, 'H2: There is no statistically significant difference between the expectations of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system' was accepted for Overall Expectation, as well as all dimensions except for the dimension Empathy.

H3: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

The working model based on the Standard SERVQUAL Dimensions of the perceptions of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system of higher education is given in

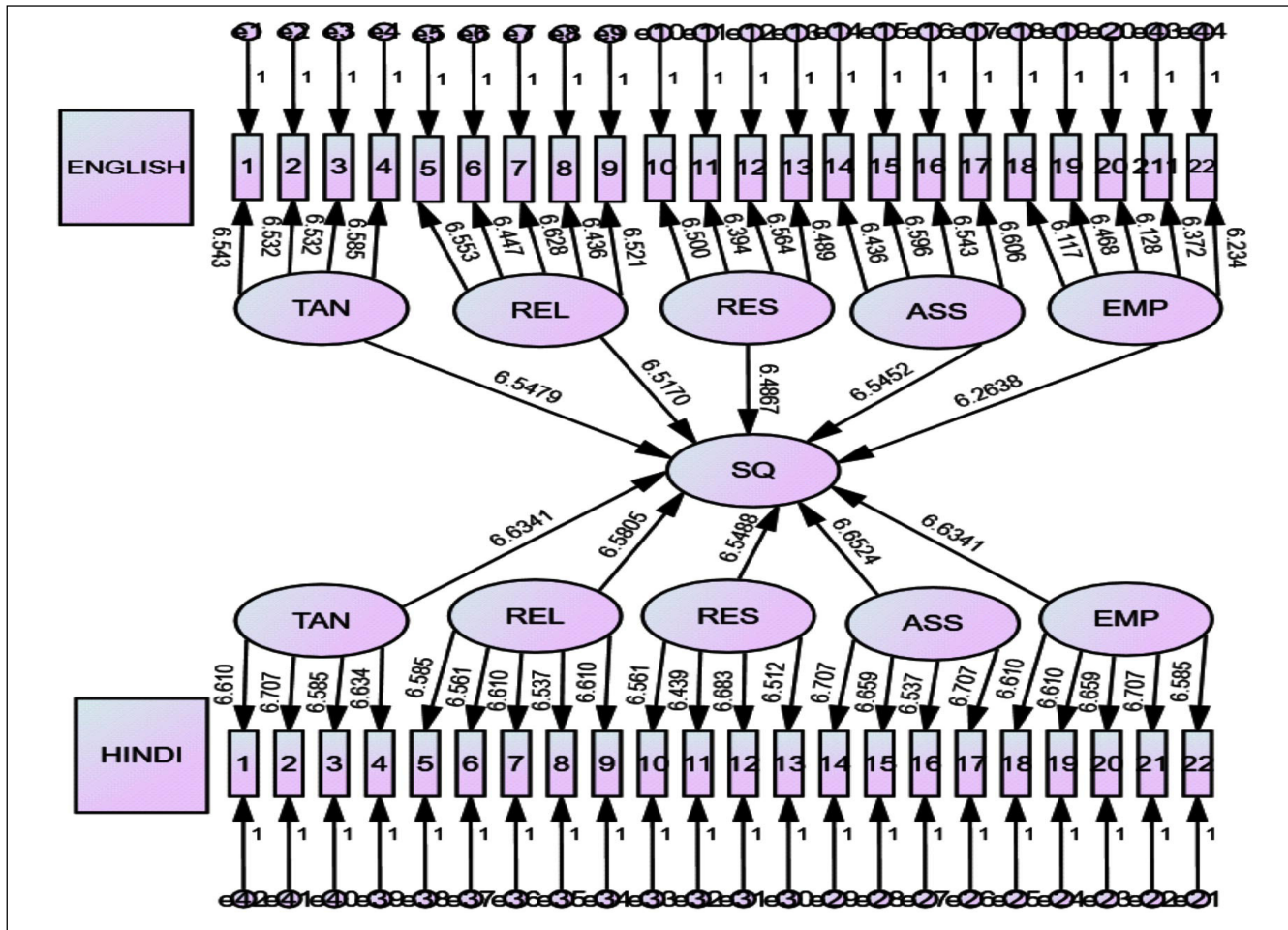


Figure 1: Model Depicting Expectations of Hindi and English Medium Students

Table 4: Result of the *t*-Test-Expectation of English and Hindi Medium Students

	Medium	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Tangibility	English	94	6.5479	0.59712	0.06159	-0.843	133	0.401
	Hindi	41	6.6341	0.40734	0.06362			
Reliability	English	94	6.5170	0.80237	0.08276	-0.480	133	0.632
	Hindi	41	6.5805	0.40695	0.06356			
Responsiveness	English	94	6.4867	0.73632	0.07595	-0.506	133	0.614
	Hindi	41	6.5488	0.41163	0.06429			
Assurance	English	94	6.5452	0.63602	0.06560	-1.026	133	0.307
	Hindi	41	6.6524	0.31063	0.04851			
Empathy	English	94	6.2638	0.75418	0.07779	-2.998	133	0.003
	Hindi	41	6.6341	0.35469	0.05539			
Overall Expectation	English	94	6.4721	0.63430	0.06542	-1.316	133	0.190
	Hindi	41	6.6100	0.32566	0.05086			

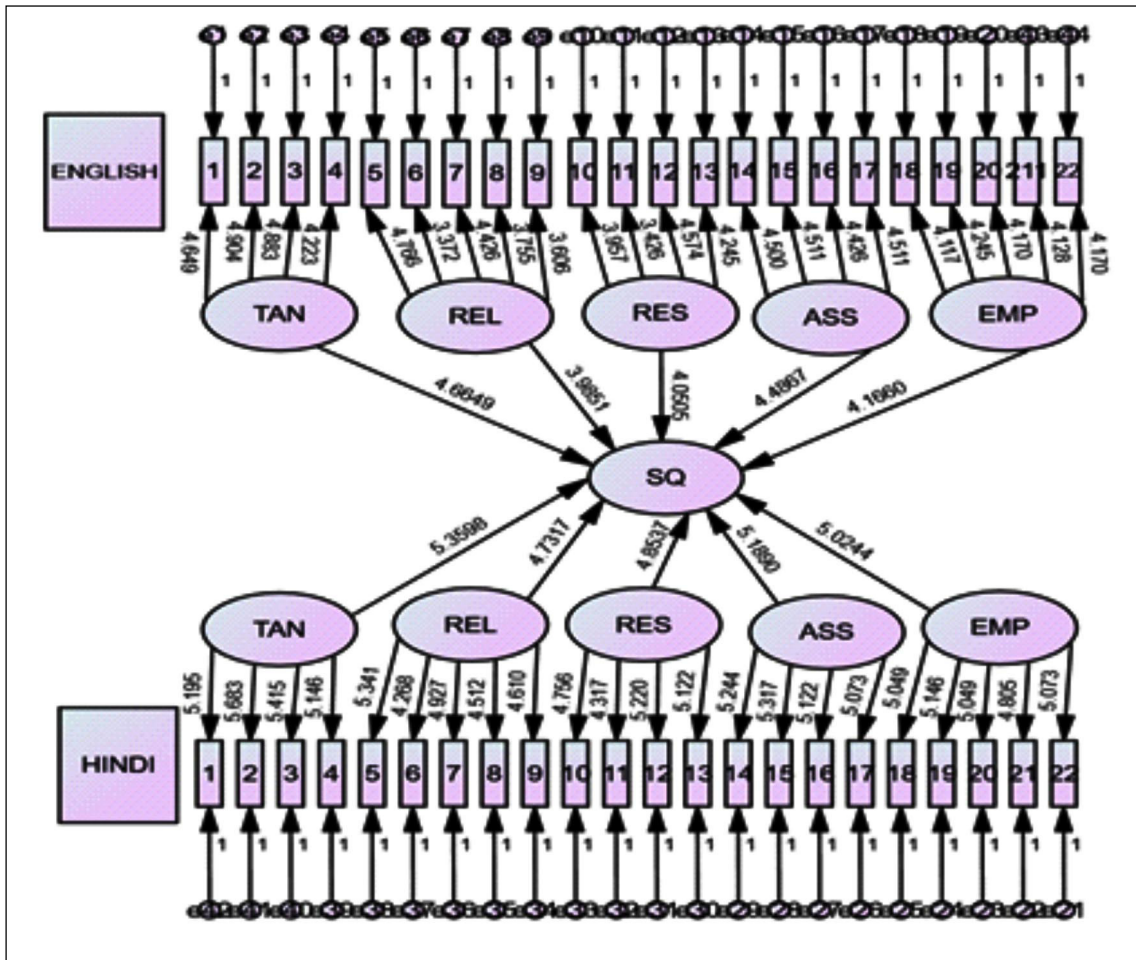


Figure 2: Model Depicting Perceptions of Hindi and English Medium Students

Figure 2. It shows the mean scores of the five dimensions of SERVQUAL for English and Hindi Medium students' perceptions. For simplicity only, the main paths and mean values of judgments are shown (Figure 2). A cursory glance reveals there are differences between the two groups based on the medium of education/instruction.

To gauge the difference between the perceptions of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system a *t*-test was computed, the results are as follows:

From Table 5, it is realised that in the perceptions of the students from English medium, the scores for dimension Tangibility (4.6649) was the highest among

all dimensions and the scores are lowest for Reliability (3.9851). In the perception of the students from Hindi medium, the scores for dimension Tangibility (5.3598) were the highest, and are the lowest for Reliability (4.7317). There appears to be a similar trend in gap perception for both groups for the dimension of these two dimensions. The minimum gap is observed in the dimension tangibility, that is, 5.09756 and -7.53191 by English and Hindi medium students, respectively, shows that students are not much concerned with the overall outlook and the visual appeal of the facilities. However, the Table 4 also demonstrates that statistically significant differences exist between English and Hindi Medium students' perceptions, at $p < 0.001$ in all the dimensions. Along

Table 5: Result of the *t*-Test-Perception of English and Hindi Medium Students

	Medium	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Tangibility	English	94	4.6649	1.06796	0.11015	-3.642	133	0.000
	Hindi	41	5.3598	.89626	0.13997			
Reliability	English	94	3.9851	1.08131	0.11153	-3.444	133	0.001
	Hindi	41	4.7317	1.31955	0.20608			
Responsiveness	English	94	4.0505	1.09408	0.11285	-3.699	133	0.000
	Hindi	41	4.8537	1.30021	0.20306			
Assurance	English	94	4.4867	1.25315	0.12925	-2.992	133	0.003
	Hindi	41	5.1890	1.25720	0.19634			
Empathy	English	94	4.1660	1.27865	0.13188	-3.525	133	0.001
	Hindi	41	5.0244	1.35218	0.21118			
Overall Perception	English	94	4.2706	1.01070	0.10425	-3.867	133	0.000
	Hindi	41	5.0317	1.14102	0.17820			

these lines, the hypothesis, 'H3: There is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system', was rejected.

H4: There is no statistically significant difference between the perception of quality gaps of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system.

To test the above hypothesis, another *t*-test was performed; the differences in Quality Gaps between English and Hindi Medium students are tabulated below.

As Table 6 indicates, the mean perceived gap scores are extensively lower for Hindi Medium students in comparison with English students for all the dimensions, except the dimension Empathy. The perceived gaps according to the English medium students are more notable for the dimension Tangibility than those of their counterparts ($t=2.962$, $p<0.01$). Table 6 further displays that there was a significant difference between English and Hindi medium students perceived gaps in the area of Reliability ($t=2.592$, $p<0.01$), meaning Hindi medium students

as customers were less dissatisfied with the system and its facility to perform the promised service reliably and precisely than the English medium students. The table also shows that there was a significant difference between their perception of quality gaps in the area of Responsiveness ($t=2.840$, $p<0.05$); this indicates that Hindi medium students perceived more willingness to provide prompt service and assistance as compared with the English medium students. And the table displays that there was a significant difference between students' perception of gaps in the zone of assurance ($t=2.317$, $p<0.05$), however, on Empathy, the test did not show any significant difference between the groups ($t=1.845$; $p>0.05$). As far as the two groups were concerned, the alternate hypothesis which implies that there is a difference between the perceived service quality of assessment and evaluation of English and Hindi medium students was supported. The overall service quality gaps between the two groups are also statistically significantly different. The results indicate that the students from English medium are more dissatisfied with the services, for the dimensions of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness and assurance. Although all students, in general, perceive gaps these

Table 6: Result of the *t*-Test-Quality Gaps between English and Hindi Medium Students

	Medium	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Tangibility	English	94	1.8830	1.12624	0.11616	2.962	133	0.004
	Hindi	41	1.2744	1.02896	0.16070			
Reliability	English	94	2.5319	1.37272	0.14158	2.592	133	0.01
	Hindi	41	1.8488	1.48713	0.23225			
Responsiveness	English	94	2.4362	1.36829	0.14113	2.840	133	0.005
	Hindi	41	1.6951	1.45184	0.22674			
Assurance	English	94	2.0585	1.39432	0.14381	2.317	133	0.022
	Hindi	41	1.4634	1.31881	0.20596			
Empathy	English	94	2.0979	1.42293	0.14676	1.845	133	0.067
	Hindi	41	1.6098	1.39065	0.21718			
Overall GAP	English	94	2.2015	1.19646	0.12341	2.749	133	0.007
	Hindi	41	1.5783	1.24512	0.19445			

are more prominent in the perception of the students from English medium. The null hypothesis, 'H₄: There is no statistically significant difference between the perception of quality gaps of Hindi and English medium students regarding assessment and evaluation system' was rejected for the overall gap as well as for all dimensions, except empathy.

CONCLUSION

The study achieved the objectives presented in the paper. The approach, based on a survey instrument, SERVQUAL was appropriate for measuring the service quality gaps in assessment and evaluation system of higher education. The adapted SERVQUAL model is successfully used for measuring service quality of the assessment system and establishing the presence of undesirable gaps between students' expectations and perceptions of English and Hindi medium students. From the descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing, the study revealed that there are influences attributable to the Hindi and English medium in the perception of service quality. Survey results display that Medium English students are less satisfied with the assessment and evaluation system than their counterparts from

Hindi medium. In the hypothesis tests, three hypotheses were rejected, and the presence of significant differences in the Hindi and English medium students' perception regarding the assessment system was confirmed.

From the above findings, it stated that medium has a considerable impact on the estimation of service quality of assessment system, which reflects the diversity among students in higher education. The study also opens the door to conduct similar studies for other vernacular mediums and to establish the comparison of the results. The institutions' administration as such should not assume that students studying in different mediums share uniform views and value systems, as the study confirms the perceptions of Hindi medium students are different from English medium students. In this study, the empirical results have shown that the English and Hindi medium students' expectations were not significantly different, and the only statistically significant difference was observed for the dimension empathy between the two groups. However, there were substantial differences in the perceptions of each dimension as well as overall understanding between the two groups.

Moreover, there were statistically significant differences in the perceived service quality gaps between the two groups for all dimensions except empathy. Thus, students from the English mediums seemed more concerned with service quality and displayed more dissatisfaction than those from the other medium. Improvements in services regarding speediness, personal attention, and helpfulness are essential for all students' satisfaction with the assessment system.

The study revealed that paying attention to the medium of instruction and the natural background of the students can help in improving the assessment and evaluation system and provide better quality services to the stakeholders. The fact that there exist significant differences between the two groups calls for attention towards other factors that determine the satisfaction level of the students. Thus, other factors such as the medium of study should also be investigated in detail in further studies.

The findings from this study are also relevant to draw appropriate implications. The presence of the moderating role of medium factor in the process of service quality evaluation of the assessment system indicates the need to consider the cultural differences among students. The English and Hindi medium groups cannot be considered as homogeneous, and they can't be handled uniformly. Local differences, cultural characteristics and behavioural patterns of each group are to be considered. The assessment system needs to be reviewed in the light of the essential factor. The services provided to the students may be adjusted and redesigned in such a way that services offered to them match their expectations. In a nutshell, services should be in line with the regional/local characteristics and for that in-depth studies need to be conducted with larger sample sizes and other vernaculars. Since medium based differences exist among the students, it may be a significant factor of overall satisfaction, vernacular

medium related issues and problems need to be identified and handled appropriately. To increase the level of satisfaction of students from different mediums of instruction, the assessment system should take into consideration the common related specific issues in bridging the gaps.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The concept of estimation of assessment system through SERVQUAL dimensions is relatively new. There is limited literature for determining the quality of assessment and evaluation system of higher education. There are rarely any published articles using the SERVQUAL model for scrutinising the assessment and evaluation system. Subsequently, the study could be used as a model by institutes of higher education to improve the quality of the assessment system and identifying the quality gaps.

However, there are certain restrictions and limitations to the research which need to be pointed out. The results of this study cannot be generalised to other students from other mediums or vernaculars. As such, the study has limited generalisability as it conducted at a single period, with a limited number of students from only two mediums of instruction. Further research may be conducted on these samples using in-depth qualitative research methods. Similar and varied factors may be selected in further studies, for example, family income, sex, educational level and more dependent variables that give more information for predicting service quality and satisfaction. Moreover, the relationships between students' performance and their satisfaction with the assessment system may be dealt with. Similarly, the course/stream, age, gender and other demographic factors and their mediating effects may be studied.

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