ISSN-L: 2223-9553, ISSN: 2223-9944
Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2012

ACADEMIC QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS AND SATISFACTION: AN EMPIRICAL SURVEY AMONG THE STUDENTS OF TWO MALAYSIAN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

In response to the market needs and demands, the private higher education in Malaysia has undergone extensive changes in the recent years to the extent that it has been regarded as supplementing and complementing the public higher education system. In view of that, higher education in Malaysia has become a business and burgeoning market for earning revenues. As such, quality has always been a concern to be addressed in higher education reforms in Malaysia and in most countries. The main objectives of this study were to investigate the students' level of satisfaction in academic quality in their current university and the academic quality characteristics which were important to them. Two Malaysian private universities were selected for study and participants were 768 undergraduate students from the bachelor and pre-tertiary levels from a wide range of disciplines. Student satisfaction in the quality of higher education, in four specific areas namely academic programme, lecturers, academic services and facilities are presented and the academic quality characteristics in each of these areas which were perceived as important to the students are also revealed.

Keywords: academic quality characteristics, Malaysian private universities, student satisfaction, higher education, quality.

INTRODUCTION

Private higher education in Malaysia has undergone extensive changes in response to the market needs and demands. In fact, the private higher education has evolved more rapidly than the public system and it may be considered as supplementing and complementing the public higher education system (Yahya Ibrahim, 2002). This is evident from the study by Middlehurst & Woodfield (2004) which shows that even though there is a strong demand of higher education in Malaysia but the demand could not be met by the local universities. Ziguras (2001) reported that insufficient places in the public universities is an acute problem. This shortcoming is not new but started in the late 1980s where there was intense competition for a place in the Malaysian public universities. In cases where a course was offered, many were disappointed by being offered a course which was not their most desired choice. As a result, many Malaysian students have opted for private higher education. At the same time, many see the roles of private higher education institutions have evolved from just accommodating students who could not get a place in the public university to quality higher education provider.

Many governments including Malaysia believe that a large number of highly educated people is essential for the society to prosper and commit huge funds to higher education in order to provide more places in higher education institutions. Hence, Malaysia invests in higher education as a means

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to achieving greater socio-economic progress and human capital development. Since its inception of its first university in 1961, data (see Table 1) released by Ministry of Higher Education in 2007 (MoHE, 2010) reveal that Malaysia has 20 public universities, 18 private universities and 15 university colleges, 4 foreign branch campus universities, 24 polytechnics, 37 public community colleges and 488 private colleges. The breakdown of private higher education institutions and the student population are given in Table 2. The private higher educational institutions that offer certificate, diploma and undergraduate degree programmes are private colleges, private university colleges, private universities and branch campuses of foreign universities. Some of these institutions also offer postgraduate degree courses. The enrolment numbers in higher education from 2002-2007, gathered from the Ministry of Higher Education shown in Table 3, indicate that private higher education institutions are capturing 40-50% of the market share. Even though Malaysia's higher education has progressed impressively, rapid changes in education and intensifying of global competition call for the government to transform higher education which have led to the development the National Higher Education Strategic Plan and National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010. The main aims are to strengthen higher education in developing human capital with first class mentality, create a conducive environment that foster academic and institutional excellence, achieve international recognition and sustainability to the Malaysian Higher Education System and position Malaysia as a hub for higher education in the region and internationally.

Table 1. Number of higher education institutions by type of institution

Institution	Number in 2007
Public Higher Education	20
Private Higher Education	525
% of total higher education	86.6%
Polytechnics	24
Community Colleges	37
Total	606

Source: MoHE Malaysia (2010)

Table 2. Number of institutions and students by the type of private higher education institutions in 2007

Private Higher Education Institutions	Number of institutions	Number of students
University status	18	141,464
Branch campus of foreign university	4	10, 525
University college status	15	39, 806
College status	488	174, 005
Total	525	365,800

Source: MoHE, 2010

Table 3. Number of higher education enrolment 2002-2007 by type of institution

Type of Higher Education	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Public Higher Education	281,839	294,359	293,978	307,121	331,025	382,997
Private Higher Education	326,458	343,881	348,989	283,671	349,937	391,553
% of total higher education	49.1%	49.3%	48.7%	42.1%	45.2%	44.8%
Others*	56,105	59,916	73,327	83,707	93,318	98,688
Total	664,402	698,156	716,294	674,499	774,280	873,238

* includes polytechnics (certificate and diploma levels) and community colleges (certificate level only)
Source: MoHE Malaysia (2010)

However, the public universities are not able to meet the demand for the increasing number of students. Hence privatization is the way out and this trend was seen in private higher education developments in Japan, the Philippines, India, Latin America and many countries in Asia (Levy, 1991; Tilak, 1996). However, academics such as Tilak (1996) and Amano (1997) argue that the quality of higher education delivered by most private education sectors is far from desirable. This may differ by country and may improve with the increased demand for greater transparency and better quality in private universities. Private higher education plays a vital role in fulfilling the goals of individuals and society. In order to provide expanded access to higher education, the Malaysian government encouraged the privatization of higher education and resulted local public and private corporations, foreign universities, multi-national companies, and transnational corporations seeing Malaysia as a lucrative market for higher education. Many self-financed academic programmes at the tertiary level have mushroomed. In short, higher education in Malaysia has become a business and burgeoning market which earns revenue (Tan, 2002). However, some authors argue that with higher education becoming new domain for good business as a result of democratisation in higher education, higher education has lost its elitism and selectiveness (Sufean, 1996; Sufean & Aziah, 2008).

The concept of quality is more complex in higher education as opposed to in the industry where the end products are clearly defined. Concern about quality in higher education has always exist and discernible in many ways. In managerial literature, very often quality is linked to "customer satisfaction" but Vroeijenstijn (2001) however, comments that in higher education there is no clear indication whether the "customer" is the institution, the student, the future employer or the society. Furthermore, many "actors" such as students, lecturers, administrators, the government, professional bodies, employers, and society in general are involved and each has their own, at times conflicting, interpretation of quality. In this way, the quality assurance processes become complicated and assessment of quality tends to be challenging. Even though much has been written on the evolving meaning of "quality" in higher education, and Harvey and Green (1993) have suggested various definitions but the most accepted definition is "fitness for purpose" (Woodhouse, 1999). Nirwan Idrus (2003) concludes that fitness for purpose can be transformed into practical educational policy and practices that improve developing countries existence. Institutions are given the freedom to define their mission and objectives and quality is assumed when these are achieved. This would be correct from the theoretical point of view but in reality, whether it is achieved or whether the mission and objectives are relevant is a separate issue and this depends on the culture. For instances, systems based on the United States model tend to appreciate the variability in the different higher education institutions but the British-based system minimizes the variability. Lemaitre (2009) reported that fitness for purpose approach has been applied for many years, but argued that when systems became diversified, it was found that this made it impossible to judge the adequacy of the institutional mission as well as the goals and objectives a programme or an institution wanted to meet. She suggests a fitness of purpose approach, through which the quality of the mission, the guiding principles or the goals and objectives of an institution or programme also had to meet certain basic standards.

Alderman (1996, p.5) sees quality in higher education cannot be defined by reference to a set of bureaucratic procedures. Rather, he says, in the words used at Erfurt, quality is "the working philosophy which the university employees achieve standards. Such standards are defined as the explicit levels of attainment needed to obtain particular academic qualifications and other assessed outcomes". Universities set their own goals, They can, of course, be inspected to see whether those goals are being achieved, but in a higher education system as richly diverse as in Britain, they cannot be judged against some super-benchmark. There is no "gold standard".

This study aimed to investigate the student satisfaction in Malaysian private universities, in particular, the academic quality in four specific areas, i.e. academic programme, lecturers, administrative services and university facilities. It also compared the quality level between two selected large and well established private universities and delved into the academic quality characteristics which were important to the students.

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METHODOLOGY

The data presented in this study is part of a larger research project. Two large and established Malaysian private universities were selected to investigate the students' satisfaction level in academic quality and gain insight into the academic quality characteristics which were important to the students.

Data were gathered from 768 volunteer undergraduate students from a wide range of disciplines using a questionnaire which consist of open-ended questions. The respondents were also asked to rate the quality level of four specific areas in their respective university, namely academic programme, lecturers, administrative services and university facilities. Following each question, there was an open ended question on the respondent's perception of quality in that particular area. This is extremely important to solicit deep understanding and meaning from the perspective of the participants. The questionnaires were largely administered after lectures and tutorials, but some were administered in the cafeteria and library in order to obtain a more diverse participant group. The participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and were told of their rights to withhold their participation during and after they had completed the questionnaire. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses which would be used for research and improvement purposes only and would not be used in any way to refer to them as an individual.

Written permission to conduct the study was obtained from the management of the two universities before the start of data collection. Both the chosen private institutions, from now on referred as Institution A and Institution B are located within the geographical boundary of Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. As of 2009, 65-70% of the private higher education institutions were located in this region (MoHE, 2010). Financial constraints precluded the extension of this study beyond this region.

FINDINGS

Table 4 shows the demographics of the respondents who participated in this study.

Table 4. Demographics of respondents

		Institution A *(N=424)*	Institution B *(N=344)*	Total *(N=768)*
Gender	Female	293 (69.1%)	140 (40.7%)	433 (56.4%)
	Male	131 (30.9%)	204 (59.3%)	335 (43.6%)
Nationality	Malaysian	362 (85.4%)	306 (89.0%)	668 (87.0%)
	Non-Malaysian	62 (14.6%)	38 (11.0%)	100 (13%)
Ethnicity	Chinese	321 (75.7%)	272 (79.1%)	593 (77.2)
	Indian	36 (8.5%)	13 (3.8%)	49 (6.4%)
	Malay	13 (3.1%)	22 (6.4%)	35 (4.6%)
	Others	54 (12.7%)	37 (10.8%)	91 (11.8%)
Age	18-20	184 (43.4%)	222 (64.5%)	406 (52.9%)
	21-25	235 (55.4%)	121 (35.2%)	356 (46.4%)
	26-30	4 (0.9%)	1 (0.3%)	5 (0.7%)
	Above 30	1 (0.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)
Study Major	Architecture	0 (0%)	64 (18.6%)	64 (8.3%)
	Business	16 (3.8%)	173 (50.3%)	189 (24.6%)
	Engineering	15 (3.5%)	68 (19.8%)	83 (10.8%)
	Hospitality	0 (0%)	39 (11.3%)	39 (5.1%)
	Food Sc. and Nutrition	179 (42.2%)	0 (0%)	179 (23.3%)
	Biotechnology	94 (22.2%)	0 (0%)	94 (12.2%)

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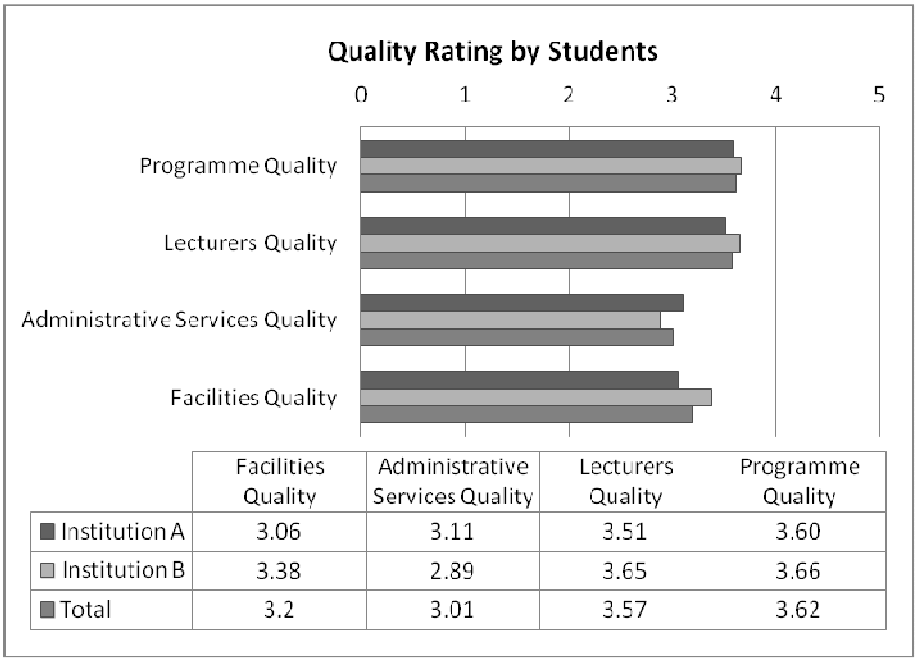
	Accounting	38 (9.0%)	0 (0%)	38 (4.9%)
	Nursing	11 (2.6%)	0 (0%)	11 (1.4%)
	Mass Communication	7 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	7 (0.9%)
	Pharmacy	23 (5.4%)	0 (0%)	23 (3.0%)
	IT	8 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	8 (1.0%)
	Psychology	10 (2.4%)	0 (0%)	10 (1.3%)
	Music	5 (1.2%)	0 (0%)	5 (0.7%)
	Social Science	2 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	2(0.3%)
	Medicine	1 (0.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)
	A Levels	15 (3.5%)	0 (0%)	15 (2.0%)
Study Level	Diploma	24 (5.7%)	76 (22.1%)	100 (13.0%)
	Bachelor	359 (84.7%)	268 (77.9%)	627 (81.6%)
	Foundation/Pre-Tertiary	41 (9.7%)	0 (0%)	41 (5.3%)

The student satisfaction level in four specific areas in their respective institution, namely academic programme, lecturers, administrative services and university facilities are given in Figure 1 and Figure 2 below.



	Facilities Quality	Administrative Services Quality	Lecturers Quality	Programme Quality
Institution A	3.06	3.11	3.51	3.60
Institution B	3.38	2.89	3.65	3.66
Total	3.2	3.01	3.57	3.62

5= Excellent, 4=Good, 3=Moderate, 2=Poor, 1=Very Poor

Figure 1. Quality ratings by students

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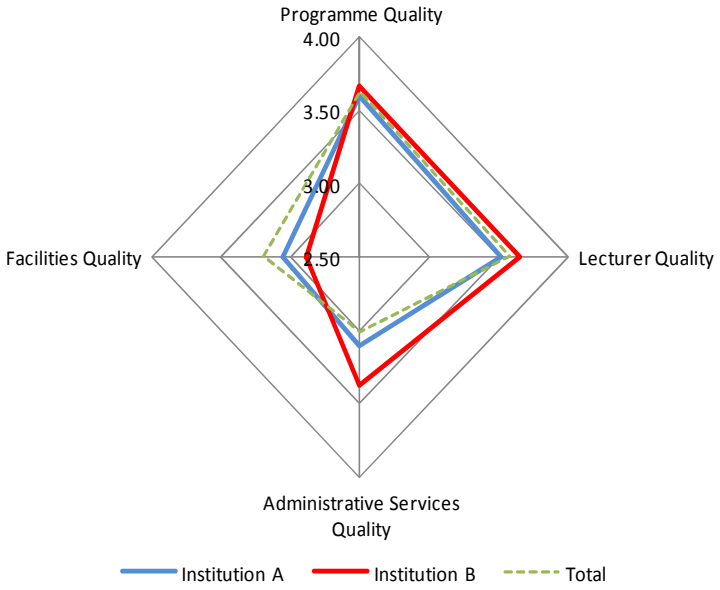

Figure 2. Comparison of students' ratings (or satisfaction) of quality level in the programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities of their institution

The data violates the stringent assumptions of repeated measures ANOVA, so it was decided that the ratings in all the four quality areas understudy for each institution were analyzed inferentially with the non-parametric Friedman test. Friedman test compares two or more related samples and is equivalent measures of ANOVA. The test statistics and the results of the tests are given in Table 5 and Table 6. The results show that there is significant difference in the students' ratings on quality level in all the four areas *within* Institution A and *within* Institution B. However, there is no significant difference in administrative service quality and facilities quality in Institution A and in programme quality and lecturer quality in Institution B.

Mann Whitney U tests were then performed to evaluate the significance difference in the students' rating on quality levels in the programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities *between* Institution A and Institution B. The test statistics and the detailed results are shown in Table 7. It was found that with the exception for programme quality, the students' satisfaction on lecturer quality, administrative services quality and facilities quality differ significantly between the two institutions. Students in Institutions A rated the quality of lecturers and facilities in their university significantly lower than students in Institution B while the quality of administrative services was rated higher. Figure 3 depicts the summary of the Friedman and Mann Whitney U tests.

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Table 5. Friedman Test for differences in ratings by students on the quality of programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities within Institution A (*N*=424)

Null Hypothesis		Mean Rank	Chi-Square	*df*	*p*-value
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality across programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities in Institution A	Programme quality	2.92	219.878	3	.000
	Lecturer quality	2.79			
	Admin. Services quality	2.17			
	Facilities quality	2.12			
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality across programme, lecturers and facilities in Institution A. Ratings would differ significantly across programmes and lecturers. Ratings would differ significantly across administrative services and facilities.	Programme quality	2.22	144.977	2	.000
	Lecturer quality	2.13			
	Facilities quality	1.65			
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality between programme and lecturers in Institution A.	Programme quality	1.53	4.585	1	.032
	Lecturer quality	1.47			
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality between administrative services and facilities in Institution A.	Admin. Services quality	1.52	2.051	1	.152
	Facilities quality	1.48			

Table 6. Friedman Test for differences in ratings by students on the quality of programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities within Institution B (*N*=344)

Null Hypothesis		Mean Rank	Chi-Square	*df*	*p*-value
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality across programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities in Institution B.	Programme quality	2.85	183.833	3	.000
	Lecturer quality	2.80			
	Admin. Services quality	1.87			
	Facilities quality	2.48			
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality across programme, lecturers and facilities in Institution B. Ratings would differ significantly across programmes and lecturers. Ratings would differ significantly across administrative services and facilities.	Programme quality	2.10	23.519	2	.000
	Lecturer quality	2.06			
	Facilities quality	1.84			

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There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality between programme and lecturers in Institution B	Programme quality Lecturer quality	1.51 1.49	.269	1	.604
There is no significant difference in students' ratings on quality between administrative services and facilities in Institution B.	Admin.Services quality Facilities quality	1.36 1.64	41.043	1	.000

Table 7. Mann-Whitney U Tests for differences in ratings by students on quality of programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities between institutions

	University	*N*	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Programme quality	Institution A	424	374.09	158614.50
	Institution B	344	397.33	136681.50
	Total	768		
Lecturer quality	Institution A	424	365.05	154781.00
	Institution B	344	408.47	140515.00
	Total	768		
Administrative Services quality	Institution A	424	401.98	170441.00
	Institution B	344	362.95	124855.00
	Total	768		
Facilities quality	Institution A	424	352.13	149304.00
	Institution B	344	424.40	145992.00
	Total	768		

Test Statistics[a]

	Programme quality	Lecturers quality	Administrative Services quality	Facilities quality
Mann-Whitney U	68514.500	64681.000	65515.000	59204.000
Wilcoxon W	158614.500	154781.000	124855.000	149304.000
Z	-1.612	-2.962	-2.573	-4.743
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.107	.003	.010	.000

a. Grouping Variable: University

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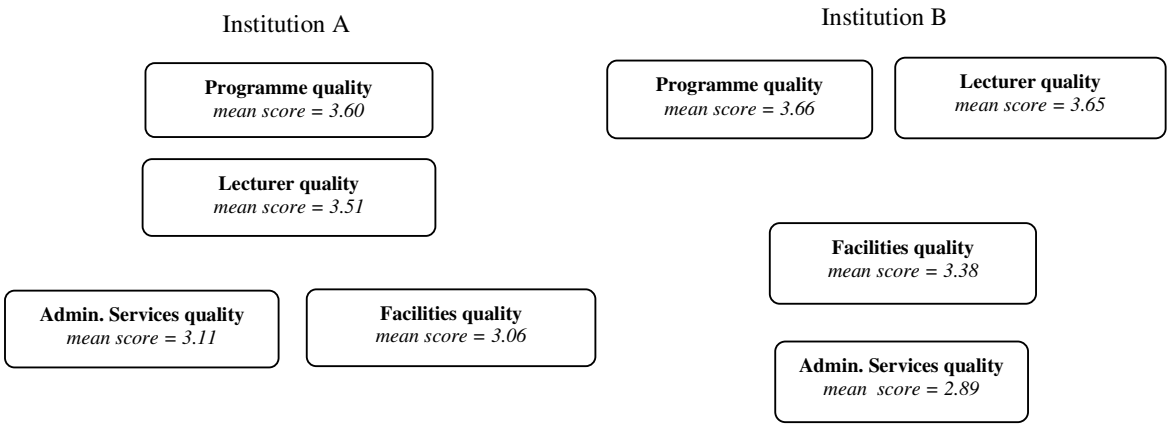

Figure 3. Comparison of students' ratings (or perceptions) of quality level in the programme, lecturers, administrative services and facilities of their institution

Students' responses to the open-ended questions on their perceptions of the important characteristics of a quality programme, a quality lecturer, quality services by the administrative staff and quality facilities are summarised in Table 8 - Table 11 respectively. Following each table, the Pareto Analysis reveals the vital few characteristics that cover at least 80% of the responses from the students (Figure 4 – Figure 7). The "others" category was omitted from the Pareto Analysis because the frequency for each of the characteristics grouped in that category is far too small compared to the total responses and is negligible.

Table 8. Students' perceptions of a quality programme
(Each student could list any number of perceptions)

Characteristics of a Quality Programme	Institution A (N =424)	Institution B (N =344)	Total (N =768)
Content relevant to industry/workplace/the real world	149	107	256
Knowledgeable/effective lecturers/Effective teaching	93	83	176
Content of specific subjects/ relevant syllabus	35	7	42
Recognised qualification	16	21	37
Balanced theory and practical/work related subjects	21	17	38
Skills development/improvement e.g. problem solving skills, communication skills, self confidence, analytical skills, etc	17	15	32
Well-structured programme structure e.g. workload, time table/balance between life and study	9	20	29
Sufficient & efficient facilities	14	14	28
Achievement of my personal goals/ meeting students' expectations.	6	13	19
Conducive learning environment	12	5	17
Graduates with good results	8	5	13
Students as independent learners	2	8	10
Others*	16	31	47

**Others include value for money, not too easy(high standard), all-rounder graduates, meet programme stated objectives, opportunities for class participation, programme continuous improvement, fair in awarding marks in assignment, good administrative service, more assignment, broaden mindset, and attend to complaints.*

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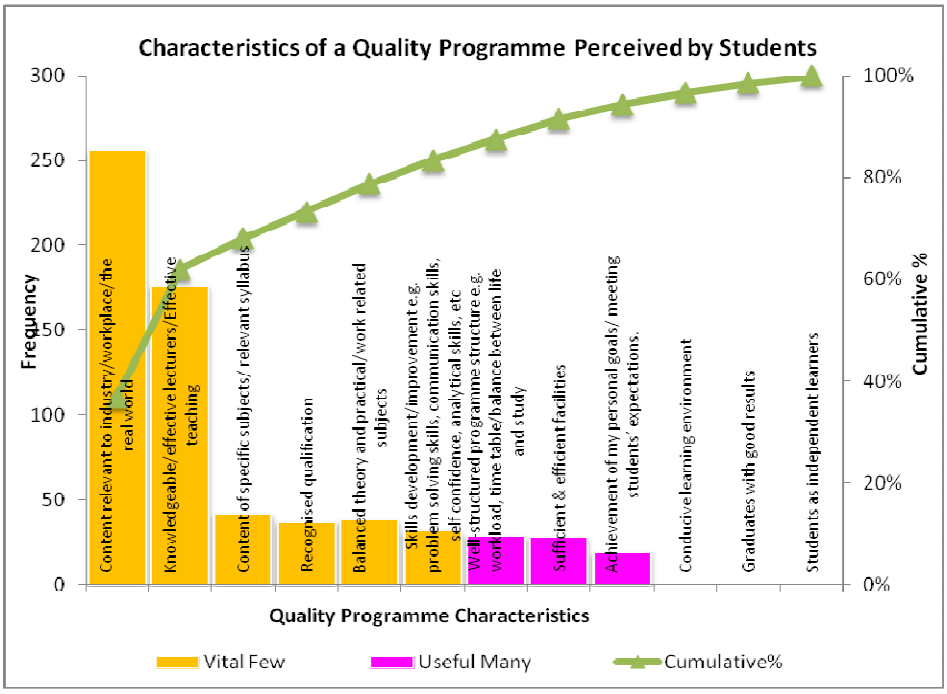

Figure 4. Pareto analysis on the perception of students on the characteristics of a quality programme

The first six characteristics cover 83.4% of the total responses. Students perceived a quality programme as a programme which:

1. prepares them to be work ready;
2. being taught by knowledgeable and effective lecturers;
3. has subjects must be related to the specific area of study;
4. its qualification award is recognized;
5. has a balanced curriculum i.e. between theory and practical components; and
6. develops work skills or soft skills such as problem solving skills, communication skills analytical skills and self confidence among the students.

Table 9. Students' perceptions of a quality lecturer
(Each student could list any number of perceptions)

Characteristics of a Quality Lecturer	Institution A (N =424)	Institution B (N =344)	Total (N =768)
Effective teaching/easily understood/teach beyond textbook/creative teaching	241	153	394
Knowledgeable/qualified	62	65	127
Helpful/willing and able to guide students	47	51	98
Understands students' needs	39	52	91
Motivating/encouraging/confidence building/inspiring	16	11	27
Monitors students' progress and feedback	16	8	24
Passionate/dedicated/committed/enthusiastic in teaching	10	13	23
Responsible	12	10	22
Approachable/friendly	8	12	20
Able to answer questions asked by students	15	5	20
Patient with students	17	2	19
Experienced in teaching/industry	8	11	19
Interaction with students (in/out of class)	9	10	19

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Industry relevant lectures/more practical	8	10	18
Cares about students' academic and well being	10	8	18
Gives useful materials/information	6	11	17
Good command of English language	15	1	16
Professional (no mood swing)/open minded (accept students' opinion)	7	7	14
Others*	26	14	40

**Others include available for consultation, well-prepared for class, punctual, fair/non-judgmental/unbiased, polite, teaches critical thinking, hardworking, flexible, and innovative.*

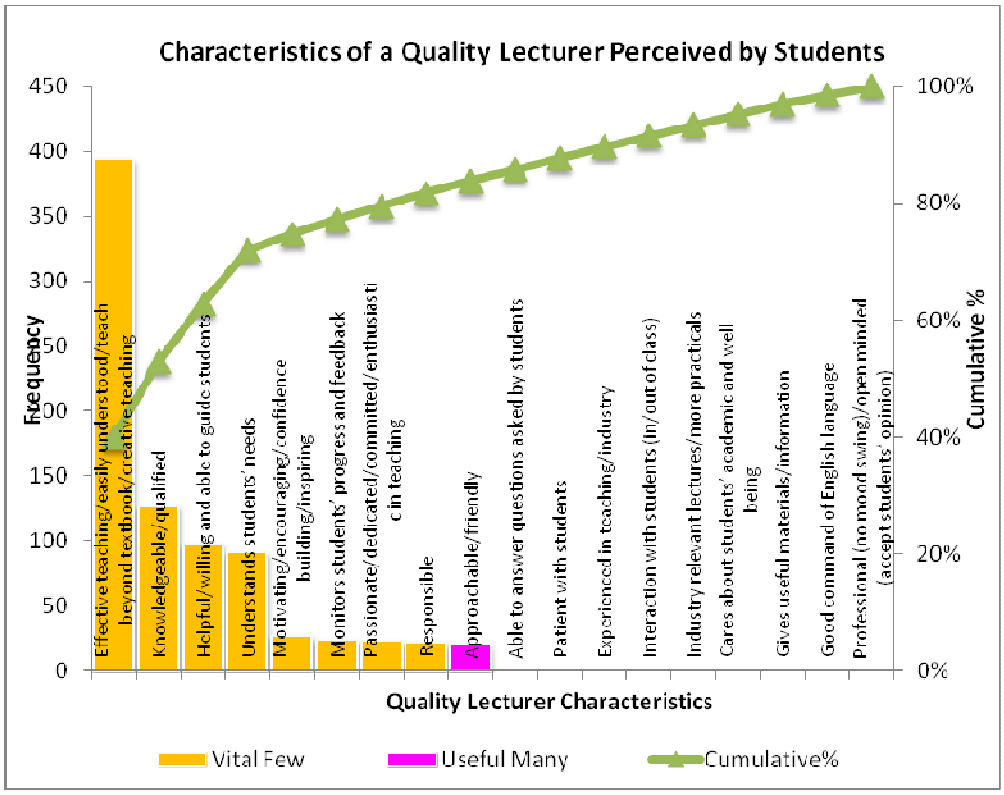

Figure 5. Pareto analysis on the perception of students on the characteristics of a quality lecturer

The first eight characteristics cover 81.7% of the total responses. Students perceived a quality lecturer as a lecturer who is:

1. effective and creative in teaching;
2. knowledgeable and qualified;
3. helpful in guiding students;
4. understanding and attends to students' needs;
5. motivating/encouraging/inspiring and builds confidence in students;
6. monitors students' progress and gives feedback;
7. passionate/dedicated/committed/enthusiastic in teaching; and
8. responsible.

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Table 10. Students' perceptions of quality administrative services
(Each student could list any number of perceptions)

Characteristics of Quality Services by Administrative Staff	Institution A (*N* =424)	Institution B (*N* =344)	Total (*N* =768)
Effective and efficient service/prompt feedback	191	170	361
Willing to help	68	49	117
Polite	70	45	115
Accurate information/knowledgeable admin staff/integration of related department	47	33	80
Friendly/approachable	32	32	64
Attentive/Students' as customers	13	23	36
Patient	13	10	23
Understanding and accommodating	9	13	22
Serve with a smile	8	9	17
Complaints are welcomed/improvement based on complaints	7	0	7
No complaint by students/parents	1	1	2
Speak proper English	2	0	2

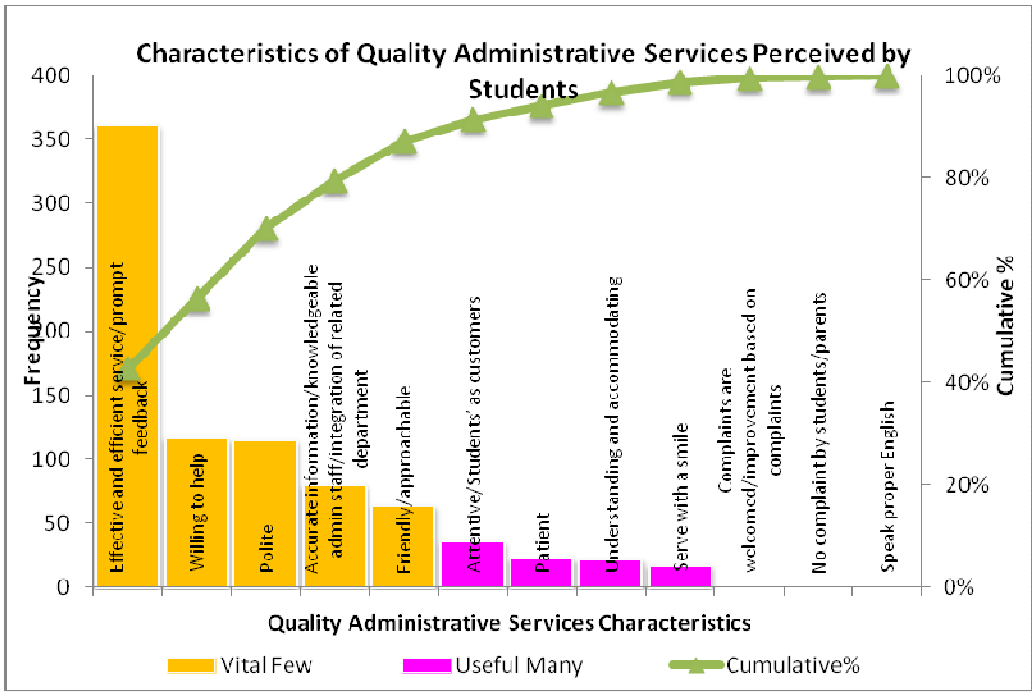

Figure 6. Pareto analysis on the perception of students on the characteristics of quality administrative services

The first five characteristics cover 87.1% of the total responses. Students perceived services rendered by the administrative staff as quality services if:

1. the services are effective and efficient;
2. the administrative staffs are willing to assist whenever a student needs help;
3. the administrative staffs are polite;
4. there is a one-stop centre where students can get accurate information from knowledgeable staff; and
5. the administrative staff are friendly and approachable.

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Table 11. Students' perceptions of quality facilities
(Each student could list any number of perceptions)

Characteristics of Quality Facilities	Institution A (*N* =424)	Institution B (*N* =344)	Total (*N* =768)
Available and sufficient for use	173	122	295
Reliability, usability and safe for use	139	80	219
Accessibility/User-friendly	57	54	111
Advanced/modern/high tech/up-to-date equipment	39	37	76
Usefulness to students in learning	35	30	65
Provide good learning environment (comfortable/clean)	31	32	63

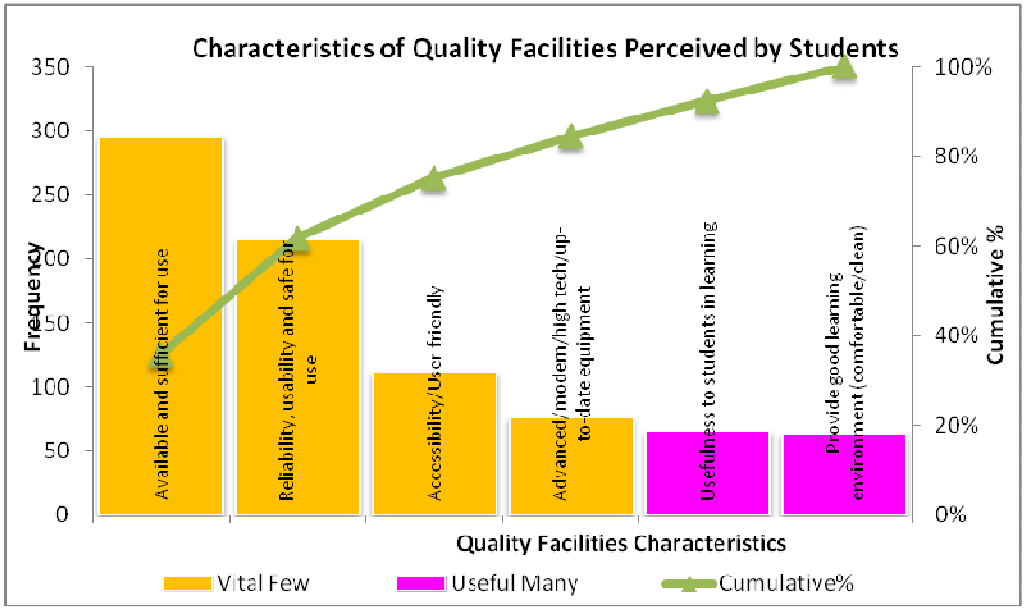

Figure 7. Pareto analysis on the perception of students on the characteristics of quality facilities

The first four characteristics cover 84.5% of the total responses. Students perceived an institution provides quality facilities if the facilities are:

1. available and sufficient for use;
2. reliability, usability and safe for use;
3. accessible and user-friendly; and
4. advanced, modern, high-tech and up-to-date.

DISCUSSION

Students' perceptions of quality higher education seemed to incline towards the output and the process; the students' learning experience, the graduate qualities, and teaching and learning. To the students who were the receiver of the education provision, internationally recognised qualifications; producing work-ready graduates; having quality lecturers; conducive learning environment; and adequate and modern facilities were perceived as major characteristics of quality in higher education. During study, they expected participation in learning, confidence building and a well-balanced social life. Since their studies were all own-funded, they also expected efficient and friendly service from the administrative staff. The results above are in congruence with the findings by Tang and Hussin

(2011). In their recent study, they found that the reliable indicators of the underlying construct of perceived quality in higher education by the students are effective teaching and learning, personal development, supportive learning environment, improved communication skills, and information availability, accuracy and accessibility.

Private higher education has its limitation. Some early studies showed that private higher education is subjected to a trade-off between quality and quantity. Geiger (1986) claims that full fee dependent private higher education unavoidably causes a trade-off between "uniformity and diversity" of courses offered, and a development of "credentiality versus academic integration". He argues that the constraints of limited finance and resources force private higher education institutions to become primarily teaching institutions. Courses that are vocational and employment linked are highly in demand for the private higher education institutions. Kerr (1990), Greiger (1986) and James (1991) find that these courses have high direct labour pay off. That is why private higher education institutions deliver mostly market driven courses. Hence, the call for "accountability", "transparency", "quality teaching and learning", and "mission-relevance" has become increasingly important on the policy agenda of educational institutions when competing for students. With the diversity of higher education nowadays, quality is a moving target and on-going event. The question as to where is the benchmark is still unanswered. In addition, there has been a lack of assessment in graduate employability and student development which should be given utmost emphasis in order to produce graduates as "learned" persons who think "out of the box". However, this is not always the case with most universities are left to offer their own programmes to cater for their own interest, usually profit-motivated. As long as the programmes meet the required criteria set by the National QA Agency, they will be approved. This trend is apparent in private higher education where most study programmes offered are non-science. At the end, the supply of graduates does not meet the type of graduates demanded by the nation in achieving its human capital requirements. Hence, it is debatable whether the government actually takes this factor into consideration when assessing or approving study programmes offered by the higher education institutions especially the private education sector.

Applying the characteristics of a learning organisation described by Mills and Friesen (1992), private higher education can enhance their quality and understand the students' needs better. Learning internally should be developed through a variety of means. Employees should not be hired and trained in everything that they need to know. Academics can also learn through research or seminars where discussions are held to discover new knowledge and record it for the use of others. Publishing what has been learned to the outside world can help critique its accuracy and improve learning. A mechanism for renewal is important to avoid from falling into bureaucratic rigidity which will impede success but promote resistance to change or learn. In the context private higher education institutions, they must get access to new educational developments such as adaptive entry requirements, innovative delivery modes and teaching-learning tools, diversified assessment methods, creative management styles, relevant and updated resources and effective communication. Most importantly, private higher education must open to the changing needs of their stakeholders influenced by the external factors.

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Tang S.F., & Sufean Hussin (2011). Quality in Higher Education: A Variety of Stakeholder Perspectives. International Journal of Social Science and Humanities 2011 Vol.1(2): 126-131 ISSN: 2010-3646.

ISSN-L: 2223-9553, ISSN: 2223-9944
Vol. 2, No. 1, January 2012

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