
The Role of Holistic Approach Service Quality on Student's Behavioural Intentions: The Mediating Role of Happiness and Satisfaction

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Abstract

Introduction: Higher education is more worldwide than any time in recent memory. The Higher education condition far and wide has been changed in the previous two decades by worldwide ideas and policy models. Higher education frameworks in numerous nations have extended drastically to meet growing economic and social needs. Educational policies, structures and practices have been essentially affected by globalization. Some of these progressions have been driven by financial forces, while others have been driven by political, technological, and social powers. Globalization's effect on education has brought on a reconsidering of numerous ranges in education, including its purpose, structure, pedagogy, content, instructional methodology, and outcomes assessment. The study aims to investigate the casual relationship between service quality and student behavioral intention, as well as, the mediating effect of student happiness, and student satisfaction.

Methodology: In the current study, the researcher adopted the quantitative technique (using questionnaire method) to achieve the research aim. SPSS25 and Smart PLS3 are implemented for data analysis.

Result and Discussion: The results revealed that higher education service quality; student happiness, and student satisfaction have a positive effect on student behavioral intention. In addition, student satisfaction and student happiness mediate the relationship between higher education service quality and student behavioral intention.

Conclusion and Recommendation: Theoretical and practical implications are introduced as well as suggestions for future research.

Keywords: Behavioral intention; Service quality; Happiness; Satisfaction; Education; UAE.

1.0 Introduction

The current study depends mainly on the existence of the certain association between Educational service quality and students' behavioral intentions. Prior studies stated that it is important and helpful for educational establishments to adopt service quality (see (Dlac̃ic *et al.*, 2014; Binnawas, Khalifa and Bhaumick, 2020) . The literature discusses the continuing need of practitioners to improve

mechanisms and plans. At the same time, awareness of the impact of behavioral intentions on students has increased by recognizing the assured impact of a holistic approach to quality of service (Binnawas, Khalifa and Bhaumick, 2019).

Many literature has emphasized the need to achieve the quality of the educational service and the importance of making the positive behavioral intentions of the students aligned (Kezar, Chambers and Burkhardt, 2015; Madsen and Walker, 2015; Miller, 2016; Alharthi, Khalifa and Bhaumick, 2019). On the contrary, there is a very limited number of literature that confirms the importance of educational holistic approach of service quality (EHASQ) has on the development of students' behavioural intentions (SBI) (Binnawas, Khalifa and Bhaumick, 2019; Alharthi *et al.*, 2020).

Ostrom et al. (2010) highlighted that service researchers must consistently emphasize the results of the service that leads to welfare. In addition Anderson et al. (2013) defined transformative service research (TSR) which is considered a new field in scientific research as “the integration of consumer and service research that centers on creating uplifting changes and improvements in the well-being of consumer entities: individuals (consumers and employees), communities and the ecosystem”. This idea is very similar to the idea of positive marketing or quality of life (derived from positive psychology; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, (2014), that strongly supports the importance of constructive interaction between all sectors related to the market, which includes the following three poles: clients, companies and organizations and community (Alghfeli *et al.*, 2021; Khalifa, Trung and Hossain, 2021).

As higher education is undergoing a radical change in addition to an increasingly competitive educational market due to globalization, it has become necessary to understand what the quality of the students' experience aspires to (Marginson and Van der Wende, 2007). Therefore, higher education officials must adopt the theory of strategic management and marketing and recognize the nature of such competitive educational environment (B. A. F. H. Alharthi *et al.*, 2019; Mohsin Naser A.N. Alharthi *et al.*, 2019).

Garcia, (2015), contends that, since the mid-1980s, published books and journal articles uncover that scholastics misconstrued and distorted the value and concept of quality in higher education. Immordino-Yang et al., (2012) contended that, "Quality education is a standout amongst the most abused ideas, which is yet getting away from the comprehension of an obvious definition in the basic verbal confrontation, as well as even in the scholarly circle". Scholastic experts keep on searching for a fitting intends to measure the accomplishment of their students. Tsinidou et al., (2010) emphasize that everything that is educational is impossible to be touched, described exactly and difficult to be measured because it represents a change in personalities, awareness, perceptions and attitudes. A review of the literature uncovered an unequal and incomplete body of knowledge about the measurement of quality in higher education (Alfalla-Luque, Marin-Garcia and Medina-Lopez, 2015; Garcia, 2015).

It was found that the literature suffers from the scarcity of studies that dealt with topics such as student loyalty to the holistic approach, quality and innovation of the service and how to achieve customer satisfaction. In terms of how to achieve customer satisfaction, a wealth of literature on this idea was found, but the literature on higher education shed light only on the evaluation of the relationship between quality of education/learning outcomes and student satisfaction. In addition, the vast majority of higher education institutions distributed questionnaires to their students to evaluate the current situation as an attempt to achieve student satisfaction. In fact, the main objective of student assessment questionnaires is to make improvements, to get feedback from the teachers, and to set standards for measuring the effectiveness of teaching to enable managers to make decisions relating teacher's retention, reward and promotion (Marsh, 1987). As a result of the evaluation of students, only less than 10 per cent of the lecturers made significant improvements in their teaching (Nasser and Fresko, 2002).

In order to be included in the overall quality management system, the student must be treated as the most important client of the higher education institution. Achieving student satisfaction is largely related to the quality of service provided by different educational institutions, as recognized by many researchers (Mizikaci, 2006). Quality in higher education has witnessed a great deal of attention despite the multiplicity of areas that can adopt the notion of quality, which is abundant in its concepts and standards HE (Ali, Mahat and Zairi, 2010). The more satisfied the students are, the less they will move between the universities and the more they will stay at their university, which in turns will form a positive attitude to attract more students to that university in the future (Temtime and Mmerekki, 2011). At the present time, providers of higher education services are keen to provide educational services with outstanding quality and build close relationships with their students as a means of coping with the intense competition between local and international higher education institutions (Durvasula, Lysonski and Madhavi, 2011). If all manpower is involved in providing a high quality service, then a comprehensive quality perspective or what is so called Total Quality Management (TQM) is achieved. The concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) is achieved in higher education institutions not only by providing lectures with valuable scientific content for students or by providing a modern environment for teaching but also by trying to apply quality to faculty staff members, educators, employees, administrators, managers, support facilities and the surrounding physical environment (Datta and Vardhan, 2017; Al-Ameri *et al.*, 2019; Khalifa, 2019; Alkheyi *et al.*, 2020; Almatrooshi *et al.*, 2020; Rahmah *et al.*, 2020).

Therefore, the society as a whole including policy makers, companies, organizations, institutions and students must be aware of this notion (Khalifa, 2018; Alneadi *et al.*, 2020). Proposals put forward for higher education development will contribute to the enhance of manpower and enlarge all productive capacities and earnings (Srivastava, Sharfuddin and Datta, 2012). Thus, when using the product offered by higher education institutions, this is not beneficial to only one individual but to the economy as a whole (Durvasula *et al.*,

2011; Datta & Vardhan, 2017). Although the first interest of this process is the student, improving the quality of higher education is of dual benefit to both the student and the whole community. Thus, the aim of this study is to empirically investigate relationships between perceived service quality, happiness, and behavioral intention in an HE context from the students' perspective. The main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of the novel perspectives of higher education quality to guarantee keeping students and influence their behavioral attitudes.

The model of holistic approach Service quality was first introduced in 2016. Thus, the current study will be the first to investigate the impact of the new model on student behavioural intentions. Another research gap however exists in the combined effect of holistic approach of service quality, happiness, and satisfaction on student's behavioural intention (Ali *et al.*, 2016).

To contribute to this gap, more resilient holistic approach models must be adopted as originally conducted by (Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck, 2016), defining five primary dimensions of Higher Educational Service Quality from the extensive literature review. These are: Administrative Quality; Physical Environment Quality; Core Educational Quality; Support Facilities Quality; and Transformative Quality. It is part of the purpose of the proposed study to contribute insight in this area by empirically testing the hierarchical model (HESQUAL) Framework adapted from Dlačić *et al.*, (2013), This adds to and constitute the second research gap as presented by Fernandes *et al.*, (2013) and Dlačić *et al.*, (2013) that future investigations must consider additional antecedents based on educational models in order to involve students at the international level, as well as to broaden the scope of a study to include other countries to achieve the results validity (Ali *et al.*, 2016).

By investigating these issues, this study provides knowledge in several ways by filling the number of gaps in the existing literature and investigating the link between the four focus areas of this study. For this purpose this study suggests and examines a theoretical framework to connect EHASQ as an essential condition for the development and encouragement of satisfaction, happiness for positive behavioral intentions purposes. The proposed study focuses on UAE Ministry of higher education. The proposed study is in an attempt to test on the EHASQ model in combination with Student's satisfaction, and Happiness in the higher education sector directed at positive behavioural intentions.

2 Literature review

2.1.1 Service quality and consumer happiness

There was an indirect correlation between quality of service and some client-related outputs, such as customer satisfaction (Hossain *et al.*, 2020), Customer confidence (Widjaja, Khalifa and Abuelhassan, 2020), Loyalty intentions (Abdulla *et al.*, 2020; Khalifa, 2020a), re-purchase of conduct (Khalifa and Hewedi, 2016; Trung and Khalifa, 2019), Portfolio Share (Alfalasi *et al.*, 2020; Alkatheeri *et al.*,

2020), Verbal intentions (Abd-Elaziz *et al.*, 2015; Abdulla *et al.*, 2019); and profitability (Kamel and El Sherif, 2001; Mohamed *et al.*, 2018). In sub-services, many researchers have sought to explore the effects of services and their providers on consumer welfare, especially after the strong interest of marketing scientists in social outcomes (such as consumer welfare) (Gharama, Gamal S.A. Khalifa and Al-Shibami, 2020; Sudigdo and Khalifa, 2020). In the context of studies concerned with services marketing, well-being is still under consideration because as a result of their interaction with the service providers and the services they receive (Mohsin Naser A.N. Alharthi *et al.*, 2019; Alkatheeri *et al.*, 2020; Gharama, Gamal S A Khalifa and Al-Shibami, 2020), consumers' well-being and also their emotional and physical safety may be affected (Sudigdo, Khalifa and Abuelhassan, 2019). Moreover, consumers' well-being is increased when the provided goods and services are of high quality (Alghfeli *et al.*, 2019) and this according to the quality model concepts contained in happiness-literature. However, the impact of quality of service on social outcomes such as consumer happiness is still neglected by service marketers (Al-Ali *et al.*, 2019; Myo, Khalifa and Aye, 2019). On the contrary, it was found that the quality of life of customers is greatly and directly affected both technical and functional quality. This is in line with what Dagger and Sweeney (2006) stated (Almarri, Ameen, Bhaumik, *et al.*, 2020; Almarri, Ameen, Isaac, *et al.*, 2020; Alshamsi *et al.*, 2020). In the field of health care, which differs from those of profit-based services (Alseiari *et al.*, 2019), it was observed that service outcomes are of great importance to consumers because technical quality is exercised more than functional quality (Morsy, Ahmed and Ali, 2016; Alseiari, Khalifa and Bhaumick, 2019). The main reason for the spread of specific research into the impact of health care on quality of life and happiness is that it is most important for consumers because it represents personal service (Hossain, Khalifa and Abu Horaira, 2019; Widjaja, Khalifa and Abuelhassan, 2019). Due to their desire to know whether the quality of service affects only the consumer's happiness or extends to other aspects, the field of consumer happiness has become a subject of interest and interest to many practitioners and business services sectors (Bhattacharjee and Mogilner, 2013; Alameri, Ameen, Isaac, *et al.*, 2019; Alameri, Ameen, Khalifa, *et al.*, 2019; Alkutbi *et al.*, 2019; Alshamsi *et al.*, 2019; Khalifa, 2020b). On the basis of prior research, we thus posit:

H1: High level of higher education service quality will lead to improved student's happiness in UAE higher education

H4: Student Happiness will lead to improved student's behavioural intentions in UAE higher education.

H6: Student Happiness has a mediating role between higher education service quality and behavioural intentions

2.7.2 Service Quality, Satisfaction and Behavioral intention

Because of its impact, which extends to many psychological and behavioral responses such as participation, identification, satisfaction and loyalty to

consumers, the quality of service over the last three decades has received considerable attention from researchers and practitioners in manufacturing and services marketing (Brady *et al.*, 2006; Jae Ko *et al.*, 2010; Ko *et al.*, 2010; Theodorakis *et al.*, 2013). In the educational context, satisfaction on study experience is known as quality of service. The actions, performances and events represent the service (Roy *et al.*, 2015). The quality of service in its entity unclear (Abou-Shouk and Khalifa, 2017) and cannot be measured objectively, such as the quality of product because it may be difficult for the consumer to investigate the substance of the service provided before buying it (Dabholkar, 2015).

In the field of quality of service research, a model has been used to collect, measure and evaluate customer expectations and perceptions about service quality which is a SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, et al., 1988) that consists of 22 elements that are theoretically integrated into 5 key elements that are aligned to cover several aspects, namely quality of service, reliability and To ensure responsiveness, empathy and concrete objects (Barclay, Higgins and Thompson, 1995; Khalifa, 2015; Badran and Khalifa, 2016).

This scale has been widely used in service industries, but each time it was taken into account the context and culture on which the quality of service is based (Khalifa and Fawzy, 2017). The measurement method and the quality dimensions of higher education services are the two issues around which quality of service research in higher education is based (Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml, 1991; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009). In the context of higher education, previous studies concentrated on service quality within higher education establishments used a number of measures such as the SERVQUAL scale quality (Khalifa and Mewad, 2017; Mohamud *et al.*, 2017), SERVQUAL tools adapted to Malaysian and Indian higher education settings. In terms of the number and content of the quality dimensions and the perceptions of the students, the previous studies on service quality in higher education varied. For example, in a study conducted at the Australian University, (Ayar, 2018; Yildiz, Polat and Güzel, 2018) reached three dimensions of service quality in higher education, namely academic and administrative aspects and facilities (Agwa, Aziz and Khalifa, 2018b, 2018a). In the physical education schools in Turkey, after conducting a service quality examination in higher education, four structural factors were discovered, including behavioral aspects, academic aspects, access and academic support (Tan and Kek, 2004; Galeeva, 2016; Wagner *et al.*, 2018).

Many studies that were carried out in the higher education sector have confirmed that the quality of the model service precedes satisfaction in most cases (Lee, Yoon and Lee, 2009; Dlac'ic *et al.*, 2014; Ali *et al.*, 2016; Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck, 2016). Rosen and Karawan (1994) pointed out that student satisfaction is greatly influenced by the perceived service quality according to the questionnaire based on the SERVQUAL scale. The results of Barnes' study (2007) on the group of Chinese postgraduate students studying in the UK (Galeeva, 2016), indicated that students' satisfaction is greatly influenced by perceived service quality. Students also demanded that staff care and support

approach must be provided specifically to students coming from other countries to study in the host country (Datta and Vardhan, 2017). The findings of Stodnick and Rogers's (2008) study are largely consistent with the positive impact of service quality on student satisfaction Barnes, (2007). They noted students' appreciation towards the efforts of their teachers to demonstrate personal attention and to understand each student's individual needs what is so-called focus approach on customers. In the field of higher education, the positive relationship between student's satisfaction and quality of service was supported in several studies (Lee, Yoon and Lee, 2009; Dlac̃ic *et al.*, 2014; Ali *et al.*, 2016; Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck, 2016) and at the same time rejected point of view was also included in other studies. Over time, satisfaction helps to understand service quality because many transactions are evaluated through satisfaction, from the perspective of (Husin, Abou-Shouk and Khalifa, 2013; Khalifa and Abou-Shouk, 2014). Based on the idea that the quality of the service is prior to satisfaction and in accordance to the prevailing support perspective of the causal trend between the formulations, the following hypothesis was imposed to test its validity in higher education in the UAE:

H2: High level of higher education service quality will lead to improved student's satisfaction in UAE higher education.

H3: High level of higher education service quality will lead to improved student's behavioral intention in UAE higher education

H7: Student satisfaction has a mediating role between higher education service quality and behavioural intentions

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

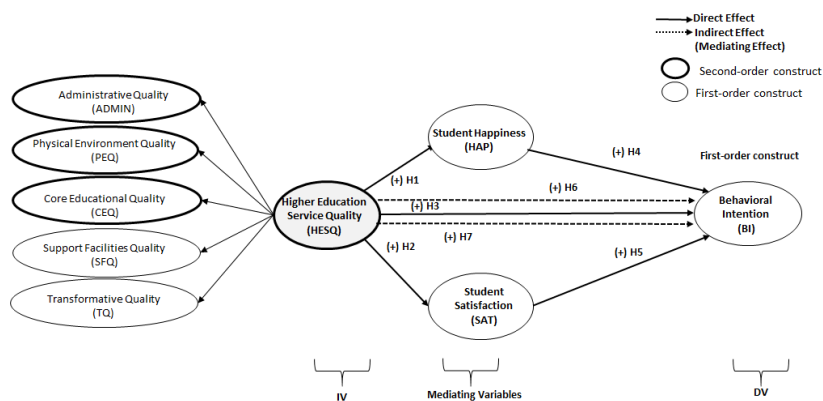


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

3 Methods

Ultimately, a quantitative methodological approach to data collection and analysis may be inferred from the development of the argument in line with the positivist and objectivist paradigms (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). Even though there is a lack of consensus regarding the methods and constituents of either the quantitative or qualitative methodology, there is a consensus regarding the meaning and implications of any one of these approaches. One common platform for differentiating between qualitative and quantitative studies is whether the study

yields numerical or statistical values (Alharthi and Khalifa, 2019; Alkhateri *et al.*, 2019; Falasi *et al.*, 2019). Typically, whether quantitative or qualitative, this affects areas of data collection and analysis of the study. Even though both positions are usually applicable, particularly in event of an interpretivist paradigm, key differences exist (Creswell, 1994; Neuman, 2000).

3.1 Data collection, sampling and procedures

The population of the study constitute all higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The latest statistical report by the Abu Dhabi Government present total accredited higher education institutions to be 78 in number and the total number of government higher education institutions is 2 of this number (Statistics Centre - Abu Dhabi, 2016).

To find an estimate of the total number of students in the higher education institutions, considering no direct data was available on this area, the proportion of students in the Ministry of higher education. The population of the study constitute all accredited educational organizations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) has well indexed list of accredited Educational service businesses, which can be used for the proposed investigation. 78 accredited educational institutions were emphasized according to CAA.

3.1.1 Data Collection Instrument and measurement of variables

The data collection instrument was collated from a variety of sources in literature (Mohamed Naser A.N. Alharthi *et al.*, 2019; Mohammed S. Alkathiri, Abuelhassan E. Abuelhassan, Gamal S.A. Khalifa, Mohammed Nusari and Ali Ameen, 2019; Mohammed S. Alkathiri, Gamal S.A. Khalifa, Abuelhassan E. Abuelhassan, Osama Isaac and Ibrahim Alrajawi, 2019). Teeroovengadam et al., (2016) set of indicators for higher education service quality was used to measure Service quality holistic approach. Happiness was measured based on Al Mandil (2016) survey instrument on measuring happiness. Satisfaction and behavioral intentions were measured based on Ali, et al., (2016) survey instrument on student behavioral intention. The five-point Likert scale was used for the main sections aside from the demographics of the study in order to permit the use of inferential statistics like regression analysis (Brekhaw *et al.*, 2018; Alsaadi *et al.*, 2019; Mohsin N.A.N. Alharthi *et al.*, 2019).

4. Data analysis and Results

4.1 Demographic Profile - Frequency Tables

The respondents' information is summarized using basic descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages in order to provide overview of the data collected. Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage for demographic profile of respondents in the study sample. It shows that there were more male (65%) than females (35%) in the educational institutions. Most of the students were aged between 18 to 25 years; this accounted for 65% of the responses followed by the age range of 26 years to 35 years at 32% of total responses. Most of the students

are from UAE 90.3%. Close to 54.4% of the students study a bachelor degree and most of the remaining 34% study a postgraduate degree. Only 11.7% were studying Diploma certificate. Key demographics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Demographic Profile of Respondents

		Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	288	65
	Female	144	35
Age	Less than 18	8	1.9
	18 to 25	288	65
	26 to 35	132	32
	36 to 45	4	1
Educational level	Diploma	48	11.7
	Bachelor	224	54.4
	Postgraduate	140	34
Nationality	UAE	372	90.3
	Foreigners	40	9.7
Total		412	

4.2 Model measurements

The research used modelling of the structural equation using Smart PLS3. The research checked reliability and validity of the constructs to assess the model measurement (Hair *et al.*, 2017). The findings showed that all Alpha values of Cronbach are above the suggested value of 0.7 (Kannana and Tan, 2005). The findings also reveal that all values for composite reliability are above 0.7 (Kline, 2010). Because of the aforementioned, reliability of the construct is fulfilled. Furthermore, the reliability of the indicators is achieved. Loading for all items therefore exceeds the specified value of 0.5 (see Figure 2). In addition, the results highlighted that convergent validity and discriminant validity are fulfilled (see table 2)

Table 2: Reliability, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted Measures

Construct	α (above 0.7)	CR (> 0.7)	AVE (>0.5)
AB	0.888	0.922	0.842
ABE	0.906	0.927	0.860
AP	0.848	0.909	0.866
ADMIN	0.911	0.930	0.903
CEQ	0.949	0.954	0.835
COM	0.800	0.882	0.815
CUR	0.858	0.904	0.801
GI	0.886	0.929	0.773
BI	0.850	0.900	0.868
LS	0.813	0.890	0.740
PDG	0.831	0.886	0.714
PEQ	0.922	0.935	0.810
SFQ	0.882	0.911	0.810
SH	0.887	0.914	0.769

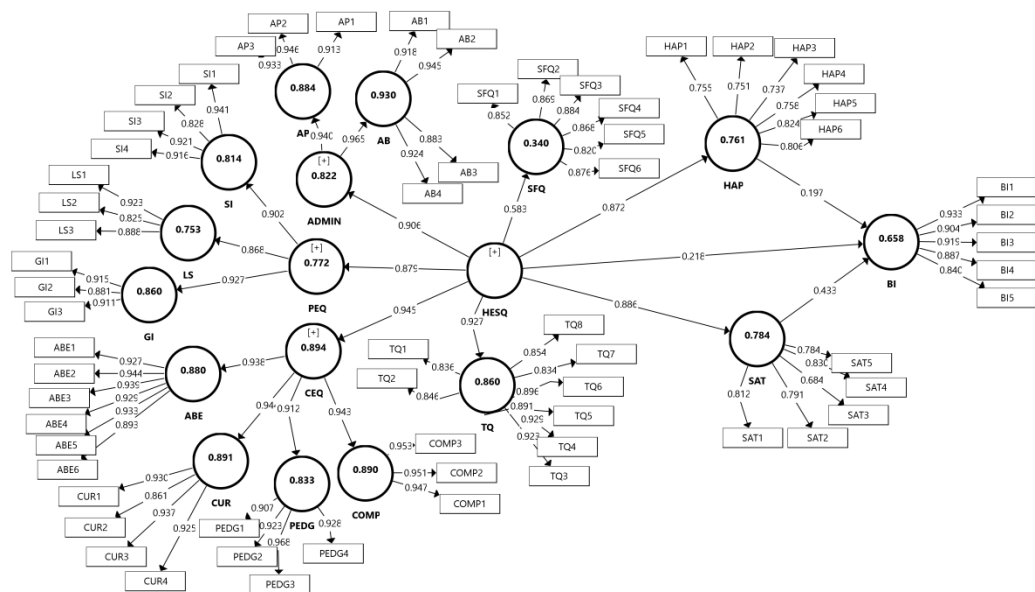
SI	0.904	0.933	0.866
STS	0.861	0.900	0.740
TQ	0.910	0.927	0.866

Table 3: Discriminant validity results

	Fornell Larcker				HTMT			
	BI	HAP	HESQ	SAT	BI	HAP	HESQ	SAT
Behavioral Intention	0.895							
Student Happiness	0.650	0.842			0.726			
Education Service Quality	0.804	0.811	0.860		0.668	0.825		
Student Happiness	0.821	0.578	0.788	0.900	0.746	0.626	0.805	

4.3. Hypotheses Tests

The structural model assessment as shown in Figure 1 and Table 4 provides the indication of the hypothesis tests. Higher education service quality (HESQ) significantly predict student happiness (HAP), student satisfaction (SAT), and student behavioral intention (BI). Hence, H1, H2, and H3 are accepted with (B=0.872, t=58.488, p<0.001), (B=0.886, t=73.281, p<0.001), and (B=0.218, t=2.453, p<0.05) respectively. Likewise, HAP and SAT significantly predicts BI. Hence, H4 and H5 are accepted with (B=0.197, t=2.045, p<0.05) and (B=0.433, t=5.361, p<0.01) respectively. Note that the standardized path coefficient indicates the strengths of the relationship between exogenous and endogenous constructs, so the direct effects of SAT on BI is much stronger than other variables as evident from the values of path coefficient. And the direct effect of HESQ on SAT is much stronger than the direct effect of HESQ on HAP.



Key: AB: Attitude and Behavior; AP: Administrative Processes; ADMIN: Administrative Quality; SI: Support Infrastructure; LS: Learning Setting; GI: General Infrastructure; PEQ: Physical Environment Quality; ABE: Attitude and Behaviour Educational; CUR: Curriculum; PEDG: Pedagogy; COMP: Competence; CEQ: Core Educational Quality; SFQ: Support Facilities Quality; TQ: Transformative Quality; HAP: Student Happiness; SAT: Student Satisfaction; BI: Behavioral Intention

Figure 2: PLS algorithm results (regression weights)

Table 4: Structural path analysis result

Hypo	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	HESQ -> HAP	0.872	0.871	58.488	0.000	Supported
H2	HESQ -> SAT	0.886	0.886	73.281	0.000	Supported
H3	HESQ -> BI	0.218	0.211	2.453	0.014	Supported
H4	HAP -> BI	0.197	0.196	2.045	0.041	Supported
H5	SAT -> BI	0.433	0.441	5.361	0.000	Supported
H6	HESQ -> HAP -> BI	0.172	0.170	2.042	0.042	Supported
H7	HESQ -> SAT -> BI	0.383	0.391	5.251	0.000	Supported

Key: HESQ: Higher Education Service Quality; HAP: Student Happiness; SAT: Student Satisfaction; BI: Behavioral

Figure 1 show that, the results of R^2 from the structural model, indicates that all the R^2 values are high enough for the model to achieve an acceptable level of explanatory power. Note that the variance explained in endogenous construct BI is 0.658 (65.8%) by exogenous constructs HESQ, SAT, and HAP.

In order to test the mediation effect, this study employed the parallel multiple mediation method which proposed by (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Preacher & Hayes, 2008) via a bootstrapping procedure with a resample of 5,000.

Table 4 shows the mediation result via the bootstrapping analysis, indicating that HAP mediates the relationship between HESQ and BI. Hence, H6 is accepted with ($B=0.172$, $t=2.042$, $p<0.05$). Furthermore, H7 is accepted with ($B=0.383$, $t=5.351$, $p<0.001$), indicating that SAT mediates the relationship between HESQ and BI.

5 Discussions

The general objective of this study is to investigate how service quality, happiness and satisfaction may be channelled towards student's behavioural intentions among students within the higher education institutions in the UAE.

Responding to the study goals entails identifying the main problems that can be deduced from the estimate of the hypothesized model's results. These results identify the primary contributions of the present study. The outcomes are dependent on a tested measurement model. The estimate of the hypothesized model serves as the foundation for evaluating study hypotheses.

Higher education service quality was found to positively affect student's happiness, student satisfaction, and student behavioural intention, among students within the higher education institutions in the UAE, this is supported by previous studies (Theodorakis, Kaplanidou and Karabaxoglou, 2015). It can be demonstrated by the fact that service efficiency has been (in)directly related to a variety of customer outcomes, including consumer well-being (Anderson et al., 2013; Ostrom et al., 2010), and quality model conceptualizations in happiness and satisfaction literature indicate that high-quality consumer products and services assess consumer well-being (Grzeskowiak and Sirgy, 2007; El Hedhli, Chebat and Sirgy, 2013), so that as the quality of consumer products and services changes, consumer happiness and satisfaction grows. Administrative Quality, Physical

Environment Quality, Core Educational Quality, Support Services Quality, and Transformative Quality would have a significant effect on student quality of life and happiness in UAE higher education institutions. Evidence in support of modeling service quality as an antecedent to satisfaction is also provided in a number of studies conducted in higher education sector (Barnes, 2007; Sultan and Yin Wong, 2013). Aforementioned relationship has been supported by other studies conducted in the area of higher education (Dlac̆ic *et al.*, 2014; Ali *et al.*, 2016; Teeroovengadam, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck, 2016; Kasiri, Guan Cheng, *et al.*, 2017).

In summary, this finding is confirmed by the literature on service quality; in this study, higher education service quality explains 76.1 percent of student happiness, higher education service quality explains 78.4% of student's satisfaction, and higher education service quality with happiness and satisfaction explains 65.8% of student's behavioural intentions. Thus, in order to increase the happiness, satisfaction, and behavioural intention of its students, higher education institutions must boost their service standard. Higher education institutions need to improve their service quality in terms of Administrative Quality, Physical Environment Quality, Core Educational Quality, Support Facilities Quality and Transformative quality.

Student happiness was found to positively affect student's behavioral intentions among students within the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates; this is supported by previous studies (Dagger and Sweeney, 2006; Kim, Shim and Ahn, 2011; Wu, Cheng and Ai, 2017; Chen and Li, 2018). It is explained by the fact that the importance of making customers happy lies in not only cultivating happiness as an end-state (Howell and Higgins, 1990), such that loyal customers are more likely to buy additional goods and services, pay premium prices, spread favourable word of mouth communication (Reichheld and Sasser, 1990; Kandampully and Hu, 2007). The demonstration of student happiness will have a direct impact on student behavioral intentions within the higher educational institutions in UAE.

Student satisfaction was found to positively affect student's behavioral intentions among students within the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates; this is supported by previous studies (Ryu, Lee and Gon Kim, 2012). It is explained by the fact that cognitively-oriented construct of service quality precede satisfaction which leads to students' behavioral intentions (Kara and DeShields, 2004; Liaw, 2008), Within the view that satisfaction is an emotional state, and ensuring students' willingness to spread positive word-of-mouth about the school and intentions to recommend the school to others (Endres *et al.*, 2009; Dado *et al.*, 2012; Jaroslav *et al.*, 2013; Ali *et al.*, 2016; Miller, 2016). The demonstration of student satisfaction will have a direct impact on student behavioral intentions within the higher educational institutions in UAE.

In the present study, the results revealed that HESQ has an indirect effect on BI via HAP among students within the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates, which confirms the mediation role that student happiness has in

this context. Simply stated, within the view that happiness is an emotional state, ensuring that customers are happy entails action tendency and behavioral outcome (Dagger and Sweeney, 2006; Wu, Cheng and Ai, 2017). Thus in order for higher education institutions to enhance its student's behavioral intentions, higher education institutions need to improve HESQ with student happiness.

In the present study, the results revealed that HESQ has an indirect effect on BI via SAT among students within the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates, which confirms the mediation role that student satisfaction has in this context. Simply stated, the more the higher education service quality are introduced in terms of (Administrative Quality, Physical Environment Quality, Core Educational Quality, Support Facilities Quality and Transformative quality), and associated with student satisfaction the more the student behavioral intention become, and more likely to achieve optimal quality (Kasiri, Cheng, *et al.*, 2017), Đad'o *et al.* (2012) on a sample of Engineering Management students justify service quality→satisfaction→behavioural intentions causal order in Serbian higher education context, which has also been supported by Sultan and Wong (2013) in Australian higher education setting.

6 Implications

The conceptual proposed model demonstrates the role of higher education service quality, student happiness, and student satisfaction which is argued to have the capability to influence student behavioral intentions, among students within the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates. Which means the better the higher education service quality along with enhanced student happiness, and student satisfaction, the better is the student behavioral intentions.

In this current study, one of the main contributions to the existing body knowledge is not only the proposed model to explain student behavioral intentions, but also examining the role of student happiness and student satisfaction as mediating variables. The findings of the present study can be added to the body of literature for four topics of service quality, happiness, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. This study also contributes to the existing body of knowledge by testing the mediation effect of the student happiness and student satisfaction on the relationship between higher education service quality and student behavioural intentions, which found that that student happiness and student satisfaction significantly mediates the relationship between higher education service quality and student behavioural intentions.

Moreover, the variance explained by the proposed model in the current study for student behavioural intentions among students within the higher education institutions in the United Arab Emirates is 65.8%. The predictive power of the model in this study has therefore a higher ability to explain and predict behavioural intention than obtained from some of the previous studies with different variances explained recorded for behavioral intention. This study shows evidence that the proposed model can be more effective in predicting student behavioural intentions.

The present research is of significant for practitioners as it illustrates the importance of HESQ, SAT and HAP. Although a link of causality between the variables of this study cannot be clearly recognized because of the cross-sectional design, the results indicate that HESQ is vital to facilitate student happiness and student satisfaction that will subsequently enhance the student behavioural intentions. The order of this sequence should encourage organizations to put more emphasis on nurturing higher education service quality dimensions (Administrative Quality, Physical Environment Quality, Core Educational Quality, and Support Facilities Quality and Transformative quality).

The following are several actions that may be taken to develop that strategy. First, colleges' improvement includes providing change as in learning conditions as in the related internal conditions. Learning conditions are associated with the internal educational environment of an educational organization comprising a wide range of resources. The resources vary from physical resources (libraries or computing facilities, etc.) to human support in the form of teachers, tutors, counselors, and other advisers. Second, organizations may reward teachers who successfully coordinate and redistribute an arrangement of integrated educational environment resources: tangible, intangible and semi-tangible.

Previous studies have highlighted service quality as the antecedent of student loyalty and post-purchase communication behaviour (Petruzzellis, d'Uggento and Romanazzi, 2006; Brown and Mazzarol, 2009; Al-Shamsi *et al.*, 2018; Mohamed *et al.*, 2019). This study adds further depth by revealing the central role of happiness in the relationship between service quality, satisfaction, behavioural intention. With the intensified competition in the higher education sector, many universities encourage their existing students to pursue further courses (Kaczanowska, 2012; Binnawas, Khalifa and Bhaumik, 2020). Universities should therefore implement strong brand-oriented activities and behavior, as this has been proven to be effective encouraging student loyalty and positive WOM communication behavior. It is expected that key findings, especially the proposed model, will help in supporting the UAE government policy initiatives, especially to increase HESQ as part of the educational institutions' job at all levels of organizations. The evidence shows a link between HESQ and Satisfaction, happiness and positive loyalty.

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