



## PROVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE QUALITY IN ETHIOPIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: EVIDENCE FROM STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES

Zelalem Oliso<sup>1</sup>, Demoze Alemu<sup>2</sup>, Jonathan Jansen<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Arba Minch University

<sup>2</sup>Addis Ababa University

<sup>3</sup>Stellenbosch University

Corresponding E-mail: [zelalem.zekarias@gmail.com](mailto:zelalem.zekarias@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Educational Service Quality [ESQ] is one of the most important parameters to measure the quality of higher education. Institutions that provide better services attract more students as compared to low service providers. In the existing literature, however, among the elements of educational service quality, administrative or nonacademic service quality is not well studied in academic settings as compared with academic service quality, which could indirectly influence how teaching and learning unfolds. This study aimed to examine stakeholders' perception towards administrative service quality in the Ethiopian higher education system. To serve this purpose, a mixed research methods with convergent parallel design was implemented. The study participants were selected via purposive and random sampling techniques. Questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews were the main tools for gathering data. A self-developed questionnaire consisting 17 items, was distributed to four hundred [400] randomly selected Graduating Class [GC] undergraduate students. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants and focus group discussions were purposefully selected students. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the elements that constituted the key attributes of administrative service quality were perceived by stakeholders to be poor. This is reflected in low mean scores in many variables or items associated with the facets of administrative service quality. The findings of this study further uncovered that poor delivery of administrative services affect students' learning outcomes.*

Keywords : *Administrative Service Quality, Student Satisfaction, Perception, Academic Performance, Public University*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions [HEIs] across the world have been experiencing quality assurance process (Hasbullah and Yosuff, 2017). Measuring higher educational service quality is one of the most important elements to assure the quality of higher education. Based on the measurement results of higher education service quality, the institutions set an improvement plan and this plan includes human resources, infrastructure improvement etc (Đonlagić and Fazlić, 2015). In the educational settings, there are various views for the term 'education service quality. Different scholars define educational service quality in different ways (Schneider and White, 2004). For example, according to AL-Dulaimi (2016) educational service quality refers to quality services that universities and research institutes shall make available to students with a view to satisfy students. Furthermore, Govender, Veerasamy and Noel (2012) described educational service quality as a measurement of how well HEIs offer both academic and administrative services to students in order to meet students' needs and satisfy them.

Scholars suggest service quality as fundamental and an important parameter of educational excellence in general and higher education in particular (Malik, Danish and Usman, 2010). Similarly, Raju and Bhaskar (2017) argue that service quality is essential for a high standard of

education and a good image of higher education institutions. In addition, service quality is important for HEIs to achieve universities' objectives and promote the effectiveness of the education system (Al-Dulaimi, 2016). Any higher education cannot play its roles without quality education. Providing quality education in higher education plays a paramount role for national competitiveness. In higher education, evaluating educational service quality from stakeholders' perspective is vital to pinpoint institutions' strengths and identify areas for improvement.

In higher education, however, measuring service quality is somewhat problematic (Eshghi, Roy and Ganguli, 2008). Since the nature of Higher Education Service Quality [HESQ] is composed of multi-dimensional constructs, different scholars propose various methods of measuring HESQ (Cerri, 2012; Abdullah, 2006b; Eskicumal, Demirtaş, Arslan and Yazar, 2015). Although there is no consensus on the dimensions that HESQ constitutes, the existing literatures reveal that academic service quality, administrative service quality, and quality of student support services have been consistently applied as dimensions of HESQ in higher education (Manzoor, 2013).

For the purpose of this study, focus was given to the administrative service quality of the Ethiopian higher education system. Administrative service quality refers to the duties and responsibilities carried out by non-academic staff members (for example, prompt in dealing with students' complaints, provides service within reasonable time frame, maintains accurate and retrievable records of their students, provides caring and individualized attention to students etc (Abdullah, 2006b; Teeroovengadum, et al., 2016). In the existing literature, many prior studies have been conducted on higher education service quality. Although a number of studies have been conducted in higher education service quality, little attention has been given to stakeholders' perceptiveness towards higher education administrative service quality. In fact, there are many stakeholders to higher education that range from internal to external. In this study, due attention was given to internal stakeholders' perspectives towards administrative service quality in Ethiopian higher education. According to this study, internal stakeholders refer to individuals who are working or learning in the higher education institutions. These encompass: students, teachers, higher education management bodies, and administrative employees. Therefore, the intention of this paper is mainly to investigate (1) Stakeholders' perception towards administrative service quality of the Ethiopian higher education system (2) How does administrative service quality affect students' learning?

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD**

In the present study, a mixed research approach with convergent parallel design was followed. This is because convergent parallel design allows the researcher to converge or merge both quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2014). In the study, both primary and data sources were used. The primary data sources are Graduating Class [GC] students, teachers department heads, college deans, student union representatives, while the secondary data sources include prior empirical studies, articles, journals, PhD dissertations, and various government policy documents.

The study participants were selected via random and purposive sampling techniques. In the Southern part of Ethiopia, there are a total of ten universities are found. From the total of ten public universities, 3 (30%) universities were randomly selected from three different differentiations, such as research, applied and comprehensive universities. Accordingly, the study was conducted in Arba



Minch, Wolaita Sodo and Jinka Universities. Among regular undergraduate students, Graduating Class [GC] students were purposefully selected because they have ample experience regarding the services provided by their respective universities. From the total of 5982 graduating class students, the minimum required representative sample size of students was selected randomly at the confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% using Yamane (1967) sample size determination formula :

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N(e)^2]}$$

Where, **n** is sample size, **N** is total the population size and **e** is the level of precision. Thus,  $n = \frac{5982}{[1+5982(0.05)^2]} = 400$ . Of which, 285 were male students and the remaining 115 were female ones. In addition, students from different universities, sexes, colleges and departments were selected via proportionate stratified sampling technique.

The data were collected via questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. A self-developed questionnaire was prepared via intensive literature review. The questionnaire has two parts. The first part of the questionnaire includes the respondents' demographics. The second part of the questionnaire contains three dimensions of administrative service quality, namely, administrative staffs' attitude and behavior, administrative processes and procedures, and administrative staffs' competence. The questionnaire included items. The response options were gauged in a Five-point Likert scales ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree [SD] to 5=Strongly Agree [SA]. Before formal dissemination of the questionnaire, the instrument's validity and reliability was checked. The validity of the questionnaire was checked by experts who selected from Arba Minch university, School of Pedagogical and Behavioral Sciences [SPBS]. The experts were chosen based on their teaching experiences in HEIs, research experiences and well-informed knowledge of the discipline of Educational Planning and Management. The experts were encouraged to provide necessary oral and written comments. Based on the experts' oral and written comments, necessary amendments were made.

Upon the completion of the instrument validation process, the questionnaire was piloted at Hawassa University (non-sampled and one of the research universities in Ethiopia). The pilot test was conducted in 20 graduating class students in order to check the reliability of the instrument. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was checked via Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.5 using SPSS v.20. The reliability result was judged according to George and Mallery (2003) rule of digit: > 0.90 = Excellent, 0.80 - 0.89 = Good, 0.70 - 0.79 = Acceptable, 0.60 - 0.69 = Questionable, 0.50 - 0.59 = Poor, < 0.50 = Unacceptable. The table below, shows the reliability coefficient of administrative service quality and its sub dimensions. The reliability analysis result confirms that the internal consistencies of the items were very strong. The following Table 1 summarizes the reliability result of the questionnaire.

**Table 1.** Reliability Results of Administrative Service Quality Questionnaire (N=20)

Facets/Dimensions	No. of Items	Deleted Items	Cronbach's \Alpha Result	Leveled as George & Mallery (2003)
Administrative Service Quality				
Sub Dimensions				
Administrative Staffs' Attitude and Behavior	10	-	.902	Excellent
Administrative Processes and Procedures	3	-	.879	Good
Administrative Staffs' Competence	5	1	.843	Good
Sub Total	17		.928	Excellent

The semi-structured interview was conducted with key informants who were purposefully selected from three sample universities, because semi-structured interview allows the informants freedom to express their views in their own terms (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). As the researchers did in quantitative data collection procedure, the purpose of interviewing was well communicated with all interview participants. Besides, ethical issues were also maintained and their informed consents were secured before formal interviewing sessions. Interviews were conducted with twenty (20) respondents. Of which seventeen (17) male participants and the remaining three (3) were female ones.

In interviewing sessions, the researchers established a relationship of trust, not as a professional, but as a person via several meetings as a thought of Corbetta (2003) in order to obtain the interviewee's full cooperation. In addition, while conducting interview, the research was careful about some necessary interviewing skills, for instance, listening attentively to their views respectfully and using neutral body language such as eye contact, nodding head, smiling, looking interested and making encouraging noises (e.g., 'mmm') and probing remarks to recount their experiences as fully as possible, without unnecessary interruptions as suggested by Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008). During interview sessions, the researchers took detail notes and their response was recorded via tape recorder in order to reduce the loss of audio information. The interview session was lasted for 1:30hr with each participant, including break time as advised by researcher like Siedman (2006).

Upon the completion of interviewing sessions, the focus group was conducted with graduating class students who are purposefully selected from three study universities. Focus group was conducted with nineteen (18) participants consisting of fourteen (14) male and five (5) female students. The focus group discussion categorized into three, such as FGD-1, FGD-2 and FGD-3 and each group consist six members. The first focus group discussion session was conducted at Arba Minch University, the second one at Wolaita Sodo University and finally the third one conducted at Jinka University.

The formal focus group session was started with some transitional periods like welcoming the focus group discussants, setting ground rules, thanking the participants for coming and volunteering their time to provide inputs and stating the purpose of the focus briefly and why they are selected for the focus group as recommended by Dilshad and Latif (2013) to make all study subjects feel welcomed and relaxed. Furthermore, starting the focus group with introductory sessions and ice-breaking exercises, play a useful role in warming up the participants (Greene and



Harris, 2011). The researchers arranged the discussants' sitting in a circular manner as per Hennink's (2007) recommendation to establish interactive group dynamics. The focus group discussion process was conducted in Amharic language so as to encourage them in focus discussion and reduce communication block and later translated into English language. The focus group was coordinated by two facilitators, namely moderator and note taker as advised by Mack, et al. (2005) in order to make the focus group sessions more effective.

The researchers played a researcher's role in encouraging the discussion open and interactive; preventing dominance and steer the group away from irrelevant ideas as per the suggestion of Ritchie and Lewis (2003) to make the focus group smooth. Furthermore, the researchers also partly share the responsibility of some moderator's role like taking additional notes and recording discussants' response to reduce information gap. In order to maintain confidentiality in the focus group, the researchers implement name substitution and assign numbers to each participant before formal FGD sessions. Finally, with the help of SPSS v.20 quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, whereas qualitative data were thematically analyzed using verbatims and direct quotations to compare or relate the quantitative findings.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the following subsequent sub section, the data collected regarding non-academic service quality were presented, analyzed and interpreted.

**Table 2.** Administrative or Non-academic Staffs' Attitude and Behavior towards students (N=400)

SN	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Have positive attitude towards the students	400	1.00	5.00	3.2125	1.12939
2	Have good communication with students	400	1.00	5.00	3.2025	1.16614
3	Provide caring and individualized attention	400	1.00	5.00	3.2100	1.13760
4	Show sincere interest in solving students' problems	400	1.00	5.00	3.1975	1.16700
5	Guarantee the confidentially of students' information	400	1.00	5.00	3.3200	1.11387
6	Provide prompt and accurate services	400	1.00	5.00	3.2100	1.11760
7	Pay attention to detail of the services sought by students	400	1.00	5.00	3.1300	1.16253
8	Are courteous and willing to help students	400	1.00	5.00	3.1500	1.14708
9	Are friendly and approachable	400	1.00	5.00	3.2150	1.19681
10	Are accessible during office hours	400	1.00	5.00	3.2300	1.17923
	Valid N (listwise)	400				
			<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.20775</b>	<b>1.15173</b>

As shown in the above Table 2, students were asked to rate their perception towards administrative or non-academic staffs' attitude and behavior. As we notice from the table, the overall grand mean (M=3.20775, SD=1.15173) is above the average mean value. In addition, in all items that are associated with non-academic staffs' attitude and behavior, the yielded mean values

are exceeding the average mean value. These findings suggest that students' overall perception is positive towards non-academic staffs' attitude and behavior.

However, during focus group and interview sessions the study participants, mainly at Wolaita Sodo and Jinka Universities were describing challenges related with health professionals' service to students. Among focus group participants, a fifth year Computer Science Student at Wolaita Sodo University shared health professionals' poor attitude towards students. His response taken from focus group transcripts represents others' thought :

In our university, the student clinic not only provides a poor service, but also a zero service. Most student clinic health professionals are not available during working hours. Not only that they have also disciplinary problem. The health professionals are not showing welcoming face to students and not provide proper service. When students knock the door, they simply say get in and they don't want even to look at students. they don't know who is entering the room because they don't want to look at students (Female, FGD Participant-2).

Another focus group participants and a fourth year Economics department student at Jinka University was also expressing weak service quality of students' health clinics. In his own words :

The students' health clinic service is also poor at our university. The university ambulance not provide stand by service when students referred to hospitals for further medication. In addition, the university hides the information when death records occur on the campus (Male, FGD Participant-2).

Furthermore, interview participants at Wolaita and Jinka Universities were also explaining the problem of students' clinic services. One of the interview participants and a Student Union V/President at Wolaita Sodo University felt that :

There is student clinic on the campus, but the service provision is the worst as compared with other services. In the first place, the health workers have disciplinary problem. They are unable to give proper health service to students. They are not welcoming students, rather they insult students (Male, Interview Participant-3).

The other interview participant and Student Union President at Wolaita Sodo University was stressing on health professionals who are working on students' clinic. His interview response excerpted from interview transcript shortly reflects others' view :

The student clinic is not providing fully functional service in our university. Students always raising complain regarding the service delivery of student clinic. Sometimes, I got the service, but the service delivery is very poor. The workers in the student clinic are not friendly and they have no welcoming face when students come to get health services (Male, Interview Participant-4).

The other interview participants at Jinka University further added improper medication and the shortages of skilled health professionals as challenges in health services. One of the interview participants and Students' Union President felt that :

The health service is poor at our university. The health professionals tell similar treatment result for all students who have different medical problem. How all students have similar disease? The health professionals relate all medical cases with weather condition and food. How it could be? (Male, Interview Participant-6)

Another interview participant and a Psychology department teacher explained a comprehensive response regarding the university's health service and his interview response taken from interview transcript summarizes others' view :



Frankly speaking, the university provides a poor health service to students. In one hand, the health professionals are not highly skilled and experienced, and they are also not always available during working hours on the other hand. Since the health professionals are diploma holders and not well experienced, they write referrals to hospitals for minor health related problems (Male, Interview Participant-1).

In addition, the study subjects were boldly sharing the influence of poor health service delivery on students' academic performance. One of the focus group discussants and a fifth-year student in the department of Computer Sciences at Wolaita Sodo University felt that :

In my own understanding, students' health and learning are highly interconnected issues. If the students are not healthy, they cannot properly attend the regular classes and vice-versa. For example, student clinic that found on our campus doesn't give proper medical service to students and that directly affects students' learning, including their academic performance (Female, Focus Group participant-2))

Another interview participant and a Psychology department teacher at Jinka University shares similar thought. In his own words :

Students can properly learn and attend the regular classes if and only if they are healthy enough. If students are not healthy, they can't attend the classes properly and achieve good academic performance. Thus, quality health services play an imperative role on students' health and their academic performance (Male, Interview Participant-1).

**Table 3.** Administrative Processes and Procedures (N=400)

SN	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	There is not that much bureaucracy and useless difficulties	400	1.00	5.00	2.8575	1.18774
2	There are clear and well-structured administrative procedures	400	1.00	5.00	3.3425	1.10147
3	There is transparency of official procedures and regulations	400	1.00	5.00	3.2950	1.18384
	Valid N (listwise)	400				
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>3.165</b>	<b>1.1576833</b>

As we can see from the above Table 3 , students were asked to indicated their level of agreement for three questions that related with administrative processes and procedures. As we can notice from the above table, the grand mean (M=3.165, SD=1.1576833) is somewhat above the average mean. Furthermore, when we see the mean value of each item the mean value for two and three (M=3.3425, SD=1.10147) and (3.2950, SD=1.18384) respectively are above the mean value. This information suggests that students' perception towards administrative processes and procedures are somewhat positive.

Although students' overall perception towards administrative processes and procedures is positive, students were disagreed on the first item that read as "there is not much bureaucracies and useless difficulties to get needed services, because the mean value falls below average mean value." This finding implies that there is unnecessary bureaucracies to get services the required in the Ethiopian universities. In consistent with this quantitative finding, interview participants in different study universities were explaining bureaucracies and unnecessary difficulties particularly

in finance. An interview participant and a Geology department teacher at Arba Minch University described that :

The role of administrative service is to support academic wing. However, there is a high bureaucracy in finance. As a result, we can't easily get the necessary educational materials on time. Our university is poorly delivering even stationary materials like pen, dusters, A4papers and gown for teachers (Male, Interview Participant-1).

Another interview participant and a Psychology department teacher at Arba Minch University was describing how weak financial procedures affect students' learning. The following quote is her response that taken from interview transcript :

In our university, the financial related issues are not flexible. For example, our students leave Campus and go to different companies and industries for practical attachment courses. The university send each student's per Diem via bank after the students leaving the campus. Since the financial procedure is a very bureaucratic, students waiting for per Diem for a couple of weeks. This dissatisfies students and ultimately reduces their motivation to learn (Male, Interview Participant-1).

On the other hand, one of the interview participants and a Mathematics department teacher at Wolaita Sodo University was expressing unnecessary delay in finance to get money. His response taken from interview transcript shortly summarizes others' view :

As you know, in the university, there are overtime payments, research grants, but you are not paid in needed time. Except salary, other payments stay in finance for about a couple of months. For example, if I teach overload course in this semester, I will be get paid at the end of second semester. In addition, there is also similar problem for research grants. If the a granted research proposal passed all reviewing process, the researcher wait for a couple of months to get the budget. Indeed, some financial related challenges are beyond the capacity of experts and university. Perhaps, the problem is associated with the country level as a whole. If there is a shortage of budget, how the university pay for the granted projects? It is difficult! This indirectly affects teachers' motivation to work and that ultimately influences students' learning. Although some times the problem is beyond the university level, the experts as well as the university should work collaboratively so as to reduce unnecessary bureaucracies in finance (Male, Interview Participant-3).

Furthermore, interview participants at Jinka University also sharing bureaucracies in purchasing procedures and processes as challenges to get the necessary services on time. One of the interview participants and Registrar Directorate Director explained the duration of purchasing educational materials. His response short and direct. The following is his interview response that extracted from interview transcript:

The purchasing process takes a long period of time to get services. You can't get the necessary educational materials when you need. We have shortage of teaching tools like markers, dusters, LCD projectors and so forth. These tools seem simple, but they play an important role in facilitating teaching and learning process. Thus, we have to get these teaching tools on time (Male, Interview Participant-5).

The other interview participant and Civics and Ethical Studies department teacher further added unnecessary bureaucracies in purchasing process. His response that taken from interview transcript reflects others' view:





At our university, there is unnecessary difficulties in purchasing process at different levels. We request the university to purchase different educational materials, but we get the services after one year and or more. In addition, the administrative workers are not identifying non-functional materials, like printers, copying machines in different offices so as to take appropriate measures. This directly affects students' learning (Male, Interview Participant-2).

**Table 4.** Non-Academic Staffs' Competence (400)

SN	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Are knowledgeable and well experienced with university rules and procedures	400	1.00	5.00	2.7050	1.21930
2	Efficient/prompt in dealing with students' complaints	400	1.00	5.00	3.0125	1.17933
3	Maintains accurate and retrieval records	400	1.00	5.00	2.8075	1.20377
4	Provide service within reasonable time frame	400	1.00	5.00	2.9000	1.27439
	Valid N (listwise)	400				
<b>Grand Mean</b>					<b>2.85625</b>	<b>1.2191975</b>

According to the above Table 4 , students were asked to respond their perception towards the non-academic staffs' competence who have been working in the sampled universities. As we can see from the table the grand mean ( $M=2.85625$ ,  $SD=1.2191975$ ) is below the average mean value. In addition, in items related with non-academic competence, the mean value is less than average mean value except for item two. This data confirms that the students' perception towards the non-academic staffs' competence is poor.

In consistent with this quantitative finding, most interview participants also disclosed the nonacademic staffs' competence. Among interview participants, a chemistry department teacher at Arba Minch University was explaining non-academic staffs' skill gap as a challenge to discharge different tasks. His interview response that taken from interview transcripts represents others' perspective :

In my observation, most non-academic staff have skill gap to carryout various duties and responsibilities. For example, some administrative workers have motivation to work, however, due to lack skill, they can't perform the assigned tasks properly in needed time and expected quality. If there is a skill gap among administrative workers, they are unable to properly serve students and teachers. This indirectly affects teaching and learning process. We need to provide motivational and professional trainings for them (Male, Interview Participant-1).

The other interview participants were stressing on the registrar service of their respective university. Among interview participants, an associate registrar for the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at Arba Minch University shared that:

Our university registrar service needs due attention, because the documentation service is poor. We manually arrange graduated students' files, but we have shortage of file cabinets. In addition, all graduated students' file is not properly filed and accessible in the center or main campus. We always handle '*file yikireb*' cases from university main registrar in all

working days. The graduated students unnecessarily kill their time, money and effort while moving from one campus to the other (Male, Interview Participant-7).

In relation to alumni services, another interview participant and a Mathematics department teacher at Arba Minch University further uncovered that:

The alumni service is poor as compared to other universities. The graduated students from a certain university have an opportunity to come back to his/ her previous university for various purposes like to take original degree, official transcripts and attend further education. If a student graduated from AMU and come to take official transcript, he or she should wait for three to four consecutive days, because the alumni service is not automated and working in a traditional manual way. This trend consumes customers' time, and leads to unnecessary costs. Working in traditional manual way has also another problem, i.e. the confidential students' data is on an individual's hand that creates tension on students. In addition, manual way of handling students' document leads to file lost, service delay and other related problems. Some universities have been attempting to automatize the alumni services. For example, if you take Addis Ababa University the alumni services are totally automated. I think in this modernized system, there is no service delay and students can get services within short period of time. In my view, making alumni service automated is not difficult to AMU. I think it is simple, because in order to make the alumni service automatized, we need accurate students' data (number of graduates), scanning all students' transcripts and temporaries and recruiting other technical workers (Male, Interview Participant-3).

The other interview participant and Institutional Quality Assurance Coordinator at Arba Minch University was explaining SMIS services. The following is his interview response taken from interview transcripts.

The SMIS service is good technology, but I have reservation on this service. One of the problems of SMIS service is uniformity of service. For example, if one student wants to see his/her grade via SMIS online service, first he/she should have to assess his/her course instructor. Upon completing the evaluation, he/she will see the grade. In some campuses, students evaluate the course instructors' performance before proceeding to see the grades. In other campuses, students directly see their grades without evaluating the course instructors' performance. Another problem in SMIS service is employees in registrar office easily change students' grades. You can find students who are fired, but illegally graduated. In addition, still you couldn't find uniformity in assessment modes. As I said earlier, the assessment mode in our university 50% continuous and 50% summative, but some teachers are not following this procedure. They may change the amount continuous as well as summative as they like. On SMIS there a sheet called exam set up, this set up is good. However, the set up only works for 50% for continuous and 50% summative exam. Finally, due SMIS service students never follow up their academic performance. They see their grades at the end of the semester. In addition, all registrar workers are not familiar with SMIS service. There is skill gap among experts. There should be continuous training on SMIS service (Male, Interview Participant-5).

Furthermore, interview participants at Wolaita Sodo and Jinka Universities were also sharing the registrar service. One of the interview participants and Student Union V/President at Wolaita Sodo University says:

In my observation, the registrar service also poor as compared with other services. The registrar workers are not always available during office hours and not properly serve students



when they are available. There is a high bureaucracy in registrar service (Male, Interview Participant-3).

Another interview participant and Educational Planning and Management department teacher at Wolaita Sodo University was expressing the traditional way of recording services. His response very direct and short: “In my perspective, our university’s recording services are not modernized. The university doesn’t properly follow Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The recording service should be standard based” (Male, Interview Participant-2).

Although the recording services are somewhat poor at Wolaita Sodo and Arba Minch Universities, a Registrar Directorate Director at Jinka University was sharing somewhat good management of students’ data. In his own words:

The university properly manage students’ data in a computerized system. The students’ data management system protects forged or fake education documents, because students’ documents are available in cloud and the university server. However, due to payment related challenges we can’t maintain students’ data on cloud, but our students’ data are available on our university server. Thus, any employer can easily identify forged or fake education documents using the students’ data available on university server (Male, Interview Participant-5).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In the study, non-academic or administrative service quality was investigated from three sub dimensions, namely administrative staffs’ attitude and behavior, quality of administrative processes and procedures and non-academic staffs’ competence. Although students have somewhat positive perception towards overall administrative service quality, the mean values for many items or variables that explaining administrative service quality was below average mean value. More specifically, among administrative services, students have poor perception towards the university’s health services, finance related services and administrative staffs’ competence. The qualitative findings also strengthened that the universities provide poor health services to students. In addition, there are bureaucracies and unnecessary difficulties particularly in finance and there is also skill gap among administrative workers.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this conclusion, the researchers make the following recommendations :

1. In majority of elements and variables of administrative service quality, students perceived mean scores are low. Higher Education Institutions [HEIs] should identify those dimensions of administrative services and variables that have low perceived mean scores in order to take necessary measures and improve administrative service quality.
2. Since the students’ clinic service is poor in the universities, the university should the universities should take necessary measures so as to improve students’ health services
3. Presently, Ethiopia is found in the era of rapid higher education expansion. The shortage of skilled manpower is the most common challenge, particularly in fourth generation universities. Thus, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education in collaboration with universities should recruit skilled manpower in different administrative positions in order to reduce skilled manpower shortage

4. The skill gap among administrative worker is one of the pressing challenges to Ethiopian universities. The universities should design different professional training programs that reduce skill gap among administrative workers.
5. Finance procedure is too bureaucratic and stakeholders are not easily getting money to discharge different professional tasks in the university. The universities should implement various strategies and policies that minimize bureaucracies and unnecessary difficulties in financial procedures.

## REFERENCES

- Abdullah, F. (2006b). Measuring Service Quality in Higher Education: HEdPERF versus SERVPERF, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, Vol. 24 (1), pp. 31-47.
- Al-Dulaimi, Z.Y.S. (2016). Education, Educational Services and their Quality, *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 4 (1), pp. 58-66.
- Bustani, B., Khaddafi, M. ., & Nur Ilham, R. (2022). REGIONAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF REGENCY/CITY REGIONAL ORIGINAL INCOME IN ACEH PROVINCE PERIOD YEAR 2016-2020. *International Journal of Educational Review, Law And Social Sciences (IJERLAS)*, 2(3), 459–468. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijerlas.v2i3.277>.
- Cerri, S. (2012). Assessing the Quality of Higher Education Services Using a Modified SERVQUAL Scale, *Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Oeconomica*, Vol.14 (2).
- Cohen, D. & Crabtree B. (2006) *Qualitative Research Guidelines Project*, Available at <http://www.qualres.org/HomeSemi-3629.html>.
- Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social Research: Theory, Methods and Techniques*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.
- Creswell, J.W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.), University of Nebraska–Lincoln.
- Dilshad, R. & Latif, M. (2013) Focus Group Interview as a Tool for Qualitative Research: An Analysis, *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS)*, Vol. 33 (1), pp. 191-198.
- Donlagić, S. & Fazlić, S. (2015). Quality Assessment in Higher Education Using the SERVQUAL Model, *Management*, Vol. 20 (1), pp. 39-57.
- Eshghi, A., Roy, S. K., & Ganguli, S. (2008). Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: An Empirical Investigation in Indian Mobile Telecommunications Services, *Marketing Management Journal*, Vol.18(2), pp. 119-144.
- Eskicimal, A., Demirtaş, Z., Arslan, S. & Yazar, I. (2015). Investigating University Students' Level of Service Quality in Higher Education, *The Online Journal of Quality in Higher Education*, Vol.2 (2).
- Falahuddin, F., Fuadi, . F., Munandar, M., Juanda, R. ., & Nur Ilham, R. . (2022). INCREASING BUSINESS SUPPORTING CAPACITY IN MSMES BUSINESS GROUP TEMPE BUNGONG NANGGROE KERUPUK IN SYAMTALIRA ARON DISTRICT, UTARA ACEH REGENCY. *IRPITAGE JOURNAL*, 2(2), 65–68. <https://doi.org/10.54443/irpitage.v2i2.313>.
- George, D. & Mallery, P. (2003). *SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference 11.0 Update* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Geovani, I. ., Nurkhotijah, S. ., Kurniawan, H. ., Milanie, F., & Nur Ilham, R. . (2021). JURIDICAL ANALYSIS OF VICTIMS OF THE ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE TO REALIZE LEGAL PROTECTION FROM HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS: RESEARCH STUDY AT THE OFFICE OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN BATAM CITY. *International Journal of*



- Educational Review, Law And Social Sciences (IJERLAS)*, 1(1), 45–52.  
<https://doi.org/10.54443/ijerlas.v1i1.10>.
- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of Data Collection in Qualitative Research: Interviews and Focus Groups, *British Dental Journal*, Vol. 204 (6).
- Govender, J. P., Veerasamy, D. & Noel, D.T. (2012). International Students' Expectations and Perceptions of Service Quality: The Case of a Higher Education Institution in South Africa, *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, Vol.4(10), pp.588 – 594.
- Greene, S. & Harris, E. (2011). *Qualitative Research Methodology: Review of the Literature and its Application to the Qualitative Component of Growing Up in Ireland*, National Longitudinal Survey of Children, Minister for Health and Children.
- Hasbullah, A. & Yusoff, W. (2017). A Framework Study of Service Quality on Higher Education Institution (HEI) Facilities Services in Indonesia, *the Social Sciences*, Vol.12 (6), pp.925-930.
- Hennink, M. (2007). International Focus Group Research a Handbook for the Health and Social Sciences, *Cambridge University Press*, New York.
- Ilham, Rico Nur. *et all* (2019). Comparative of the Supply Chain and Block Chains to Increase the Country Revenues via Virtual Tax Transactions and Replacing Future of Money. *International Journal of Suplly Management*. Volume 8 No.5 August 2019.
- Ilham, Rico Nur. *et all* (2019). Investigation of the Bitcoin Effects on the Country Revenues via Virtual Tax Transactions for Purchasing Management. *International Journal of Suplly Management*. Volume 8 No.6 December 2019.
- Lasta Irawan, A. ., Briggs, D. ., Muhammad Azami, T. ., & Nurfaliza, N. (2021). THE EFFECT OF POSITION PROMOTION ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION WITH COMPENSATION AS INTERVENING VARIABLES: (Case Study on Harvesting Employees of PT. Karya Hevea Indonesia). *International Journal of Social Science, Educational, Economics, Agriculture Research, and Technology (IJSET)*, 1(1), 11–20.  
<https://doi.org/10.54443/ijset.v1i1.2>.
- Likdanawati, likdanawati, Yanita, Y., Hamdiah, H., Nur Ilham, R., & Sinta, I. (2022). EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, WORK MOTIVATION AND LEADERSHIP STYLE ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF PT. ACEH DISTRIBUS INDO RAYA. *International Journal of Social Science, Educational, Economics, Agriculture Research, and Technology (IJSET)*, 1(8), 377–382. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijset.v1i8.41>.
- Mack, N., Woodson, C., Macqueen, K., Guest, G. & Namey, E. (2005). *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*, Family Health International, USAID.
- Mahfud *et all* (2020). Developing a Problem-Based Learning Model through E-Learning for Historical Subjects to Enhance Students Learning Outcomes at SMA Negeri 1 Rogojampi. *IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 485 (2020) 012014 doi:10.1088/1755-1315/485/1/012014.
- Mahfud *et all* (2021). PEMANFAATAN TRADISI RESIK LAWON SUKU USING SEBAGAI SUMBER BELAJAR SEJARAH LOKAL PADA SMA DI BANYUWANGI. *Media Bina Ilmiah* Vol.16 No.3 Oktober 2021.  
<http://ejurnal.binawakya.or.id/index.php/MBI/article/view/1294/pdf>.
- Mahfud, M., Yudiana, I. K., & Sariyanto, S. (2022). HISTORY OF BANYUWANGI KALIKLATAK PLANTATION AND ITS IMPACT ON SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES. *International Journal of Educational Review, Law And Social Sciences (IJERLAS)*, 3(1), 91–104. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijerlas.v3i1.492>.
- Majied Sumatrani Saragih, M. ., Hikmah Saragih, U. ., & Nur Ilham, R. . (2021). RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION TO ICREASING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IMPLEMENTATION FROM SPP AL-FALAH GROUP AT BLOK 10 VILLAGE DOLOK MASIHUL. *MORFAI JOURNAL*, 1(1), 1–12.  
<https://doi.org/10.54443/morfai.v1i1.11>.

- Malik, M.E., Danish, R.Q. & Usman, A. (2010). The Impact of Service Quality on Students' Satisfaction in Higher Education Institutes of Punjab, *Journal of Management Research*, Vol.2(2).
- Manzoor, H. (2013). Measuring Student Satisfaction in Public and Private Universities in Pakistan, *Global Journal of Management and Business Research Interdisciplinary*, Vol.13(3), pp.5 – 17.
- Nur Ilham, R. ., Arliansyah, A., Juanda, R., Multazam, M. ., & Saifanur, A. . (2021). RELATHIONSIP BETWEEN MONEY VELOCITY AND INFLATION TO INCREASING STOCK INVESTMENT RETURN: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC BY JAKARTA AUTOMATED TRADING SYSTEM NEXT GENERATION (JATS-NG) PLATFORM. *International Journal of Economic, Business, Accounting, Agriculture Management and Sharia Administration (IJEBAS)*, 1(1), 87–92. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijebas.v1i1.27>.
- Nur Ilham, R., Heikal, M. ., Khaddafi, M. ., F, F., Ichsan, I., F, F., Abbas, D. ., Fauzul Hakim Hasibuan, A. ., Munandar, M., & Chalirafi, C. (2021). Survey of Leading Commodities Of Aceh Province As Academic Effort To Join And Build The Country. *IRPITAGE JOURNAL*, 1(1), 13–18. <https://doi.org/10.54443/irpitage.v1i1.19>.
- Nur Ilham, R., Arliansyah, A., Juanda, R. ., Sinta, I. ., Multazam, M. ., & Syahputri, L. . (2022). APPLICATION OF GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES IN IMPROVING BENEFITS OF STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES (An Emperical Evidence from Indonesian Stock Exchange at Moment of Covid-19). *International Journal of Economic, Business, Accounting, Agriculture Management and Sharia Administration (IJEBAS)*, 2(5), 761–772. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijebas.v2i5.410>.
- Nur Ilham, R., Likdanawati, L., Hamdiah, H., Adnan, A., & Sinta, I. . (2022). COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES “SOCIALIZATION AVOID STUDY INVESTMENT” TO THE STUDENT BOND OF SERDANG BEDAGAI. *IRPITAGE JOURNAL*, 2(2), 61–64. <https://doi.org/10.54443/irpitage.v2i2.312>.
- Rahmaniar, R., Subhan, S., Saharuddin, S., Nur Ilham, R. ., & Anwar, K. . (2022). THE INFLUENCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP ASPECTS ON THE SUCCESS OF THE CHIPS INDUSTRY IN MATANG GLUMPANG DUA AND PANTON PUMP. *International Journal of Social Science, Educational, Economics, Agriculture Research, and Technology (IJSET)*, 1(7), 337–348. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijset.v1i7.36>.
- Raju, M.S & Bhaskar, N.U.(2017).Service Quality in Higher Education: A Review and Conceptual Model, *International Journal of Science and Technology*, Vol.6, Issue, 2.
- Rico Nur Ilham, Irada Sinta, & Mangasi Sinurat. (2022). THE EFFECT OF TECHNICAL ANALYSIS ON CRYPTOCURRENCY INVESTMENT RETURNS WITH THE 5 (FIVE) HIGHEST MARKET CAPITALIZATIONS IN INDONESIA. *Jurnal Ekonomi*, 11(02), 1022–1035. Retrieved from <http://ejournal.seaninstitute.or.id/index.php/Ekonomi/article/view/481>.
- Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, SAGE Publications.
- Sandi, H. ., Afni Yunita, N. ., Heikal, M. ., Nur Ilham, R. ., & Sinta, I. . (2021). RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUDGET PARTICIPATION, JOB CHARACTERISTICS, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORK MOTIVATION AS MEDIATOR VARIABLES TO STRENGTHENING USER POWER PERFORMANCE: AN EMPERICAL EVIDENCE FROM INDONESIA GOVERNMENT. *MORFAI JOURNAL*, 1(1), 36–48. <https://doi.org/10.54443/morfai.v1i1.14>.
- Schneider, B & White, S. 2004. *Service Quality: Research Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.



- Seidman, I. (2006) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York and London.
- Sinta, I., Nur Ilham, R. ., Authar ND, M. ., M. Subhan, & Amru Usman. (2022). UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL MEDIA IN MARKETING GAYO ARABICA COFFEE. *IRPITAGE JOURNAL*, 2(3), 103–108. <https://doi.org/10.54443/irpitage.v2i3.467>.
- Sinurat, M. ., Heikal, M. ., Simanjuntak, A. ., Siahaan, R. ., & Nur Ilham, R. . (2021). PRODUCT QUALITY ON CONSUMER PURCHASE INTEREST WITH CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AS A VARIABLE INTERVENING IN BLACK ONLINE STORE HIGH CLICK MARKET: Case Study on Customers of the Tebing Tinggi Black Market Online Store. *MORFAI JOURNAL*, 1(1), 13–21. <https://doi.org/10.54443/morfai.v1i1.12>.
- Teeroovengadum, V. Kamalanabhan, T. & Seebaluck, A. (2016). Measuring Service Quality in Higher Education Development of a Hierarchical Model (HESQUAL), *Quality Assurance in Education*, Vol. 24 (2), pp. 244-258.
- Wayan Mertha, I. ., & Mahfud, M. (2022). HISTORY LEARNING BASED ON WORDWALL APPLICATIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING RESULTS CLASS X IPS IN MA AS'ADIYAH KETAPANG. *International Journal of Educational Review, Law And Social Sciences (IJERLAS)*, 2(5), 507–612. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijerlas.v2i5.369>.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), New York: Harper and Row.
- Yusuf Iis, E., Wahyuddin, W., Thoyib, A., Nur Ilham, R., & Sinta, I. (2022). THE EFFECT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE WITH WORK MOTIVATION AS INTERVENING VARIABLE AT THE OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK IN ACEH. *International Journal of Economic, Business, Accounting, Agriculture Management and Sharia Administration (IJEBAAS)*, 2(2), 227–236. <https://doi.org/10.54443/ijeabas.v2i2.191>.