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PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON THE PRACTICES OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN DILLA UNIVERSITY: A DIFFERENTIAL STUDY

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Abstract:
Despite the rapid enrolment expansion during the last few years, higher education participation rate in Sub-Saharan African region has remained among the lowest in the world (6%). At present, the major challenge facing many Sub-Saharan African nations is, on the one hand, of addressing the unmet demand for access through rapid expansion of their higher education and on the other, of improving quality of their education in the context of the prevailing socio-economic, fiscal and political constraints. Under these circumstances, a descriptive survey was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis to seek out and investigate the perception of teachers and students on the practices of educational quality enhancement in Dilla University besides exploring and justifying the current practices of educational issues.

Keywords: quality enhancement in education, teachers' perception on quality enhancement, perceptions of students on quality enhancement

1. Introduction

In Sub-Saharan African countries, formal quality enhancement in Education is a challenging phenomenon. The increasing concern for quality in many Sub-Saharan African countries comes at a time from growing recognition of the potentially powerful role of higher education for growth and its rapid expansion since the new millennium (Materu, 2007). In the recent past, many of the Sub-Saharan African countries have implemented higher education expansion policies, which resulted in a significant

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enrolment growth (McPherson, 2008) within the existing and newly emerging colleges and universities as well as in changes regarding student demographics. The demand for access in many Sub-Saharan countries will increase significantly in the coming years due both to demographic growth and to increased access at primary and secondary educational levels (Shabani, 2007 as cited in Mulu 2012). However, despite the rapid enrolment expansion during the last few years, higher education participation rate in this region has remained among the lowest in the world (6%). At present, the major challenge facing many Sub-Saharan African nations is, on the one hand, of addressing the unmet demand for access through rapid expansion of their higher education and on the other, of improving quality of their education in the context of the prevailing socio-economic, fiscal and political constraints.

Like other Sub-Saharan African countries, concern about quality of higher education in Ethiopia is on the rise vis-à-vis the rapid institutional and enrolment expansion (Teshome, 2007). The number of universities has risen from 2 before 2000 to 22 by 2008/9 to 33 by 2013 (MoE, 2008/09). The total enrolment capacity in the undergraduate programs has grown from 67,682 in 1999/2000 to 309,092 of 22.3% (MoE, 2009/10). Following this rapid expansion, the issue of quality has become a point of discussion and major concern among all stakeholders including the government. There is a general concern that the rapid enrolment expansion accompanied by inadequate resources; incompatibility of existing capacity and lack of organizational arrangements may result in deterioration of academic quality and standards. As a response to the increasing concerns, the Ethiopian government has endorsed higher education proclamation and established national quality assurance agency to regulate quality of the education offered in higher education institutions since 2003. Empirically, however, not much is known about how the Ethiopian universities assure quality of their education under the circumstances of rapid enrolment and program expansion, and in the face of multitude of constraints including changes in student demographics.

2. Statement of the Problem

The practice of enhancing quality in university education is a recent phenomenon. It is not well researched and documented in the context of developing regions like Ethiopia in general and Dilla University in particular. In the Ethiopian context, research on higher education in general and on quality assurance in particular is inadequate (Amare, 2007). A review of some of the books written on Ethiopian higher education (Teshome, 1990; Teshome, 2007; Amare, 2007) indicates that none of them had a focus on quality concern in higher education. The first three authors dealt with the higher education development process and system in Ethiopia, whereas the last two authors focus on academic freedom in higher education.

There has been an environmental change in the Ethiopian higher education landscape. The environmental changes could be illustrated by: a rapid institutional and enrolment expansion amid financial stringency, frequent changes in policy directions, perceived decline in quality of education, etc. The university is becoming complex in

terms of expanding access and study programs and it depend on government for their full financial resources. These trends raise a concern about quality of education and thus lead to demands for accountability on the part of university. Such changes necessitate the undertaking of a study such as this, which helps to fill the research gap on quality and practices of quality enhancement in the institution. In the back drop of the above cited situations in Ethiopia, the present study entitled "Perceptions of Teachers and Students on the Practices of Education Quality Enhancement in Dilla University: A Differential Study" assumes importance.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study in hand are stated as follows:

- To examine the roles of different internal stakeholders in contributing for educational quality enhancement in Dilla University;
- To rate the level of satisfaction of the respondents and the degree of importance with which the current practices of enhancing educational quality in the University;
- To evaluate the quality and access of infrastructures, facilities and learning resources and their contributions to promote educational quality in the University ;
- To indicate the level at which the students' commitment and engagement in the process of improving educational quality here in the University.

2.1 Significances of the Study

The significance of the study may be stated as follows:

- The findings of the study could be used to develop theoretical framework and/or model for building quality assurance systems suiting to the context of Ethiopian universities.
- This study could serve as an inspiration and reference for further research in the area of higher education in Ethiopia.
- It would provide pertinent and timely information concerning the existing systems and practices of assuring quality to the Ethiopian public universities, to other higher education institutions and to governmental organizations.
- The study would help to raise the awareness of key stakeholders regarding the problems in the development and implementation of quality assurance besides the areas that need improvement.
- In addition to the above, the present study would provide information to policy makers involved in the planning, management and improvement of the higher education system in Ethiopia.

2.2 Delimitation of the Study

The study has been delimited with respect to the study area. Accordingly, the study would be more worth if it had been conducted by including all Ethiopian universities.

However, it has been found not manageable and practically unattainable. More specifically, the study emphasizes on quality of teaching and learning process other than any other focus areas that are being demanded. Even if there are many issues which need to be investigated within the institution, this study is delimited only to the perceptions of teachers and students on practices of educational quality enhancement in the University with special r reference to the quality of teaching and learning process at regular basis of admission.

2.3 Operational Definition of Terms

The optional definition of the important terms availed in the study are given as follows: Higher Education is a post-secondary learning institution which is may be established by law or accredited by an authorized agency. Examples are universities and colleges For the purpose of this study, the following basic terms are used.

- Perception: In this study, it refers on how teachers and students view and understand the practices of educational quality enhancement in Dilla University.
- Quality: refers to something that fits a purpose.
- Quality Enhancement is taking deliberate steps to bring about improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experiences of students.

3. Review of Related Literature

3.1 An Overview of Quality Enhancement

Ellis (1993) defines quality enhancement as a process whereby a consumer or other interested party is made confident that standards will be maintained. Similarly, Carley and Waldron (1984) defined it as planned, deliberate activities instigated and carried out with the intent and purpose of maintaining and improving the quality of learning for participants. Here, from both definitions one can simply understand that the intent and essence of quality enhancement is to maintain the standards so as to increase satisfaction to users of the system. A more inclusive definition is provided by Harvey & Green (1993), who refer it as "Those mechanisms and procedures designed to reassure various 'stakeholders' in higher education that institutions accord a high priority to implementing policies designed to maintain and enhance institutional effectiveness".

Hence, quality enhancement in any system in general and in higher education in particular is a combination of several principles (e.g., setting of quality objectives, planning activities to meet these objectives), restructuring and philosophies that promote commitment and motivation. In relation to this, Frazer (1992) in his critique of quality control argues that the overall quality of a university is dependent on all aspects of the university's activities.

Dill (2007) is of the view that it is an increasingly used to denote the practices whereby academic standards, i.e., the level of academic achievement attained by higher education graduates, are maintained and improved. This definition of academic quality as equivalent to academic standards is consistent with the emerging focus in higher education policies on student learning outcomes -- the specific levels of knowledge,

skills, and abilities that students achieve as a consequence of their engagement in a particular education program (Brennan and Shah, 2000).

3.2 Quality Enhancement in Ethiopian Public Higher Education System

According to Ashcroft (2012), the requirement for the establishment is to monitor for accreditation purposes (especially important in regulating the expanding private sector) and also to ensure that quality does not suffer to an unknowable extent: such a rapid expansion puts pressure on the limited pool of capable and qualified people and systems to manage the institutions. At the same time, Government cannot micro-manage such a diverse and large system and balance central control with institutional autonomy. It has changed the operation of power within Government and devolved considerable freedoms and responsibilities to the universities. It has looked into the northern developed countries for ways to manage the situation using concepts of quality and quality assurance, operated through quasi-autonomous sector support units, as the basis for a relatively "hands-off" system of regulation and control. Recognizing the importance of quality and relevance in this new context, the 2003 Higher Education Proclamation established the HERQA.

4. Research Methodology

This section of the paper covered the description of the study area, research design, sources of data, population and sample, data collection instruments, procedures of data collection, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations.

4.1 Description of the Study Area

Dilla University is located at Gedeo zone of Dilla town 360 Kms. south wards of the capital city of the nation. It was first established as College of Teachers' Education and Health Sciences in 1996. In 2001, it was made as a part of Debub University and then it was converted as a full-fledged university as per the Councils of Ministers' Regulation No. of 129/2004 in 2004. Once again, it was re-established by the Councils of Ministers as per the Regulation No of 238/2011.

The university has undertaken a variety of outreaching activities as on the date of the study to achieve its vision of being one among the most top ten universities in east African in the areas of teaching and learning, research and consulting and community services consisting six colleges, two institutes and two schools and overall more than 55 academic programs in both under and post-graduation.

4.2 Research Design

The study was a descriptive survey and used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis to seek out and investigate the perception of teachers and students on the practices of educational quality enhancement in Dilla University besides exploring and justifying the current practices of educational issues.

The use of the qualitative approach enabled the researcher to develop an understanding of individuals and events in their natural settings, taking into account the relevant context. Therefore, the respondents were asked to describe their everyday experiences relating to issue under investigation (Gay, et al., 2009; Creswell, 2008; Creswell and Plano, 2011). Quantitative designs, on the other hand, are well suited for identifying general trends in populations (Gall, et al., 2007). Therefore, this study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the current practices and challenges to educational quality enhancement at the university and finally to arrive at a valid conclusion.

4.3 Data Sources

In order to gather the relevant data, both primary and secondary sources of data were availed. Thus, primary data was collected from the academic staff, students, directors and the Deans of Colleges of the university. With respect to the secondary data, documents were analyzed. For gathering the primary data, questionnaires were distributed besides the conduct of interview sessions.

4.4 Population of the Study

The target population under investigation was Dilla university's academic employees, students and academic officials who are responsible for running the core business of the institution. In addition, students were assumed that they know whether quality teaching is taken place.

4.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

From the total colleges, institutes and schools of the university, three colleges (college of Engineering and Technology, Business & Economics and College of Health and Medical Science) were selected as the sample by using simple random sampling technique. From all the three colleges 70 (about 43%) of the academic employees who were then working in the university were included under the sample size, and director for quality enhancement office, two college Deans and 116 second and above year students from all sample colleges were included in the sample of the study.

Teachers from each college were selected by using stratified sampling method. Whereas, students were selected randomly by using simple random sampling technique, and the director for quality enhancement office, and college were drawn as a sample by using purposive sampling method to include them in the sample intentionally as both of them were very important for the study.

4.6 Instruments of Data Collection and Procedures

To collect all the required data, questionnaire of both closed and open ended types, interview, observation and document analysis were employed. Accordingly, questionnaires were administered for teachers and students, interview session was conducted for both the director for quality audit office, and college Deans of the university and different documents were analyzed. Hence, in caring out the study,

questionnaire, interview, observation and documents analysis techniques were used to collect the data needed. Besides, validity and reliability of the instrument was tested by pilot testing. this was because self-constructed and adopted measurement instruments are strongly recommended to be pilot tested before use so as to determine validity, reliability, and feasibility (Gay, et al., (2009, p.169). and professional comments of the advisor of the research and other professionals were also added.

A. Questionnaire

In this study, a survey questionnaire was employed in collecting the quantitative data. The survey instrument consisted of 31 questions administered to 116 students and 70 teachers to elicit their perceptions towards the practice of educational quality enhancement in Dilla University. The respondents were requested to indicate their perceptions on a five-point Likerts scale to indicate their level of agreement with each item. The opportunity for written responses was also provided at the end of the questionnaire. Here, the respondents had to share any other comments with the researcher. Comments were recorded and used to enhance the presentation of data and to complement the discussion of the findings.

B. Validity and Reliability

The instrument was presented to two colleges which were not involved in the study to review the instrument for validity. The reviewers were requested to read all the instructions, the terminologies used, the design, the logical order of each items, and to evaluate the instrument in terms of appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of specific inferences made from the instrument or procedure results, or if items are relevant to the construct that is measured (Gall et al., 2007). The experts reviewed both the face and content validity of the instrument and responded with feedback. The researcher revised the survey accordingly. Moreover, the questionnaire and interview guide were presented to the research advisors for further assessment and consideration before use. Recommendations and changes indicated by the advisors were incorporated into the final instruments.

Regarding the reliability, on the other hand, the researcher pilot tested the instrument and applied Alpha coefficient to ascertain the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The instrument was administered to 20 teachers and 50 students randomly selected from the university who were outside of the selected sample colleges. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the appropriateness of the instruments to be used to conduct the study to find out whether additions or modifications are important on the basis of the pre-test experience and also to find out whether the items in the questionnaires were clear enough to enable the respondents to complete them accurately. The reliability of the survey instrument was confirmed by examining the individual test items using the Cronbach's alpha (Gall et al., 2007; Bryman & Cramer, 2009, 363). It is found that the internal reliability alpha coefficients were 0.838 revealing that the research instrument was reliable to gather data.

C. Interview, Observation and Documents Analysis

In order to improve the trustworthiness of data, researchers suggest use of multiple data-collection methods or what they called "triangulation" process (Gall et al., 2007; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Triangulation process not only helps researchers to increase the credibility and validity of their study but also to eliminate biases that may result from relying exclusively on any one data-collection method, source, analyst or theory. To this end, this study employed interview, observation and documents analysis as the second method to supplement, authenticate and/or clarify issues raised in the questionnaire responses. Individual interviews were administered to a sample of 2 college Deans and the Director for Academic Quality Audit in Amharic language for more than an hour having been recorded in digital camera with respect to the current practices of educational quality enhancement. In addition, observation was conducted and different documents were analyzed.

D. Procedures of Data Collection

The researcher having reviewed all the related literature, then selected three colleges from the university. Subsequently, he developed the interview schedules and questionnaire instruments, compiled; pilot tested and reviewed them followed by administering the questionnaire and conducting the interviews with the respondents. The data so collected were finally analysed.

4.7 Methods of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the researchers used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis (mixed approach). Qualitative data analysis requires reading, describing, classifying and interpreting the collected data. Quantitative data analysis involves inferential and descriptive statistics. The responses of closed ended questions were analyzed quantitatively by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency, means, standard deviations and independent sample test were applied to analyze items in the survey. Whereas, the responses of open ended questions, interview, observation and the results of document analysis were qualitatively analyzed by using descriptive words.

Correlations were attempted to see the relationships of teachers' perception with that of students' feeling regarding the practices to enhance educational quality besides the relationships of these scales with perceived standards to educational quality enhancement. Likewise, independent sample t-test was also attempted to analyze whether significant differences were found between the perception of instructors and students regarding the issue under investigation. The data was presented as per the research questions of the study.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Since academic writing does not occur in a vacuum, researchers are frequently interacting with a dynamic and demanding socio-political environment that influences their research decisions both formally and informally. To cope with such influences, the researchers followed a number of guidelines which are ethically sound.

Initially, the researchers obtained a formal approval to conduct the study from Dilla University, Institute of Education and Behavioral Science. The researchers got consent of the respondents and made it known to them that their participation was indeed voluntary. All provisions had been made to offer anonymity and confidentiality to all the participants of the study. After the completion of the interviews, participants had been given opportunity to review their responses and to make any change to their statements. The integrity of the researchers safeguarded by protecting the respondents from harm; either emotional or physical and in a manner by which the research questions and reports of the findings were presented.

4.9 Data Analyses, Interpretation and Discussion of Results

This section presents the results of statistical analysis undertaken with a view to answer the major research questions raised in the study.

4.10 Biographic Information of Respondents

The following Table provides a descriptive overview of the biographic information of the teachers and students of Dilla University who participated in this study.

Table 1: Biographic Information of Respondents

S. No	Category	Alternative	Subjects				Total	
			Teachers		Students			
			N	%	N	%	N	%
1	College	Engineering and Technology	34	56.7	52	49.5	86	52.1
		Business and Economics	16	26.7	24	22.9	40	24.2
		Health and Medicine	10	16.6	29	27.6	39	23.7
		Total	**60**	**100**	**105**	**100**	**165**	**100**
2	Sex	Male	48	80	59	56.2	107	64.9
		Female	12	20	46	43.8	58	35.1
		Total	**60**	**100**	**105**	**100**	**165**	**100**

From the Table 1, it is found that 34(56.7%) of the teacher respondents were from College of Engineering and Technology and 16(26.7%) of them were from college of Business and Economics. Whereas, the rest 10(16.6) of the teacher respondents were from the College of Health and Medical science. Concerning sex of teacher respondents, about 80% of them were males and the remaining 12(20%) were female. This indicates there is still low participation of female instructors in HLI. Regarding student respondents characteristics, it is found that 52(49.5%) of the student respondents were from College of Engineering and Technology (E&T) and 24(22.9%), 29(27.6%) of the respondents were from the Colleges of Business and Economics and Health& Medical Sciences. Regarding the gender of the respondents, 59(56.2%) of them were male while the remaining 46(43.8%) of them were female student respondents.

5. Data Analysis of the Variables Treated in the Study

The variables treated in the study were discussed as follows. The means, standard deviations, and t-test were presented with respect to the scores of the academic staff and students perceptions pertaining to each variable.

5.1 Role of Different Actors in Enhancing Educational Quality

The perception of academic staff and students on the roles of different actors/stakeholders/ in enhancing educational quality has been presented in Table: 2.

Table 2: The Role of Different Actors in Enhancing Educational Quality

S. No	Variables	Respondents (N=165)						Average mean	Sig (2-tailed)	t-Value
		Teachers			Students					
		N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{tea}	N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{stu}			
1	The university management	60	3.63	1.25	105	3.80	1.31	3.71	.598	.534
2	Colleges	60	3.63	1.30	105	3.87	1.10	3.75	448	.771
3	Departments	60	4.94	0.84	105	3.61	1.34	4.28	.007*	2.860*
4	Academic staff	60	4.10	1.28	105	4.08	.991	4.09	.950	-.063
5	Students	60	3.00	1.29	105	4.09	1.19	3.54	.009*	-2.842*
6	Supportive staffs	60	2.69	1.00	105	2.50	.981	2.41	.456	.758
	Average mean		**3.66**	**1.16**		**3.66**	**1.15**	**3.63**		

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

.$t_{\text{-table}}$ =1.96 df =163

From the Table 2, it is found that the items 1, 2, 4 and 6 were statistically significant between the two groups in perception. Thus, it is obvious that they rated the contributions of the university management, colleges and academic staff for improving the practices of educational quality as high. On the other hand, their response for item 6 of the same table shows the role of supportive staff in the process of enhancing educational quality which is found to be below average.

It is evident that there was a statistically significant variations in the responses of teachers and students concerning the roles of departments (t_{val}=2.860, *df*= 163 at P<0.05) and students (t_{val}=2.842, *df*=163 at P<0.05) in assuring quality of education. This illustrates that though there was some variations in the responses of both group, the role of both departments and students is found to be rated as high in the process of educational quality enhancement.

It is observed that though there was a variation in the perception of both respondents with regard to the degree of contributions of different stakeholders, these two groups have comparatively similar views pertaining to the roles of internal stakeholders in the process of enhancing educational quality. Again, the data that was obtained from the open ended questionnaire also revealed that relatively all particularly

the top management of the university is contributing a lot to enhance educational quality. Evidently, the respondents also affirmed in order to improve the quality of education in all colleges of the university, the formation of quality education and good governance forum and adoption of computer assisted instruction are the main ones among others.

Hence, it is possible to conclude that the role being played by the majority of the stakeholders particularly the university management, colleges, departments and academic staffs in bringing about educational quality in the university is a high practice.

5.2 Level of Respondents' Satisfaction and Degree of Significance to/of Some Practices of DU in Enhancing Educational Quality

The degree of significance of some practices and level of satisfaction of respondents with regard to the practices being undertaken is presented in the following table.

Table 3: Level of Respondents Satisfaction and Degree of Significance to/of some Practices of DU in Enhancing Educational Quality

S. No	Variables/practices	Respondents(N=165)						Sig (2-tailed	t-Value
		Teachers			Students				
		N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{tea}	N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{stu}		
1	Leadership commitment for quality improvement	60	3.38	1.13	105	3.42	1.18	486	.706
2	Academic staff commitment for quality education	60	3.52	1.07	105	2.28	1.07	.009*	2.839*
3	Academic staff educational qualification and specialization for quality education	60	3.53	0.96	105	2.34	1.09	.001*	3.535**
4	Class size and conducive learning environment	60	2.31	1.41	105	2.25	1.15	.866	-.171
5	Conducive class rooms	60	3.94	1.17	105	2.32	1.15	.043*	-2.130*
6	1 to 5 educational army development (cooperative learning) for quality education	60	3.63	1.07	105	3.88	1.20	.143	1.510
7	The teaching and learning practices, Assessment mechanisms currently employed to quality education	60	3.78	0.97	105	2.41	1.19	.019*	2.495*
8	Student recruitment and admission practices	60	3.89	1.14	105	2.58	1.24	.026*	2.363*
9	Staff recruitment &development practices	60	3.47	0.84	105	2.39	0.95	.000*	4.277**

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

.t_{table} =1.96 df =163

From the Table 3, it is found that the mean values (x=3.38 and 3.42) for item 1 for both respondents respectively indicates that the perception and level of satisfaction of teachers and students towards the commitment of the leadership in enhancing quality of education was moderate. The mean scores (x=2.31 and 2.25 for item 4) of teachers and students respectively affirmed both of the respondents perception and level of satisfaction with the current class size and learning environment and its contribution to promote educational quality was low. While, the mean values (x=3.63 and 3.88 for item 6) of teachers and students represents that the degree of significance and their level of satisfaction regarding cooperative learning in assuring educational quality is high. It is also observed from the 't' values that there were no statistically significant variations among the responses of both respondents with regard to the level of satisfaction and degree of significance of leadership commitment, class size and conducive learning environment, and cooperative learning practice for improving educational quality. Thus, it is obvious that the degree of significance of leadership commitment and cooperative learning in assuring educational quality is high; while their response concerning the existing class sizes and learning environment is found to be low.

But at the same time, statistically significant variations were observed between the responses of the two groups regarding academic staff commitment (t_{val}=2.839, *df*= 163 at P <0.05), academic staff educational qualification and specialization (t_{val} =3.535, *df*= 163 at P <0.05), conducive class rooms (t_{val} =-2.130, *df*= 163 at P <0.05), the teaching and learning practices, assessment mechanisms currently employed (t_{val} =2.495, *df*= 163 at P <0.05), student recruitment and admission practices(t t_{val} =2.363, *df*= 163 at P <0.05) and staff recruitment & development practices(t t_{val} =4.28, *df*= 163 at P <0.05) for enhancing educational quality. This means the two groups were in a different perception on view towards these practices in the process of enhancing educational quality.

Thus, teachers were in higher level of satisfaction than students with the current academic staff commitment, academic staff educational qualification, conduciveness of the class rooms, teaching learning practices, assessment mechanisms, students recruitment and admission practices, staff recruitment and development practices to enhance educational quality.

The result of the interview and open ended questions flaunted that as the leadership at all level of the institution is striving, committing and designing and undertaking a number of strategies so that to enhance the quality of education. Among others, the building and implementation of educational development army, which is very helpful to the adoption of cooperative learning, and the adoptions of smart rooms (fully equipped with electronic media), which is the experience of Jimma University and serious follow up of the implementation of modular approach and continuous assessment are critical practices that are being taken place currently to improve educational quality.

On contrary, the result of interview, observation and analysis of different documents in relation to these variables with which statistical significance is observed clarified that academic staff commitment found to be moderate which supports the

response of teachers. Whereas, regarding academic staff qualification, relative documents showed that the proportion of Bachelor degree holders is found to be 38.1%, in general and more than 72% in the college of Engineering and Technology in particular. Similarly, the proportion of PhD holders is insignificant i.e. about 8% from which 2.75% of them were expatriates. Thus, this composition of academic staff can be rated as moderate and even low. Hence, the response of the students coincides with the result of document analysis.

The result for the items of students' recruitment and admission and staff recruitment and development also indicates that; most students are not assigned to respective departments based on their interests and choices. A document for the offices of registrar and alumni also confirmed that only 60-65% of them are assigned to departments on the basis of their interest. While, the rest 35-40% of them at regular under graduate program are forced placed to respective departments. Consequently, the finding was in line with student's response in the survey questionnaire that student's recruitment and placement practice is inclined to be forced and which can be rated as a low/poor practice.

On contrast, the result of documents analysis concerning the process of staff recruitment and development practice explicitly indicates that as is done on the basis of the procedures indicated in HEI proclamation and the university's legislation. Following this, when there is a need to hire new academic staff members, the concerned college/institute or college can make a requisition to HRDM of the university and then to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research. After passing all the critical steps in hiring a new staff, the most appropriate candidate who succeeds in written exam, interview and all other requirements is being hired. As regards academic staff promotion, up to the rank lecturer, it is processed at college level and approved by AVP. Therefore, the practices of academic staff recruitment and development can be rated as high which supports the perceptions of teachers.

The source of variation between these two groups with regard to the practices of recruitment and development of academic staff is may be though the hiring process seems perfect; some of them can be hired regardless of merit, problems of pedagogical skill, class room practice of the teacher.

5.3 Quality and Access of Infrastructure, Facilities and Learning Resources

Infrastructure, facilities and learning resources are among the essentials that have a direct impact on the process of enhancing educational quality. The Table: 4 illustrates the condition of some infrastructure related practices in Dilla University.

Table 4: Quality and Access of Infrastructure, Facilities and Learning Resources

S. No	Variables	Respondents (N=165)						Average mean	Sig (2-tailed)	t-value
		Teachers			Students					
		N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{tea}	N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{stu}			
1	Library service	60	3.04	1.07	105	2.74	1.10	**2.86**	.007	2.945*
2	Laboratories and workshops	60	2.84	.76	105	2.62	1.18	**2.73**	.317	-1.016
3	ICT infrastructure (internet access to students and teachers)	60	2.15	1.21	105	2.52	.721	**2.34**	.217	1.274
	Average Mean		**2.64**	**1.01**		**2.62**	**1.00**	**2.63**		

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
.t_{table} =1.96 df =163

From the Table 4, it is found that the average mean for both teachers and students is (x=2.63). This shows that the quality and access of infrastructures, facilities and learning resources, which is highly supposed as an important factor for an improved teaching-learning process and promotion, educational quality, is found at low level.

However, the mean values of teachers and students response (x=3.04 and 2.74 respectively) for item 1 in the table indicates that there is statistically significant variation between the perception of both respondents concerning the quality for the provision of library service. To this end, teachers rated the provision of library service as medium practice. However, the perception of students about the quality of library service found at nearly low level. The calculated t-value (t=2.945, p<.05) at 163 degree of freedom for this item also indicates there was statistically significance variation between the two groups in perceiving the quality of library service which is currently provided. For this reason, teachers were more in moderate level agreement than their counterpart students.

The result of the interview and open ended question reveals that though the library is rendering service for 24 hours of reading in all the three campuses, the existing library buildings are not sufficient and posing a serious problem, especially weeks before the final examination period characterized by lack and even absence of necessary books both in hard and soft copies, unqualified human resource with irrelevant fields of studies, limited trace of electronic media library, serious shortage/absence of reference books for some courses, and shortage/absence of reference books for some courses written in Braille form for VI students and staff. Hence, the library service which is being provided currently is intended to be found at average level.

The mean score for teachers and students response (x=2.84 and 2.62 for item 2) and (x=2.15 & 2.52 for item 3) assured that both respondents rated as there is a lower quality and access to laboratory, workshops, ICT infrastructure. The calculated t- test value for these items (t_{val}=-1.016 and 1.274, p<.05) which are less than the (t_{tab}=1.96) at

163 degree of freedom also indicates that there was no statistically significant difference in the responses between both groups.

The results of interview, open ended questions and observation also assured that the low access and quality of many infrastructure related activities and learning resources are among the constraints that hold back the progression of educational quality. Thus, as many of the respondents in the open ended questions replied that and the researcher witnessed, including the above aforementioned factors, poor internet access for students, there are also serious problems related with sufficiency and hygiene of toilet which will encourage students to urinate at night around the surrounding, water, power supply, lounge, transportation services and sport field problems. However, with regard to laboratories and workshops, the newly built laboratory center at Hassedela campus for engineering and technology students is a promising. Hence, it is concluded that low attempt is made in improving the quality and access of infrastructure, facilities and learning resources so that to access improved process of teaching learning and thereby enhanced educational quality.

5.3 Level of Students' Commitment and Engagement in Enhancing Educational Quality

Students are among the key stakeholders /actors/ in the process of improving educational quality. The Table 5 specifies what the practices of students look like in the study area.

Table 5: Level of Students' Commitment and Engagement in Enhancing Educational Quality

S. No	Variables	Respondents (N=165)						Sig (2-tailed)	t-value
		Teachers			Students				
		N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{tea}	N	$\bar{X}$	SD_{stu}		
1	Well preparation and motivation of students for the program they admitted	60	2.63	68	105	3.97	1.27	.02*	-3.297*
2	Interest of the learners towards the courses they learned	60	2.89	.93	105	2.86	1.22	.910	-.114
3	Engaging & committing on their studies	60	2.10	1.04	105	2.47	1.20	.621	-.500
4	Your happiness on the existing learners assessment mechanism	60	2.31	.87	105	2.28	1.23	446	.771

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
.t_{table} =1.96 df =163

From the Table 5, it is found that the mean scores (x=2.63 and 3.97 for item 1) of teachers and students respectively depicted that teachers perception towards the level of students preparation and motivation to the program they admitted was found at low level. Whereas, students perceived their level of preparation and motivation towards the program they admitted as high. Hence, mean variations were observed between the responses of the two groups as regard to preparation and motivation of students for the program/field of study/ they admitted.

It is also found that there was a statistically significant difference in the responses of teachers and students (t_{val}=-3.297, *df*= 163 at P <0.05). To expound the idea, teachers were in low level of agreement and considering the students as they were not motivated and well prepared enough. Whereas students rated themselves as they were well prepared and motivated for the program that they are admitted for.

Regarding the rest variables, as the mean values (x=2.89 and 2.86 for item 32), (x=2.10 and 2.47for item 3) and (x=2.31and 2.28for item 4) of teachers and students respectively indicate both the respondents agreed that the level of commitment, engagement, interest of students for their studies and courses were low. Besides, the feeling of both respondents regarding to the assessment mechanisms employed to date is low. The t-test also confirmed that the perception of teachers and students regarding item 2,3 and 4 have no any considerable statistically significant variations.

The result of the interview and open ended questions confirmed that there was a serious problem related to students. As discussed in table 4 of the analysis section, as some students were forcedly assigned to a given field of study, they obliged not to pay a due attention, lack of interest and commitment for studying hard and most of the time most students were observed to study when a final examination is approaching simply for the sake of having degrees. Moreover, most students in university are influenced by peers and they always tend refresh themselves with campus life with unlimited degree freedom. More to these points, the interview result made sure those restrictions the ways of approaching with students, communication skills gap, many exhibit tendencies of absenteeism, sluggishness, inability to give valuable time, and lack of concern for students' challenges. Because of these and other related socio economic factors, most students are not well prepared and motivated to the program they admitted. Hence, this assured that the response of teachers has a truth indication that students' preparation and motivation for learning in the program that they admitted is found at lower level.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers forward the following recommendations.

- Every stakeholder of the university should have an awareness of the importance of educational quality enhancement and exert their at most effort to contribute their best in the process of achieving educational quality.
- The university should communicate the goals of the institution regarding educational quality enhancement through creating training sessions so that to make the goals shared.
- Every academic unit should strengthening monitoring and evaluations mechanisms in order to recognize good practices and take corrective measures on poor practices.
- The university should improve remuneration to staff in order to increase the valuable time and the quality of services given to students and their formal jobs.

- The university should improve the educational qualifications pedagogical skill of academic staff through providing a variety of long and short trainings.
- The university in cooperation with MoE has to reconsider the admission and placement policy of students to different departments by considering the interests and choices of students so that the engagement of students can be increased.
- Recruitment of teachers should be based on their academic merit so that the most qualified candidates can be selected.

6.1 Conclusion

The practice of educational quality enhancement has now become one of the central components of reform and policy instruments to adapt higher education institutions to the increasing expectations from both internal and external stakeholders. In order institutions can cope up with the dynamic nature of educational environment, they are needed to develop the culture of enhancing educational quality practice. However, this study found that much more gaps were observed regarding educational quality promotion. Thus, on average though there were attempts made in contributing to enhance quality from the side of internal stakeholders especially from the management of the institutions, a huge gap between the expectations of stakeholders and actual practices concerning the quality and access of infrastructure, facilities and learning resource was exist. Majority of the respondents of the two groups with slight differences showed that as their level of satisfaction with most current practices being undertaken to promote educational quality was found to be low. Though there were some degrees of variation between the perceptions of the two groups of respondents, the level of students' commitment and engagement in promoting quality of education was also low.

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