

Comparative Study of the Affective Learning Environment on Students' Learning in the University and Its Affiliated Colleges

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Abstract

The study investigates the various aspects of quality education at AWKUM and GPGC Nowshera with reference to the parameters of quality of education. The researcher selected purposive sampling technique to conduct the study and selected purposive sampling technique for this case study research, so, the researcher selected 2 departments of each AWKUM and GPGC Nowshera to take samples. Finally 4 students from AWKUM, 4 students from GPGC Nowshera, 4 head of departments, 4 teachers, principal GPGC Nowshera, director academics AWKUM and controller of examinations AWKUM, i-e 19 respondents were selected as the sample of the study. The researcher used semi structured interviews schedule to conduct this research. The data obtained through observation the collected data was organized interview category wise, section wise and was grouped issue wise and analyzed using descriptive statistics and finally summarized to get findings. Conclusions of the study were: i) In quality of education "Academic" shows that director academic has more involvement in university than colleges. Both are independent in mid-term exams while university is sole body for final term. ii) In quality of education "Assessment" shows that university and colleges have both summative and formative assessment. Formative is conducted by university. On the basis of conclusions it was recommended that: i) The higher authorities may sanction a separate post of Director Academics or a Senior Most Professor may be nominated as Director Academics because the result of the study shows that Director Academic has more involvement in educational scenario. ii) University teachers' are being evaluated by QEC but in college there is no such check and balance regarding teachers academic evaluation, so it is highly recommended that Quality Enhancement Cell type department may be introduced at college level for better evaluation of the teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Education is considered to be the hub of, basic and primary sector of a society. It is meant to impart appropriate, effective and excellent information from mature to immature. It is requisite for development and directly linked with socio-economic development of a country (Arain & Munshi, 2017). The development of a society depends upon a meaningful and quality education (QE).

Education is required to pass a satisfactory and comfortable life. It is the education which gives success to achieve distinction from other nations. It provides necessary knowledge for earning a living and results in, development of the country. In the absence of quality education no system may be successful and real development will only be a nightmare. The countries providing good education to their masses have developed to maximum extent. Therefore, creative education of good quality becomes the base of such progress. Education provides skillful individuals and makes them useful to people (Arain, Arshad & Ahmed, 2019). A good education system teaches skills to the learners. Education is necessary to plan the future and lead people on the way of success. It produces the future leaders and leads the society (Memon, 2007). A society lacks leadership without necessary education. It is a fact that when educated persons led a country, it grew up to be developed.

Quality as defined by the oxford dictionary as the degree of excellence of something (lexico.com). The quality is the achievement of standards fixed when compared with other products available. It depends upon the producer as well as product. Quality depends upon the source or person delivering a product through the process of education (Tharega, 2017). The quality of a system depends as a whole on its fundamental elements like input, process and outcomes. Hence, when we analyze the quality of a system, we need to look into all three aspects.

Provision of quality education is the ultimate goal of universities (Shaheen, Ahmad & Shah, 2020). Quality training, education and service are one of the major guiding values of HEIs (Regassa, Tolemariam, Feredal, Bekele, & Lemma, 2013). The standards of quality education can be dictated by the curriculum, the institution, policy, or, any combination therein (Young, 2020). Every university tries its best to provide quality education. Higher education commission (HEC) also keeps an eye on the quality of education in higher education institutions (HEIs). Quality assurance agency (QAA) was established at HEC to provide, enhance, and assure quality of higher education across HEIs in Pakistan in 2011 (www.hec.gov.pk). Moreover, every HEC recognized HEI has established quality enhancement cell (QEC) and maintain internal quality assessment (IQA). The five key directions of quality of education are what learners bring, environment, content, process and outcomes. HEIs have quality maintenance system; the external quality is controlled by HEC. The HEC recognized HEIs have their own internal quality maintenance system working under QEC. QEC was established in 2010 at AWKUM. The universities make content and appoint teaching faculty on the guidelines provided by HEC. HEC also supervises the facilities provided at the HEIs, like laboratories and libraries to maintain their quality. Moreover the activities of research are supervised by HEC like conferences and journals and accreditations.

Teaching learning process is revolving around some aspects such as learning outcomes, critical thinking skills, appropriate teaching and learning methods, usage of information technology, equality, sustainability, child friendly environment, engagement, leadership role of a teacher, curriculum, assessment etc. Thus, if we need quality then we have to incorporate skills. These components are inter-related to student and teacher's interaction until there is no proper interaction between student and teacher, we won't be succeeded to achieve the goal of quality of education. Teachers play a vital role in education. The teacher's leadership role has an effective impact on pupils learning and growth (Epstein, et al., 2018). Through this way students can accomplish and construct their knowledge. Teacher should enhance student's creativity, innovation, critical thinking and analytical ability, if they do that then they will create wisdom.

Pakistan has been doing its best to equalize the education standards with the international world. Government of Pakistan, was anxious to make the bachelor of science (BS) degree of 4 years

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duration while commission on education 1959 recommended to equalize the degrees with international world but unluckily it could not be implemented due to students reaction. The Government of Pakistan, has announced the BS programs from 2011 but now in 2020 the 2 years degree is completely banned or renamed as associate degree. There is a great relationship between BS program and quality education. BS programs aim to develop high quality of education to promote skills, competencies and knowledge (Verecio, 2014). Quality education brings out the opportunities for BS learners and emerging techniques of research and material development in the field of education. The standards of quality education and BS programs need to be improved significantly to achieve the goals of competitiveness with international standards and to create the foundation of a knowledge and compatibility (Billingsley, 2004).

The population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 35.53 million, with 53% literacy rate. With 32 universities, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) is working as a public sector university in the province of Khyber Pakhtun Khawa (KPK) since 2009. It is chartered by KPK Government and situated at Mardan city vide letter no dated. Mardan district of KPK has 1460093 populations, with 753442 male and 706651 females, where males make 51.6% of the population (PBS, 2017)

Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) was established in 2009. It is working with four campuses and 13000 current students in central campus. It has 223 PhD faculties out of 404 teachers, 6 faculties and 34 disciplines. It has campuses and 69 affiliated colleges. It is a general university offering educational programs both in natural and social sciences. (www.awkum.com). It is fully equipped with science laboratories, libraries, auditoriums, gym, sports articles and has the cool and friendly environment. The affiliated colleges consist of public and private both types of colleges. According to the world university ranking (2020) AWKUM stands on 510th position and on first position in Pakistan. The university has first position in ranking at Pakistan level as well as KPK level. It may be considered as the best ranking university. It is a teaching as well as research university.

The Government Post graduate College (GPGC) Nowshera was established in 1956. It extends education at BS level in science and humanities disciplines. It is working with 2183 students and 87 teachers. The Nowshera city has population of 1518500 with male 781722 and 736778 female and literacy rate is 89% (PBS, 2017). It offers BS degree programs in 16 disciplines. It works on same format of AWKUM and affiliated with it since last five years. It was the first post graduate college which started four years BS program on the guide lines of HEC.

Statement of the Problem

The problem under investigation is the analysis of quality of education at BS level at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan and its affiliated colleges. The study investigates the various aspects of quality education at AWKUM and GPGC Nowshera with reference to the parameters of quality of education. This is the case study of both institutions hence the researcher investigates the institutions, their quality of education and points out further chances for improvement.

Research Question

How does the different learning environment affect students' learning in the University and its affiliated colleges?

Delimitation of the study

Keeping in view the time factor and financial barrier, the study was delimited to Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) and (GPGC) Nowshera affiliated college.

Research Methodology

This research study is a multiple case study of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, (AWKUM), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its affiliated colleges where Government Post Graduate College (GPGC), Nowshera represents the affiliated colleges. This study investigated AWKUM and GPGCN in depth in sense of provision of quality of education to the students. It studied the various parameters of input, process and outcomes of quality education system. It studied the quality of resources, teachers, students, assessment and curricula in force. This study selected interview schedule as the research tool. The data was conducted from the respondents by arranging face to face (F2F) interviews. The data was gathered from the sources, grouped, analyzed and findings was drawn and recommendations were made for solution of the issues.

Population

The Population of the study is consists of all the students of BS at AWKUM 9368 and 2183 students of GPGCN who have completed 4 semesters and studying in 5th semester , 404 teachers of AWKUM and 35 teachers of GPGC, as well as HoDs of both institutions and controller of examinations AWKUM (Director Admission AWKUM and Principal GPGC Nowshera).

Sampling Technique

The present research is multiple case study and the sampling technique suitable for case studies may be purposive sampling. Hence, the researcher selected purposive sampling technique to conduct the study (Gay, L.R, 2008)

Sample

The researcher selected purposive sampling technique for this case study research, in which size of sample depends upon the knowledge of the researcher who knows better about the suitability of the sample taken may be proper. Hence, the researcher selected 2 departments of each AWKUM and GPGC Nowshera to take samples. Finally 4 students AWKUM, 4 students from GPGC Nowshera, 4 head of departments, 4 teachers, principal GPGC Nowshera, director academics AWKUM and controller of examinations AWKUM, i-e 19 respondents were selected as the sample of the study.

Research instrument

The researcher used semi structured interview schedule to conduct this research. This type of instrument would help to get the data in depth and provide required information.

Data collection procedure

The primary data was conducted through the interview schedule from students, teachers, HoDs, the controller of examinations, by arranging face to face interviews, while the secondary data will be conducted from annual reports, official records, education policies and related sources.

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The researcher arranged face to face interviews with the respondent i.e administrators, teachers and students. The open-form interview schedule presented to the interviewees and the required data would be obtained. The secondary data will be obtained by observation, reports, and relevant documents.

Data analysis procedure

The data obtained through observation the collected data was organized interview category wise, section wise and was grouped issue wise and analyzed using descriptive statistics and finally summarized to get findings.

Theoretical Framework

The current study follows grounded theory (GT) of research; the founders of this theory were Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss who gave this theory in 1967.

Grounded Theory

GT of research represents qualitative research. It better presents ethnographic and interview studies. It helps the researchers to reach theoretical results and guides during the whole process. This theory is helpful in collection and analysis of qualitative data. GT is an inductive, comparative methodology that provides systematic guidelines for gathering, synthesizing, analyzing and conceptualizing data for the purpose of theory (Charmaz, 2001). The researchers worked further on this theory and tried to replace flaws and make it more practical. GT was re-envisioned and revised by constructivists to make it more flexible, widely adoptable than before (Charmaz, 2010).

In GT the research is based on questions and begins with a broad query about a specific topic, followed by collection of relevant information. According to Elizabeth & Laura (2016) the data is collected and each piece of information is reviewed, compared and contrasted with other information, similarities and dissimilarities categorize the data and finally the theory is inductively developed that explains the observations. GT is widely acceptable in qualitative research where the ethnographic studies are collected through interview schedule. However, equally used in case studies or interview studies.

The term GT was used by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in their book "The Discovery of Grounded Theory" in 1967. It is the constant comparison process which is used by researchers in collection and analysis of data. According to Given (2008) GT is so named because the end product, or theory, is grounded in data. This theory is the social psychological examination of a social scene. GT makes a constant comparison of relevant settings, by record keeping and coding data, comparing with existing data and sorting out the element as in the development of GT.

The background of GT is connected with Strauss who was a survey researcher, and gave GT, a systematic approach, positivist and procedural language. Objectivists' GT assures the reality of an external world, takes for granted a neutral observer, views categories as derived from data and sees representative of data and subjects as non-problematic. Constructivists prioritize studied phenomenon over study methods and uses GT as tool not as prescriptions and acknowledge the researchers' role in interpreting data and creating categories. The techniques used in three major GT strategies are coding, memo making and theoretical sampling.

The GT also gives a particular method for content analysis. Cohn, Manion & Morrison (2007) described the whole process of content analysis in the light of GT. They highlighted the eleven steps involved in the process as; defining research questions, defining the population, sampling, context of generation of document, defining units of analysis, conduct coding and categorizing data, data analysis, summarizing and making speculative inferences.

Quality

The term quality is widely used by service providers, consumers or other people and many definitions of quality exist, but the experts have not reached to an accurate definition that may be acceptable for various groups. Hence, no consensus on definition of quality is found, yet. Quality as defined by Cambridge online dictionary is the degree of excellence of something, often a high degree of it; or how good or how bad something is ([cambridge.org](https://www.cambridge.org)). This quality may be qualitative or numerical, physical, formal or abstract. The definition given by the oxford dictionary is somewhat different. The standard of something when it is compared to other things like it: how good or bad something is ([oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com)). Here, the quality is being measured by the existing similar things available in the market. As the consumer who intends to use the product, compares the quality of available similar things from different aspects. Defining quality and giving a widely acceptable definition has been a difficult task, quality has been variously defined but fairly understood because of its complexity (Tharega, 2017). The question arises, how to define the term quality? Quality is an elusive term, having variety of interpretations that depend upon the views of different stakeholders (Bobby, 2014). The stakeholders are already clarified; the four groups of stakeholders to be considered while defining quality: fund providers; users of products; users of output and employer and employees of the (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2003). The donors or funding partner has the right to demand what type of product he wants to produce. Secondly, the consumer or users' demand has importance; what is quality of the product near him? Then, the persons related with production or outcomes like marketing persons and sellers better know the market demands. Finally, the employees and employer itself want to produce such products which may have quality and market demand. Hence, none of the above stakeholders groups can be ignored.

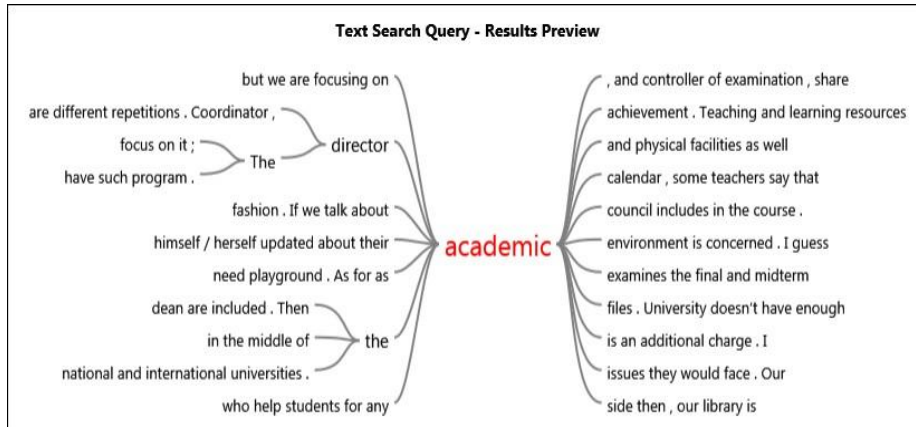
According to Elshaer (2012) quality is a set of inherent characteristics, consistently fulfills the continuously changing requirements of the organization or customers and other stakeholders. Hence, it is the state of characteristics of the product that fulfills or beats the consumers' intensions. Sometimes, the quality is used in physical sense but other time its work or use is analyzed for quality sense. The educationalists use the word in delivery of education, process and product. According to Iqbal, Hassan & Ali (2018) quality was a term with multidimensional meanings and scopes that varied from context to context and person to person. The users of word quality have various dimensions of quality in their mind; hence the definitions given by various groups of persons are different. Elken & Stensaker (2018) defined the quality as the degree of satisfaction to an attribute or requirement of an entity such as process, product or service, comparison of inherent characteristics with set of requirements and the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements. It is the level of satisfaction of the consumer. The quality may also be defined as the state of a process, product or service that supersedes the requirements of the consumer, comparing it with the similar and available things. However, quality may be taken in two ways; as a product or service that is to satisfy needs, and a product or service that is free of deficiencies (Budiharso & Tarman, 2021). Whenever, we discuss the quality of a product the consumers demand comes on first step. The

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product which is being produced needs consumers and if it does not fulfill the customers or users needs, the quality becomes useless. The product is produced is not substandard and free of deficiencies, so that it may meet the stakeholders demands. The consumer also equates the quality of a product with market price. He intends to find such characteristics in minimum price. However, it has to beat the expectations of the consumer and fulfill more dimensions than the others to qualify as a quality product, process or service. The word quality leads out thinking to a faultless, durable and standard thing or operation. However, quality is difficult to understand completely and reaching a consensus with some characteristics. We may reach a better definition when we pick various points of intention of different experts. According to Juran (1994) quality is fitness for use of anything, conformance to requirements (Crosby, 1980) and the totality of characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy and implied need (ISO, 8402). Here, the fitness of use or customers requirement is preferred, as the use of such product may solve his problem more than his expectations. Moreover, the satisfaction of the consumer keeps its own importance. After above review the definition given by Elshaer (2012) seems suitable, who defined quality as a situation when a set of inherent characteristics consistently fulfill the continuously changing requirements of the organization's customers and other stakeholders. The quality may not be measured in a common way for various product areas. Every field has stress on its own related aspect but; it is clear that quality of every product may have some common quality dimensions. The quality is connected with various dimensions of consumers requirements, as the core of quality is consumers' expectations (Budiharso & Tarman, 2021). Quality is a holistic term, having many dimensions (Weststkyelm, 2007). The quality is measured by the dimensions and the when more than half or basic dimensions are fulfilled the system under consideration comes in class of quality. The dimensions of quality were firstly given by Garvin still accepted as base to analyze the quality.

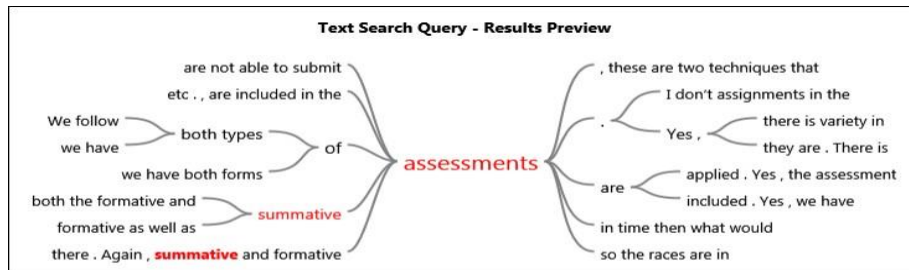
Visualization of "Academic" Word Tree

- In university director academic, while in colleges coordinators are looking after academic matter.
- Teaching learning resources and library facilities are more in university.
- Dean is the academic head in university.
- Final examination is conducted by controller of examination although he is not permanent, having additional charge.
- Mid-term exams are conducted by both institutions independently.
- University has better linkage with international and national universities, helping students for placement in international universities.
- In case of administrative staff like controller of examination and director academic etc. have additional charge in the university.
- Physical facilities are better in university as compared to colleges.



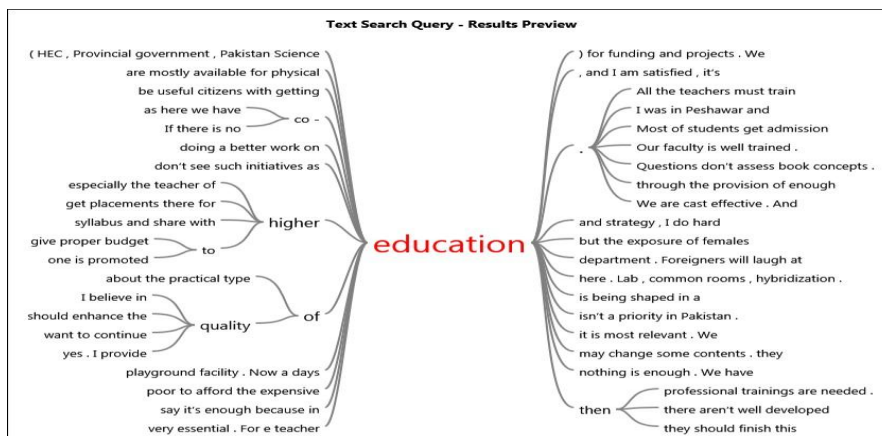
Visualization of “Assessment” Word Tree

- Both types of assemst formative and summative have conducted
- Assignment are also given on various topics.
- During process or sememster formative assessment conducted.



Visualization of “Education” Word Tree

- Educational facilities are better in university
- HEC provide funding for research projects
- Provide scholarships to faculty development
- Expenditure in mode of fee is more in university as compared in colleges.

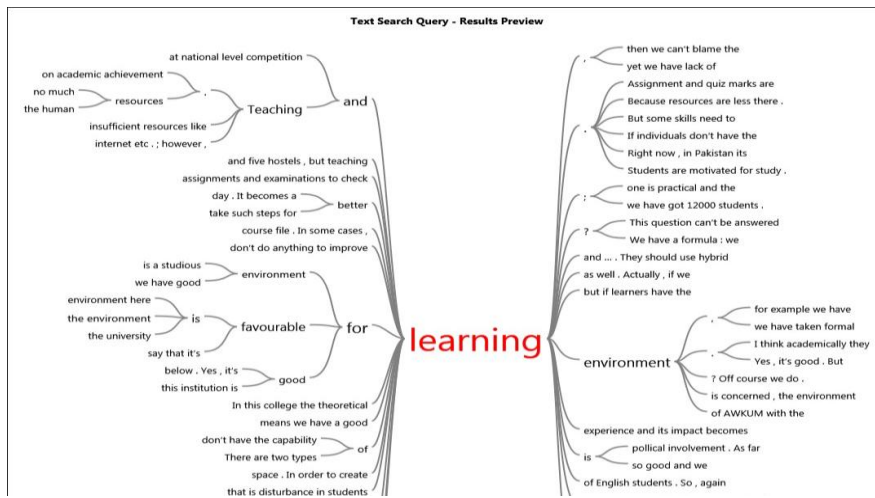


Visualization of “Learning” Word Tree

- Learning environment is but no proper facility of internet.
- Space is insufficient

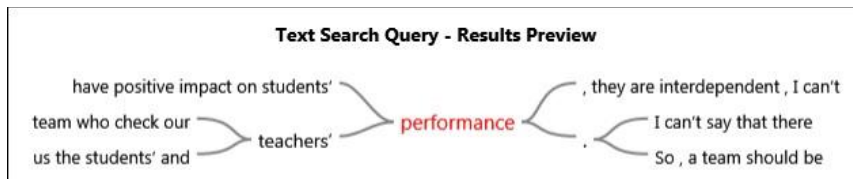
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- English department is overburden
- Language lab is not available.



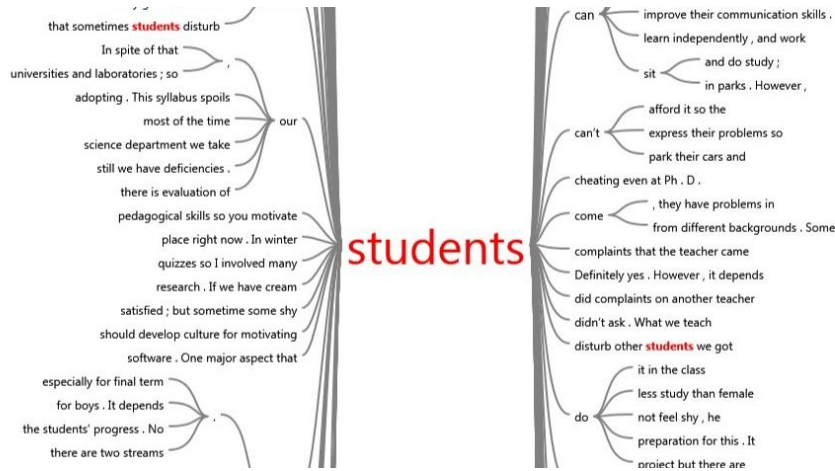
Visualization of "Performance" Word Tree

- Performance of student or teacher is not properly checked during semester.
- If properly both teacher and students are monitored performance can be enhanced



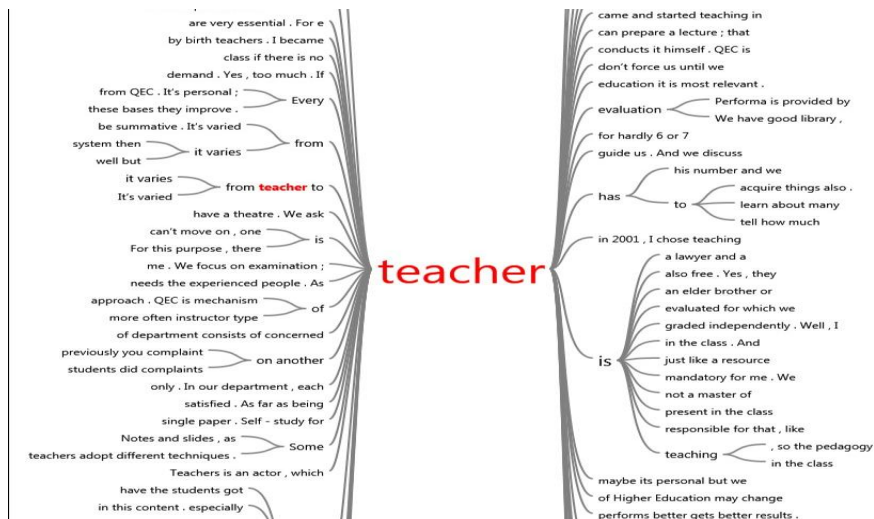
Visualization of "Students" Word Tree

- Majority of students have weak academic background
- Classes are over crowded
- If some one complaint his/her grievances are not properly addressed.
- There is a shortage of essential equipment
- Majority of teachers take no pain for the satisfaction of the students.



Visualization of “Teacher” Word Tree

- Teacher instruct properly
- However certain terminologies are not properly explained
- Reacher teacher guide properly and try to satisfied the students.
- However only majority of teacher stress on quantity instead of quality



FINDINGS

Findings of the study were:

“Learning”

Learning was the most crucial component of quality of education. The result searches using (NVIVO-11) has confirmed the importance of learning with 34 text units with 0.05% for AWKUM and 13 text units with 0.20% of coverage for Affiliated colleges.

“Student”

Students theme was one of the important factor of quality education. The result searches using (NVIVO-11) has confirmed the significant of student with 183 text units and 2.01% for AWKUM and 78 text units with 1.59% of coverage for Affiliated colleges.

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“Teacher”

The theme teacher was concerned as an eminent aspect of quality education. The result searches using (NVIVO-11) has confirmed the importance of teacher with 37 text units with 0.36% for AWKUM and 23 text units with 0.41% of coverage for affiliated colleges.

“Education”

The theme education was referred the vital element of quality of education. The result searches using (NVIVO-11) has confirmed the value of education with 11 text units and 0.14% for AWKUM and 10 text units with 0.23% of coverage for affiliated colleges.

“Academic”

Academic was judged to be a very important factor of quality education. The result of searches using (NVIVO-11) has also confirmed the importance of this very theme with 07 text units with 0.08 for AWKUM and 04 text unit with 0.08% of coverage for Affiliated Colleges in the interviews.

“Performance”

Performance was considered the important component of quality of education. The result of searches using (NVIVO-11) has also confirmed the importance of performance with 1 text unit with 0.02% of coverage for AWKUM and 2 text units with 0.06% of coverage for affiliated colleges.

“Assessments”

Assessment was considered to be an important component of quality education. The result of searches using (NVIVO-11) has also confirmed the importance of assessment with 11 text units with 0.15% for AWKUM and 5 text units with 0.13% of coverage for affiliated colleges.

Conclusions

Conclusions of the study were:

- In quality of education “Academic” shows that director academic has more involvement in university than colleges. Both are independent in mid-term exams while university is sole body for final term.
- In quality of education “Assessment” shows that university and colleges have both summative and formative assessment. Formative is conducted by university.
- In quality of education “Education” refers as the university has more educational facility due to HEC funding and fee structure.
- In quality of education “Learning” university and colleges have no language lab but university has maximum facilities of learning.
- In quality of education theme “Performance” indicates there is no strict check and balance on students and teachers performance.
- In quality of education theme “students” indicates that there are a lot pf barriers for students to meet quality of education.
- In quality of education theme “Teacher” concerns with proper instructions, hence some terminologies and updated knowledge are being required for them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The higher authorities may sanction a separate post of Director Academics or a Senior Most Professor may be nominated as Director Academics because the result of the study shows that Director Academic has more involvement in educational scenario.
- Latest technologies may be introduced at college level also, as highlighted from the result of the present study that colleges have not latest technologies which increase the interest of the students.
- University teachers' are being evaluated by QEC but in college there is no such check and balance regarding teachers academic evaluation, so it is highly recommended that Quality Enhancement Cell type department may be introduced at college level for better evaluation of the teachers.
- The results of the study revealed that university has well equipped and well-furnished labs, while colleges are in lack of lab facility. Both Federal and Provincial Govt may try to facilitate colleges with modern labs.
- The faculty of the college may try to improve their qualifications, because the more qualified faculty of the universities provides more quality education.
- Continuous training or refresher trainings may be attended by both college and university teachers to produce quality education.
- Further researches may include modes of education in the present scenario as it has great impact on quality of education.
- Further researches may be conducted at elementary and secondary level that teachers may better know about the term of quality education.

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