Chapter 11
Evaluating Higher Education Institutions through Agency and Resource–Capabilities Theories:
A Model for Measuring the Perceived Quality of Service

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this chapter is to explain through the agency theory and theory of resources and capacities as is the process of assessment in higher education institutions. A model is presented to measure the perception of service quality by students of the Technological Institute of Celaya, as part of the system of quality control, based on the theoretical support of several authors who have developed this topic (SERVQUAL and SERPERF) an instrument adapted to the student area of the institution called SERQUALITC is generated. The paper presents the areas or departments to assess and the convenient size, the number of items used by size and Likert scale, the validation study instrument is mentioned. Finally, it is presented the model that poses a global vision of quality measurement process including corrective action services that enable continuous improvement.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of organization is also considered synonymous with business, so that it can be said about a variety of types of organizations including educational institutions. Although each one of these differ from the purposes for which they exist, the members who compose and interests they serve. There are also points of convergence. Higher education institutions (HEI) as well as other organizations are

guided by human action, have a culture of their own and are geared to meet the objectives. Given the new scenarios of competition among educational institutions there is a need to incorporate evaluation as a linked element to the loss of confidence of the State with regard to the social function of the HEIs putting at the center of the debate the quality of education they offer? That is when assessment policies arise while funding is enshrined in this process.

Understand how the HEIs function, requires an organizational analysis, also explains how implementing strategies to maintain educational quality. The agency theory can reflect on the governance of higher education institutions and how it operates in the management and performance that is given to the institution. Governance means the relationship between several participants to manage and evaluate the performance of institutions. Moreover, the theory based on the resources and capabilities is linked to agency theory and both help to understand how senior managers or directors exercise decision-making, in this particular case, the use of resources to maintain and position the HEIs as successful organizations in the field of education.

BACKGROUND

According to Fernandez (2005) from the national crisis in economic matters there is a restriction of public funding for the social sectors, including the universities. The demand generated a strong diversification of university and non-university HEIs. During the 1990s it was generated in most of the Latin American concerns over the issue of university quality, so they were creating agencies for evaluation and accreditation. In the agency theory alluded to corporate governance. In this case, it speaks of university governance, which according to Casanova and Rodriguez (1999) provides descriptive and analytical ability to integrate the variety of processes that are articulated in the management exercise of the university (p. 15). In other words, it covers the relationships between the different actors and agents that influence the decisions that they drive to the institutions.

The agents that make university governance in the HEIs are operating strategies to have quality in each of their activities, and at the same time continue to get funding. The success that have agents in implementing strategies will be determined by the ability of these possess when designing the organizational structure, evaluate the performance of staff, and the consolidation of the culture of the organization. Sander (1989) systematized four criteria that reflect the historical development of educational administration, and explicitly illustrate the great influence of the currents arising from business management in practice and analysis of education:

1. Profitability, nourished by so-called scientific management.
2. Performance based on the current human relationships.
3. Adaptability, founded in the current organizational development.
4. Relevance, which is related to the social sciences and cultural.

The changes generated in the HEIs, such as educational expansion, diversification of institutions and overcrowding, highlight the introduction of the issues of evaluation and quality improvement. Alongside, this requires managers to recognize the institution strategic management as a measure which will facilitate managing the use of the physical and human resources to achieve its objectives.

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