The Effect of Co-creation of Value on Service Quality-Customer Loyalty Chain and the Role of Relationship Quality in Higher Education Institutions

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This study investigated the causal relationship of co-creation of value with service quality, attitudinal loyalty and relationship quality in a higher education context. It also investigated the relationship between service quality and relationship quality and attitudinal loyalty. The data was gathered from 818 students of public and private universities from major cities of Pakistan. A multidimensional model was tested through SEM using AMOS 24. The foremost insight is that co-creation is a powerful paradigm that shape the attitudinal disposition, permeates into the quality evaluations of services as well as influence the assessments of the quality of relationship of students with Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). Additionally, the results ratify that service quality is a strong antecedent of relationship quality and improved attitudinal makeup which manifests in positive future intentions of patronage by the students. Implications, limitations and future research are discussed.

Keywords: Co-creation of value; service quality; relationship quality; attitudinal loyalty; Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Higher Education sector is witnessing an unprecedented growth. It is estimated that by the end of 2019 there will be more than 16000 universities across 180 countries enrolling approximately 125 million students. This number is expected to double by 2025, reaching 262 million, where most of the growth is expected in South Asia. This increased demand is primarily owing to the proverbial "youth bulge" where more than sixty percent of the population is under the age of twenty four years mostly belonging to the middle class who is looking for a better financial future through skill based learning. This trend is more pronounced in Pakistan where the number for HEIs increased from 75 in 2004 to 192 in 2019 with a total enrolment of 1.41 million students in undergraduate and post graduate programs.

This proliferation in the higher education sector has led to immense competition in the higher education industry where HEIs from both the public and the private sector

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¹https://www.whed.net/home.php

 $^2 https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/SWOP\%202014\%20 fact\%20 sheet\%20-\%20 Youth\%20 in\%20 ASIA.pdf$

³https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/universities/pages/recognised.aspx

have been focusing on improving their quality in order to attain higher number of applicants, retaining existing ones and building a superior image in relation to the competitive offering (Carvalho & Mota, 2010; Clemes, Cohen & Wang, 2013). Compounded by the decreased funding and complete reliance on student fees to sustain, HEIs are now more driven towards market-orientation and treating students as customers matching their needs with improved offerings, creating enabling learning platforms, fostering relationships thereby striving to develop deeper attitudinal fortitude and favourable behavioural responses (Eagle & Brennan, 2007; Gruber et al., 2010; Musselin, 2018). Creating and sustaining superior quality and customer loyalty in academia has indeed become a source of competitive advantage and profitability (Rojas-Mendez, Vasquez-Parraga, Kara & Cerda-Urrutia, 2009; Ryu & Han, 2010). Lately, researchers have been of the view that service quality-customer loyalty chain should be viewed through its antecedents which are characterised as 'environmental,' 'transformational,' 'relational,' 'value-driven' and center-staging the customers (Dabholkar, Shepherd & Thorpe, 2000; Torres, 2014; Ostrom, Parasuraman, Bowen, Patricio & Voss, 2016).

Barnett (2011) deems students as a protagonist of the service eco-system especially in higher education context Dill and Soo (2005), Dicker, Garcia, Kelly and Mulrooney (2018) have emphasised the importance of co-creation paradigm for progressive learning and enduring productive outcomes not only for the students but also for the universities. The notion and practice of co-creation of value has a strong bearing on students' quality assessments, relationship with the university, attitudinal makeup and behavioural response towards the university which remains unexplored and posit a gap for both the academicians and practitioners (Akareem & Hossain, 2016; Ranjan & Read, 2014). This implication for considering co-creation of value in service quality-relationship, quality-customer loyalty research has been emphasised by Edvardsson, Tronvoll and Gruber (2010), Torres (2014), Oertzen, Odekerken-Schröder, Braxand Mager (2018) as reflections of Oliver's (1997) view point, in incorporating the dynamic and adaptive elements of service exchanges, actors, roles, relationships and other organisational ecological factors that have an impact on the cognitive and hedonic evaluation of services in a social milieu. Jaakkola, Helkkula and Aarikka-Stenroos (2015) and Oertzen et al. (2018) stress that the impact of these operant and operand resources determines customer value, interpreted contextually and collectively and which permeates across several realms of the organisational life. Likewise, Duque (2014) and Armstrong and Johnston (2016) proposed that future studies should model co-creation onto service performance evaluations, include loyalty as a consequence of satisfaction and explore the relationship of other enduring and relational elements in the service exchange. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to understand the relationship of co-creation of value with respect to the service quality-customer loyalty chain and relationship quality by conjecturing relationships and testing them through structural equation modelling.

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. Co-creation of Value

For the last two decades, the concept of co-creation of value (CCV) has generated significant interest and development in the service literature. Grounded in Service-Dominant (SD) logic, an extension of Goods Dominant logic (GD), co-creation of value is defined as"

the joint creation of value by the company and the customer; allowing the customers to coconstruct the service experience to suit their context" (Prahalad & Ramaswamy; 2000). Service dominant logic is a social constructionist theory where the underlying idea is that services are form of activities that when configured in combination with the receiver's competencies, leads to more efficient processes and superior benefit or value for the receiver and in reciprocity benefits the provider (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). It is considered as a corporate strategy that is orchestrated to involve the organisation and its stakeholders with the customer to co-create the products and services that deliver the desired value to the customer (Prahalad & Ramaswamy; 2000). In later publications Ramaswamy and Gouillart (2010), Ramaswamy and Ozcan (2014) have reiterated the increasingly engaged role of customers in the value creation process and stressed that co-creation of value is an organisation's wide framework, a holistic systemic approach, built on multiple engagement platforms that enable value creation processes with and for the customer in organisations. For them, the organisation is a selfinnovating, living organism that continuously strives to co-create value for the betterment of the user, the organisation and its stakeholders. In this regard, these authors redefined the concept by stating that "co-creation is a joint creation and evolution of value with stakeholders, intensified and enacted through platforms of engagements, virtualised and emergent from ecosystems of capabilities, and actualised and embodied in domains of experiences, expanding wealth-welfare-wellbeing" (Ramaswamy & Oscan, 2014). The later discourse on CCV stressed on the operant sources as a basis of exchange where operand resources have been considered as mere 'facilitators' for service delivery. These resources or inputs do not have value as such rather their integration, configuration and use create value for the customer i.e., the value-in-use (Vargo, Maglio & Akaka, 2008). Ballantyne and Varey (2006) and Neghina, Caniels, Bloemer and Birgelen (2015) consider operant resources as normative and substantive, rooted in direct interactions in a specific social setup that determines the outcome value. From a 'social construction' point of view, value is determined as collective and inter-subjective phenomena and is considered as 'value-in-social-context'; where, some authors have drawn similar analogy for students in HEIs (Islam, Agarwal & Ikeda, 2015).

The creation of value is manifested through mutual and reciprocal interactions and exchanges built upon mutually engaging iterative episodes and situations where each party in the exchange relationship influences the other (McColl-Kennedy, Vargo, Dagger, Sweeney, & Van Kasteren, 2012; Vargo & Lusch, 2008). For organisations, customers' involvement during the co-creation in specific forms during several intertwined phases of the service processes and interactions offer an opportunity to influence value assessments by the customer (Edvardsson et al., 2011; Gronroos, 2010). Gronroos and Voima (2013) consider value-in-use as a psychological development through tangible, cognitive and possessive actions taken by the customer, and therefore value is determined not phenomenologically but is experientially and contextually perceived. The temporal, physical, and social aspects of co-creation practices pervades into the cogno-emotive reshaping of the value assessments of other facets of the organisation as well. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between co-creation of value with service quality evaluations, attitudinal loyalty, and relationship quality along with conceptualising the relationships between service quality, relationship quality and attitudinal loyalty.

1.1.2. Co-creation of Value and Service Quality

The research on co-creation of value shows that the value customer receives or the 'value-in-use' is highly symbolic, subjective in nature, culturally driven emerged through recurrent participatory interactions. These processes and activities signify incremental effect on the satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the customer with the outcomes (Edvardsson et al., 2011; Galvagno & Dalli, 2014; Holbrook & O'Shaughnessy, 1988; Oertzen et al., 2018). Gronroos and Voima (2013) have been of the view that co-creation experience can influence customers' perceptions about the products and services, the organisation itself including its constituents that ultimately determines their repurchase intentions. The effect can be positive if value co-creation is deemed constructive. Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel and Gutman (1985) and Bitner, Brown and Mueter (2000) have emphasised that value in service-based organisations is intrinsic where quality, quantity, benefits and features are co-created. Based on expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm, service quality is assessed by comparing expectations versus experience to arrive at an overall judgment of the service quality which are abstract and malleable in nature (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1994; Zeithaml, 1988). The co-creation manifestation is likely to modify or create 'quality perceptions' related to goods and services mutually conceived and produced. Zhang, Tong, Demirel, Duffy, Yih & Bidassie (2015) in their study of healthcare services state that "co-creation of value acts as a medium for patients to engage in defining what good service should be and, in this way, both patients and doctors create value of service together" (p.205). Gronroos and Voima (2013) and Tari-Kasnakoglu (2016) opined that co-creation is likely to positively influence customers evaluations of service quality since co-created services can satisfy personal needs better, offer superior customer-service fit, creates sense of ownership, and develops appreciation of the outcome quality. HEI scan take into account the central role of students by involving them and actively seeking their inputs in various university processes and activities can lead to self- efficacy, symbolic depictions of the self, belongingness and personal gratitude towards the outcome (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ribes-Giner, Perello-Marin & Diaz, 2016). It is quite likely that students who are successfully involved in the co-creation of value are likely to appreciate the service quality and therefore it is hypothesised that:

H1: Co-creation of value positively affects service quality evaluations in HEIs.

1.1.3. Co-creation of Value—Attitudinal Loyalty

Previous research shows that co-creation in organisations results in increased self-esteem, enhanced citizenship behaviour, pleasurable feelings, enjoyment in kinship, increased engagement in organisational activities, feelings of empowerment, and appreciation of the value-in-use (Humpreys & Grayson, 2008; Ranjan & Read, 2014; Oertzen et al., 2018). Gronroos and Voima (2013) offered a more analytical view by positing that penetrating into the customer sphere by the organisation along with the other stakeholders has psychological bearings on the customers' cogno-emotive makeup encompassing aspects of the intellectual and affective functions. Based on consumer cognitive psychology theories, Rauyruen and Miller (2007) define attitudinal loyalty as "customer's psychological attachment and attitudinal advocacy towards the organisation" (p.25). Reprising Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974) and O'Reilly & Chatman

(1986) studies of attitudinal shift, successful co-creation results in altered belief structures, thoughts, and values that depict internalisation of organisational values and practices which leads to sense of belongingness, and appreciation of the association with the host organisations. These belief structures are the building blocks of attitudinal loyalty (Dick & Basu, 1994) and indeed represent attitude manifested behaviour (Fishbien & Ajzen, 1967). This leads to the fact that co-creation not only acts positively on the global attitudes but also transforms the attitude towards behaviour (better outcomes, lesser costs) appreciation and motivation (through the subjective norms) and better perceived behavioural control (access to more resources and opportunities for carrying out behaviour) in determining the overall probability of intentions towards the behaviour (Medden, Ellen & Ajzen, 1992). Hart, Smith, Sparks and Tzokas (1999) view communality and aggregation of positive attitude toward behaviour across numerous activities as core constituents in shaping overall attitude towards the organisation and its multifarious dimensions. Authors who have applied organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and participatory tendencies concepts to the students in higher education have suggested that co-creation may lead to student advocacy, positive word-of-mouth and recommendation of the program and courses to other students, and have feelings of pleasure and emotional connection with the university (Elsharnouby, 2015; Khalid, Rahman, Madar, & Ismail, 2013; Mazen, Herman, & Ornstein, 2008). Thus, co-creation of value in universities is likely to result in positive attitudinal shift ingrained in favourable evaluative cognitions, satisfying affective response and overall a positive rhetoric among students. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H₂: Co-creation of value positively affects attitudinal loyalty in HEIs.

1.1.4. Co-creation of Value and Relationship Quality

Co-creation of value is considered as an organisational effort which is composed of tangible and intangible assets in the form of skills, knowledge and physical resources to primarily benefit the customer (Barney, Ketchen & Wright, 2011; Mahoney & Pandian, 1992; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). From the theory of growth of firm (Penrose, 1959) to the S-D logic (Vargo, 2006; Vargo & Lusch, 2004), the basic premise is that it is the network of actors who are intertwined in a web of information and knowledge sharing, mutual and reciprocal exchanges, formal and informal interactions, committed towards creating a superior value which acts as a catalyst in giving access to the organisational resources (Penrose, 1959; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The epicentre of co-creation is the strength and depth of customer ties and relationships with the members of organisation and its stakeholders (Yli-Renko, Autio, & Sapienza, 2001). Co-creation leads to increased involvement and engagement especially at the relational level where increased knowledge and skills gained (cognitive), enjoyments from mutual interactions and activities (hedonic), recognition and achievement (self-esteem), motivate the customers to continue their contribution in the relationship. From the social exchange perspective (Homans, 1961; Blau, 1964), the personal, economic and social outcomes of these relationships are considered as 'rewards' which lead to increased trust, companionship, commitment and feelings of esteem and pleasure which are the main attributes of relationship quality (Hennig-Thurau & Klee; 1997; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Omar, Kassim, Nazri, & Sidek, 2018). Weidman, Twale and Stein (2001), and

Varleye's (2015) studies highlight the fact that successful co-creation reduces anxiety, increases trust and confidence in the host organisations, leads to active acquisition and sharing of knowledge and skills both intellectually and normatively, induces continuous commitment to perform tasks and roles effectively, and leads to admiration and appreciation of the relational exchanges. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H₃: Co-creation of value positively effects relationship quality in HEIs.

1.1.5. Service Quality-Relationship Quality

Several prominent authors consider service quality as a natural antecedent of relationship quality (Athanasopoulou, 2009; Crosby et al. 1990, Morgan & Hunt, 1984; Wong &Sohal. 2002. Chakrabarty, Whitten and Green (2008) study in the IT industry ratify that service organisations when improved their service quality, earned improved quality of relationships with their customers. Gummerus, Johanna, Koskull and Kowalkowski (2017) in their review conclude that service quality is indeed one of the most significant 'hygiene factors' in predicting the quality of relationship in dyads, groups and organisations. Decades ago, Gummesson (1987) theorised that relationship quality can be understood as an accumulated value received overtime by experiencing and evaluating different facets of the organisation. In particular, the perceived quality of products and services through iterative episodic judgments determines satisfaction, trust and value. Crosby et al. (1990) elaborated this relationship by suggesting that the presence of tangible and intangible aspects in the conceptualisation of service quality affects relationship quality. In further elaboration, researchers posit that service quality comprises aspects such as the physical evidence as well as the relational and interactional aspects, also referred as a process quality, that affect relationship quality, and relationship quality encompasses holistic and global judgments through its technical, psycho-social and economic factors (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Holmlund, 2001). Both the American model (Parasuraman et al., 1994) and the Nordic model (Gronroos, 1994; Storbacka, Strandvik & Gronroos, 1994) emphasise the superiority of functional (process) quality vis-à-vis the outcome (technical) quality. In addition, Gronroos (1994) and Storbacka et al. (1994) posited that the reiteration of episodic level service quality experience leads to a more holistic and transformational relationship. Recently, in a higher education context, Teeroovengadum, Kamalanabhan and Seebaluck (2016) further elaborated the fact that transformative quality is embedded in compassion, empowerment and involvement which are inherent to the functional aspects of the service quality construct.

The early literature shows that service quality has been the most ubiquitous antecedent of second order construct of relationship quality i.e., satisfaction, trust and commitment as highlighted in the Helson's (1948) adaptation theory, Festinger's (1957) discourse on cognitive dissonance as well as in Oliver's (1980) critical analysis of satisfaction and loyalty models. Cardozo (1965), Engel and Blackwell (1982) and Howard and Sheth (1969) viewed satisfaction from the expectancy-confirmation/disconfirmation paradigm and believed that the reduction in expectation and performance gap led to positive attitudes and increased satisfaction. Researchers have been of the opinion that service quality perceptions are of critical importance especially in experiential and credence services where increased level of service quality results in reduced perceived risk and uncertainty in a relationship (Hsieh & Hiang, 2004; Reisinger & Waryszack; 1996; Teas, 1993). The initial stages of the relationship in a credence context are critical in terms of building consumer trust and their decision for continued commitment where

the role of consistent and superior service quality is deemed as of profound importance (Ostrom & Iacobucii, 1995). Holmlund (2001) and Hsieh and Hiang (2004) have been of the opinion that apart from the outcome quality, the expertise, professionalism, empathy and compassion carry deeper interpersonal meaning in establishing value-laden relationships. Consequently, higher education, a credence context, offers an opportunity to the management, faculty and staff to positively influence the quality of relationships with the students by offering desired service quality experience. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H₄: Service quality perceptions affect relationship quality in HEIs.

1.1.6. Service Quality-Attitudinal Loyalty

Service quality perceptions are formed on the basis of direct experience and the evaluations are based on prior expectations. The confirmation of expectations vis-à-vis the perception leads to post-experience judgements or evaluations. Repeated experiences lead to the strong formation of either positive or negative evaluations i.e., the consumer attitude. Service quality is primarily based on cognitive theoretical perspective and in its classic nature, its conceptualisation is 'analytic' i.e. service quality, to a large extent, is 'symbolic' and part 'significant input which is internalised for processing in consumer decision making (Blythe, 2013; Howard & Sheith, 1969; Loudon & Della-Bitta, 1993). This perspective of service quality perceptions highlights value driven 'psychological measurement' and 'analysis of expert judgemental evaluating the evidence that eventually translates into obscure judgements (predisposition)and reflects cognitive and affective aspects of attitude formation (Anderson, 1973; Nesset, 2011). These preferences or the predisposition overtime leads to the formation of attitudinal loyalty towards products and services as they are experienced (Day, 1969; Jacoby & Kyner, 1973). Parasuraman et al. (1986) believed service quality perceptions as a customer judgment and Zeithaml (1988) deemed it as 'similar to the attitude.' Previous research in attitudinal loyalty shows that as an input variable, such as service quality, is significantly related to the formation of attitudinal loyalty in the students of universities (Ali, Zhou, Hussain, Nair & Ragavan, 2015; Belwal & Amireh, 2018). Therefore, it can be proposed that:

H₅: Service quality affects attitudinal loyalty in HEIs.

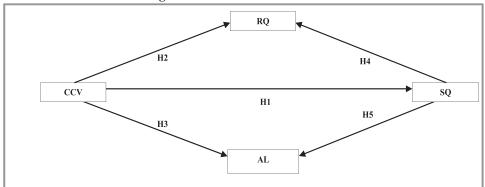


Figure 1: The Theoretical Model*

*Note: CCV = Co-creation of Value; SQ = Service Quality; RQ = Relationship Quality; AL = Attitudinal Loyalty.

2. METHODS

Creswell (2009) has suggested that for causal relationships between constructs that intend to discover directional influence, a positivist approach is considered appropriate for deductive reasoning based on theoretical priori. Therefore, the research design is causal and is based on using questionnaire based survey technique employing constructs as depicted in the theoretical model and data analysis through linear regression. In addition, this study is cross-sectional in nature where data is to be obtained from 'more than one' subject (sample) as the intent is to study variation in responses for each variable in the conceptual framework. The unit of analysis is the 'individual' who is student of bachelors and masters' program in a 'general' type public or private university recognised by the Higher Education Commission (Sekaran, 2006).

2.1. Population and Sampling

There are over 192 public and private universities in Pakistan having an estimated enrolment of 1.6 million students. This research targeted universities under the 'general' category. As per the HEC statistics available, there are 184 universities listed under the 'general category'. The general category is divided into public and private sector universities out of which 106 are public sector while 78 are private sector universities. The estimated student population by year 2019 in these universities is 1.414 million out of which 1.140 millionaire in public sector universities while remaining are in the private sector universities. The population is further refined as the students at bachelors and masters level program in the universities (Asiamah, Mensah, & Oteng-Abayie, 2017; Bartlett, Kotrlik & Higgins, 2001).

2.2. Measurement Scales

Co-creation of value scale is adopted from Ranjan and Read (2014). The scale comprises of five dimensions with a total of 22 items. These dimensions include co-production knowledge, equity, interaction, experience and personalisation. Service quality scale of twenty-one items under five dimensions i.e. SERVQUAL is adopted from Parasuraman et al. (1988) study. Relationship quality is measured through satisfaction, trust and commitment. The scale for relationship quality has been adopted from Cannière, Pelsmacker and Geuens (2008) study. All scales were 5 point Likert type for each representative item. Attitudinal loyalty is measured by the scale adopted by Chudhuri and Holbrook (2001).

2.3. Sampling and Data Collection

In multivariate data analysis, large sample size have been mostly recommended i.e. greater than 500 especially for complex models (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson

⁴http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/universities/pages/recognised.asp

⁵http://library.aepam.edu.pk/Books/Pakistan%20Education%20Statistics%202016-17.pdf

2010). In multivariate data analysis, Reisinger and Mavondo (2007) have recommended data of five respondent per parameter as a minimum number, where ten respondent per parameter is considered appropriate especially when there are issues of normality and missing data. Keeping in view the above, a total sample size of 800 was determined. Data were collected from twenty-seven universities across all the four provinces primarily through Google docs. The link was sent to the university management, faculty and staff via email as well as through social media and Whats App for onward distribution to their students. A total of 160 responses were gathered through personally administered paper-based survey. A total of 818 responses were gathered.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Respondents Profiles

The demographic data shows that 574 (70 percent) were from public sector and the remaining 244 (29.8 percent) were from private sector. Bachelors' students accounted for 634 (77.5 percent) and 184 (22.5 percent) belonged to the masters' program. Most of the students were from engineering 263 (32 percent), business 254 (31 percent) and computer science 170 (20 percent) while remaining were from physical sciences, humanities and others. Majority were from third (108, 13.2 percent), fourth (157,19.2 percent) and fifth semesters (110, 13.4 percent) followed by the first (155, 18 percent) and the seventh semester (111, 13.5 percent). The 2nd (37, 4.5 percent) and the 6th semester (42, 5.1 percent) had the lowest proportion. Male students were 490 (59.99 percent) versus 328 (40.01 percent) females. A total of 767 (93.7 percent) aged under 18-21 and 22-25 age categories (767, 93.7 percent), followed by (6.90 percent) students under the 26-29 category, 6 (0.07 percent) belonged to 30-33 category, and remaining i.e.8 (0.09 percent) reported were above 33 years. Geographically, responses from Islamabad/ Rawalpindi accounted for (301, 36.79 percent), Lahore (185, 22.62 percent), Peshawar (142, 17.36 percent), Karachi (110, 13.45 percent), Multan (38, 4.64 percent) and other cities (42, 5.13 percent).

3.2. Common Method Bias, Missing Data and Outliers

The possibility of common method bias (CMB) was detected through Harman's Single Factor Score method. The single factor showed Eigen value of 23.027 with 29.148 percent (<50 percent) cumulative variance which indicates no issue of CMB (Podsakoff, MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). The analysis returned the highest Eigen value of 23.027 and cumulative variance of 29.148 percent indicating no issue of CMB. No missing data were there in the dataset as all questions were mandatory. Mahalanobis (1936) technique detected 38 outliers and were removed (p<0.01) as per the suggestions of Aguinis, Gottfredson and Joo (2013) and Tabachnickand Fidell (2006). This led to the total number of responses to 780 in the dataset.

Table 1
Scale Reliability

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Co-Creation of Value (CCV)	0.91	22-items
Service Quality (SQ)	0.93	21-items
Relationship Quality (RQ)	0.92	9-items
Attitudinal Loyalty (AL)	0.81	3-items

Table 1 shows the Cronbach's alpha of all the latent variables scored above than the minimum acceptable range of 0.70 indicating sufficient reliability indicating sufficient homogeneity among the items of each construct (Hair et al., 2010; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

3.3. The Measurement Model

The measurement model is assessed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in order to find out if the data fits in the form of items and constructs (Kline, 2010). The CFA is carried out by employing structural equation modelling technique using AMOS 24 software.

The standardised factor loadings for first order and second order factors are shown in Table 2. The values are between 0.467 to 0.987 and all significant (p<0.01) indicating acceptable construct validity (Hair et al. 2010). Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) have recommended using more stringent cut-offs going from 0.32 (poor), 0.45 (fair), 0.55 (good), 0.63 (very good) or 0.71 (excellent). Nevertheless, researchers have been of the opinion that these criteria for removing 'low' factor loading are simply heuristics and caution should be exercised in removing the low loading items in order to preserve the construct and theoretical importance of the items and factors in the model (Bryne, 1989; Hair et al., 2010).

3.3.1. Model Fit

The initial CFA for measurement model fit indices yielded values $as\chi^2/df$ ratio = 2.397; SRMR = .061;GFI = 0.860; NFI = 0; IFI = 0.910, TLI=0.904; CFI = 0.909 and RMSEA = .042. The fit indices indicated the model fit could be improved by inspecting lower loading items (<0.50), modification indices (>.30) and standardised residual co-variances as suggested by Hair et al. (2010). A thorough review resulted in removing of fourteen items as well as co-variating ten items followed by respecification of the model. The removal and co-variating items are within the thresholds of deletion criterion of 20 percent or less items with respect to the total number of parameters in the model (Hair et al., 2010). The fit indices were selected based on the recommendations of Hair et al. (2010) and Kline (2010). The revised model resulted in better model fit as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 2
Standardised Loadings, Standard Errors (S.E) and P-values

Latent	•	Standardised				Standardised		
Construct	Factors	Loadings	SE	Sig.	Items	Loadings	SE	Sig.
					CCV1	.649	.067	***
					CCV2	.684	.063	***
	17	0.65	056	***	CCV3	.699	.064	***
	Know.	.865	.056	4.4.4.	CCV4	.713	.067	***
					CCV5	.663	.051	***
					CCV6	.736	.068	***
					CCV7	.679	.047	***
	_		.102		CCV8	.779	.063	***
	Equ.	.927		***	CCV9	.660	.062	***
					CCV10	.732	.061	***
					CCV11	.705	.060	***
CCV					CCV12	.706	.058	***
	Interact.	.923	.052	***	CCV12	.510	.055	***
					CCV13	.599	.053	***
					CCV14 CCV15	.479	.130	***

	E	.850	0.52	***	CCV16	.426	.081	***
	Exp.		.053	ירידי	CCV17	.487	.135	***
					CCV18	.725	.154	***
					CCV19	.763	.162	
		.900			CCV20	.604	.072	***
	Personal.		.051	***	CCV21	.698	.087	***
					CCV22	.633	.076	***
		.946			SQ1	.604	.049	***
					SQ2	.730	.078	***
	Ass.		.043	***	SQ3	.796	.079	***
					SQ4	.754	.074	***
					SQ5	.770	.075	***
		205			SQ6	.569	.055	***
	D. 1		0.50	***	SQ7	.690	.067	***
	Rel.	.987	.052	***	SQ8	.782	.073	***
					SQ9	.564	.065	***
					SQ10	.621	.044	***
SQ					SQ11	.745	.043	***
,	Res. Emp.	.920 .898	.054	***	SQ11	.795	.044	***
					SQ12	.759	.044	***
					SQ13	.764	.048	***
						.758	.050	***
			.053		SQ15			***
					SQ16	.467	.054	***
					SQ17	.759	.050	***
		.905	.059	***	SQ18	.626	.106	***
	Tgbl.				SQ19	.594	.105	
	-8				SQ20	.617	.046	***
					SQ21	.662	.088	***
		.903 .946		***	RQ1	.840	.034	***
	Sat		.044		RQ2	.818	.038	***
					RQ3	.875	.036	***
					RQ4	.826	.038	***
₹Q	Trust		.052	***	RQ5	.824	.041	***
					RQ6	.781	.042	***
				***	RQ7	.780	.039	***
	Commit.	.902	.047		RQ8	.823	.048	***
					RQ9	.786	.040	***
					AL1	.756	.050	***
		AL			AL2	.761	.046	***
		1111			AL3	.751	.051	***

Note: p<0.001.

Table 3

Fit Indices: Original and Re-specified Measurement Model

		Origina	ıl Model	Re-specified Model		
Index	Cut-off Value	Statistic	Fit Level	Statistic	Fit Level	
χ^2/df	≤ 3.0	2.397	Good	2.053	Good	
GFI	≥ .90	.840	Weak	.895	Acceptable	
RMSEA	≤ .07	.042	Good	.037	Good	
SRMR	≤.80	.061	Good	.048	Good	
CFI	≥ .90	.90	Moderate	.93	Good	
TLI	≥ .90	.90	Moderate	.92	Good	
IFI	≥ .90	.90	Moderate	.92	Good	

The model fit values for the re-specified model resulted in acceptable fit. The GFI fell short of the recommended value (Hu & Bentler, 1999) however, GFI values above 0.80 are acceptable for large and multi-tier complex models when factor loadings are sufficiently higher and sample size is adequate (Baumgartner & Homburg, 1995; Doll, Xia, & Torkzadeh, 1994; Shevlin & Miles, 1998). It is pertinent to mention that the popular view of Huand Bentler's (1999) cut off values as universal rules is impugned. Instead Hu and Bentler (1998) stated that "it is difficult to designate a specific cut-off value for each fit index because it does not work equally well with various types of fit indices, sample sizes, estimators or distributions" (p.449). Likewise, Hair et al. (2010) have cautioned that there is no "magic" number for fit indices and there are many cases where minor model misspecification remains which should not cause the loss of important information from the model.

3.3.2. Construct Validity, Multicollinearity and Normality

Table 4 shows that all correlations between each of the variables remained under the suggested maximum value of 0.80 (Hair et al., 2010). Further, the VIF for all variables remained less than 4 and tolerance values greater than 0.25 indicating no serious issues of multicollinearity (Field,2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Similarly, Skewness and kurtosis values remained within the suggested range -2.0 to +2.0 thereby, indicating normal multivariate distribution for each of the latent construct (George & Mallery, 2010; Field, 2009; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014). Further, the values show that the composite reliability (CR) for all latent variables is above 0.70 limit thereby establishing sufficient convergent validity (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988; Zikmund, 2003). Likewise, all latent constructs showed average variance extracted (AVE) values greater than 0.50 and larger than their respective maximum shared variance (MSV). The square root of AVE value for each construct remains larger than its correlation with other construct thereby establishing discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4

Construct validity, VIF, Skewness and Kurtosis

	CR	AVE	MSV	AL	CCV	SQ	RQ	VIF	Skew	Kurt.
AL	0.802	0.575	0.527	0.758				1.68	-0.13	-1.04
CCV	0.948	0.785	0.587	0.483**	0.886			2.38	0.16	-0.16
SQ	0.961	0.830	0.639	0.498**	0.412**	0.911		2.67	-0.33	-0.18
RQ	0.941	0.842	0.639	0.620**	0.621**	0.623**	0.917	2.66	-0.31	-0.33

Note: p<0.05.

3.3.3. The Structural Model

The structural model output shows the model fit values of $\chi^2/df = 2.057$, SRMR = .051, GFI = 0.864, TLI = 0.907, IFI = .912, CFI = 0.910 and RMSEA = .038. All the items and second order factors sufficiently loaded on their respective construct and all paths were significant (p<0.01). The results of the structural model validate the measurement model stability (Hair et al., 2010). The structural model is depicted below (see Figure2).

Fig.2. The Structural Model

3.3.4. Hypothesis Testing

The results of parameter estimates show that all regression coefficients in a structural model are significant and all hypothesis are accepted (p<0.05). Specifically, CCV positively affects AL, SQ and RQ thereby supporting $H_1,\,H_2$ and H_3 respectively (β =0.304, p<0.01; β =0.766, p<0.01; β =0.264). Likewise, SQ is found to be a positive and significant antecedent of RQ and AL thereby ratifying H_4 and H_5 respectively (β =0.609, p<0.01; β =0.367, p<0.01). Table 5 summarises the details of all hypothesis.

Table 5
Standardised Regression Weights

	Hypoth	eses					
Linkages	Number	Sign	Estimate	S. E.	C. R.	Sig.*	Remarks
CCV→AL	H_1	+	.304	.111	2.738	***	Supported
CCV→SQ	H_2	+	.766	.084	9.100	***	Supported
CCV→RQ	H_3	+	.264	.046	5.656	***	Supported
$SQ \rightarrow RQ$	H_4	+	.609	.045	13.427	***	Supported
$SQ \rightarrow AL$	H_5	+	.367	.072	5.097	***	Supported

*p<0.001.

4. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

The primary purpose of this research was to determine the impact of co-creation of value on different facets of service quality-customer loyalty chain along with the role of relationship quality. The foremost insight is that co-creation of value is indeed a positive organisation wide endeavour that results in a favourable attitudinal shift. This result is in line with researchers who posit that co-creation in organisations lead to enhanced intellectual capability, pleasurable feelings, kinship, and advocacy through knowledge acquisition and sharing, access to resources, participatory behaviour in co-production, valuable experience, and improvisation (Gronroos & Voima, 2013; Oertzen et al., 2018; Schmidt-Rauch & Nussabaumer; 2011). In higher education sector, co-creation demands students as an active and purposefully involved participant and co-creator of the social milieu and particularly the services which are co-produced and consumed. Their stances and perspectives through deep dialogues and interactions in joint creation and manifestation of knowledge across several platforms of engagement are likely to in still admiration and gratifying feelings for the university. Similarly, sharing information and control that relates to various facets of student life, even including policy making at different levels which leads to integrated outcomes become key elements in enhancing student attitudinal fortitude towards the university.

Likewise, co-creation of value leads to the appreciation of service quality of the university offerings. This is in line with Vargo and Lusch (2008) and, Gronroos and Voima (2013) studies who opined that customers and organisation when work together to form products and services, the primary co-creator for whom the value is created takes the 'ownership' of the final outcome depicting favourable creation and re-creation of service quality evaluations. Since perceived service quality is based on the expectations and perceived performance, the quality or the value assessments are perceived to be favourable since the user is the one who was part of creating it. In other words, when the student who is a value co-creator is involved in the pre-consumption stages of the value creation process, the post-consumption evaluations are appreciated stimulating enthusiasm and feelings of achievement (Vargo & Lusch, 2006). In line with the studies of Hu and McLoughlin (2012), Ryzhkova (2015) and Xu, Liu and Lyu (2018) who consider co-creation as a psychological contract bearing profound physical and emotional investment in the processes, activities and interactions where the outcome yields positive pragmatic evaluations, feelings of accomplishment as a reward. The conceptualisation of co-creation of value illustrates that students and the university when work together across

many facets of services, they indeed create and recreate quality perceptions. The student as a co-creator has deeper cognition, awareness, recognition or appreciation, as of moral, psychological, aesthetic, and/or tangible aspects of the services of the university. In these processes of mutual exchange and 'immersion' students are likely to improve their intellectual capabilities and develop positive hedonic appraisals of the interactions and the artefacts of the university.

In addition, the fact that co-creation leads to more enduring outcome of relationship quality assessments becomes evident. Co-creation of value leads to shared mental schemas and favourable interpersonal cognitions resulting in increased motivation and commitment, confidence and fulfilment of the needs and wants of the customer or the student. Based on the social exchange theory which is primarily based on relational rewards, successful co-creation efforts by the university are likely to yield positive student affect which is an emotional state depicting satisfaction with the university. Similarly, university's conscientious efforts in creating systemic mechanisms and uplifting relational experiences will lead to the creation of positive belief structures representing that the students are engaged with competent, professional and capable organisation which are the key ingredients of mutual trust and reciprocal commitment (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997; Omar, Kassim, Nazri & Sidek, 2018). Relationship quality is considered as an attitudinal loyalty surrogate and as discussed previously; the successful iterative co-creation experiences will inspire students to continue their relationship with the university.

Moreover, service quality is found to be a strong predictor of relationship quality which is in line with the suggestions of previous researchers (Gummerus, Johanna, Koskull & Kowalkowski, 2017; Snijders, Rikers, Wijnia & Loyens, 2018; Wong & Sohal, 2002). This finding depicts that improving and sustaining desirable levels of value in services requires focus on reliability of core services performance, capability, expertise and responsiveness of the faculty, staff and management of the university that imbue trust, confidence and sensitivity, physical evidence and compassion that permeates into unique aspects of relationship quality. Further, service quality is found to be a strong predictor of attitudinal loyalty which depicts that students 'beliefs' formed post service quality assessments will be instrumental in their disposition and resulting attitude towards the university ratifying the suggestions of Oliver (1999), Dickand Basu (1994) and Abdullah (2006) studies.

From a managerial perspective, co-creation is a powerful business model for universities to create value not only for the students but also for the industry and society at large and is indeed a source of competitive advantage. This paradigm entails carving out socialisation mechanisms and platforms that centre-stage the students and actively engages them across different facets of the university life. In particular, sharing and giving access to the operant and operand resources of the university thereby creating value with the students is likely to enhance their intellectual capacities and evolve positive demeanour in appreciation of the quality of mutually created services. The tacit role of relationships and their symbolic connotations are also strengthened through uplifting iterative co-creation experiences. In its spirit, co-creation in organisations especially universities are conceptually a 'collective consciousness endeavour that imbues unification of the multiplicity which leads to better financial and social mobility, and offers legitimacy for universities to continue offer superior social capital to the industry and the society at large.

4.1. Limitations and Future Research

This study considered a cross-sectional approach to co-creation of value behaviour and its outcomes. Co-creation in universities should be assessed on longitudinal basis as students advance into higher semester, their co-creation experiences along with the related outcomes are likely to vary. In addition, more data from diverse academic programs can be taken for a comprehensive cross level analysis and comparison. Importantly, the systemic antecedents of co-creating behaviour that evoke the desire for active involvement, collaboration and engagement need to be explored (Oertzen et al., 2018; Omar, Kassim, Nazri, & Sidek, 2018). Co-creation can also be linked to other important consumer factors such as organisational/brand image, switching costs, organisational justice and other intricate factors. Finally, co-creation has been primarily seen from customers' point of view and future studies should take the perspective of organisation and other stakeholders involved.

4.2. Conclusion

Co-creation of value is an evolving theme in higher education that has strong ramifications in sustaining HEIs strategic differential advantage and legitimising their financial and social viability. In essence, co-creation is a paradigmatic shift that entails systemic changes by centre-staging the students and carving out strategies for better educational, individual and professional future.

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