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Determinants of Competitiveness of Business Schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Faculty's Perspective

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
<p>History Revised format: 30 Nov 2019 Available Online: 31 Dec 2019</p>	<p>Purpose- The present study was an attempt to enhance the understanding on the competitiveness of business schools (Bschoools) and identify the most influential determinants that affect competitiveness of Bschoools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from faculty's perspective.</p>
<p>Keywords Faculty, Competitiveness, Cost, Employment, Leadership, Business, School</p>	<p>Methodology- The current study followed the quantitative approach. The sample size was 261 determined by formula of Yamane (1967) and respondents were selected using stratified probability sampling technique. Data was collected through questionnaire using 5-point Likert scale. Principal Component Analysis was applied to assess unifactoriality of the constructs. Hypothesis of study assuming relationship between independent and dependent variables were tested using SEM.</p>
<p>JEL Classification: L20, L21</p>	<p>Findings- Findings of the study suggests that Teaching staff, Employment prospects, Gender diversity, Leadership and management significantly and positively affect the Competitiveness of Bschoools ($P < 0.05$). On other hand, Industry and Internationalization aspects were found to have significant negative effect on competitiveness of Bschoools ($P < 0.05$).</p>
	<p>Originality/Value- The present study can help the management of business schools to focus on the areas that can increase the competitiveness of business school to meet the challenges of globalization. Moreover, competitiveness was measured using satisfaction and reputation and the empirical testing of effect of determinants on competitiveness of business schools are the theoretical contributions of the study.</p>

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1. Introduction

The quality of human force in every country is dependent on its education (Sembiring, (2018). It is due to fact that the most vital factor of globalization is knowledge. Knowledge is affecting every sphere of

modern times such as technology and sustainable development that is linked directly to the competitiveness of nations (Keser, 2015). The knowledge is the factor that transforms companies into a competitive one and in turn contributes to the competitiveness of a nation. This transformation is take place through competitive labour force. Due to this reason, it is the requirement of a country to nurture a workforce that is globally competitive (Keser, 2015). The aim of creating competitive national workforce can be achieved only through good quality of higher education. Therefore, most developed countries have more emphasis on competitive education quality for economic and social uplift (Stimac & Simic, 2012).

The globalization has intense pressure over the countries for producing competitive human resource and new challenges are being encountered by educational institutes (Tan, Goh & Chan, 2015). The changes in education industry such as creation of research universities and universities of applied sciences, pressure from stakeholders and world-class universities etc has given a central role to achieve competitiveness of higher education institutes in present times (Supe, Zeps, Jurgelāne, & Ribickis, 2018). Education providing institutes are now struggling hard to improve their quality to achieve competitive advantage (Tan, Goh & Chan, 2015). Moreover, the change in education sector is compelling institutes towards identifying ways for competitiveness (Supe, Zeps, Jurgelāne, & Ribickis, 2018). Competitiveness can be broadly referred to the ability of a firm to build and sustain competitive advantages (Dimitrova & Dimitrova, 2017). In order to build and identify competitive advantage, it is required to unveil the determinants that can play crucial role in attaining the competitiveness for higher education (Supe, Zeps, Jurgelāne, & Ribickis, 2018). The institutions can gain competitiveness if it fulfills the needs of internal and external stakeholders (Ashmarina, Khasaev, & Plaksina, 2015).

Despite the fact that competitiveness in higher education is highly desirable, fewer efforts are seen in the subject area. Various gaps are identified in literature. First, determinants of competitiveness of higher education institutes are explored in one study of Supe et al. (2018) but methodology of study was a systematic review and it was not tested empirically. They insisted on identification of internal and external factors for competitiveness of higher education institutes. Tan, Gou & Chan (2015) also emphasized that determinants that attract and retain students to gain competitive advantage should be explored in higher education. Secondly, the concept of competitiveness is not measured through the lens of satisfaction and reputation together (non-financial measures) from perspective of stakeholders in previous studies. Sembiring (2018) establish a link between competitive advantage and image (reputation) of higher education institute but the study lacks the empirical testing of relationship. The effect of determinants of competitiveness using satisfaction and reputation is not seen empirically till date. Third, there is contextual gap in literature that the concept of competitiveness and the determinants of competitiveness is not studied adequately in context of business schools (Bschoools) and none of the study is found in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the best of author knowledge.

The study will contribute to the body of knowledge by empirically testing the relationship of determinants of competitiveness with competitiveness of business schools. The competitiveness of business schools will be gauge through the internal stakeholder (faculty) perspective that will help the management and policy makers of business schools to understand the requirements of internal stakeholders. The study will identify most influential determinants that can be useful in designing strategies of business schools and to build competitive advantages of business schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Competitiveness

Competitiveness can be defined as how well the ability of a firm is to meet its customer needs in comparison to other firms that offer a similar product or service (Melnyk & Yaskal, 2013). The competitiveness of firms is linked to the concept of competitive advantage (Porter, 1985). A competitive advantage can be described as an attainment of superior position of a firm in an industry as compared to its rivals (Depperu and Cerrato, 2005). Competitive advantage is the result of a strategy helping a firm to maintain and sustain a favorable market position (Yasar, 2010). To this struggle of achieving competitive

advantage, Porter's suggested generic strategy framework. According to the Porter (1985), there are two type of competitive advantage a firm can build: Cost leadership and differentiation. A firm can gain competitive advantage either by keeping a lower cost than its competitors or commanding a higher price through product and service differentiation (Porter, 1980 & 1985). Cost leadership is a position of a firm in which they sell their goods or service to customers with a price either equal or lower than average industry price that provide them with a profit margin to gain maximum market share as compared to their rivals (Kamau, 2013; Porter, 1985). Approaches or the competitive factors adopted for differentiation are various. For instance, design or brand image, technology, features, customer service dealer network, high quality product or other dimensions (Porter, 1985). Both type of competitive advantage is the outcome of actual value created by the firm for its customers (Porter, 1985). Further, Porter has also clarified that this competitive advantage can be achieved only by trade-off i.e. choosing single strategy (cost leadership or differentiation) at a time otherwise firm will 'stuck in the middle'.

2.2. Determinants of Competitiveness of Bschoools

Review of business schools literature provided the determinants of competitiveness of business schools. These determinants can broadly classifid as cost related features and service quality features consistent to the generic strategies concept of Porter (1985). The determinants necessary for the competitiveness of a Bschoools are identified in literature review are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Determinants of Competitiveness of Business School

No	Determinants	Source
Cost related features:		
1	Cost	(Businessweek, 2001; Qureshi, 2012)
Service quality features:		
2	Living experience	(Abdullah ,2006; Afzal, Akram, Akram & Ijaz, 2010;
3	Selectivity / Selection process	Business Today India, 2015; Businessweek, 2001; Brochado, 2009; Corey, 1981; Delaney, 2005; Debnath
4	Faculty or Teaching staff	and Shankar, 2009; EFMD, 2016; Entwistle and Tait,
5	Academic, Personal & societal activities (APS)	1990; Financial Times, 2014 & 2016; Fraiman, 2002; Gault, 2000; Gill, 2012; Hall, 2008; Hampton, 1993;
6	Employability or Employment prospects	HEC, 2012; Huang, 2009; Joseph and Joseph, 1997; Kelley & Gaedeke, 1990; Kolachi and Mohammad,
7	Research aspects	2013; Kolachi and Wajidi, 2008; Kolluru, 2011; Kuh &
8	Industry aspects	Hu,2001; LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1994; Lejeune, 2011;
9	Internationalization aspects	Lejeune and Vas, 2009; Mai, 2005; Neelankavil ,1994;
10	Network of Alumni	QS World University Ranking, 2014; Qureshi, 2012;
11	Gender balance or diversity	Qureshi and Mahmood, 2008; Ranjan, 2011; Rigotti
12	Leadership and management staff	and Pitt, 1992; Sallis, 2002, Times Higher Education, 2016; The economist, 2016; University of Surrey, 2016; US News, 2015)

The above mentioned determinants of competitiveness of Bschoools are operationalized in literature as follows in Figure 1.

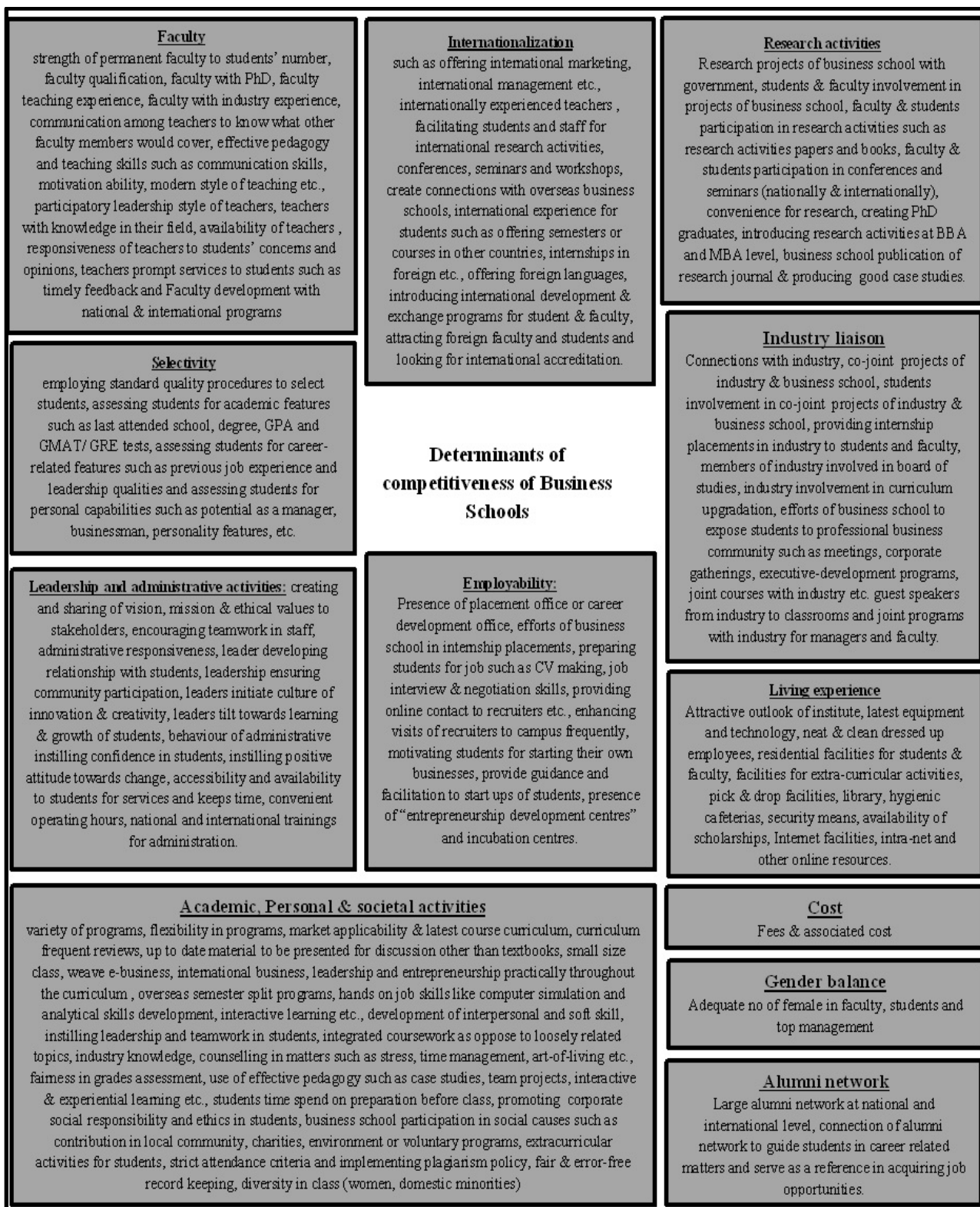


Figure 1. Operationalization of 12 Determinants of Competitiveness of Bschoools

2.3 Measures of competitiveness

Customer satisfaction and reputation helps a firm in gaining a competitive advantage. Literature supports that firms strive to provide superior value to the customers and build relationship with customers to gain customer satisfaction. And it is due to customer satisfaction that competitiveness of firm or educational institute increases (Bauk and Jusufranic, 2014; Cabiddu, Lui & Piccoli, 2013; Massawe, 2013). Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990) defined satisfaction as an overall judgment, perception or attitude on the superiority of service. The judgment is the result of difference between expectations and actual

experiences of customer. In more simple way, student satisfaction can be defined as a short-term attitude which is derived from the assessment of the received education service (Elliot and Healy, 2001). The studies of Sembiring (2018) and Sichtmann & Diamantopoulos (2013) linked reputation or image with the competitive advantage. Sofiati & Limakrisna (2017) defined reputation as how the general public understands the brand in terms of its services and communication program. Thus, stakeholders' satisfaction and reputation of institution reflects its current level of competitiveness in relation to its competitors. Sallis (2002) divided stakeholders of higher education institute into external customers (Students, Parents, Employers, Government) and internal customers (Faculty). Being an internal stakeholder, faculty perspective is highly important for the fact that they are the service providers.

Conceptual Framework

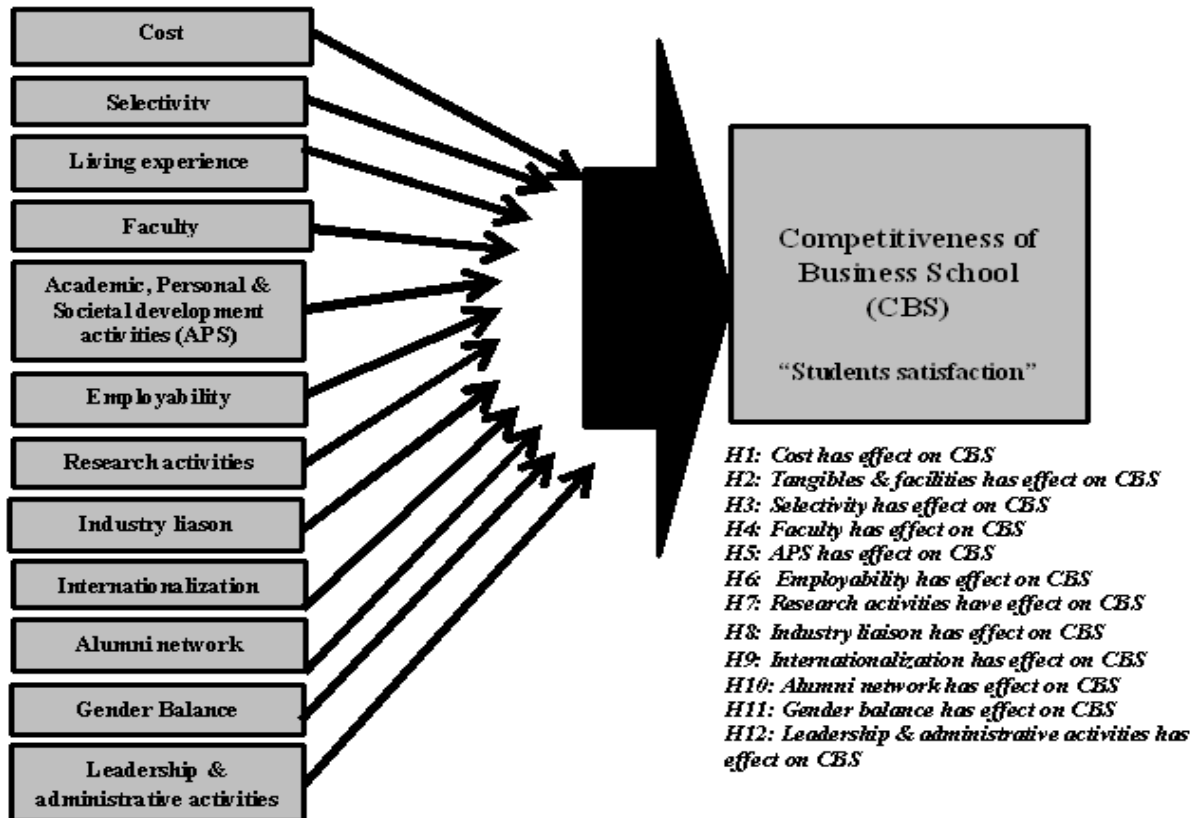


Figure 2. Theoretical Framework of study

2.4 Methodology for the study

The total population of the study included 568 faculty members from 11 private and 18 Public universities in 2016. The targeted population of study comprised of only those Management Sciences departments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (business schools) affiliated with HEC recognized universities or DAIs. Yamane (1967) formula was used that derived a sample of 261. Stratified random sampling, a technique of probability sampling, was used in selecting respondents. Population was divided into strata and respondents for sample were derived in same proportion as it was representing in population known as proportionate allocation method.

2.5 Discussion on Items

The 12 determinants of competitiveness of Bschoools (independent variables) were measured through a list of underlying items resulted from detailed and in-depth literature review. The detailed operationalization of these 12 variables is given in Figure 1. The dependent variable "Competiveness" comprised of faculty satisfaction and reputation of bschool was measured with items taken from Owino (2013).

3 Analysis and Results

3.1 Reliability and Descriptive Statistics

The Cronbach's Alpha for 13 variables of study is in the range of 0.6-0.8 showing reliability of constructs as the values lies within acceptable limits (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Reliability and descriptive statistics of the construct are given in Table 2. Descriptive statistics showing Gender diversity has the highest value of 4.42, followed by Network of alumni having value for mean equal to 3.88. It shows the satisfaction of faculty on gender diversity and network of alumni of bschools. Internationalization aspect has the lowest mean of 1.94 showing negative perception of faculty is high over the aspect of internationalization of Bschoools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Moreover, the dependent variable Competitiveness the has mean value of 3.8 showing faculty has optimistic view about the overall competitiveness of Bschoools in KPK

TABLE 2. 1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Construct	No of Items	Cronbach α	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cost	4	0.7	3.23	0.76
Living experience	5	0.8	3.23	0.67
Selection process	4	0.6	3.33	1.05
Teaching staff	8	0.9	2.32	1.01
APS	7	0.9	3.67	1.18
Employment prospects	5	0.8	2.68	0.88
Research aspect	6	0.9	2.05	0.87
Industry aspect	4	0.9	3.56	1.26
Internationalization aspect	4	0.8	1.94	0.80
Network of alumni	3	0.8	3.88	0.90
Gender diversity	3	0.8	4.17	0.70
Leadership	8	0.9	2.16	0.90
Competitiveness	4	0.7	3.78	0.81

3.2 Assumptions' Statistics for Factor Analysis

Principle component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation was applied in the study. The two tests KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were carried before factor analysis. The recommended value for KMO is 0.6 or greater. The results for KMO values for all constructs are higher than 0.6 and satisfying the assumption of sample adequacy that there is no sample size issue. Results for Bartlett test of sphericity depicted that the P-value of the Bartlett's statistic for all factors are significant, thus, assumptions of sphericity is satisfied (Leech, Barrett & Morgan, 2005) showing data is suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity means that at least one significant correlation between two of the items is observed. After obtaining satisfactory values for KMO and BTS, items were scrutinized for the values of communalities and factor loadings. Those items were retained in factor analysis having communalities higher than 0.50 (Leech et al., 2005) and have factor loading value of 0.5 or higher. Overall, the items deleted for constructs Living experience, Teaching staff, APS, Employability prospects, Research aspect, Industry aspect, Internationalization aspect, Leadership & management and Competitiveness of Bschoools were 6,5,14,2,3,3,5,6 and 3 respectively. The KMO, BTS and P values are given in Table 3.

TABLE 3. ASSUMPTIONS STATISTICS FOR EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Constructs	KMO	BTS	P
Cost	0.7	251.36	0.000
Living experience (TF)	0.8	343.62	0.000
Selection process	0.7	229.90	0.000
Teaching staff (FT)	0.9	1666.41	0.000
Academic, personality & societal	0.9	1308.15	0.000

development (APS)			
Employment prospects/Placement (PC)	0.7	604.05	0.000
Research aspect(Res)	0.8	937.01	0.000
Industry aspect (Industry_L)	0.7	614.00	0.000
Internationalization aspect (IntlO)	0.7	438.62	0.000
Network of Alumni (Alumni)	0.7	227. 74	0.000
Gender diversity (GBalance)	0.8	365.32	0.000
Leadership & management (LA)	0.8	1314.49	0.000
Competitiveness (CompDV)	0.7	350.71	0.000

4. Structural Equation Modeling

Structure equation modeling abbreviated as SEM, used in the study to investigate the hypothesized effect of independent variable on dependent variable. Before SEM, measurement model for each construct was tested to get good model fit. Modifications indices and covariance were applied where required. The results for measurement model for each construct are given in Table 4. The six fit indices were used in the study to check the fitness of model included chi-square/degree of freedom (CMIN/DF), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Root Means Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) and Root Mean Square Residual (RMR). All the values of fit indices from model 1 to model 13 were in the threshold proposed by Usluel, Askar, and Bas (2008) showing model is good fit.

Overall measurement model of 13 factors is presented as Model 14 in Figure 3 and Table 5. Model 14 include all the 12 independent variables and 1 dependent variable. The values of fit indices are also satisfactory and in line with Usluel et al (2008) showing good fit of the model.

TABLE 4. 2 SUMMARY OF MEASUREMENT MODELS FOR CONSTRUCTS

Measurement model	RMSEA	GFI	RMR	CFI	TLI	CMIN/DF
Optimum Value (Usluel et al., 2008)	<0.08	>0.9	<0.1	>0.9	>0.9	<3
Model 1-Cost	0.07	0.98	0.04	0.97	0.95	2.71
Model 2-Living experience	0.05	0.98	0.02	0.99	0.97	1.79
Model 3-Selection process	0.08	0.98	0.10	0.98	0.95	4.13
Model 4-Teaching staff	0.02	0.98	0.02	0.99	0.99	1.13
Model 5- APS	0.05	0.98	0.02	0.99	0.99	1.75
Model 6- Employment prospects	0.03	0.99	0.01	0.99	0.99	1.36
Model 7- Research aspect	0.02	0.99	0.01	1.00	1.00	0.69
Model 8- Industry aspect	0.03	0.99	0.02	1.00	0.99	1.22
Model 9-Internalization aspects	0.06	0.99	0.01	0.99	0.98	2.05
Model 10-Network of alumni	0.07	0.99	0.04	0.98	0.97	3.00
Model 11- Gender diversity	0.02	0.98	0.13	1.00	1.00	1.24
Model 12-Ledership	0.05	0.98	0.02	0.99	0.98	1.70
Model 13-Competitieness	0.08	0.98	0.03	0.99	0.97	0.40

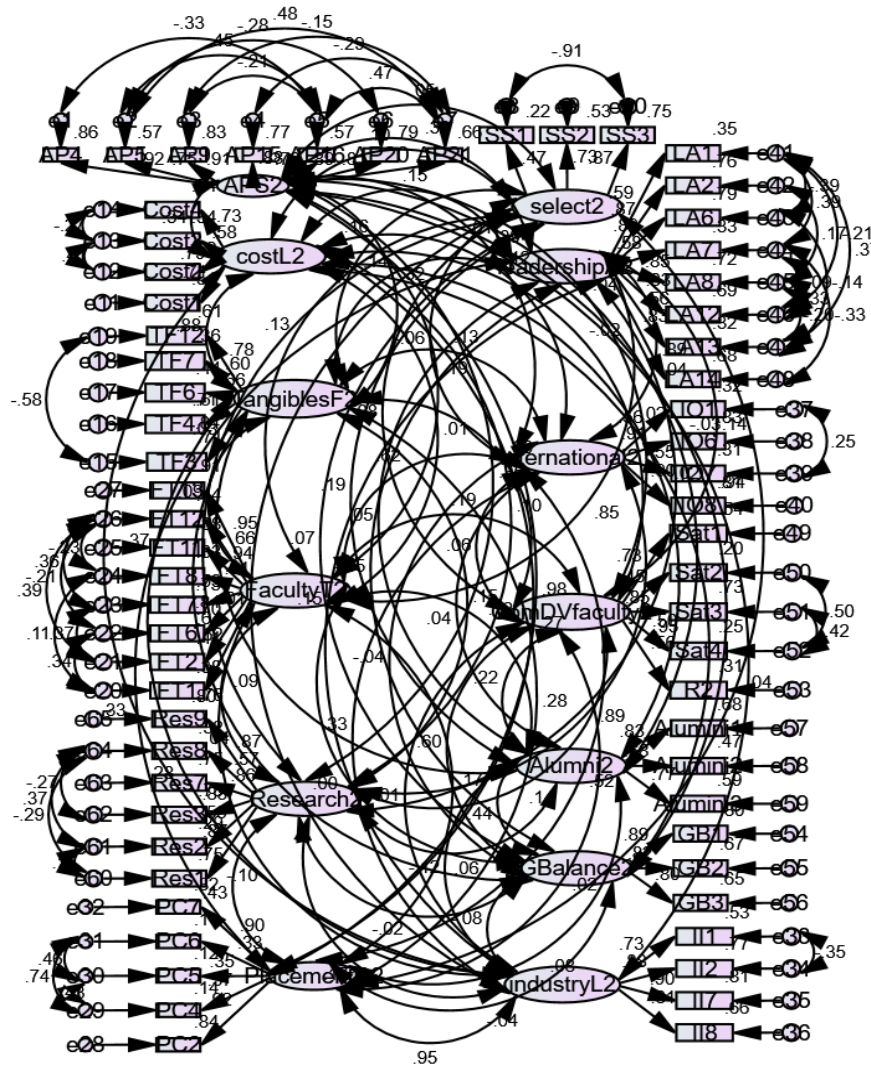


FIGURE 3. MEASUREMENT MODEL FOR 13 FACTORS

TABLE 5. SUMMARY OF OVERALL MEASUREMENT MODEL OF 13 FACTORS

Measurement model	RMSEA	GFI	RMR	CFI	TLI	CMIN/DF
Model 14- Overall model of 13 factors	0.06	0.99	0.05	0.98	0.95	2.27

5. Hypotheses Testing

After obtaining satisfactory measurement models, the study has used SEM to analyzed relationship between 12 independent and dependent variable. The framed hypotheses from H1 to H12 were tested using SEM. The results are given in Table 6 showing that R² has a value of 0.319. It implies that 31.9% of variation in Competitiveness of Bschoools is explained by 12 independent variables of study. The results depicted that Teaching staff (β= 0.262), employment prospects (β= 0.215), Gender diversity (β= 0.477), Leadership and management (β= 0.214) positively contribute to the Competitiveness of Bschoools and results are significant having P < 0.05. On other hand, Industry aspect (β= -0.177) and Internationalization

aspect ($\beta = -0.116$) were found to have significant and negative effect on Competitiveness of Bschoools ($P < 0.05$). Moreover, insignificant relationship was found between Cost, Living experience, Selection process, Academic, personality & societal development activities (APS), Research aspect and Network of alumni with dependent variable Competitiveness of Bschoools ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, the hypotheses H4, H6, H8, H9, H11, and H12 are accepted and hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, and H10 are rejected.

TABLE 6. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Hypothesis	Structural Paths	Estimate	P	Results
H1	Comp <--- Cost	-0.073	0.326	Not supported
H2	Comp <--- Living experience	-0.022	0.765	Not supported
H3	Comp <--- Selection process	-0.029	0.601	Not supported
H4	Comp <--- Teaching staff	0.262	***	Supported
H5	Comp <--- APS	-0.117	0.463	Not supported
H6	Comp <--- Employment prospects	0.215	***	Supported
H7	Comp <--- Research aspect	-0.016	0.902	Not supported
H8	Comp <--- Industry aspect	-0.177	***	Supported
H9	Comp <--- Internationalization aspect	-0.116	***	Supported
H10	Comp <--- Network of alumni	0.043	0.470	Not supported
H11	Comp <--- Gender diversity	0.477	***	Supported
H12	Comp <--- Leadership & management	0.214	***	Supported

$R^2 = 0.319$, Sig = .000

6. Discussion

The results of the study revealed that the determinants which are significantly and positively contribute to competitiveness of Bschoools from faculty perspective are Teaching staff, Employment prospects, Gender diversity and Leadership & management. The significant positive contribution of Teaching staff to competitiveness of Bschoools is also justified in the studies of Butt & Rehman, (2010), Gibson (2010), Owino (2012) and Shah, Nair, & Bennett (2013). The significant and positive influence of Employment prospects on competitiveness of Bschoools is supported in the study of Deuren & Lhaden (2017) and Lenton (2015). The literature also supports the positive impact of Gender diversity. McMillan-Capehart, (2003) and Ali, Metz & Kulik (2007) asserted that gender diversity is positively associated with competitive advantage. The current study also found a positive influence of Leadership & management on competitiveness of Bschoools consistent with the previous research studies of Schmidt (1995) and Ravindran & Kalpana (2012). The results of current study supports Peter Senge (1990) concept of learning organization where organization adapts to the changes through people in teamwork and it is the essence of leadership how to make it possible.

The results of the study unearth a negative and significant relationship between industry aspect and internationalization aspect with competitiveness of Bschoools. The negative effect of industry aspect is in line with studies of Manjarrés-Henríquez, Gutiérrez-Gracia, Carrión-García, & Vega-Jurado (2009) and Kaymaz, & Eryigit (2011). Moreover, the special circumstances of the province cannot be ignored in the context. The province and its industry suffered a huge setback from terrorism. It resulted in large number of closure of industrial units and higher ratios of unemployment (Social Policy and Development Centre Karachi, Pakistan (2010). Due to these reasons, industry became unattractive in the province and may be responsible for negative perception of faculty about industry interface. The Internationalization aspect was also found to have negative influence negating the earlier studies of Kiriakidis & Moos (2010) and Lambert & Usher (2013). It can be assumed from negative perception of the faculty about relationship of internationalization aspect and competitiveness of Bschoools that they are not ready to embrace the new model of education because internationalization aspect is one of the important current challenge in

academic and without faculty's will it is not possible to deal with it (Bedenlier and Zawacki-Richter, 2015). The internationalization aspect is affecting teachers directly (Taylor, 2004).

Moreover the insignificant result of the study for cost is consistent with the study of Alzoubi & Emeagwali (2016). The insignificant results of the study for Living experience are line with Khan, Ahmed and Nawaz (2011). The insignificant results of the study for Selection process consistent with the view of Yorke (1999) that process is more crucial than input they selected in educational institutes. The insignificant results of the study for Academic, personal and societal development is negating the results of Owino (2012) showing that faculty in KPK are not favoring new teaching methodologies, new roles and new challenges; however these are the facets of globalization (Bedenlier and Zawacki-Richter, 2015).

7. Conclusion

The study used SEM to check the relationship between 12 independent variables (determinants of competitiveness) with one dependent variable i.e. Competitiveness of Bschoools. The results depicted that teaching staff, employment prospects, gender diversity and leadership & management have a significant and positive effect on dependent variable competitiveness of Bschoools. On other hand, industry aspect and internationalization aspects were found to have significant negative influence on competitiveness of Bschoools. The effect of determinants cost, living experience, selection process, academic, personality & societal development activities (APS), research aspect and network of alumni on dependent variable competitiveness of Bschoools was found insignificant. The future studies should be done on faculty perspective in KP to understand the factors that is creating a negative perception of faculty towards industry and internationalization aspects in Bschoools. Moreover, empirical studies should be done on determinants of competitiveness of Bschoools in future from other stakeholders' perspectives such as top management, parents and employers to identify strategic factors for creating competitive advantage.

8. Theoretical and Contextual Contribution of the Study

The study used satisfaction and reputation (non-financial measures) together for measuring competitiveness that is not used before in literature. Moreover, empirical studies on determinants for the competitiveness of higher educational institutes and its effect on competitiveness are not done earlier which is the theoretical contributions of the study to existing knowledge. The current study has a contextual addition to the existing literature as work is not found in discipline of business education and it is novel in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

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