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The Mediating Effects of Trust in an Institution on the Relationship between Perceived Transparency and Student Satisfaction in Higher Learning Institutions: Evidence from Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

Higher learning institutions (HLIs) are essential bases for a knowledge economy by developing human capital and technology. The HLIs fuel developing countries such as Tanzania to remain competitive in the current global economy. This paper explores the relationship between perceived transparency, trust in an HLI and student satisfaction. The quantitative data were collected from respondents in the coastal zone of Tanzania using a clustering approach with multi-stage sampling methods (n = 398). The variable relations were analysed using partial least squares–structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The study confirms that perceived transparency and trust in an institution are essential variables in predicting students' satisfaction in Tanzanian HLIs. Trust in the institution partially mediated the influence of perceived transparency on student satisfaction. In detail, the findings showed significant results for perceived transparency, trust in an institution, and student satisfaction. This study's findings offer policymakers and administrators in HLIs practical insights for enhancing service delivery, building institutions – students ties, and raising competitiveness in the higher education market. Future researchers could have a cross-country comparative assessment of HLIs' student satisfaction in African underdeveloped nations. This study mediated trust between perceived transparency and student satisfaction, providing novel insights into these dynamics inside higher education institutions.

Keywords: Student Satisfaction, Perceived Transparency, Trust in an Institution, Higher Learning Institution
JEL Classifications: M10, M19, M31

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketisation of higher learning has intensified rivalry among higher learning institutions in recruiting students (Latif et al., 2021; Latif et al., 2019). Of late, there has been a rising portrayal of students as consumers and the higher learning institutions (HLIs) as businesses (Bunce et al., 2017; Latif et al., 2021; Schnackenberg, and Tomlinson, 2016). Consequently, concepts such as "customer" satisfaction have become central to assessing the success of HLIs. Keiningham et al. (2017), King and Bunce (2020) and Latif et al. (2021) argued that commercialisation and commodification of higher learning are problematic and may undermine the scientific excellence pillar of academia. For HLI to achieve success akin to businesses, prioritising student satisfaction is essential (Latif et al., 2021), a pursuit that may risk compromising the academic pillar of excellence.

Satisfaction refers to the pleasurable fulfilment derived from the consumption of a product or service (Koay et al., 2022). It is a post-consumption customer's assessment, serving as a fundamental element of marketing efforts and a measure of overall business performance (Islam et al., 2021; Yilmaz and Temizkan,

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2022). Enhanced customer satisfaction correlates with heightened customer loyalty, reduced price sensitivity, and impacts future shopping behaviour. A satisfied customer promotes the company's products or services through positive word of mouth (Lim et al., 2020). Yilmaz and Temizkan (2022) assert that total customer satisfaction arises from customers' interactions with various product and service providers, hence a multidimensional concept.

Student satisfaction in higher education pertains to the contentment individuals experience throughout their educational journey (Venkateswarlu et al., 2020). Educational institutions employ marketing tactics to enhance student recruitment. Camilleri (2020) showed that HLIs enhance their appeals through strategic marketing communications to display institutional quality to prospective customers. Institutions tend to focus on service cost, diploma prestige, facilities, public perception, and communication efficiency. Contented students advocate for their universities, thereby attracting additional students (Yilmaz and Temizkan, 2022).

Recently, studies found that transparency and trust boost consumer happiness (Hofmann and Strobel, 2020; Saleem et al., 2017; Latif et al., 2021). Studies have shown that perceived transparency affects customer satisfaction (Hofmann and Strobel, 2020), trust (Latif et al., 2021), and trust-based customer satisfaction. By affecting trust in an institution, perceived transparency affects customer happiness. However, empirical research on how perceived transparency and trust in an institution affect students, who are crucial to HLIs' financial success, is scarce (Medina and Rufin, 2015). Since perceived transparency and trust in HLIs are not performance indicators in the HLI ranking system, they must be studied (Shek and Hollister, 2017). HLIs are realising the necessity of increasing and encouraging transparency and trust (Hofmann and Strobel, 2020; Latif et al., 2021).

Studies have examined information transparency and its effects on job satisfaction and turnover intentions among academics in higher education institutions. For example, Hofmann and Strobel (2020) revealed a strong correlation between perceived transparency and job happiness. In the students' context, Latif et al. (2021) posit that a transparent and reliable HLI can enhance student satisfaction. Moreover, Research on perceived transparency and trust to comprehend its influence on student satisfaction has been advocated in the past research (Medina and Rufin, 2015). An understanding of drivers of student satisfaction is crucial to facilitating the sustainability and advancement of HLIs.

Existing studies have paid considerable attention to the relationship between perceived transparency and trust in institutions, particularly in Asian, European, and American contexts. However, relatively few studies have examined this relationship in Africa. Some recent studies, such as Krah and Mertens (2023) in Ghana and Igigo and Mseti (2026) in Tanzania, have started to address this issue by examining transparency and public trust in local government. Nevertheless, more research is needed to understand how perceived transparency influences institutional trust within different African settings, particularly given the differences in institutional structures and public administration practices across countries. The current study was conducted in Tanzania, a developing country, to contribute to the knowledge base in the area. Analysing these issues through an alternative cultural lens may assist higher learning institutions in enhancing student satisfaction, particularly in a context where quality higher learning is most needed. Since increased perceived transparency enhances the "informedness" of professors (Hofmann and Strobel, 2020), it ultimately lifts students' satisfaction. This study examines, in addition, how trust in the institution mediates the nexus between perceived transparency and students' satisfaction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Perceived Transparency and Satisfaction

To effectively manage HLIs, it is essential to collect and manage information regarding an organisation's structures, processes, and performance (Hofmann and Strobel, 2020; Ganseuer and Randhahn, 2017). Similar requirements pertain to the information that HLIs are obligated to disclose to consumers, including students. In the past decade, advancements in information technology have facilitated these activities and enhanced organisational transparency (Arshad and Khurram, 2020). Students who experience service failures often express their dissatisfaction on social media in contemporary society (Honora et al., 2022; Moraes, 2019).

Transparency is commonly defined as the extent to which an organisation discloses information to its stakeholders about its decisions, procedures, and performance (Honora et al., 2022). It encompasses honesty, clarity, accuracy, and openness, which reduce the perception of information withholding by stakeholders (Yang, 2018). It is the ability of an organisation's or entity's stakeholders to obtain relevant information (Honora et al., 2022).

For use in this study, perceived transparency is the degree to which HLIs effectively execute their activities. These activities encompass subjects, processes related to specific student services, including internships, exchanges, applications for tutorial class changes or leaves of absence, access to the library's e-reading materials, and management of services such as student appeals or complaints. Furthermore, students can be content with sufficient transparency regarding information pertinent to student services (Bwachele et al., 2023).

The study proposes that the disclosure of information regarding an HLI's structure, processes, and performance reflects students' perceptions of transparency. Eisenberg et al. (1984) assert that a lack of information results in student uncertainty and disengagement. A sense of being well-informed is associated with feelings of appreciation, resulting in increased satisfaction (Buell et al., 2017; Honora et al., 2022). In principle, transparency portrays organisational perceived credibility, service quality and service satisfaction (O'Neill, 2002; Rawlins, 2008; Porumbescu, 2015).

The expectation confirmation theory (ECT) posits that satisfaction hinges on discrepancies between service initial expectations

and actual service performance (Oliver, 1977). In this case, organisational transparency serves to bridge the two, thereby assuring customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study hypothesised that high organisational transparency fosters customer satisfaction, based on the ECT influencing their satisfaction. The current research, therefore, examined how HLI students' perceptions of varying levels of transparent learning environments affect their satisfaction with HLI services.

- H_1: Perceived transparency of the HLI has a positive influence on students' satisfaction with HLI services.

2.2. Perceived Transparency and Organisational Trust

In addition to assessing the direct impact of perceived transparency on student satisfaction, institutional trust serves as a significant mediator in this dynamic (Arshad and Khurram, 2020; Haron et al., 2020; Usman et al., 2021; Latif et al., 2021). Having defined transparency above, it is important to expound on the importance of organisational trust. Generally, trust among an organisation's members is indicative of high-performance organisations (Çiçek and Macit, 2016). Customers' trust is reflected by their willingness to engage in future transactions based on the seller's transactional behaviour (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

Just as transparency, trust is prevalent in human relations (Saleem et al., 2017). The legitimacy theory (LT) holds that organisations seek legitimacy (hence trust) by aligning their operations and disclosures with expectations of their social settings (Suchman, 1995). Being in the social setting of a business, customers expect, among many things, high transparency. Therefore, it stands to reason that customers' (students') perception of an institution's transparency affects their confidence in it.

In the United States, Tomlinson and Schnackenberg (2022) reveal that organisational transparency enhances employees' trust in management. In the US, also, Kang and Hustvedt (2014) showed that consumers' perception of a company's transparency influenced their trust towards it. In Vietnam, supply chain transparency strongly influenced consumer trust (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2025). Based on a sample of 6180 Spanish public university students, Medina and Rufin (2015) revealed that institutional transparency affects trust. Based on the LT and literature evidence, this study hypothesised that:

- H_2: HLI's transparency has a positive influence on students' trust in the HLI.

2.3. Trust and Satisfaction

In establishing links between perceived transparency–satisfaction and transparency–trust, the key concepts of transparency and trust are well explained. In general, the concept "satisfaction" can be defined as a feeling of disappointment or pleasure following the comparison of service expectation and performance (Kotler, 2000). That is, a consumer's emotional response to the difference between anticipation and the experience of service. In the context of this study, student satisfaction is an evaluative attitude derived from a student's assessment of educational services (Latif et al., 2021).

While expectation confirmation theory (ECT) links transparency with satisfaction (Oliver, 1977), this study extended the theory by mediating trust. In education, part of the satisfaction is felt after graduation (Espinoza et al., 2019), but HLIs share satisfying prospects (transparency) with students about life after college, during their studies. Hence, when that transparency is not trusted, the gap between expectations and performance remains void, harming the present moment satisfaction. AlSokkar et al. (2024) explained that expected trust develops before consumers actually experience a service. In the case of higher learning institutions (HLIs), students may therefore form an initial level of trust before fully experiencing the institution's services. This initial trust may influence how students view the institution's transparency and, in turn, their level of satisfaction.

The body of knowledge linking trust and satisfaction is more in the area of e-commerce, banking and consumer behaviour. In the area of online shopping in Malaysia, Ashraf et al. (2016) found that trusting beliefs mediated expectation-confirmation and satisfaction. In the current study, organisational transparency is crucial to filling the expectation–confirmation gap. In a web-based survey of 559 participants, AlSokkar et al. (2024) showed that perceived trust significantly contributed to customer satisfaction. Based on that, the study hypothesises that trust influences students' satisfaction, hence completing the mediation relationship.

- H_3: Students' trust in the HLI mediate the relationship between HLI transparency and students' satisfaction with HLI services.

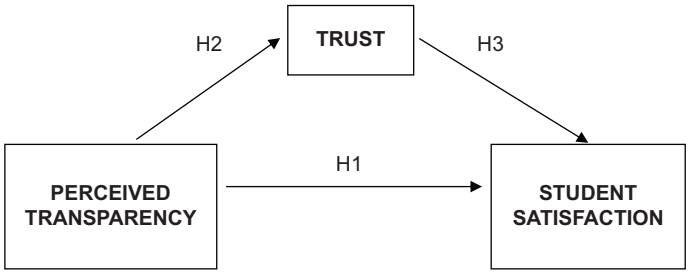
Diagramatically, the study analysed the variable relationships portrayed in Figure 1, the conceptual framework of the study, below:

3. METHODS

3.1. Pilot Study

The researcher performed a pilot study to evaluate the factor structure of a condensed version of the 16-item questionnaire developed by Parasuraman et al. (1988). Participants expressed their level of agreement with each item on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The 16 items included perceived transparency, institutional trust, and overall student satisfaction. The study measured perceived transparency using five items related to principles, values, and standards. Trust in an institution was assessed using three items, and student satisfaction was assessed using eight items. Students were satisfied with the services provided by the institution, their decision to attend, and their willingness to recommend the institution to others.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study



To assess the factor structure of this abbreviated version, a sample of 30 students from 14 higher learning institutions in the coastal zone completed the questionnaire. The scale reliability with coefficient alphas exceeding 0.6 was obtained, consistent with recommendations from prior consumer satisfaction research (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The researcher subsequently assessed item correlation to verify that all questions effectively measured the intended concept and exhibited strong correlations. Most items across the various subscales exhibited a corrected item-to-total correlation exceeding 0.2, indicating a strong association between each item and its respective subscale (Itani et al., 2017), verifying that each item had a proper association with its respective subscale (Table 1).

3.2. Data Collection

The researchers collected data from 398 higher learning students from 14 institutions. The sample comprised 242 males (61%) and 156 females (39%), the majority of whom were aged 18-24, followed by those aged 25-34. To achieve data collection cost efficiency without compromising sample representativeness, the researcher focused on Universities located in the Tanzanian coastal zone, covering Dar es Salaam, Coast Region (Pwani), Tanga, and Mtwara. Each of these regions hosts either main campuses or branches for all Tanzanian HLIs, hence a representative sample.

The questionnaire used 7-point Likert scales to capture data on perceived transparency, institutional trust, and student satisfaction. The researcher evaluated perceived transparency and trust in an institution utilising items by Parasuraman et al. (1988), Mwiya et al. (2017), Park and Blenkinsopp (2011), Medina and Ruffin (2015), and Venkatesh et al. (2011). The items are the institution's management services, which are student appeals or complaints, internships, student exchange programs, and access to e-reading materials in the library. Institutional trust indicators included trust in library resources, sports activities, medical services, counselling services, and access to student services, which encompass co-curricular activities, internet access, and computer and printing facilities. The researcher assessed student satisfaction utilising the eight-item developed by Venkatesh et al. (2011) in Medina and Ruffin (2015). These items included student satisfaction with the services offered by the institution, students' choice to enrol in the institution, the chance to re-enrol at the same institution, and recommending others to enrol.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Measurement Model Assesssment

Table 2 displays the factor loadings and supplementary measurement properties for each construct, where 13 out of 16 constructs analysed had loadings exceeding the threshold of 0.708 (Hair et al., 2022). The two constructs with factor loadings below the threshold were retained, ensuring that all remaining items contributed effectively to the estimation of their respective underlying constructs. The researcher utilised the composite reliability (CR) to assess the instrument's reliability, and all CR values exceeded the 0.70 thresholds (Table 2), indicating internal consistency of all constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Convergent validity was considered acceptable, with the average variance extracted (AVE) exceeding 0.50 and the composite reliability (CR) surpassing 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022), as indicated in Table 2.

Hair et al. (2022) suggest that the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) of correlations serves as a more effective alternative

Table 1: Item-to-total score correlations and internal consistency for scale items

Items	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
Perceived transparency		
The institution administers its subjects with transparency.	0.595	0.933
The procedures for particular SSs, such as internships, student exchanges, or accessing the library's electronic reading materials, are clear and open.	0.487	0.934
Students can monitor the progress and status of specific services like internships, student exchanges, tutorial class changes, and leave of absence applications.	0.611	0.934
The University ensures transparency in managing student appeals and complaints.	0.519	0.934
Information about SSs, such as library resources, sports activities, medical services, and counseling services, is adequately disclosed.	0.507	0.934
Total subscale Cronbach's alpha		0.934
Trust		
The SSs provided by the University align with my interests.	0.606	0.933
The university allows students to access various SSs, including co-curricular activities, internet, computer, and printing facilities.	0.532	0.934
The University excels in providing SSs.	0.572	0.933
Total subscale Cronbach's alpha		0.933
Student satisfaction		
The individual is satisfied with the quality of SSs offered by the institution.	0.634	0.933
Enrolling at my university was a wise decision.	0.548	0.934
The individual expresses satisfaction with their decision to attend this institution.	0.576	0.934
The individual plans to recommend this institution to their family and friends in the future.	0.686	0.933
If given the choice to study again, I would still choose to enroll in this institute.	0.552	0.934
The individual is satisfied with their decision to enroll in this institute.	0.686	0.933
The individual expresses satisfaction with their academic experience at their university.	0.53	0.934
I made the right choice by selecting my university.	0.608	0.934
Total subscale Cronbach's alpha		0.934

Table 2: Validity and reliability

Dimension	Item	Item descriptor	Loading	CR	AVE
Perceived transparency	PT1	The institution administers its subjects with transparency.	0.729	0.841	0.515
	PT2	The procedures for particular SSs, such as internships, student exchanges, or accessing the library's electronic reading materials, are clear and open.	0.680		
	PT3	Students can monitor the progress and status of services like internships, student exchanges, tutorial class changes, or leave of absence applications.	0.659		
	PT4	The University manages services such as student appeals and complaints with transparency.	0.792		
	PT5	Information on student services like library resources, sports, medical, and counseling services is adequately disclosed.	0.723		
Students' satisfaction	S1	The individual is satisfied with the quality of SSs offered by the institution.	0.939	0.946	0.689
	S2	Enrolling at my university was a wise decision.	0.827		
	S3	The individual expresses satisfaction with their decision to attend this institution.	0.849		
	S4	The individual plans to recommend this institution to their family and friends in the future.	0.798		
	S5	If given the choice to study again, I would still choose to enroll in this institute.	0.840		
	S6	The individual is satisfied with their decision to enroll in this institute.	0.810		
	S7	The individual expresses satisfaction with their academic experience at their university.	0.762		
	S8	I made the right choice by selecting my university.	0.803		
Trust in an institution	TR1	The SSs provided by the University align with my interests.	0.726	0.785	0.550
	TR2	The university allows students to access various SSs, including co-curricular activities, internet, computer, and printing facilities.	0.716		
	TR3	The University excels in providing SSs.	0.780		

*Threshold value is 0.708 for factor loading; 0.7 for CR and 0.5 for AVE

to conventional methods for evaluating discriminant validity, including cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. Since the constructs in this study are conceptually more distinct, all values are below the conservative threshold of 0.85 (Hair et al., 2022) (Table 3).

4.2. Structural Model

The researcher initially examined the extent of variance explained by the independent variable across various outcome variables. Perceived transparency was a significant predictor of student satisfaction, accounting for 64% of the variance in this outcome. The perceived transparency accounts for 68% (R^2) of the variance in institutional trust (Table 4).

The researcher analysed R^2, beta (β), and the associated t-values using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 samples to assess the mediating role of trust in an institution in the relationship between perceived transparency and student satisfaction (Hair et al., 2022). The study included three variables. Perceived transparency served as the predictor variable, trust in an institution functioned as the mediating variable, and student satisfaction represented the outcome variable. See Figure 2, which illustrates a modified structural equation model with direct and indirect effects. Modified measurement model showing the factor loadings for all variables and their measurement indicators.

The findings supported H1. First, perceived transparency predicted student satisfaction positively and significantly (β=0.319, t=5.303, $p < 0.001$), implying that the more students agreed that their HLI was transparent, the more satisfied they were.

The results of the structural path (H2): trust in an institution was also positively and significantly predicted by perceived transparency (β=0.671, t=20.098, $p < 0.001$); thus, the more students agreed that their HLI demonstrated transparency, the more likely they were to agree that their HLI had higher levels of trust.

Table 3: Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT)

Variable	Perceived Transparency	Students' satisfaction	Trust in an institution
Perceived Transparency			
Students' satisfaction	0.735		
Trust in an institution	0.889	0.791	

Table 4: R square

Variable	R square	R square adjusted
SS	0.642	0.641
TR	0.677	0.677

The direct effect of the mediating variable on student satisfaction was then evaluated (H3). Trust in an institution (β=0.473, t=7.935, $p < 0.001$) was found to have a significant positive relationship with student satisfaction. This significant relationship means that students with a higher perception of trust in their HLI are more satisfied (Table 5).

For indirect effects, the study found a significant indirect effect of perceived transparency on student satisfaction mediated by trust in the institution (Table 6). This indirect effect suggests that trust in the institution partially mediates the link between perceived transparency and student satisfaction, confirming H_4.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Discussion

This study investigates the mediating effect of trust in higher learning institutions on the relationship between students' perceptions of transparency and their satisfaction. The study revealed that perceived transparency has a significant effect on student satisfaction. Prior research confirms this finding, even though in a different context of job satisfaction, with a positive correlation between perceived transparency and job satisfaction

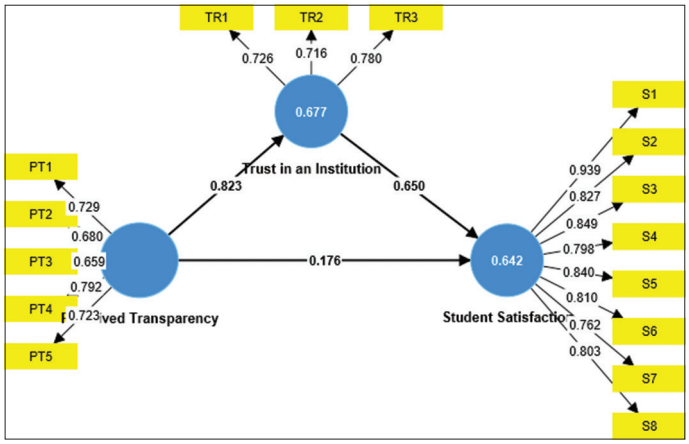
Table 5: Path coefficients (direct effects)

Variable	Beta (β)	Error	T statistics	P-values
PT -> SS	0.319	0.322	5.303	0.000
PT -> TR	0.671	0.672	20.098	0.000
TR -> SS	0.473	0.470	7.935	0.000

Table 6: Path coefficients (indirect effects)

Variable	Beta (β)	Error	T statistics	P-values
PT -> TR -> SS	0.317	0.316	7.653	0.000

Figure 2: Modified research model



(Hofmann and Strobel, 2020; Tiwari, 2022). Identifying predictors of student satisfaction is crucial for higher education institutions to build a competitive foundation and improve their market share. The current study's findings demonstrate that perceived transparency is essential for student satisfaction, potentially aiding higher learning institutions in maintaining and increasing student enrolment.

This study demonstrates that perceived transparency significantly improves student satisfaction and trust. Research demonstrates that perceived transparency significantly influences trust in institutions (Grimmelikhuijsen et al., 2020; Medina and Rufin, 2015; Tiwari, 2022). The notable correlation suggests that students evaluated perceived transparency favourably as a result of heightened trust in their higher learning institution (Latif et al., 2021). Researchers subsequently identified a significant positive direct relationship between institutional trust and student satisfaction. The correlation between student trust in an institution and student satisfaction is significant and positive, supported by previous studies (Alzahrani et al., 2015; Saleem et al., 2017; Tiwari, 2022). The significant relationship can be attributed to service providers' capacity to improve customer satisfaction and trust, thereby diminishing the perceived risk linked to service delivery. A reduction in perceived risk can enhance customer commitment to the service provider (Latif et al., 2021). Student satisfaction is potentially affected by the dynamics of trust in the personnel and management of higher learning institutions (HLI), indicating that this trust is associated with confidence in the HLI's capacity to sustain service levels in the future (Latif et al., 2021).

The present study examined the role of institutional trust in mediating the relationship between perceived transparency and student satisfaction. The findings indicate that trust in an institution mediates the relationship between perceived transparency and student satisfaction. The findings indicate that the implementation of transparency can indirectly enhance student satisfaction when integrated into the HLI in a manner that fosters and strengthens student satisfaction while simultaneously increasing the trustworthiness of the HLI.

Research on perceived transparency in the education sector is limited; however, findings from marketing and management literature have consistently produced similar results. Trust in an institution serves as a mediator in the relationship between perceived transparency and customer satisfaction, as indicated by Uzir et al. (2021). The current study's findings support previous research indicating that trust mediates the relationship between perceived transparency and satisfaction (Usman et al., 2021; Singh and Jasial, 2021).

The findings provide empirical support for the conclusions of Hofmann and Strobel (2020) and Latif et al. (2021) concerning the importance of transparency and trust in higher education, particularly in the context of new strategic challenges and organisational change. The findings highlight the significance of an effective information policy and information management. Studies indicate that HLI administration and departments must prioritise clear and transparent communication concerning their units' structure, resources, and performance. This study examined general transparency and assessments of student satisfaction; however, the availability and necessity of specific information may differ across higher education institutions. The HLI administration can assess satisfaction concerning specific aspects of information transparency at a more detailed level, facilitating a more precise comprehension of perceived shortcomings and pinpointing the essential information required to address these gaps effectively. This strategy ensures that HLIs provide accurate information considered valuable, thus improving perceptions of transparency and trust in society.

Perceived transparency initiatives may fail to enhance satisfaction unless they concurrently foster students' trust in an institution (Latif et al., 2021). The findings indicate that university administrators should recognise that investing in perceived transparency may significantly influence positive student responses, such as satisfaction in the current study.

5.2. Conclusion

Student satisfaction confers a competitive advantage to higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Consequently, enhancing the satisfaction of higher learning institutions (HLIs) students with the provided services has become essential and based on this study, transparency and trust are crucial inputs to that goal. HLIs need to prioritise the delivery of high-quality and reliable services to establish trust. Trust and transparency are critical components of a Higher Learning Institution, as they enhance student satisfaction and foster enduring relationships. Training centred on customer focus would equip service centre personnel, including gatekeepers, receptionists, accounts office staff, the dean of students' office, and wardens, to deliver prompt and efficient

service. The HLIs could utilise transparency, trust, and satisfaction as metrics to assess and enhance employee service behaviour. The utilisation of suitable communication methods can facilitate the establishment of trust.

This study introduced an innovative method for scholars and researchers to investigate the behavioural and cognitive elements affecting perceived transparency, institutional trust, and student happiness among students in higher education institutions. The study contributes by applying a proposed new model to behavioural, cognitive, and marketing factors. The proposed model offers a useful way to understand how different service-related factors, such as transparency, trust, and satisfaction, may be connected. Its ability to examine these relationships makes the model applicable to different research contexts (Leong et al., 2020; Tiwari, 2022). The findings enhance the present understanding by identifying antecedent factors that affect student happiness in higher education institutions through predictor transparency (Tiwari, 2022).

5.3. Implications of the Study and Future Research Scope

The research suggests that tanzanian higher learning institutions (HLIs) should prioritise improving student satisfaction and institutional transformation tasks through transparent policies. This transparency includes transparent implementation of subjects, services, and handling student appeals. By doing so, HLIs can ensure student satisfaction and gain future student trust. The research indicates that the integration of transparency processing with customer relationship management can enhance reliable services for prospective customers.

Trust can enhance student satisfaction; however, higher learning institutions should prioritise the development of harmonious relationships with their clientele. Future research should employ qualitative methods, utilise larger sample sizes, and adopt longitudinal approaches to examine the long-term effects of transparency on student satisfaction. Surveys conducted across various geographical regions can provide insights into student satisfaction, given that the literature on perceived transparency and satisfaction within the Tanzanian education sector remains underdeveloped.

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