

## **Positioning of Private Sector Business Schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Multidimensional Positioning Study**

Muhammad Tariq Yousafzai,\* Maryam Khan\*\* and Usman Khan\*\*\*

### **Abstract**

*The term “positioning” was first coined by Alries and Trout in (1969) which has since then become a major concern for business corporations, non-for-profits and even individuals. The study strives to investigate the current peculiar positioning status of private sector business schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. An overwhelming, majority of private sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are charitable trusts and foundations running business schools to support camouflaged profit motives. The survey is based on multidimensional scaling technique applied to data collected from newly inducted students of 12 leading private sector business schools and departments using admitted Student Plus Questionnaire (ASQ). The multi-level data is collected over two phase’s empirical evidence collected from four business schools on twelve attributes in pilot phase; and from eight business schools on eight most relevant attributes in subsequent full-scale part of field work. The attributes were academic reputation, availability of majors, quality of social life, academic life, extra-curricular activities, campus attractiveness, academic facilities and cost of study. The study argues on theoretical grounds and unravels empirically a below average performance for all business schools as evident from the combined average score of less than 50 percent. This inwardly, indicates a serious positioning issue which warrants immediate attention. The study recommends business schools to reassess their idiosyncratic positioning in wake of competitors having me too charters, similar composition in board of governors, sponsoring bodies and even similar learning curves since incorporation. The researchers leave further studies to exclusively study others and especially public sector universities to future researchers.*

**Keywords:** Positioning, Perceptual mapping, Multidimensional scaling, Board of Governors, Charters, Private Sector Universities

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\* Muhammad Tariq Yousafzai, Assistant Professor, FAST School of Management, FAST National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences, FAST-NUCES, Peshawar Email: [tariq.yousafzai@nu.edu.pk](mailto:tariq.yousafzai@nu.edu.pk) or [ibc208tamu@gmail.com](mailto:ibc208tamu@gmail.com)

\*\* Maryam Khan, Bachelor of Business Administration, FAST-NUCES, Peshawar

\*\*\* Usman Khan, Bachelor of Business Administration, FAST-NUCES, Peshawar

## **Introduction and Background**

The business school once a top priority of students in Pakistan has become a rather dismal choice for nowadays. This is evident from the fact that there has been gradual decline in popularity of business programs due to gradual market saturation. Part of the problem is due to the fact that HEC has not been able to exercise tight control over business schools due to lack of effective governance and absence of proper enforcement apparatus. The top tier and highly ranked business schools in the country are facing a decline in terms of quality student's intake across Pakistan. The trend is more prevalent in the private sector universities operating in small cities like Peshawar. Whereas, in capital city of Islamabad there is a ready supply of students no matter which institute or university we may take to consideration. The capital attracts the best and brightest talent in the country across the world and hence Islamabad has more universities than Baluchistan province.

### *Problem Statement*

A whopping majority of private universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are run by trusts and foundations. The member Board of Governors (BoGs) of these charitable institutions lack ownership, insight, oversight and foresight to figure out the correct positioning strategy in domains of competition resulting in a miss-match. Prior researcher has paid scant treatment to the fact that there is a general misconception among academics in Pakistan that good universities do not market their programs. This is very true but the fact remains that world over universities may not market themselves but their business schools or executive development programs regularly does marketing. There seems to be a mismatch as we expect MBAs to become entrepreneurs and in the school we are teaching mere business functions and managerial skills. Moreover MBA prepares for private sector; whereas the target market value Government jobs. This clearly indicates that private sector universities have a positioning issue which is idiosyncratic to a given institution. This study strives to determine the peculiar market positions in relation to competition for leading private sector business and schools and departments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Pakistan.

### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose is to identify the current positioning of business schools on a perceptual map using multidimensional scaling attributes.

## **Frame of Reference**

At the time of independence Pakistan inherited only one higher education University by the name of University of Punjab established in (1882) as a public sector university. According to Khalid Khattak (2015) the total

number of universities and degree awarding institutes stands at 117 comprising of 74 private and 103 public sector universities (HEC, 2015). Over the years Pakistan has witnessed gradual rise in number of higher education with most of universities established by Government which were governed by University Grants Commission. However, since the establishment of Higher Education Commission in 2002 there has been a phenomenal rise in the participation of private sector in domains of higher education. This trend is evident in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where a number of universities have been established since 2000 in the private sector. In the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa there are 19 public sector and 10 private sector universities (ibid).

The authors strive to create a chronological overview of the emergence of private sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as evident from table (1.1) describing the nature of constitution, scope, and sponsoring bodies along with year of incorporation. At the same time efforts have been made to collect information pertaining to scope of universities, the nature of their charters, governors structures and how these universities have positioned themselves.

Table 1: Development of Private Sector Universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

1	Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences & Technology, Topi Swabi	Provincial Charter, (1994)	Society for Promotion of Engineering Sciences & Technology
2	National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences (FAST-NUCES)	Federal Charter (2000)	Foundation for Advancement of Science & Technology (FAST)
3	COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT)	Federal Charter (2000)	Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in South
4	CECOS University of Information Technology and Emerging Sciences	Provincial Charter, (2001)	CECOS Educational Institutions (Pvt) Limited
5	City University of Science & Information Technology	Provincial Charter, (2001)	Partnership registered with registrar of

			companies
6	Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology	Provincial Charter, (2001)	Qurtuba Foundation
7	Sarhad University of Science and Information technology, (SUIT)	Provincial Charter, (2001)	Al-Beruni Trust for educational development.
8	Gandhara University	Provincial Charter, (2002)	Begum Muhammad Naseer Trust
9	The Northern University (NU)	Provincial Charter, (2002)	The Educational Development & Research Trust
10	Preston University Kohat	Provincial Charter, (2002)	Preston education Peshawar, Private Limited
11	Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences)	Provincial Charter, (2002)	Autonomous Self Governing Body
12	Abasyn University	Provincial Charter, (2009)	Abasyn Educational System (Pvt) Limited
13	Iqra National University (INU)	Provincial Charter, (2010)	Iqra Trust

### Emergence of Private sector Universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences & Technology (GIKI) operates as Private Sector residential University near Tarbela in Topi, within geographic jurisdiction of District Swabi. The sponsoring body of (GIKI) is Society for Promotion of Engineering Sciences & Technology formed through Societies Registration Act of (1860). The President of Pakistan is the Chancellor of university who appoints the Rector for a fixed tenure in consultation with Society members. The control of institute is vested in the sponsoring Society whose council acts as Board of Governors of the Institute. Prominent members of this council include Chief Secretary and Secretary Law of the Government KP, Chairman Central Board of revenue and the Chairman University Grants Commission or Higher Education Commission (Government of KKP, Act No. III, 1994; Isani & Vrik, 2006).

National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences was incorporated through an ordinance on July 1, (2000) as a center of excellence in the form of a federally chartered university. The patron of university is the President of Islamic republic of Pakistan who shall

appoint the chancellor on recommendations of the member board of trustees for Foundation for advancement of Science and Technology. The Chancellor appoints the rector for duration of four years who shall be an eminent scholar and educationist with distinctive record. The rector acts as Chairman Board of governors. Other members include one vice chancellor of any university, Chairman Higher Education commission, one retired judge of Supreme Court and secretary of Education. The university has five campuses in cities of Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi, Faisalabad and Peshawar (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Ministry of Law, 2016).

COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT) was established in (2000) through an ordinance of the Federal Government. The President of Pakistan is patron in chief of CIIT and the Minister of Science and technology acts as Chancellor of institute. (Isani & Vrik, 2006) CIIT has campuses across the country as well as offers distance education and virtual education to masses. The main campuses of CIIT are located in Islamabad, Lahore, Wah Cantt, Attock, Vehari and Abbottabad. The Abbottabad Campus was inaugurated on September 3, 2001. The Board of Governors of CIIT is chaired by Executive Director with other prominent members such as Secretary, ministry of Science and technology, Secretary Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan. The rest of members are Chairman University grants commission or HEC. The university has the distinction of holding more than 1077 PhD qualified faculty members (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Gazette of Pakistan, 2000; Ministry of Law, 2016).

CECOS University of Information Technology and Emerging Sciences Peshawar was established through a provincial ordinance by then NWFP on August 30, (2001) as a private sector university. The Governor of formerly NWFP province (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa hereafter) is the Patron in Chief of the university with Engineer Muhammad Tanveer Javed as its lifetime President. The Board of Governors is chaired by the President (Isani & Vrik, 2006). Other members of BoG include Vice President, Vice Chancellor of CECOS University, retired judge to be nominated by Chief justice Peshawar High Court, nominee of University Grants Commission or Higher Education Commission. The main faculties of the university shall be Computer Sciences and information technology, Management Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Natural and applied Sciences, Engineering, Medical Sciences, Faculty of Distance/Virtual Education. The University has two management sciences related campuses in Phase 2 Hayatabad and Saddar, Road, Peshawar Cantonment (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK, Ordinance, XXI, 2001)

City University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar was established through ordinance of the North West Frontier Province on August 30, (2001). Prior to university status the founders of university

had already established school and college's network of good repute. The Governor of the province is patron in chief of the university and Mr. Muhammad Sabur Sethi was appointed as first president of university by the members of partnership. The Board of Governors comprises of Vice Chancellor who acts as chairman of the board. Other prominent members include one Vice Chancellor of a public sector university, a serving or retired judge to be nominated by Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (Isani & Vrik, 2006: Government of KPK, Ordinance NO. XX, 2001).

Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar established through ordinance in (2001) in Dera Ismial Khan (DI. Khan). Prof Abdul Aziz Khan was elected as lifetime president of the university by members of foundation. The Governor of province acts as patron in chief of the university (Isani & Vrik, 2006). The President is the chairman of the Board of Governors of Qurtuba Foundation. Other members include the Vice chancellor, the pro-Vice chancellor, a serving or retired judge nominated by Chief Justice Peshawar High Court, one scientist of international repute, one serving vice chancellor of Public Sector University. The faculties include Computer Sciences and Information technology, Management Sciences, Arts, Natural and applied sciences, Engineering and Medical Sciences. The University has two Campuses in Dera Ismial Khan and Peshawar (Government of KPK, Ordinance. XXII, 2001)

Sarhad University of Science and Information technology, Peshawar listed in official records as [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa university of Science and technology] through ordinance of provincial Government was incorporated on August, 30, (2001). The Governor of KPK province is Patron in chief of university with Mr. Riaz Karim appointed as life time president of the university by board trustees of "Al-Beruni Trust for Educational Development". The Vice President of University is Brigadier (Retd) Javed Tipu for a life time. The Board of Governors comprises of Vice Chancellor of University who acts as chairman of the board. Other prominent members in the include Secretary Education Department, Chairman or member nominated by Chairman Higher Education Commission, One scientist of repute, a Vice chancellor of Public Sector University, a serving or retired judge nominated by chief justice Peshawar high court. Sarhad University has the provision of starting up distance education which the university utilizes to its advantage. The University has its main campus in Peshawar with 2 Distance Education centers (DECs) located in Islamabad and 36 Distance Education centers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as Distance education centers in Dubai, Kuwait and KSA (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK, Ordinance No. XXIV, 2001).

Gandhara University was initially a medical college which received its charter in November, (2002) provincial Government

ordinance. The overall founder of the trust is Professor Muhammad Kabir who is also member board of trustees. The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa acts as the patron in chief who in consultation with member board of trustees appoints the chancellor for a term of three years who in turn appoints Vice Chancellor of Gandhara University (Isani & Vrik, 2006). The Chancellor or university is chairman of board of Governors. Other prominent members include Chief justice Peshawar High Courts, Chairman HEC, Chairman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Service Commission and President of Pakistan Medical and Dental Council. The faculties of university include Medicine and Allied Science, Islamic Studies, Basic and Applied sciences, Management Sciences, Humanities and faculty of legal studies (Government of KPK Ordinance No. LIV, 2002).

The Northern University, through ordinance provincial Government was incorporated in November, (2002). The university operates as a private sector university sponsored by "The Educational Development and Research Trust". The Governor, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa acts as the patron in chief with General Sarwar Khan appointed as first President and Chaudry Iftikhar Ahmad Khan first Vice President of University. The President is chairman Board of Governors with other prominent members include nominee of HEC Chairman, Secretary Higher Education Department, a serving or retired judge nominated by Chief Justice Peshawar High Court and a Vice Chancellor of Public Sector University. The university by virtue of its charter can operate in Faculties of Engineering and Technology, Faculty of Administrative Sciences, Faculty of Arts, and faculty of Sciences (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK, Ordinance XLVIII, 2002).

Preston University Kohat was established through an ordinance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in (2002). The university has the distinction that Preston Karachi was established as the pioneering private sector university in Pakistan during (1984). The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the Patron of Preston University. The Chancellor of university is appointed by Board of Directors for a tenure of six years with Dr Abdul Basit Khan elected as first ever Chancellor of Preston university Kohat. Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan is the first ever Executive Vice President of University. The chancellor is also the chairman of board of Governors and appoints the vice chancellor for tenure of three years. Other prominent member of the Board comprises of one nominee each of Chairman HEC and Patron in Chief, Secretary Higher Education Department, a serving or retired judge nominate by chief justice Peshawar high court and a Vice Chancellor or public sector university (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK, Ordinance LII, 2002).

IMSciences is a degree awarding autonomous institute established through an ordinance of formerly NWFP Province on

October 2, (2002). Prior to this the institute was a constituent department in University of Peshawar (Isani & Vrik, 2006). As per the charter the Institute is open to all with its Director appointed by Board of Directors for four years. Director is the Chief academic and administrative officer of institute. The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa acts as Chairman Board of Governors. Other Prominent members of the board include Minister of Education, Vice Chancellor University of Peshawar (UOP), Rector Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), and Director Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Chief Secretary to Government, Representative of Higher Education Commission and Institute of Bankers in Pakistan (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK Ordinance, XXXVII, 2002).

Abasyn University was founded in (2009) through the Abasyn University Act Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a private sector university. Prior to university charter the founders had already cemented their market share in education circles of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by running Abasyn institute which offered certificate courses and diploma as an affiliated institution. The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the Patron of the university with Mr. Muhammad Imran Ullah as the Chancellor of Abasyn Educational System (Pvt) Limited. The university has faculties of Engineering, Management Sciences, Information technology, Social Sciences and Faculty of Natural Sciences (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK Act XIII, 2009).

Iqra National University was affiliated with Iqra University Karachi from (2000) till year (2010). Afterwards, it was given charter by the Provincial assembly vide an ordinance on 25 November (2010) as a private sector university with name of Iqra National University (INU). The University is sponsored by "Iqra Trust" registered under the Trust Act (1882). The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the patron in chief with Mr. Obaid Ur Rehman as its Chancellor and Dr. Shah Jehan Khan as Vice Chancellor of Iqra National University. As per its charter the university has faculty of Computer Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Business Administration, Faculty of Arts and Design (Isani & Vrik, 2006; Government of KPK Act, No. 2, 2011).

### **Positioning**

Fumasoli and Huisman, (2013) as cited in Pritchard et al, (2016) define institutional positioning as the process through which educational institutions situate themselves in a certain niche within an already existing system of education to favorably contribute towards institutional performance. The three activities of segmenting, targeting and positioning are extremely crucial to the success in products and services in a category. However, segmentation and targeting can only be accomplished when the company own advantageous position in minds of

target market in a certain product or service category. The word positioning was first introduced by Al Ries and Jack Trout in their seminal paper published in Journal of Industrial Marketing in (1969) which proclaims that positioning is a game that marketers play with minds of customers. According to them positioning serves as instrument of increasing competitive strength (ibid). Al Ries, (2001) defines positioning as the marketing strategy, the aim of which is to occupy a distinct position, relative to competing brand in the minds of customers. Position does not mean doing something with the product/services, but it's setting the brand in the mind of consumer.

Ries and Trout (2002) asserts that it's better if a brand comes first to the mind (recall) than to be a first mover to the market as marketing is all about competition for a favorable consumer perception. Through Positioning the company can differentiate its products and services through low cost, differentiation and dual advantages strategy by offering value (IESE, 2010; Bowman et al, 2000; Kotler et al, 2015).

### **Positioning of Universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

The objective of market positioning is to emphasize one or two attributes that makes the company stand out in the clutter of competition. The following are the current market positions of leading private sector business schools operating in business education sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. According to Trout & Ries, (1982) the name of a brand or company establishes a distinct word in the mind of customers. In the same vein, the university names have been derived from history such as Qurtuba, Gandhara, Sarhad, Iqra to establish a favorable image and recall in the minds of prospective students.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute (GIKI) is society based institution which positions itself as a center of excellence in science and technology. The university appeals to prospective students with its aspirations to contribute towards economic growth of Pakistan by further strengthening its manufacturing, industrial through provision of quality education. The university announces admission in both Fall, and Spring semesters.

Sarhad University is basically an IT university offering diverse spectra of courses in social and natural sciences and engineering. They have distance programs in remote areas, which make the mass producer. The university positions itself in admission campaign with a unique selling proposition of "*Quality Education at affordable Cost*" and a slogan "*Step into bright Future*". The University offers admissions in both Fall, and Spring Semesters with heavy print media advertising spending throughout the year. The university has recently launched its journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (JOSH).

Qurtuba University stresses the importance of moral, ethical and spiritual development to enliven the spirit Qurtuba city in Spain which remained a

cradle of knowledge for centuries. The Qurtuba Educational Foundation offers a complete educational solution from with its allied schools and colleges from primary level till tertiary education. The university has a research focus and advertises itself to prospective students as a teaching based and research lead university having two recognized research journals. The university offers admissions both in Spring and Fall Semesters and charges the lowest fee on the market. Most recently the university has is experiencing a reposition with its increased focus towards engineering programs in 2016.

City University (CUSIT) focuses on the social sciences and transitioning towards engineering and natural sciences programs. The university positions itself as a highest category university having accreditations NCEAC for Computer Sciences, PEC accredited for engineering programs to prospective candidates. The university however runs admission in Spring and Fall semester which does not fit well with the market position it aspires to achieve. The university appeals to residents of Peshawar city area who speak Hindko language courtesy of its name and background of founders.

Fast University is a computer science university and positions itself as a center of excellence in Computer Sciences. The university positions itself in its admission announcement with a slogan “Reshaping your destiny”. The University offers centralized admissions once in Fall Semester ahead of competitors to attract the brightest of students from market. The university markets itself sparingly, thus enjoying low level recall ability amid higher academic stature in perceived in other campuses.

CECOS University is engineering oriented university with limited focus on business administration. The university positions itself in its admission announcements to prospective students as a pioneer in domains of private sector to have started engineering programmes.

Abasyn University is basically engineering university and offering computing and technology, management sciences and natural sciences. Abasyn University appeals to prospective students in admission announcements with a slogo “Passion to design futures”.

Preston University has a first mover advantage in the domains of educational circles of private sector universities in Pakistan owing to the fact that Preston Karachi was established in 1984. The university markets itself aggressively and can be termed as marketing dominated institution with admission offered in both Fall and Spring Semesters. The university position itself before prospective students in its advertisement with a tag line “Strengthening Lives for purpose, Service and Leadership”.

Iqra National University is a liberal type and focuses more on arts and creativity amid its recent focus on engineering and business management. The university caters to the demands of long tail of intake

as evident from longer lag time between announcements and closure of admission as well as charges the highest fee on the market at undergraduate level. Iqra National University positions itself to prospective students in its admission campaign with a tag line “Connecting the values and mission of INU towards needs of nation.

IMSciences is a standalone business school in itself with a strong board of governors and resource base. It is similar to IBA of Karachi or Sukkur IBA for that matter. A kind of model institution for KPK based Universities. The Institute has repositioned itself as previous it used not to advertise itself as a seat of higher learning. The university appeals to prospective students in its admissions campaigns as the leading business school of the province in terms of PhD Faculty, Scholarships availability, international outlook and HEC rankings.

Gandhara University is basically medical and applied sciences dominated university. The university has guaranteed business from its Faculty of Medical Sciences and positions itself to prospective students as a Medical university specializing in cross disciplinary expertise such as management sciences, public health and hospital services. However, the size and relevance of their business school is minor with regards to this undertaking.

CIIT core competency lies in domain of computer sciences as it is continuously ranked the top computer science university in Pakistan. The University Positions itself to prospective students in admission advertisements as highest ranked Nature Index, IT, with more than 1077 PhD qualified faculty. The university is also ranked second in domain of research rankings and 6<sup>th</sup> best university of Pakistan. CIIT complements its positioning with a slogan, “In search of Excellence” in its marketing campaigns. The university beside spending heavily on press advertisements also arranges two international annual conferences (SAICON & FIT) to further boost its brand image at national and international levels.

### **Methodology**

The research is mainly desk based, however; efforts have been made to triangulate it with primary data collection through survey (questionnaire) and personal observation. For this purpose the research scholars visited selected business schools and collected data from a multiplicity of sources but primarily students in two stages. Initially un-structured interviews were held with students to achieve basic understanding of the impression private sector business schools were having in minds of students. Moreover, environmental scan was carried out by contacting advertising agencies and through access to the World Wide Web to cross check the validity of pilot stage data collected. In the second phase the questionnaire for this study is Admitted Students Questionnaire (ASQ)

plus which collects data information on multiple attributes and subsequently analyzed via MDS in excel. A possible delimitation of the study pertains to the fact that some of the universities having partnership and private forms of incorporation. The researchers were however constrained due to the fact that there is more than 50 percent of HEIS which run as charitable organizations in the form of trusts and foundations.

#### *Sample Frame and Sampling procedure*

The sample frame comprised of all universities (private and public) located in geographical boundaries of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, due to certain limitations we have taken to consideration the following 13 universities as our sample.

Table 2: List of Universities consulted in pilot and second phase of Data collection

	Name of University/DAI	Campus Location	Pre/Post Test
1	Institute of Management and Sciences (IMSciences)	Hayatabad Phase (VII) Peshawar	Post Test
2	Iqra National University	Hayatabad Phase (II), Peshawar	Post Test
3	CECOS University of IT & Emerging Sciences	Hayatabad Phase (VI) Peshawar	Post Test
4	National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences	Hayatabad (IE) Estate, Peshawar	Post Test
5	Qurtuba University of Science & IT	Hayatabad Phase (III), Peshawar	Post Test
6	Sarhad University of Science & IT (SUIT)	RR Landi Akhun Ahmad Peshawar	Post Test
7	Abasyn University	Charsada link Ring Road, Peshawar	Post Test
8	City University of Science & IT	Dalazak Road, Peshawar	Post Test
9	Preston University	University Town, Peshawar	Pre Test
10	COMSATS Institute of IT (CIIT)	University Road, Abbotabad	Pre Test
11	Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute (GIKI)	Topi, District Swabi, (KP)	Pre Test
12	Northern University	Nowshera	Pre Test

*Source: Self-Created*

The admitted students (freshmen) of above universities were consulted for data collection in a two phase sampling procedure. In the first phase first year (freshmen) students three university campuses were consulted to acquire a general understanding of phenomenon under study. In the second phase 8 leading universities in the private sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were chosen for data collection on admitted student plus questionnaire (ASQ). Data were only collected from undergraduate business graduates. A total of 150 students were given the questionnaire out of which 98 responded within the time frame. The 08 attributes on which data is collected from subjects include Cost of Studying, Institutional Reputation, Availability of Facilities, Availability Majors, Extra-Curricular Activities, Quality of Academic quality; Life, Quality of Social life and Conduciveness of General Atmosphere.

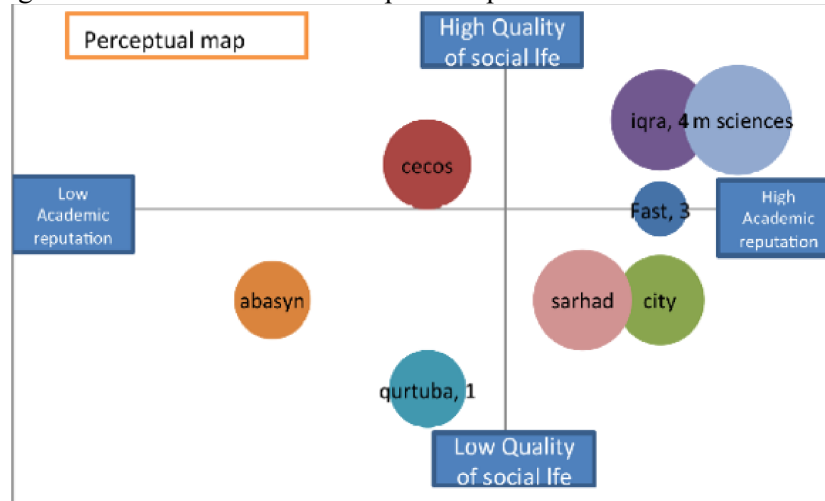
#### *Perceptual Mapping*

Choosing a college or university is major decision for both parents and students. In this regard institutional perception and image is crucial and deciding factor. Perception as defined by Schiffman, (2013) is how a customer selects, organizes and interprets an external stimulus and gives it some meaning. The freshly inducted students were asked to rate the image of the institute for which the current perception survey is carried out. The perceptual maps can be two dimensional or multi-dimensional in nature depending upon the nature of the data collected. For the purpose of this paper authors have constructed both two dimensional and multi-dimensional perceptual maps using data collected through questionnaire. The data was analyzed using Microsoft excel 2013 version using perceptual mapping template.

The perceptual maps reveal the positioning of your product or business vis-a-vis your competitors. Likewise, products or firms having similar attributes are plotted near to each other and seen as direct competitors. At times, if there are gaps available on the graph it signifies opportunities for firms to come up and fill it with new value propositions.

By choosing only two attributes of academic reputation and quality of social life the following output is generated for which interpretation is given below

Figure 1: Two dimensional Perceptual maps with two attributes

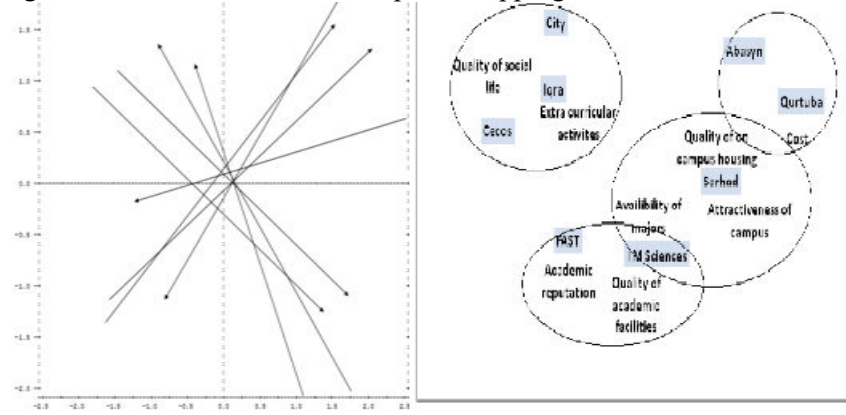


As evident from the figure above FAST NU is rated better in comparison with other universities on dimensions of academic reputation. On the other hand, it was rated below the competitors on quality of life dimension. The size of the circular diagram shows the number of new students admitted at various universities and is as such self-explanatory. The results reveal that Imsciences is the market leaders and direct competitor FAST NUCES. Iqra University was perceived as better on the social dimension when compared with FAST national university. The results reveal that FAST School of Management is amongst the weakest competitors when it comes to business school intake.

#### Analysis with Multi-Dimensional Perceptual Mapping

Like two dimensional scaling multidimensional scaling also utilizes attributes but the number of attributes is generally greater 3. Out of the 12 attributes of ASQ we have adopted 8 attributes and 8 business schools to construct multidimensional maps perceptual map. The 8 attributes most important with regards to positioning were chosen with regards to perceptual mapping.

Figure 2: Multidimensional Perceptual Mapping of Business Schools



### Findings

The multidimensional scaling analysis revealed a number of perceived similarities and differences among the private sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The graphical illustration above in figure (2) indicates that FAST School of Management and IMSciences share two attributes namely academic reputation and quality of academic facilities. In the same vein, IMSciences is rated favorably on the dimension for availability of major concentrations; whereas, FAST School of Management is perceived negatively on this attribute. IMSciences scored the highest amongst the competing business schools except for quality of social life. FAST School of Management enjoys good reputation with regards to academics. Apart from this school does poor on dimensions such as quality of social life, extracurricular activities, on campus housing and availability of major concentrations in business programs. IMSciences is ranked highest on the quality of housing facilities for students. Likewise Sarhad University is also ranked favorably on this dimension. Iqra National University scored higher on extracurricular activities and quality of social life as the youngest business schools in the sample chosen. On the other hand Iqra and Sarhad do not show very positively with regards to academic outlook and image. Abasyn University and CECOS University enjoys favorable image with regards to extracurricular activities. Qurtuba University is positioned as the most affordable university and Iqra national university is using psychological pricing even though it is newly established university. City University is perceived to have better academic infrastructure and facilities than Iqra, CECOS and Abasyn University.

### Conclusions

The analysis indicates that IMSciences enjoys market leadership in domains of private sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on almost all the attributes chosen for this paper. Qurtuba and Abasyn fall in the second tier business schools. While FAST Peshawar, CECOS Peshawar and City University are lying in third tier business schools. The overall rating of entire sample of business schools is lower than 55 percent indicating serious issues with regard to positioning, targeting and segmentation strategies of said business schools. Part of the problem stems from the reasons that majority of universities promulgated through ordinances during military regime as during time period ranging between years 2000 and 2010. This shows unsystematic and poorly thought out charters and similar governance structures resulting in creation of identical universities having similar resources and capabilities. Haphazard churning or ordinances have created flaws in charters of universities with life time presidents. Almost 90 percent of the business schools are run by charitable trusts and foundations which lack ownership, foresight, oversight and a vision for running business schools. The composition and strength of members Board of governors signal the quality of institution as evident from the strength of Imsciences and other top ranked institutions of the country. Majority of the board of private sector universities lack experts from industry, commerce and other leading seats of higher learning except for IMSciences with a strong composition of BoGs. Finally in almost all the universities studies the Business departments or schools are either question marks in their own respective universities which requires immediate repositioning in accordance with market trends to differentiate themselves in the me too business schools arena of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan.

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