

The Student Satisfaction on Education Service Quality: Case Study at Hong Duc University



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ABSTRACT: Education Service Quality is a vital issue of every university to provide training service that aligns with societal demands and strives for learner satisfaction. A great number of research is conducted on this topic to calculate the role and impact of Education Service Quality on student satisfaction. This study analyses Student Satisfaction with Education Service Quality, including lecturer, staff officer, educational program, educational activities, infrastructure, and support activities on student satisfaction. Data from 464 students in the fields of economics and engineering were collected for analysis. The research findings demonstrate that students are satisfied with 3 of 6 proposed factors, with the lecturer exerting the most, followed by educational programs and training activities. This study contributes novel insights to both theoretical understanding and practical application, thereby facilitating the continuous improvement of training management.

KEYWORDS: Student Satisfaction, Education, Service Quality

1. STATEMENT

To improve their image and prestige, universities must always find solutions to provide the best training services to attract and satisfy learners. When the students are satisfied, they continuously contribute to the advantage of universities through positive word-of-mouth and enhance their position in dealing with other competitive counterparts. The intense competition in student attraction and retention requires universities to be cautious in providing quality education that ensures graduates possess the necessary knowledge and skills for their future careers and lives and how students perceive their learning experiences within these higher education institutions. Additionally, universities are increasingly focusing on assessing students' perception of the quality of services they provide; as education is classified as a marketable service, the number of students paying total tuition fees is increasing, and students' expectations of higher education institutions are rising. The increasing competitive pressure in educational services has led higher education institutions to focus more on student satisfaction. Developing strategies to attract students and create an effective learning environment is part of the plans implemented by the management of these organizations to achieve successful learning outcomes, with concepts such as retention and attraction (Helgesen & Nettet, 2007). Institutions can attain student satisfaction by providing excellent service value, which is essential for ensuring sustainable competitive advantage in today's international education market (Huang et al., 2010 & 2012).

One of the main reasons organizations fail is their failure to recognize the expectations and demands of their target customers. Only a few studies have examined students' perceptions of the quality of educational services. Moreover, studies conducted in developing countries on students' awareness of service quality often focus on students in private universities and organizations rather than students in public universities (Farahmandian, 2013). Furthermore, most studies on the relationship between service quality and student satisfaction have been conducted abroad (Bakrie et al., 2019; Jameel et al., 2021). In Vietnam, research on the quality of university services and student satisfaction has also been conducted by some scholars, mainly in private universities (Truong et al., 2016) or large public universities (Pham et al., 2019; Dinh et al., 2021).

Stemming from competitive pressure as well as the requirements of learners in recent years, HDU has constantly strived to develop the scale and quality of training and improve learner satisfaction, thereby enhancing its reputation and brand. However, there is no overall assessment of learner satisfaction, so the study will focus on comprehensively assessing learners' satisfaction with the quality of training services to provide HDU with reliable scientific bases in strategy development.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Education Service Quality

The quality of higher education services has been mentioned by many authors in studies through students' perceptions. Each study identifies different components of service quality depending on the approach and context of the study, but each inherits Parasuraman's (1988) service quality scale. Specifically, Sohail and Shaikh (2004) inherited the development of scales in universities, including in Arabia, that identified six components of quality training services: counselors, facilities, prestige, responsiveness, access facilities, and curriculum. Similarly, Firdaus (2005) developed the HEdPERF model based on the succession and developed the SERVQUAL and SERVPERF models to evaluate the quality of services in the higher education sector with five aspects: Academic aspects, Non-academic aspect, Fame, Accessibility, and application programming. The quality of training services in higher education in Cambodia is measured by Chen et al. (2009) through 5 factors, including training programs and extracurricular activities, lecturers, budget, interactive systems, and facilities.

Gamage et al. (2008) researched at private universities in Thailand and Japan also identified ten factors of training service quality divided into three groups: (1) academic aspects (including the quality of lecturers, the quality of training programs, and the reputation of the school), (2) non-academic aspects (including financial aid and tuition fees, counseling services, job placement services, appeals procedures), (3) facilities aspects (including facilities, libraries, computers, student organizations). These are comprehensive scales that cover all the elements that constitute the complete training service of the university, which have been inherited and implemented by many researchers. Do not divide groups but use almost all factors in the model of Gamage et al. (2008), including Cost, Accessibility, Teaching Methods, Technology Linkage, Applied Programs, and School Reputation. Latif et al. (2017) developed the HEdPERF and SERVQUAL models into the HIEDUAQUAL model with six elements that constitute the quality of training services: quality of teachers, administrative services, knowledge services, innovation, and leadership.

Dam Chi Cuong (2016) said that the quality of training services must include all elements of material, personnel, training, library, machinery equipment, subject content, departmental staff, teaching methods, and dormitories. In a recent study by Nguyen Ngoc Diep (2020), service quality is constituted of 10 factors, including the quality of lecturers, training programs, administrative staff, support services, equity, facilities, extracurricular activities, and university reputation. Suitability of training costs, satisfaction of assessment of learning outcomes. Similarly, Mai Thi Hong (2022) and Do Thi Man (2023) identified lecturers, administrative staff, facilities, training programs, and complementary activities as the main factors constituting service quality and learner satisfaction. In addition, there are many studies on the quality of training services using linear multi-level models such as the study of Clemes et al. (2007), Jain et al. (2013), Nguyen Thi Thuy Dung (2015), Lai Xuan Thuy Pham Thi Minh Ly (2011), Nguyen Xuan Tho and Tran Thi Kim Loan (2013).

2.2 Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction (perceived value) with the quality of education is an overall evaluation made by students based on their perception of what they receive and the fulfillment of their learning desires while studying at the institution. Chute and colleagues (1999) also view student satisfaction as a psychological factor, which is the perception of the quality of the information system, the quality of the faculty, and the quality of the management support services.

Learner satisfaction must be measured based on the "expect-feel" theory. This theory involves two processes that independently impact customer satisfaction: "expectation" before purchase and "feeling" of service after experience. In a higher education setting, satisfaction with the quality of training is related to students' "feeling" of the knowledge they receive compared to what they spend. That perceived value is assessed through the quality of courses, training programs, and other relevant factors provided by the university to provide students with satisfaction or exceed student expectations prior to purchase and post-use assessment. In this study, the authors use the concept of student satisfaction as the student's perception of all factors related to the quality of the educational services provided by the university they are studying, including Lecturers, Administrative Staff, Training Programs, Training Activities and Evaluation of Learning Outcomes, Facilities, Training Auxiliary Activities.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.1 Research scale

In this study, the author does not develop a new set of scales but only focuses on analyzing and selecting scales suitable for the context of HDU by inheriting existing scales that have been studied and verified. Inheriting the research results of Clemes et al. (2007), Firdaus (2005), Jain et al. (2010), Sumaedi & Bakti (2011), Thuy Dung (2015), Nguyen Ngoc Diep (2020), Mai Thi Hong (2022), Do Thi Man (2023), the author has built a scale set of 6 observational variables including Lecturers, Administrative staff, Training programs, Training activities and assessment of learning outcomes, Facilities, Training auxiliary activities and conducting expert consultations. In qualitative research results, all 8/8 experts agreed with the way questions are asked, the number of

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questions in each research variable, quality questions, and ensuring the collection of research information. In addition, experts also have detailed suggestions for the student survey proposed by the author, from the content of the questions and the style used to the form of the questionnaire presentation. The author has absorbed and edited the comments before being included in the official survey.

3.2 Research sample

Before the official study, the author conducted a preliminary quantitative study to evaluate and adjust the scale on a sample of 150 students at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Economics to verify the suitability of the scale and questionnaire. Preliminary quantitative study results show that all 6/6 variables have Cronbach's Alpha coefficient >0.77 . Two scales are disqualified due to not forming groups in EFA and have Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of <0.23 . The scales excluded were: "Staff officers keep records accurate and can be retrieved quickly if needed" and "Well-equipped and up-to-date computer room systems (hardware, software)". Based on the preliminary research results, the questionnaire was revised, and a formal survey was conducted.

Formal quantitative research with a sample size was determined based on the Slovin formula (1984), and sampling was done using a stratification method according to the proportion of students of the faculties in the university. Overall sample selected As of 10/2023, the whole school has 6000 full-time non-pedagogical students, so the minimum number of samples is:

$$n = \frac{6000}{1+6000*(0,05)^2} = 379$$

To ensure reliability and a minimum sample size of 379, the author conducted a random survey according to the proportion of students in each department and stopped when the sample reached the size of more than 500 full-time students at HDU (The sample was collected online and has a time limit). According to the stratified sample selection by year and department, the author allocates a sample selection rate of 500 students to ensure representativeness, credibility, and science. Units, faculties and courses distribute statistical results. The 5-tier Likert scale was used in the study with the following levels of assessment:

Table 1. Likert scale

Point	Level of assessment	Interval scale	Understood as
1	Strongly disagree	1 to less than 1.8	Very dissatisfied
2	Disagree	From 1.8 to less than 2.6	Dissatisfied
3	Normal	From 2.6 to less than 3.4	Normal
4	Agree	From 3.4 to less than 4.2	Satisfied
5	Strongly agree	From 4.2 to 5.0	Very satisfied

Results of the official quantitative survey:

The total number of students surveyed was 495, of which 464 matching votes were eligible for inclusion in the analysis. Out of a total of 464 eligible surveys, there were 378 female students (81.6%) and 86 male students (18.4%); this ratio is almost identical to the male/female ratio of 22% and 78% of the overall students studying at HDU. By discipline and science, students of the Faculty of Economics - Business Administration, Primary Education, and Foreign Languages accounted for the highest proportion of 29%, 19% and 19% respectively in line with the overall rate.

Before proceeding to further analyses, the author verified the reliability of the scale, questionnaire. The above results show that scales of the study model all have a high Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (>0.87). All observed variables of factors have a total variable correlation coefficient greater than 0.3; The results received are similar to preliminary quantitative studies. The scales are satisfactory, thus qualifying for exploratory factor analysis and other analyses.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test Results

No.	Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Lecturer	8	0,936
2	Staff officer	6	0,896
3	Educational program	6	0,920
4	Educational activities	6	0,957
5	Facilities	7	0,877
6	Support activities	5	0,932
7	Student Satisfaction	4	0,947

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

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4. STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH THE EDUCATION SERVICES QUALITY

4.1 Student Satisfaction with Lecturers

Lecturers directly provide educational services to students, so the competence and expertise of lecturers are among the factors that contribute to the quality of the services they provide (Kuh & Hu, 2001). When surveyed about the teaching staff, most students highly appreciated the competence of lecturers at HDU, specifically:

Table 3. Student satisfaction with Lecturers

Item	Mean	Student satisfaction
The lecturer possesses a solid and extensive level of expertise and specialized knowledge	3,96	Satisfied
The lecturer demonstrates excellent communication skills and effective teaching methods.	3,84	Satisfied
The lecturer demonstrates effective teaching methods.	3,81	Satisfied
The lecturer gives a real example to illustrate the subject	3,92	Satisfied
The lecturer is friendly and always ready to listen to and support students.	3,85	Satisfied
The lecturer is good at using technology in teaching	3,25	Normal
The lecturer consistently evaluates students' academic achievements fairly and accurately.	3,29	Normal
Lecturers ensure class time, teaching plan courtesy	3,96	Satisfied

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

The results of the learner survey on the teaching staff were rated Satisfied in all eight criteria, which "Lecturers have qualifications, solid and extensive professional knowledge," "Lecturers have much practical experience and often integrate them into lectures," and "Lecturers ensure class time, teaching plan, courtesy, and decency" were rated highest with an average value above 3.95. Most lecturers know their roles and responsibilities in providing training services to learners. The school regularly collects feedback from learners on the quality of training, so the style, standards, and attitudes of lecturers when going to class are highly appreciated by learners.

4.2 Student satisfaction with staff officers.

In service, interpersonal interactions often tremendously impact customers' perception of service quality. Therefore, the attitude and behavior of employees in direct contact with customers can affect customer satisfaction with service quality. For higher education institutions, personal contacts, and interpersonal interactions are also factors in evaluating the quality of the university's training services. Staff officers are not directly involved in teaching but have an essential role in providing learner support services. The results of the learner survey on the quality of staff officers are shown in the table below:

Table 4. Learner satisfaction with staff officers.

Item	Mean	Student satisfaction
Staff officers with good professional knowledge	4,10	Satisfied
Staff officers have a polite attitude when communicating with students	3,27	Normal
Staff officers are always polite	3,35	Normal
Staff officers resolve issues quickly and efficiently	3,08	Normal
Staff officers store and retrieve lakes quickly	3,55	Satisfied
Staff officers are always enthusiastic and patient to support students	2,89	Normal

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

The survey results showed that staff officers were rated highly on the criteria of knowledge and manners with mean of 4.10 and 3.35, respectively, while the criteria of "polite and courteous attitude when communicating with you"; "Kindness,

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enthusiasm, patience to respond to your requests" and "solve your problems quickly and efficiently" are not high. Through researching the reasons stemming from both sides, firstly, due to the work pressure of the training department staff, the student working department has fewer employees, while the workload is high, so sometimes the work needs to be solved in time. Besides, students do not plan to do work early, and there are proposals for assistance at the end or about to expire, leading to haste and lack of many procedural records and dissatisfaction. Students still have a word-of-mouth mentality when unsatisfied, leading to wrong impressions of some administrative staff.

4.3 Educational program

Up to now, HDU is training 37 majors, 21 master majors, and 07 doctoral majors in the fields of education, economics, agriculture, society, and nature to meet the learning requirements. The training programs are newly built, modified, and updated regularly according to the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training, according to the training strategy of the university to meet the needs, desires, and development trends of learners and society.

From 2019 to 2023, the university conducted a demand survey and opened 11 new university-level training disciplines. 18 training programs were accredited with the accreditation of education quality training programs at a rate of over 84%. The Educational programs are built based on the Vietnamese Qualifications Framework and current regulations, with the participation of stakeholders such as users/businesses, scientists, lecturers, alumni, students, and after two years the Educational programs of the sector is reviewed, adjusted to fit reality. The results of the learner satisfaction survey on e-learning at HDU are as follows:

Table 5. Learner satisfaction with a training program

Item	Mean	Student satisfaction
The Educational programs have clear goals, designed by practical requirements	3,44	Satisfied
The educational program ensures the published objectives and outcome standards.	4,50	Very satisfied
The Educational programs are designed flexibly to meet the requirements of learners	3,48	Satisfied
The Educational programs have a reasonable distribution of theoretical and practical ratios	3,39	Normal
The Educational programs provide learners with full knowledge, skills, and self-responsibility to meet job requirements	4,41	Very satisfied
The curriculum and lectures in The Educational programs are updated, meeting the subject objectives well	3,53	Satisfied

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

The results showed that 85% of the criteria were rated "Satisfied" and "Very satisfied" by learners. "EP meets the published objectives and output standards" and "EP provides learners with full knowledge, skills and self-responsibility, meeting job requirements" were rated very well with a mean of 4.5 and 4.41 respectively. The remaining criteria also have a high average score of 3.39 to 3.53. This proves that the school's efforts to innovate EP have met the requirements and expectations of learners and society. One principle being applied by the university in developing EPs is to increase the duration of practical practice, reduce theory, increase longitudinal and high interdisciplinarity (there are majors in the same faculty with interconnection up to 65-70%), thereby creating conditions for learners to easily study dual and second majors and flexibly choose classes and lecturers. Some programs are updated and inherited from advanced programs of Germany, France and England, bringing new experiences in training for learners. Reducing the load at the beginning of the subject and increasing the number of credits is also thoroughly applied by the school to reduce the pressure load in exams and administrative procedures, increasing practice time and sufficient time to monitor learner development. The quality of training is improved, the standards and quality of outcomes are clearly defined and measured, making learners more oriented in learning and choosing career opportunities.

4.4 Student satisfaction with Education and evaluation of learning outcomes.

With a learner-centered perspective of the training process, the school's training activities have been built and improved year by year with changes in teaching methods, teaching methods, and teaching management methods. The school constantly improves training activities by applying software for lecturers, students, and administrative departments to synchronize the teaching and learning plan throughout the school quickly. In addition, the module management is also digitized so that the attendance and scoring process is the fastest. Learners easily update their status and learning results. The results of the assessment of learners' satisfaction with training activities are as follows:

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Table 6. Student satisfaction with training and outcome assessment

Item	Mean	Student satisfaction
Study plans are communicated promptly to students	3,42	Satisfied
Classes have a reasonable number of students	2,69	Normal
Students are fully informed about the criteria for assessing academic performance	3,46	Satisfied
Forms of evaluation by learning outcome	3,38	Normal
The assessment results reflect the student's ability	3,45	Satisfied
Assessment test results are published on time to students	3,01	Normal

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

The factor "Classes with a reasonable number of students" has the most satisfaction because many students think that the class is not arranged reasonably, especially specific classes, besides classrooms with classes are not suitable, large classes are small rooms and small classes are large rooms. The assessment forms are suitable for the objectives of educational programs but are not flexible and diverse; written tests still account for the majority of them. Some modules are slow to grad, errors in grading lead to "students having suspended academic results" and having to travel many times to solve problems. In addition, students are quite satisfied when they are "fully informed about the criteria for assessing learning outcomes" on the first day of each module. Recently, through the school's web portal and shared software, students can easily update relevant information to view timetables, know the number of credits accrued, academic results, exam schedules, academic alerts. In addition, the school has actively interacted on the website and page as well as more closely warned activities, leading to limiting the situation of students behind schedule, dropping out of school, or having to re-study and retake many subjects.

4.5 Student satisfaction with facilities

HDU currently has two campuses with an area of nearly 50ha with a complete system of modern classrooms, campuses, libraries, and laboratories to meet all learning and practice requirements of students. Specifically, there are 163 classrooms, 1 large hall of 500 seats, 47 laboratories, 1 practical workshop, 1 library and 1 sports complex for teaching physical education. In recent years, the school has invested in upgrading wifi systems, online classrooms, digital library systems and open source for lecturers and learners to access for the training process. Dormitory system with capacity to meet the needs of domestic students and Lao students. The campus has many trees, spacious, equipped with stone benches, cast iron benches, is a place to rest, break and study for students. The results of the learner survey on the school's facilities are as follows:

Table 7. Student satisfaction with facilities

Item	Mean	Student satisfaction
The campus is spacious and airy, convenient for learning	3,49	Satisfied
Support services (canteen, dormitory...) are full and spacious	3,57	Satisfied
Clean and comfortable classrooms	3,54	Satisfied
Classrooms and computer rooms are fully equipped	3,26	Normal
The library is spacious, spacious, with rich and diverse resources	3,58	Satisfied
Wide Wi-Fi system, good connection	3,04	Normal

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

The survey results showed that most learners rated the school as having spacious and beautiful facilities, Spacious and comfortable classrooms. However, some limitations in facilities are reflected by many students such as some old classrooms have shown signs of deterioration, much equipment is old, faulty, broken and has not been repaired, making it difficult to teach and learn. The internet connection system of the library is sometimes not good, the materials updated every year are limited, not meeting all the learning needs of students. Currently, in addition to textbooks, hard copy materials, digitization materials and online resources, libraries have not been equipped and invested in procurement by the school. With the above limitations, the need to supplement, renovate and upgrade facilities and equipment of the school is always considered an urgent need, contributing to the best quality of training services provided to learners of the school. Another situation is that many classrooms are arranged unreasonably, classes are few, but the room layout is too large, causing waste of electricity and light, dilute space is difficult to concentrate, while some crowded classes arrange cramped classrooms that are difficult to sit and study.

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4.6 Student satisfaction with support activities

With the mission of training high-quality human resources, developing a comprehensive learning and training environment. Every year, the Youth Union, the Students' Union of the university organizes many volunteer, humanitarian and charity activities such as Green Summer Volunteering, Green Sunday, Exam season relay, Supporting Lao students, Voluntary blood donation, donating to support people in natural disasters, supporting students in difficulty, support the prevention of the Covid-19 epidemic. In particular, the "Green Summer" volunteer program is a prominent activity with volunteer activities in remote and difficult areas of Thanh Hoa province, building rural roads, cultural works to build new rural areas, giving gifts to disadvantaged households, helping poor students overcome difficulties... The voluntary blood donation program "HDU Red" attracts many lecturers and students to contribute their efforts, practice awareness and skills to become more mature.

The school has several active and popular clubs that attract a large number of students such as football, sports, dance, media, English, Future Entrepreneurs Club, Computer Club ... which have created a useful playground for students. Vocational training activities, annual professional competitions of faculties and training branches also make an important contribution to creating a playground for intellectual training and professional knowledge for students. When asked about extracurricular activities, many students are excited but the percentage of students who have not participated or are not interested. The following specific results:

Table 8. Student satisfaction with support activities

Item	Mean	Student satisfaction
Always create conditions for students to participate in extracurricular activities	3,45	Satisfied
Extracurricular programs and activities are very useful	3,05	Normal
Regularly provide job opportunity information to students	3,02	Normal
Regularly organize career matching activities for students (job fairs, recruitment days, recruitment programs...)	2,98	Normal
There are many useful student club models for learning and training activities	2,97	Normal

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

Although there are many activities, the spread is not high and not commensurate with the expectations of students. Students want to have more extracurricular activities, in addition to the general movement, there are activities in groups and sectors to increase opportunities to exchange and learn. As a result of the survey, up to 4/5 criteria were assessed at the Normal level, in which students also recognized the school's efforts for difficult external activities but the quality was not high.

4.7 Learner satisfaction with the quality of training services

Based on individual assessments of each factor, the author summarizes the overall satisfaction of students on all 6 criteria constituting service quality such as lecturers, administrative staff, training activities, facilities, auxiliary activities will obtain results as shown in the table below.

Table 9. Learner satisfaction with the quality of training services

Criteria	Mean	Student satisfaction
Lecturer	3,73	Satisfied
Staff officer	3,37	Normal
Educational program	3,79	Satisfied
Educational activities	3,23	Normal
Facilities	3,41	Satisfied
Support activities	3,09	Normal

(Source: Student Survey Results, 2023)

The survey results show that learners are more satisfied with lecturers, training and facilities. Meanwhile, factors such as administrative staff, dynamic training and evaluation of results, complementary activities have not really satisfied learners. In other words, there are still 50% of factors that have not satisfied learners' expectations. The aggregate results are consistent with the situation of the factors analysed in the previous section and true to the current situation at the school.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Satisfied students continuously contribute to the advantage of universities through positive word-of-mouth and enhance their position in dealing with other competitive counterparts. The intense competition in student attraction and retention requires universities to be cautious not only in providing quality education that ensures graduates possess the necessary knowledge and skills for their future careers and lives but also in terms of how students perceive their learning experiences within these higher education institutions. Additionally, universities and other educational institutions are increasingly focusing on assessing students' perception of the quality of services they provide, as education is classified as a marketable service, the number of students paying full tuition fees is increasing, students' expectations of higher education institutions are rising, higher education is becoming more internationalized, and fierce competition is occurring in the higher education sector today. The results of quantitative and qualitative research at HDU have comprehensively assessed learners' satisfaction with service quality based on 6 factors of lecturers, administrative staff, training activities, facilities, and auxiliary activities. This is an important basis for administrators to research and develop school development strategies in general as well as improve learner satisfaction in the future. It is necessary to focus on improving the group of factors in terms of administrative staff, training and evaluation of results and auxiliary activities. In addition, the study also suggests some new research directions on the impact of service quality on learning outcomes or focuses on the causes and limitations that make learners dissatisfied with the quality of services at HDU.

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