

# Assessment of the Student Satisfaction Level of University Performance (Case Study: Ardabil University of Medical Sciences)

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## Abstract

**Background:** Every organization, which is a provider of services or products, is always responsible for seeking the client's comments as feedback in order to identify the shortcomings. On the basis of such comments, organizational plans can go through growth and improvement phases. The present study, from the point of view of client tendency, is aimed at measuring the rate of satisfaction of students of Ardabil University of Medical sciences with faculties, educational management, student-cultural management, and counselling units.

**Methods:** As many as 705 students from all faculties of Ardabil University of Medical Sciences participated in this descriptive study. The main instrument for data collection was a questionnaire whose validity and reliability were examined and approved by the face validity method and Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.816). In the first step, data was investigated through descriptive statistical methods, while independent t-test and ANOVA analysis were used in the next stage to determine the difference between group comments.

**Results:** The results indicate that in terms of student satisfaction, the following dimensions have gained a higher score than average: colleges (female: 4.13 and male: 4.09), educational administration (female: 4.01 and male: 4.5), and counselling centre (female: 3.39 and male: 3.35). Also, student cultural management indicated a below-average satisfaction score (female: 1.85 and male: 1.99).

**Conclusions:** Student dissatisfaction with the practices of student-cultural management and the counselling unit is a shortcoming, which requires the people in charge to take necessary measures to improve the quality of affairs.

**Keywords:** Student, Satisfaction, University, Performance

## 1. Background

Any successful university is an institution that constantly grows and hones its abilities to meet a student's needs and expectations and to increase their satisfaction. Researchers believe that the student satisfaction is a factor that affects the growth and development of educational centres. To achieve a good university and student satisfaction, it is necessary for a university and its officials to provide better services. Its employees, too, must pay more attention to how such services are provided. According to this point, students look at issues in different ways because of their age and moral. Investigate educational satisfaction can be a basis for helping students; it is an indicator to improve the performance and shows the success rate. On the other hand, investigating student satisfaction is useful in raising awareness of the educational process and its quality; it also shows extent of students' interest in learning and education (1).

A study in South Africa showed the relative satisfaction of students in educational services, while the main problems reported were their tuition and university welfare services (2). In another study, results showed that university staff and faculty members were satisfied with the service provided, but the bachelor's students' satisfaction was at a lower level. Library users were not satisfied about accessing the computer, the Internet, and software packages (3). Moreover, a study by Hanssen and Solvoll at a Norwegian university indicated that the factor that most strongly influences student satisfaction with university facilities is the quality of its social areas, auditoriums, and libraries. Conversely, it is determined that computer access on the campus does not influence student satisfaction (4). Also, another study by Poon and Brownlow indicated that real estate students in Australia have a relatively higher level of student satisfaction compared to environment students overall, but environment students have a higher level of satisfaction in this regard (5). In this respect, a study by

Hopland and Nyhus indicated a modest, yet significant, relationship between satisfaction with school facilities and exam results (6).

With this interpretation, the objective is to determine the level of student satisfaction in the Medical University of Ardabil.

## 2. Methods

In this research, the study methodology is a descriptive method and a questionnaire is used to collect data. The population consisted of all Ardebil University of Medical Sciences students in the academic year 2005 - 2006. In this study, all subjects were given the questionnaire. After collecting questionnaires, about 705 of them were found to be suitable for analysis (because others answered the questionnaires in a very incomplete manner). For data collection, a researcher made the questionnaire comprising 30 questions that measured the students' satisfaction with university performance (15 questions), instructional educational and cultural management (nine questions), and the counselling centre (six questions).

The face validity of the questionnaire was set by six university professors (specialized in the field of educational management).

Reliability of the questionnaire was reviewed and approved by Cronbach's alpha (0.816). The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics in the first stage; next, independent t-test and ANOVA test were used to assess differences between groups.

In compliance with 'Ethics in Research', all participants were informed about the research objectives, and they participated in the study with the full consent. More precisely, the entrance criterion to study was full consent to participate in research, while the exclusion criterion was dissatisfaction (even low) of students to take part in this study.

## 3. Results

In this study, the mean age of students  $20.6 \pm 1.5$  (The minimum age was 18 and the maximum age was 29). Overall, 541 students were female (77%) and 164 students were male (23%). Also, in terms of course shift, 470 students were in day courses (67%) and 235 (33%) were enrolled in night courses. In terms of educational level, 207 students (29.3%) were studying for their associate degrees, while 222 students (31.5%) were studying for the bachelor degree and 157 students (22.2%) for the Master of Science degree. As many as 119 students (16.9%) were studying at the PHD level. In terms of being native and living in a dormitory, out of 705 students participating in the study, 259 (37%) were native

and 446 (63%) were non-native. Among the non-native students, 350 (78%) were living in university dormitories.

Most of these students (27.5%) were nursing students, and the lowest amount of students (2.3%) was disease-fighting major students. However, 17 subjects did not write their field in the questionnaire.

Both male and female students had a medium level of satisfaction from schools and educational management, and had moderate-to-low satisfaction from student and cultural management and the counselling centre. Also, there was no significant difference between males and females regarding satisfaction with department services except the educational administration department. Satisfaction of male students in educational administration was higher than the female ones. This difference was statistically significant (Table 1).

Students' satisfaction relating to colleges services in associate degree and bachelor degree was moderate; it was at the PHD level moderate to low. This difference is statically significant. Also, there was significant difference in student satisfaction in different educational levels from educational administration, student cultural management, and the consultation centre (Table 2).

For comparing student satisfaction based on academic shifts, the independent t-test was used, and the differences between day course and night courses students were not found to be statistically significant. Also, for comparison of student satisfaction based on being native and non-native, the independent t-test was used, and it was observed that in colleges and in educational administering field, native student satisfaction is higher than that of non-native students. But in terms of student cultural management and the counselling centre, non-native students' satisfaction was higher this difference is not statistically significant. Comparing the mean of student satisfaction from fields based on their residency status, it was observed that both in colleges and in the educational administration field, the mean relating to non-dormitory student satisfaction was higher than those who live in the dormitory. However, in terms of student cultural management and the counselling centre, the mean for those who live in the dormitory was higher this difference was not statically significant.

In examining students' satisfaction from services, it was observed that "colleges" with 4.14 score was highest and "thereafter educational administering", "counselling centre" and "student cultural management" with 4.13, 3.46, and 1.88 scores were were in the next ranks of students satisfaction (Table 3).

Based on ANOVA test and P Value =  $0.001 < 0.05$ , It was concluded that there is a significant difference between the average of items.

**Table 1.** Comparison of Student Satisfaction Based on Their Genders

Area	Gender	Num	Percent %	Mean	SD	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Colleges	F	541	77	4.13	1.8	0.933
	M	164	23	4.09	1.8	
Educational administration	F	541	77	4.01	2.4	0.04
	M	164	23	4.5	2.1	
Student cultural management	F	541	77	1.85	1.3	0.77
	M	164	23	1.99	2.7	
Counseling center	F	541	77	3.39	2.5	0.852
	M	164	23	3.65	2.3	

**Table 2.** Comparison of Student Satisfaction Based on Educational Levels

Level	Consultation Center	Student Cultural Management	Educational Administration	Colleges
Associate degree	3.90	2.13	4.03	4.07
Bachelor degree	3.07	1.67	4.50	4.50
MA.	3.21	2.08	2.96	4.33
PHD	2.79	1.52	3.76	3.60
<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0.001	0.008	0.001	0.001

**Table 3.** Comparison of Students Overall Satisfaction from Services

Service Provider Units	Mean	SD
Colleges	4.14	1.79
Educational administration	4.13	2.29
Counseling center	3.47	2.4
Student cultural management	1.89	1.32

#### 4. Discussion

It seems that the importance of cultural and welfare affairs among students is more. Services such as timely delivery of student loans, student transportation services, nutrition, services provided in dormitories due to students' organizations and clubs, and physical education and their extracurricular programmes can reduce the dissatisfaction. Since welfare facilities in large universities are more and can provide better services to students in this regard, the lack of consistency of the findings of this research against similar studies in large universities should be found in terms of different services provided. Since no university areas has not achieved higher scores on the level of satisfaction, managers and employees of the university should strive to identify the factors affecting student sat-

isfaction in various areas and take appropriate actions to improve them. Also, further research is recommended following the modelling of the factors affecting student satisfaction so as to offer a native model of student satisfaction for universities of Iran.

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