

# Major Factors Influencing Student Satisfaction in Higher Education

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**Abstract:** Student satisfaction is a key indicator of the competitiveness and quality of higher education. Higher education institutions are increasingly focusing on the question of how to improve student satisfaction. This study conducted a qualitative analysis of literature on factors that have influences on student satisfaction, with more emphasis being placed on variables including reputation, relationship advantages and quality of service. Some suggestions on increasing student satisfaction in higher education are made accordingly. By conducting a review of the literature on the variables that have a significant impact on student satisfaction, this study added knowledge that could aid higher education in improving student satisfaction. In addition, it is concluded that more empirical research is needed to study the specific effects of variables affecting student satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Student Satisfaction; Reputation; Relationship Advantage; Quality of Service

## 1. Introduction

Higher education institutions (HEIs) must strive to ensure the satisfaction of student if they are to thrive in the current competitive higher education (HE) market. Therefore, administrators in higher education are increasingly focusing on the question of how to raise student satisfaction. The goal of this study was to add knowledge that could help HE increase student satisfaction by conducting a literature review on factors that have an influential effect on student satisfaction.

Student satisfaction is a reflection of how the students, taking into account various aspects like academic, social, and institutional factors, felt about their time at the university overall. In order to accurately forecast and foster student loyalty, it is essential to have an understanding of the factors that contribute to student satisfaction .

Gu and Lu (2023) draw a conclusion in their study that the level of happiness experienced by college students as consumers of services related to higher education, as well as how they assess these services and their own educational experiences, successes, and expectations, is referred to as “college students’ satisfaction” . Student satisfaction is an important criterion for evaluating the quality of college education services as well as a measure of how well students are learning and living in college.

## 2. Literature review

Numerous studies have found a positive relationship between students’ long-term commitment and how satisfied they are with their education. Positive word-of-mouth behavior, strong emotional ties to their alma mater, and a higher likelihood of re-enrollment are all traits of students who are happy with their time spent in higher education. High levels of student satisfaction directly translate into higher retention rates and positive outcomes for the school. High levels of student satisfaction increase a sense of commitment and devotion to the school. Students at Chinese private institutions that prioritize their students’ happiness have a better overall university experience and are more inclined to stick with their school in the long run.

It has been demonstrated that student happiness is significantly correlated with a number of favorable outcomes for the educational institution in which they are enrolled. A student will be more motivated to continue their education and not drop out before receiving their degree if they feel satisfied with their first year of school. Satisfied students are more likely to spread positive word-of-mouth and make favorable recommendations (a sign of attitudinal loyalty).

The analysis of the pertinent research indicates that satisfaction is one of the variables that predicts loyalty in the higher education setting. Numerous studies have found that a student’s level of satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on their loyalty . Hosseini and Haghghi Shirazi (2021) studied the effects of reputation and satisfaction on student loyalty at a number of South Indian universities . The data indicate that there is a strong causal relationship between loyalty and satisfaction. This supports the notion that one of the most crucial elements influencing student loyalty is student satisfaction.

Califf and Brooks (2020) were able to demonstrate a causal link between student loyalty and satisfaction in their study, which was conducted in Spain . Their model, which was derived from the perspective of relationship marketing, suggested that shared values, a feeling of satisfaction, and mutual trust between parties were important predictors of loyalty. The results of a study done by Dong et al. (2020) among foreign students enrolled in three public universities in Malaysia indicate that student loyalty is largely influenced by satisfaction .

Students' commitment is immediately impacted by their level of satisfaction.

### 3. Factors influencing student satisfaction

Numerous factors have a significant impact on how satisfied students are with their university experience. These consist of the standard of the academic programs provided, the social aspects of campus life, the support offered by the organization, and the interactions between students and faculty. Increased levels of student loyalty, positive attitudes toward the institution, and better outcomes for the institution are all related to rising levels of student satisfaction.

When students feel that their education is assisting them in acquiring knowledge and skills necessary for future careers and that it is preparing them for those careers, their level of satisfaction with their education rises. The use of efficient teaching strategies that encourage active learning and engagement may further increase student satisfaction. Interactive lectures, real-world applications, and opportunities for research or internships are a few examples of such techniques.

#### 3.1 The effect of reputation on student satisfaction

Academic research on HEIs should focus on the relationship between the reputation of the institution and the level of satisfaction felt by its student body. While the level of student satisfaction reflects the students' assessments of the value of the education they have received, the reputation of an educational institution has a significant impact on the views and expectations that students have of that institution. This section examines the existing body of knowledge on the connection between an institution's standing and the level of satisfaction felt by its students who enroll in colleges and universities.

According to numerous studies, there is a direct link between an educational institution's reputation and how satisfied its students are with their experience there. Students are more likely to trust and have more confidence in the university's support services and educational offerings when it has a positive reputation in the community.

Additionally, other elements of the environment, such as the student's chosen field of study or course of research, may have a different impact on how important perceived reputation is and how it affects student satisfaction. When it comes to how much a school's reputation influences how satisfied students are with their educational experiences, students from different fields of study may have very different perceptions and expectations.

For the sake of a brief review, the research to date indicates that, the perceptions and expectations that students have of the school are shaped in part by its reputation, and this in turn affects how satisfied students are overall with their educational experiences.

#### 3.2 The effect of relationship advantages on student satisfaction

One of the most important considerations to take when addressing the issue of student satisfaction in HEIs is the relationship that exists between relational benefits and the level of student satisfaction. The benefits that students gain from their relationships are a collection of elements that enhance their overall satisfaction with their academic experiences. Some advantages of attending this school include interactions between students and staff, individualized support, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities. The literature on the impacts of relationship advantages on student satisfaction at HEIs is examined in this section.

Numerous studies have indicated a positive correlation between the benefits of connections and students' levels of satisfaction. Universities that place a high value on the fostering of deep bonds between students as well as the provision of personalized support services for them frequently report higher levels of student satisfaction. What's more, students are most likely to report higher levels of satisfaction when they experience a learning environment that is seen as encouraging and engaging, where faculty members are approachable and invested in the growth of the students. This is due to the likelihood that these students had a favorable perspective on their educational experience.

It was found that the benefits of relationships had a significant impact on student satisfaction in the context of Chinese private universities. For instance, Zheng and Li (2020) investigated the relationship between the standard of support services, interactions between faculty and students, and overall student satisfaction at private universities. The results showed that students with positive relationships with their teachers and those who benefited from all-encompassing support services expressed higher levels of satisfaction with their educational experiences. Whether or not the students had access to comprehensive support services had no bearing on this. According to Jaremus et al. (2020), students who feel a connection to and support from the university community are more likely to express high levels of overall satisfaction with their educational experience.

More research needs to be done in order to analyze certain relationship benefits and their impact on student satisfaction at Chinese private universities. A deeper understanding of how to use relationship advantages to boost student satisfaction may be gained by looking into the efficacy of mentoring programs, the availability of faculty, and the purpose of networking opportunities.

### 3.3 The effect of quality of service on student satisfaction

The impact of the quality of service offered by HEIs on the degree of student satisfaction is one of the most crucial factors to look into in the context of HEIs. Numerous factors play a significant role in determining how satisfied students are with their educational experiences. These elements include the caliber of instruction received by the students, the effectiveness with which the administration manages the institution, the caliber of the physical facilities, and the caliber of the student support services provided. This section reviews the body of literature on the relationship between the standard of service provided by HEIs and the level of satisfaction experienced by their student bodies .

Numerous studies have consistently shown that there is a link between the level of satisfaction felt by students and the quality of the services provided. Among various colleges and universities, those who place more emphasis on providing their specific students with high-quality services, frequently have higher levels of student satisfaction. Higher overall levels of student satisfaction are the result of higher quality of service. Students are more likely to report higher levels of overall satisfaction with their educational experience when they believe their school provides quality instruction, effective administrative procedures, well-maintained buildings, and a wide range of support services .

Additionally, there is a strong correlation between the caliber of the services offered to students and the degree of satisfaction they express with their overall educational experience. The positive impressions that students have of their educational experiences can be attributed to a variety of factors, including excellent teaching, enjoyable classroom activities, effective administrative assistance, and facilities that are adequately furnished with the necessary resources. Students are more likely to express higher levels of satisfaction with their overall educational experience if they feel that their needs are being met and that they are getting support in their academic endeavors.

The relationship between the quality of the service and student satisfaction must, however, be considered in light of individual differences and student expectations. Different students might have different preferences and expectations for the kind of assistance and support they require. When working with students, this is something that should be taken into account. Understanding these individual differences and adjusting the quality of service to meet the various needs of students are two strategies to further raise student satisfaction levels .

The research that has been done up to this point indicates, in a nutshell, that at HEIs, there is a positive correlation between the level of service provided and the level of student satisfaction. By ensuring that students have access to excellent instruction, effective administration, adequate infrastructure, and student support services, it is possible to increase their level of satisfaction with their educational experiences. To maximize the positive impact that may have on student satisfaction, it is crucial to give careful consideration to certain aspects of the quality of service being provided and take individual variability into account.

## 4. Conclusion

This study sheds light on the beneficial relationship between a higher education institution's reputation and the level of satisfaction its student body reports experiencing. It also investigates whether there is a relationship between the advantages of relationships and the levels of satisfaction that students report feeling. The evaluation also considers whether there is a relationship between the students' level of happiness and the level of service that is offered.

In general, this thesis offers a thorough review of the literature on variables that have a bearing on student satisfaction. Numerous theoretical studies found that reputation, relationship advantages and quality of service have a positive effect on student satisfaction. Accordingly, some effective measures have been suggested to improve student satisfaction in HEIs. However, more empirical studies are needed to research the specific effects of various variables on student satisfaction. Hopefully, this research can contribute information that could help HE (Higher Education) increase student satisfaction.

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