

# INVESTIGATING FACTORS ON STUDENT SATISFACTION: A SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR A PRIVATE NURSING COLLEGE IN MALAYSIA

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## ABSTRACT

*This research aims to examine a private nursing college in terms of student satisfaction; as delivering and managing student satisfaction and providing better services are among the most important factors for any colleges in higher education. A questionnaire was distributed to all Year 2 and Year 3 students. Of 208 questionnaires distributed, 148 were returned and analysed; yielding a 71% response rate. The result from linear regression analysis revealed that facilities, teaching quality and administrative have a strong and significant impact on overall student satisfaction. 53% of the variance in student satisfaction also can be explained by these variables. The most significant factor of the three was teaching quality, followed by administrative and facility. The findings of this study recommend the private nursing college to consider which factors to be essential in providing student satisfaction as many universities now have pledged providing student satisfaction as part of their vision and mission statement and becoming part of the succession planning.*

**Keywords:** student satisfaction, teaching quality, administrative, facility, succession planning, nursing college, Malaysia.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Delivering and managing student satisfaction and providing better services are among the most important factors for any colleges in higher education (Martono, Nurkhin, Pramusinto, Afsari & Arham, 2020; Eresia-Eke, Ngcongco & Ntsoane, 2020). A study by Abdullah, Abu Samah, Jusoff and Mohd Isa (2009) highlighted that succession planning in educational sector encompasses crucial areas like talent pooling, students' satisfaction and effectiveness of the institutions and managerial competency at large. It is more important especially for private colleges because the survivability of the college is dependent upon how many students are willing to enrol in their respective college and the number of students enrolled is very much dependent upon how satisfied is the existing student. Coskun (2014) contended that higher education institutions are committed to continuously improve their

teaching and physical facilities as strategy to attract more students to enrol as this industry is becoming highly competitive.

According to Hassan and Shamsudin (2019), it is crucial to ensure students are satisfied especially in the stiff competition among higher learning institutions. Eresia-Eke et al. (2020) suggested that a good quality of service received by the students is highly associated with profitability and competitive advantage. Both of these studies agreed that through achieving student satisfaction, it could enhance the chances of continued survival of the college as student satisfaction is the critical component for the survival of educational establishments. In the higher education context, student satisfaction is looked upon the quality of education provided by these education institutions (Naidu & Derani, 2016). Hasan, Ilias, Rahman and Razak (2008) on the other hand suggestion factors such as teaching and

learning environment, facilities supporting teaching and learning and also the support system.

Practically, numerous global studies investigated the factors influencing student satisfaction in a higher education institution. For example, a study conducted by Islam, Mok, Xiuxiu and Leng (2018) found that the most significant factor that influenced student satisfaction was facilities provided by the college. Another study by Dahl and Smimou (2011) found that teaching quality has a positive relationship in creating student satisfaction. This also supported by other researchers (Dali, Daud & Fauzi, 2017). Malik et al. (2010) and Subrahmanyam and Raja (2014) suggested a good service by administrative also plays an important role in delivering student satisfaction. Weerasinghe and Fernando (2018) stated that satisfied students have a high possibility of delivering the positive word of mouth, and this positive feedback from the students will have a positive impact on the college's image.

As Malaysia is hoped to become the educational hub in the region, it is important for the educational institutions to enhance their quality of teaching and learning. The scope of the study will be focusing on one of the private nursing colleges in the country. This study intends to investigate the effect of factors that include facilities, teaching quality, and administrative towards student satisfaction. It is expected that the outcomes of this study will shed some light towards enhancing the services provided to the students by this nursing college. The outcomes of this study would also be beneficial not only to other educational institutions all over the country, but to those in other countries that might share similar culture as in Malaysia. It is also expected that, ability to find factors affecting student satisfaction would allow institutions to develop a sound succession planning initiative to ensure its survivability.

## 2. STUDENT SATISFACTION

Students are the main customers and strategic partners for educational institutions. The survivability of any higher educational institutions is pretty much depended upon how many students enrolled in the college or university. The number of students enrolled at the university also depends on how satisfied is

the existing students with the university as satisfying them would attract more students to come (Weerasinghe, Lalitha, & Fernando, 2018). Satisfaction can be defined as an experience of the fulfilment of an expected outcome (Ramzi, Bechara & Kamal, 2008). According to Mukhtar, Ahmed, Anwar & Baloch (2015), to define student satisfaction levels, one must look into quality of experiences as perceived by the students towards various educational services provided by the university. Hence, student satisfaction indirectly influences organisational performance, and it could boost up the profits of the universities.

### 2.1 Factors Influencing Students Satisfaction

A recent study by Weerasinghe and Fernando (2018) was carried out among undergraduates, excluding year one and final year students in four different universities. The first-year students were excluded as they were less experienced, and all final year students were doing their industrial training. In their study (Weerasinghe & Fernando, 2018), they investigated quality of academic staff, quality of university facilities, quality of degree programs, quality of university administration, university location, and university image and its impact on student satisfaction. Their study has found that all the independent variables have a positive relationship with student satisfaction. This study showed that satisfied students reflect the image of a university.

#### 2.2.1 Facilities

Majority of the students' time, will be spent within the facilities of the college or university. Universities become places to provide services to fulfill the students' needs. The demand from students is put at a higher level, not only concerning the quality of teaching but also to the conditions of facilities (Muhammad, Lim, Safarina, Mohd & Nor, 2016). To ensure the success as a higher educational institution, infrastructure would allow the university to function effectively (Kärnä, Julian & Nenonen, 2013). Price, Matzdorf, Smith and Agahi (2003) contended that, excellent facilities is an essential factor that could attract potential new students and creating a conducive learning environment to the existing students.

The facilities provided by the university and

their management is vital in reaching the goal of the university as it allows the users to experience versatile learning environments and infrastructure that support the university to function as an effective learning ground (Kärnä et al., 2013). This notion was supported in a study by Weerasinghe and Fernando (2018) which contended that facility at the university is one of the key strategic sources for any university as this factor may become one of the distinctive competencies that leads to development of sustainable competitive advantage for higher education industry. In their study, they covered four selected regional state universities and included 650 undergraduates that served as samples. The study found that that lecture rooms, facilities and hostel are top three facilities that matter the most to student satisfaction level. In addition, facilities are also considered as factors of attraction to get new students to enrol into the university (Price et al., 2003). Any lack of facilities provided by the college or university will impact student's satisfaction.

### 2.2.2 Teaching Quality

Lecturers are the most important component for educational institutions. Thus, Coskun (2014) contended that lecturers are responsible for the outcomes of student's achievement through their instruction and guidance. Their work attitude towards teaching is important to elevate the image of the institution and to ensure the success of their teaching method and quality. This element is what makes the difference in the lives of students. Lecturers need to boost their teaching quality as it could influence students' satisfaction as well as their performance in the academic field.

de Jager and Gbadamosi (2013) have explained that to determine quality in education, one must evaluate by the extent of how the students' needs and expectations are satisfied. Teaching quality would lead to teaching effectiveness as it is the most powerful predictor towards the performance of higher education. Inadvertently, it also could increase the brand name of one institution. Teaching quality also is one of the most important factors that influence students' satisfaction.

The survival of an educational institution is not only depending on the continuous enrolment of the students, but at the same

time, the quality of the education gained also plays an important role in it. This shows that any institutional organisation in this world cannot neglect the roles of their teaching staffs because both students and lecturers are important as they complete the educational organisation. Cohen (1988) had defined teaching quality as a teaching method that to benefit and encouraging pupils to learn effectively and successfully. Teachers have the responsibility to teach soft skills to students as a part of a quality and effective teaching to impact students' interest, commitment and achievement (Tang, Yie & Shahid, 2015). In 2013, other researchers examined the relationship between students' perception of the quality of teaching and satisfaction among 387 university students in Indonesia (Suarman, Aziz, Zahara, Mohamad & Ruhizan, 2013). Students' satisfaction was measured by investigating the elements that could impact satisfaction, such as lessons, motivation among lecturers, instructional design, the dynamic of the relationship among students, the relationship forged between students and lecturers, task and assignment, the efficiency of the lecturers, evaluation, obstacles faced and restraints. The questionnaire was distributed and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (T-Test, correlation and regression). The result showed that nine elements have a significant relationship with student satisfaction.

### 2.2.3 Administrative

Another important aspect of student satisfaction, can be derived from the services delivered by the administrative staffs of the educational institutions. Satisfaction of students will be met should the institutions are able to deliver what is expected of them administratively (Suarman et al., 2013). It drives the universities to retain customers rapidly, recognising that sustainability depends on the administration as they need to provide to students, who are their primary customers. When the educational sector has becoming highly competitive industry, the element that can differentiate between universities is how efficient they can be in terms of executing and delivering their services to their students (Yeo, 2008: Seema, Maryam, Abdul, 2013).

Soutar and McNeil (1996) stated that academic and administrative issues in any institution are crucial in affecting the performance of

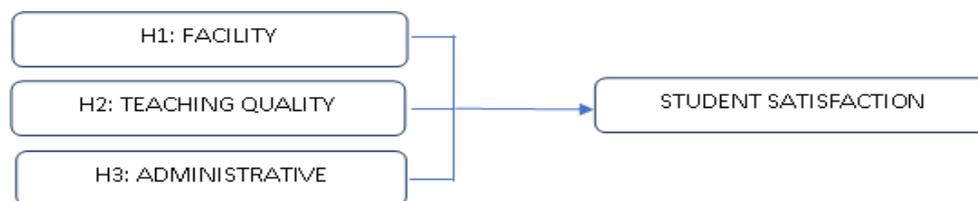
students, the building of the organisational image and maintaining quality assurance. A further investigation was made by Manaf, Ahmad and Ahmed (2013) to look at how do factors such as administrative services and other factors would have impacted on student satisfaction. Based on analysis among 221 respondents, students were found to have a positive and significant perception of administrative services. Student satisfaction depends on the impeccable service by the

**2.3 Research Framework**

Based from the literature reviews, the

administration and management (Subrahmanyam & Raja 2014). They have a crucial role in providing assistance, compassion and receptiveness in influencing student satisfaction levels in higher education. The majority of the students will be demotivated if they think that the staff is apathetic and unkind.

following research framework and hypotheses were proposed:



Adapted: Weerasinghe & Fernando (2018)

H1: There is a significant effect between facility and student satisfaction

H2: There is a significant effect between teaching quality and student satisfaction

H3: There is a significant effect between administrative and student satisfaction.

**3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study is conducted only in one of the nursing colleges in Malaysia. Currently, there are 346 students enrolling in the Diploma of Nursing, of which 138 of them are year one students. They are excluded from this study. Their limited experience in the college may not be reflective of the variables investigated in this study. Weerasinghe and Fernando (2018) also have omitted the first-year student in their study. Thus, the total number of year two (124) and year three (84) students are 208. From this population, a targeted sample size of 136 respondents are needed for this study. Due to a small population size, a census sampling was adopted in which all 208 respondents

were approached to participate in this survey.

For this research, there are five sections in the questionnaire design. Section A consists of demographic questions of respondents. Section B, C, and D consist of questions regarding the independent variables, namely, facilities, teaching quality, and administrative, respectively. Lastly, Section E focuses on student satisfaction. Apart from demographic questions, the Likert scale ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 is used to denominate “strongly disagree” and 5 to denominate “strongly agree” were used in Section B, C, D, and E. All questions were adapted from Weerasinghe & Fernando (2018).

- 4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS
- 5. OUT OF 208 QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED, THERE WERE ONLY 148 SETS COMPLETED AND RETURNED, YIELDING A 71% RESPONSE RATE.
- 6. 4.1 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

**Table 1:** Reliability Analysis

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Facility	6	0.825
Teaching Quality	7	0.893
Administrative	8	0.952
Student Satisfaction (DV)	5	0.860

According to Table 1, all variables possess a high level of consistency as the Cronbach

alpha values were more than 0.6 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The highest value is

administrative with alpha value 0.952, and the lowest is facilities with alpha value 0.825. It indicates that the measurement scales used in measuring various constructs were deemed reliable for further analysis.

**4.2 Demographic Profiles of Respondents**

The study found that most of respondents of this nursing college were female with 84.5%, and only 15.5% of respondents in this college were male. The highest percentage of respondents were Malay (58.1%), followed by

Chinese (31.8%), and 8.8% of the respondents were Indian. In terms of their current year of study, the majority of the respondents came from Year 3 (68.9%), and the balance of 31.1% of respondents were the Year 2 students. When being asked on the reason to choose Diploma in Nursing program, the highest responses was due to the parents' influence (37.8%), and followed by ambition (33.1%), sponsorship offered (25.7%), and 3.4% of respondents choose for others.

**Table 2:** Demographic Profile of Respondents (n=148)

Items		Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	23	15.5
	Female	125	84.5
Race	Malay	86	58.1
	Chinese	47	31.8
	Indian	13	8.8
	Others	2	1.4
Year of Study	Year 2	46	31.1
	Year 3	102	68.9
Reason to choose this Diploma	Ambition	49	33.1
	Sponsorship	38	25.7
	Parents	56	37.8
	Others	5	3.4

**4.3 Mean Analysis**

**Table 3:** Analysis of Mean (n=148)

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Facilities (6 items)	3.04	0.69
Teaching Quality (7 items)	3.98	0.52
Administrative (8 items)	3.34	0.75
Student Satisfaction (DV) (5 items)	3.74	0.67

Table 3 indicates the mean values for all variables. Overall, the mean value for overall students' satisfaction is good (M=3.74; SD=0.67). Of the three independent variables, the respondents perceived that teaching quality

as the most important factor (M=3.98; SD=0.52). This is followed by administrative (M=3.74; SD=0.67) and facility (M=3.04; SD=0.69).

**4.4 Multiple Regression**

**Table 4:** Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Student Satisfaction		
Independent Variables	Standardized Coefficients (β)	Sig.
Facilities	0.265	0.000
Teaching Quality	0.395	0.000
Administrative	0.290	0.000
F value	56.797 p=0.000	
R square	0.542	
Adjusted R square	0.532	

To test hypotheses, a multiple regression analysis was performed. The results from multiple regression analysis are shown in Table 4. First, the model of this study was

significant with an F-statistics of 56.797. The results also displayed that the model is significant at 5% level (p=0.000).

Second, the variability of the model is

observed. The adjusted R squared was 0.532, suggesting that the model (represented by facility, teaching quality and administrative) explained 53% of the variance in the measure of student satisfaction. The other 47% of variation can be explained by other variables which are not included in this study.

Third, the model shows that all three variables contribute significantly towards student satisfaction. With every increase of one standard deviation in facility, teaching quality and administrative, student satisfaction rises by 0.265, 0.395 and 0.290 of a standard deviation respectively. Thus, it can be deduced that teaching quality contributed the greatest impact on student satisfaction since it had the highest beta coefficient, followed by administrative and facility.

As for the significance of each variable towards dependent variable, it has been analysed that facility ( $\beta = 0.265$ ;  $p < .001$ ), teaching quality ( $\beta = 0.395$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and administrative ( $\beta = 0.290$ ;  $p < .001$ ) significantly affect student satisfaction. Thus, H1, H2 and H3 are all supported. It can also be concluded that teaching quality has the most significant effect towards student satisfaction, followed by administrative and facility. All of these effects were significant since the p-value is less than 5%.

## 7. DISCUSSION

One of the top priorities for universities is providing better services and managing student satisfaction (Martono et al. 2020). Thus, student satisfaction has been an important agenda in higher education due to higher students' fees are being charged to students. Thus, students perceived themselves as customers and expected certain assurance on the quality to be provided by universities (Xiao & Wilkins, 2015). In fact, many universities have embedded the factor of student satisfaction into their vision and mission statements. Student satisfaction reflects the emotional conditions that the students are feeling towards services rendered during their study on campus (Martono et al. 2020).

This study was carried out to investigate the effect between facility, teaching quality and administrative variables of a nursing college towards student satisfaction. The results from this study are in line with Weerasinghe and

Fernando (2018) where all three factors were found to be statistically significant towards student satisfaction.

A strong relationship between teaching quality and student satisfaction also is in line with Syed Hassan et al. (2013). As this component of education contribute to the difference in the lives of students. The experience and encouragement to allow students of being creative, determines the educational success and exemplify the significant role of the educational institutions towards the success of their students (Coskun, 2014).

Administration element reflects the maintenance and supervision of the work process being carried out by administrative staffs of the college. The measures being adopted and practiced can prevent many problems from occurring or even expediate the problems faced by students. In a study conducted among postgraduate students in the UK also revealed that administrative is significant towards student satisfaction (Poon 2019).

Finally, facility also was found to significantly contribute towards student satisfaction. Similar findings also were reported by Napitupulu et al. (2019). Facilities provided by the college are necessary to satisfy students because most of their time were spent within the college facilities and therefore the process of learning also could be influenced by the physical facilities of the college.

The findings indicate strong implications towards the top management for higher educational institutions in the country as nowadays, many universities have embedded the factor of student satisfaction into their vision and mission statements. Student satisfaction reflects the emotional conditions that the students are feeling towards services rendered during their study on campus (Martono et al. 2020) and therefore, it should not be taken lightly for the survivability of the college. In order to compete competitively in a competitive industry, any higher education institution must give top priority to the teaching quality of their academic staffs. All work processes must be simplified to expediate the administrative processes and facilities provided must be conducive to the learning environment to the students.

## 8. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, this study found support that all three variables are important and significant towards providing student satisfaction at this private nursing college. Just like previous research reported, the core business of the educational institution would lie on the quality of the teaching staff. The ability of the teaching staff to deliver what is expected would greatly influence how the knowledge is being transferred to students. This would in turn contribute towards how they perceive on the quality of the learning process being conducted in the college. Abdullah et al. (2009) postulated that these are important ingredients in the institutions' succession planning to ensure their survivability and remain competitive.

This study is not without limitations. First, this is a cross-sectional study, in which it only provides a snapshot of data collected in a single point in time. Perhaps, a longitudinal study might overcome this issue in the future. Second, this study only involved a small sample size focusing only in one nursing college in the country. Perhaps, the study could be expanded to include a larger sample and other nursing colleges in the country.

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