

**DETERMINANTS OF STUDENTS' SATISFACTION AT HIGHER  
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN BANGLADESH: EVIDENCE FROM PRIVATE  
AND PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**  
(Penentu Kepuasan Pelajar di Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi di Bangladesh: Bukti dari Universiti  
Swasta dan Awam)

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to identify the relative importance of factors that influence the students' satisfaction at private and public universities in Bangladesh. Moreover, the study examines different demographic and socio-economic variables that also affect stakeholders' satisfaction at university. Quantitative method research design was conducted for the study and a sample of 182 students was taken from different private and public universities in Bangladesh. The results showed that students were mostly satisfied with teachers' expertise and design of course curriculum in both categories of universities in Bangladesh while food facilities had the lowest positive response factor of the students. The exceptionality of this study is to use binary logistic regression analysis to identify the most important demographic determinants regarding satisfaction. It is found that female students were less likely to be satisfied overall on their respective institutions than their male counterparts. In addition, students from the urban area and also from middle-class economic condition had more likely to be satisfied than any other counterparts. Understanding these variables could assist educational institutions with bettering their strategies to achieve their desired goal. Moreover, the strategy of development of strong personal relations with students and faculty members can definitely alleviate the dissatisfaction of the students.

**Keywords:** Students' satisfaction, Higher educational institution, Demographic and socio-economic factors, Survey, Bangladesh.

**Abstrak**

*Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti kepentingan relatif faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kepuasan pelajar di universiti swasta dan awam di Bangladesh. Selain itu, kajian ini mengkaji pemboleh ubah demografi dan sosioekonomi yang berbeza yang juga mempengaruhi kepuasan pihak berkepentingan di universiti. Reka bentuk penyelidikan kaedah kuantitatif telah dijalankan untuk kajian ini dan sampel 182 pelajar diambil dari universiti swasta dan awam yang berbeza di Bangladesh. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan pelajar berpuas hati dengan kepakaran guru dan reka bentuk kurikulum kursus di kedua-dua kategori universiti di Bangladesh sementara kemudahan makanan mempunyai faktor tindak balas positif yang paling rendah bagi pelajar. Kecemerlangan kajian ini adalah menggunakan analisis regresi logistik binari untuk mengenal pasti penentu demografi yang paling penting mengenai kepuasan. Adalah didapati pelajar perempuan kurang berpuas hati secara keseluruhan di institusi mereka berbanding rakan lelaki mereka. Di samping itu, pelajar dari kawasan bandar dan juga dari keadaan ekonomi kelas menengah lebih cenderung berpuas hati daripada rakan-rakan lain. Memahami pemboleh ubah ini dapat membantu institusi pendidikan dengan memperbaiki strategi mereka untuk mencapai matlamat yang mereka inginkan. Selain itu, strategi pembangunan hubungan peribadi yang kuat di antara pelajar dan ahli fakulti pasti dapat mengurangkan ketidakpuasan pelajar.*

**Kata kunci:** *Kepuasan pelajar, Institusi pendidikan tinggi, faktor demografi dan sosio-ekonomi, Kajian, Bangladesh.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the basic and important needs of human being and without proper education it is impossible to ensure development of any nation. Besides, in present the world is concern about achieving sustainable development goals and within these goals to ensure education for all is a significant one. In recent years, prolonging of education sector has been showing rapid change due to digital revolution as well as globalization (Butt & Rehman, 2010). In consequence, the demand of higher educational institution has been raised. Competition has also risen due to availability of numerous institutions, besides, for globalization and technological advancement, students can easily get their desired information whenever needed. Only those institution are coupe with this situation who are proving quality education, suitable environment, excellent service to their students, since these determinants have influence to choice admission as well as their overall satisfaction towards the institution.

“Student satisfaction is generally accepted as a short term attitude resulting from and evaluation of a student educational experience” (Elliott & Healy, 2001). Ensuring quality consolation and development of their program higher education institution take into account student satisfaction as one of major elements (O’ Driscoll, 2012; Parahoo et al., 2016). Retention and reduce decay, which have a positive effect on students number, rely on student satisfaction (Douglas et al., 2006). Therefore higher education institution are concentrating to recognize and satisfying the needs and expectation of their students. There have several determinants such as expertise of faculty members, curriculum, environment, transports and food facilities which have effects on student satisfaction. Moreover, the influence of these effects varies on several demographic factors, namely recite place, socioeconomic condition, gender etc.

Bangladesh is providing higher education in various fields with its forty two public, one hundred and three private and three international Universities. Government has established University Grand Commission (UGC) to look after and maintain the quality of universities. After that, it remains big concern about demand and quality of higher education in Bangladesh (Faruky, 2012). A number of students going to abroad for pursuing higher study, that means, we import education till now by which our national economy facing loss. Moreover, in terms of cost, private university is really higher compare to public university as well as admission and other fees are not affordable to lower and middle income families (UGC Bulletin, 2011) and the cost in increasing day by day for demand of education as well as inflation. However, to cope with this changing situation e.g. increasing cost, competition among institution within national and international they should take some initiative to differentiate themselves from other institution not only for retain but also fulfilling the expectations of students. In Bangladesh, it is a recent issue to focus on the quality of education and the topic of student satisfaction has not been analyzed much. The aim of this paper is to analyze of a review of student satisfaction amongst graduate and postgraduate level to build environment students. Moreover, the study will try to recognize the relative importance of the different determinants that contribute to the overall satisfaction to build environment students in both private and public university in Bangladesh. It also identifies the effects of demographic backgrounds on students’ satisfaction.

## 2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Determinants of student satisfaction

For the purpose of assessing student satisfaction enormous studies have been driven on the various universities’ students in developed countries, besides, for the aim of improving and providing standard education, developing countries are now put a greater conscious on this issue. Several factor have been identified which have significant impact on students’ satisfaction. Different multiplier namely, expertise of teachers, environment, available facility in the classroom, course offered by the university are common and have significant effect on students’ satisfaction within them expertise of teachers’ is most influential factor (Butt & Rehman, 2010). Practice of quality management is a key variable ensuring excellent performance in organization as well as organizational performance depends on organization learning. In addition, organizational culture has a greater impact on performance (Mohammed et al., 2016). Similarly (Nuamah, 2017), argued that greater satisfaction relies on library facility, contract with teacher, reading materials, size of classroom, official services, even satisfaction of students’ effect on retention and financial capacity. On the other hand, the level of satisfaction sometimes depends on governing body of the university e.g. Public or private. Bangladeshi private university student are more satisfied compare to public university (Mazumder, 2014). Gruber (2010) conducted a study among 374 and 544 German students based on pilot and main study by using newly developed questionnaires and examined how

students are satisfied on the services get from university as well as their consciousness about the quality and found out location, weather, infrastructure and lecture quality have a significant effect on satisfaction. However, the students were particularly satisfied on atmosphere and infrastructure of these institutions. There are several determinants in Sri Lanka's universities which are correlated with amusement of students, namely faculty members, programs, administrative staff, location university image and so on, where university image considered as a most significant factor (Weerasinghe & Fernando, 2018). Wilkins and Balakrishnan (2013) said satisfaction of students depends on quality of faculty staffs, resources and effective use of technology while Hanssen and Solvoll (2015) argued satisfaction does not depends on computer attainment on campus. Liang and Zhang (2009) investigated foods provided from cafeteria have significant effects on student satisfaction regarding their quality, price, variation and so on. Through used of structural equation (Alven & Raposo, 2010) identified image is the most influential factor of students satisfaction as well as royalty of students depends on institution's image. Moreover, University image is a denominator which has significant outright impact on students' desire (Shahsavari & Sudzina, 2017). Royalty directly depends on student satisfaction where motivation works as a mediator between satisfaction and royalty (Subrahmanyam & Shekhar, 2017; Carter & Yeo, 2016). Academic experience considered the most prevalent dominants of student's retention where Campus environment, students' centeredness and institutional is the factors, which helps to attract and retain students (Elliott & Healy, 2001).

## 2.2 Research gap and research hypotheses development

Several factors affect student satisfaction which had discussed in previous study. Besides, identification of demographic factors by which student satisfaction was influenced also a popular research area (Douglas et al., 2006; Johnston et al., 2005; Arambewela & Hall, 2009). However, previous studies had targeted on factors affects satisfaction and any analysis that specialize in necessary determinants from demographic or socio-economic factors. This paper aims to fill this analysis gap. The subsequent analysis hypotheses are derived from the review of existing literature:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Gender has an influence on student satisfaction.
- H<sub>2</sub>: Place of parental home has an influence on student satisfaction.
- H<sub>3</sub>: Socio-economic condition has an influence on student satisfaction.
- H<sub>4</sub>: Different disciplines of studying have influence on student satisfaction.
- H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between teaching performance and student satisfaction.
- H<sub>6</sub>: Designed course curriculum has positive impact on improving learning capabilities.
- H<sub>7</sub>: Infrastructure facilities have positive impact on student satisfaction.
- H<sub>8</sub>: There is a positive relationship between university transport facilities and student satisfaction.
- H<sub>9</sub>: Food facilities and student satisfaction are positively interrelated.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study developed a questionnaire based on the teachers' expertise, academic course design, structural facilities, bus services and food facilities at the university. The survey instrument of the study consisted of a five-point covenant scale which is associated to statements of the students about satisfaction ranging between strongly unsatisfactory condition and strongly satisfactory condition. A questionnaire was distributed to each 200 students who were from both public and private universities, whereas two were public and rest of two were private. They were chosen based on convenience random sampling method to obtain the information accurately and the main criteria of selecting the universities is those had bus service facilities. The survey yielded a total of 182 usable responses, representing a 91 percent response rate. To obtain accuracy of the level of satisfaction of the students the data obtained from those students who were almost in the position of completing undergraduate program and post graduate program. Obtained data in this study were analyzed by statistical package for social science (Version 20.0). Descriptive statistics was used to explain the characteristics of the students. In addition cross tabulation and Pearson's correlation test were employed to find out the significance of the important predictors of students' satisfaction towards university. Moreover, the study considered binary logistic regression analysis to detect important demographic and socio-economic factors which directly affect the level of satisfaction.

A reliability test by using Cronbach's alpha was used to confirm the internal consistency of each of the factors and the 24 items in general (Table-3 to Table-7)

#### 4.0 RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The 182 student respondents consisted of 52.7 percent from private university and rest of them from public university. 60.1 percent respondents in private university were male, whereas 55.81 percent in public university were same in terms of gender. Most of the respondents in both category universities were from urban area (73.96 percent and 68.6 percent respectively in private and public university). Students studying at private university, 72.9 percent were from middle class whereas, only 8.3 percent from lower class. On the other hand, 73.2 percent students in government owned university were from middle class and 11.62 percent from lower class. In fact students studying for a science (50 percent) and commerce (41.86 percent) in private owned university. About 67.44 percent of students were from science and 29.06 percent from commerce background in public university.

Table 1: Demographical and socio-economic characteristics of the student and test of association with satisfaction of studying at the current university

Variables	Private University				Public University			
	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Chi-square Value	Significance Level	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Chi-square Value	Significance Level
Male Female	<i>Gender</i>		3.466	0.063	<i>Gender</i>		13.123	0.000
	49	9			43	5		
Urban Rural	<i>Home</i>		10.502	0.002	<i>Home</i>		4.751	0.36
	49	22			48	11		
Upper Middle Lower	<i>Socio-economic Condition</i>		23.877	0.00	<i>Socio-economic Condition</i>		5.204	0.074
	10	8			11	2		
Science Commerce Arts	<i>Discipline</i>		6.491	0.09	<i>Discipline</i>		14.543	0.001
	31	12			49	9		
Total	96				86			

Table 2: Logistic regression analysis showing odds ratio of the students who had satisfaction on the university and different demographic and socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Private University		Public University	
	EXP(B)	Level of Significance	EXP(B)	Level of Significance
Male(RC) Female	<i>Gender</i>		<i>Gender</i>	
	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Urban(RC) Rural	<i>Home</i>		<i>Home</i>	
	0.033	0.000	0.626	0.551
Upper(RC) Middle Lower	<i>Socio-economic Condition</i>		<i>Socio-economic Condition</i>	
	62.72	0.000	0.000	0.999
Science(RC) Commerce Arts	<i>Discipline</i>		<i>Discipline</i>	
	0.075	0.017	0.184	0.014
Constant	18.3273	0.003	3865455606.74	0.998

Note: RC (1.00) = Reference Category

The chi-square value in Table1 indicates that all the demographic and socio-economic variables had influenced on student satisfaction. Moreover, to identify the important predictors of level of satisfaction binary logistic regression was used and the results are shown in Table 2. The table express that female students in private owned university were 83.5 percent less likely to be satisfied than their male counterparts, whereas female students in government university were 83.4 percent less likely to be satisfied than male students. It indicates that female students are lesser satisfied compared to male students on based their education (Butt & Rehman, 2010).

Women get fewer chances than men in education where families don't enable their girls to get advanced education. Both in private and public university the percentage of female students is likewise littler than male students. Female students confront more problems in coming to and learning at university than male students. As the result of Table 2 shows that rural students had 96.7 percent and 44.9 percent respectively less likely to be satisfied than their urban counterparts in private and public university of Bangladesh. Similar studies were conducted by Martirosyan (2015), based on location (Urban & Rural) with the purpose of examine the factors by which students satisfaction is affected and mentioned some demographic factors affect student overall satisfaction, namely age, gender, housing status, financial aid status etc.

Research indicates that students from low socio-economic households and communities develop academic skills slower than children from higher socio-economic class (Morgan et al., 2009). Private university students in Bangladesh who were from middle class and lower class were 62.72 times and 1.44 times respectively more likely to be satisfied than those students from upper class. The reason might be upper status students would like to avail higher education in foreign institution than local institution. Students are often satisfied with the discipline (Feldman & Ng, 2007) of studding for future career in their job life. Students may change their educational path for a number of reasons, but it is not mandatory for them to be satisfied with their current discipline.

Moreover, satisfaction level quite depend on the different determinants of studying at the university of which discipline of the study is one of them. In our study commerce discipline students were less satisfied than science discipline students in both categories university.

Table 3: Table showing items to indicate satisfaction on teachers' expertise

Variables	Private University				Public University			
	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Teaching method is interactive	3.71	1.169	0.236**	0.977	3.83	1.008	0.578***	0.978
Modern devices are used in the class room	3.48	1.179	0.367***		3.53	1.243	0.593***	
Various methods are used to improve quality education	3.51	1.076	0.299***		3.50	1.205	0.596***	
Course specifications are provided to the students in the starting class	3.86	1.211	0.422***		3.77	1.025	0.511***	
Assignments, quizzes, ,term papers and different types of assessment of the students are taken regularly	3.90	1.218	0.370***		3.51	1.196	0.559***	

Note: \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

Responses of each items for teachers' expertise are shown in Table 3. The five factors related to teachers' expertise have a significant influence on overall student satisfaction. In other words, H5 about positive relationship between teaching performance and student satisfaction has been accepted. The highest responses of the students were regarding taking different class assessment regularly in private

oriented university, whereas in public university highest responses were in the items that the interactive method of lecturing with the students. This research finding echoes Rogers' (1992) and Smyth's (2012) comment on the importance of clear assessment criteria for student satisfaction. Butt and Rehman (2010) directed an examination to look at the satisfaction of the students with respect to the advanced education in Pakistan. The consequences of the examination demonstrate that instructors' capability is the most persuasive factor among every one of the factors. Customarily, many instructors have assessed their students learning by giving examinations, regularly just at the center and end of the quarter particularly at state funded institution in Bangladesh. Therefore, an addressing to a vast basic class probably won't perceive until the point that end of the final exam are done. Interestingly, the lowest response in private university were used of the modern device in class room and in public university it was using of various method to improve quality education.

Table 4 presents responses of students view on how the course design helps them to develop personally on their overall satisfaction with the course. Student satisfaction is positively associated with program design. The Pearson correlation in private university were ranges from 0.155 to 0.308 and 0.436 to 0.491 in Government University.

Table 4: Table showing items to indicate response rate regarding design of course curriculum

Variables	Private University				Public University			
	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Courses are consistently arranged in the curriculum from lower to higher levels	3.65	0.995	0.269***	0.966	3.59	1.182	0.436***	0.972
Teaching strategies are clearly states in the curriculum	3.75	1.076	0.230**		3.42	0.964	0.496***	
Assessment strategies are clearly understandable from the curriculum	3.53	0.917	0.308***		3.44	0.941	0.491***	
Curriculum load is optimum and exerts no pressure	3.44	1.014	0.155		3.38	1.190	0.457***	

Note: \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

University provides several courses for better development to their students. These courses are combined under various classifications, namely prerequisite courses, center requirement courses, required courses for real, electives in major and so on. It could be conclude that the more choices in the above classes' students have, the more probable they will feel happy with the educational programs. This is on the grounds that accessibility of decision results in adaptability, which in terms influences students' fulfillment levels. Seaberry (2008) found that planning adaptability was a main consideration for students' fulfillment. A good response of the students found in the item that curriculum clearly states the teaching strategies.

As competition among advanced educational institution has expanded, these institutions have been compelled to adopt the advertisement system in suitable methodologies to separate themselves from their competitor and, in this way they attract in whatever number of students as many as possible (Butt & Rehman, 2010). University facilities play an important role to achieve the goals of a university by providing students an effective infrastructure as a basis for university functions. As results of its job as a facilitator, we accepted the hypothesis  $H_7$  which is that there is a positive link between student satisfaction with university infrastructure and overall satisfaction (Hanssen & Solvoll, 2015). Moreover, to choose university facilities is considered by students (Price et al., 2003).

Table 5: Table showing items to indicate response rate regarding university infrastructure

Variables	Private University				Public University			
	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Classroom facilities are well decorated for ensuring effective learning	3.42	1.311	0.150	0.984	3.27	1.202	0.565***	0.974
Laboratory facilities are congenial for practical teaching-learning	3.31	1.069	0.227**		3.13	1.125	0.462***	
The central library has adequate up-to-date books or materials	3.40	1.041	0.227**		3.15	1.251	0.538***	
Indoor and outdoor medical facilities are adequate	3.21	1.123	0.144		3.05	1.137	0.369***	
Sports facilities are adequate (indoor& outdoor)	3.18	1.179	0.209**		3.10	1.265	0.490***	

Note: \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

The Table 5 implies that all items regarding satisfaction on infrastructure in public universities is significant and mean responses ranges from 3.05 to 3.27. Also the mean responses of private oriented university varies from 3.18 to 3.42. The findings indicate that the item “The central library has adequate up-to-date books or materials” has good response from the student and significant association with students’ satisfaction in both types of university. Hanssen and Solvoll (2015) found that the factor that most strongly influences student satisfaction with the university facilities is the quality of its social areas, auditoriums and specially libraries.

Table 6: Table showing items to indicate response rate regarding bus facilities at the university

Variables	Private University				Public University			
	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Frequent bus services in and out of the university	3.77	1.071	0.336***	0.976	3.21	1.228	0.459***	0.976
There are sufficient safety systems available in the university's vehicles	3.68	1.010	0.356***		3.06	1.250	0.544***	
The behavior of drivers and staff are well	3.54	1.065	0.294***		3.41	1.182	0.566***	
Drivers are enough qualified to drive vehicles	3.46	0.939	0.233**		3.33	1.111	0.563***	
Drivers follow traffic rules	3.63	1.039	0.296***		3.28	1.144	0.525***	

Note: \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

Almost in all university of Bangladesh, students depend intensely on open transport system. Low quality administrations of the grounds transport administrations will leads to miss classes, waste valuable

time and exertion and intrinsically, discourage them to riding the transports. Students living in hall are mostly depends on bus service. All the questions related to bus service under this segment had significant association with students' satisfaction. As can be seen in Table 6 the mean response rate of the students regarding facilities of bus service ranges from 3.54 to 3.77 and 3.06 to 3.41 respectively in private and public university in Bangladesh. The findings of Table 6 supports the hypothesis H<sub>7</sub>.

Besides excellent teaching, universities are also responsible for the promotion in cultural activities and should be educated and cultured people in the society. The best clients of the universities are students'. Among the different criteria of satisfaction, food services are an important material of wholesome arrangement that effects on personal satisfaction of students. One of the critical exposition of this examination is that food quality and value esteem reasonableness are the basic segments that a cafeteria must consider whether the person is students or staff or any one.

Table 7: Table showing items to indicate response rate regarding food facilities at the university

Variables	Private University				Public University			
	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Restaurants and cafeterias are available	3.20	1.236	0.147	0.980	2.55	1.214	0.380***	0.978
The menu has a good variety of items	2.57	1.149	0.023		2.37	1.189	0.476***	
The food is served hot and fresh	2.55	1.160	0.057		2.37	1.284	0.441***	
The quality of food is excellent	2.56	1.141	(0.004)		2.06	1.296	0.307***	
The food is good value for the TK	2.79	1.151	0.102		2.52	1.176	0.502***	

Note: \* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

Food quality highlights, namely ensure cleanness at serving time, offered quality and menu assortment are seen as cardinal by students and staffs of respective university who eating at the cafeteria. The result furthermore speaks that, particularly cost and fairness are also influence satisfaction of students who are taking their meal from cafeteria. This is in resemble with prior findings (Herrmann et al., 2007; Oliver & Swan, 1989), students are used to make the value relationship with elsewhere in respect of price of the menu offered by cafeteria. The results indicate a low positive response regarding food facilities in both types of universities.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Quality education gives the shaping of the character of the students to make responsibility, cooperation, and discipline in their life. The study revealed that students' satisfaction has significantly associated and positively correlated with different determinants like as teachers' expertise, curriculum design, infrastructure, bus service, food facilities and also some demographic variables. These are the important determinants which need to improve to achieve desire level of quality of education as well as students' satisfaction to build environment students. Moreover, an attractive infrastructure and restaurants with food varieties at reasonable price should be offered to students. However, the result of this study showed that satisfaction level differ in terms of public and private organization. In this study female students are less satisfied compare to their male counterpart which is supported by the findings of a previous research (Yusoff et al., 2015). This study also identified male students are more satisfied than female. Poon (2018), conducted his study in considered several demographic factors, such as, age, gender, residential status. In consequence, he identified gender is only variable by which overall student satisfaction is influenced. Feeling of students towards the quality of education relies on their socioeconomic condition (Akareema & Hossain, 2012). Clemes et al, (2008), conducted their study based on the level of course and considered some demographic factors in their study, e.g. ethnicity, gender, age and showed overall satisfaction vary in regards to ethnicity and year of study.

By identifying the important factors that drive student satisfaction, the study provides new insights into the general evaluative dimensions of student satisfaction, however, care must be taken while summing up the outcomes as this examination was attempted with regards to the private and public educational environment. Future investigations could be attempted to recognize the measurements of students' satisfaction in different context.

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