

FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH QUALITY OF TRAINING AT UNIVERSITIES IN MEKONG DELTA REGION

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Abstract: *The aim of this study is to analyze factors influencing student satisfaction with quality of training at Universities in Mekong Delta region. The research data is based on survey opinions from 300 graduated students. Reliability of the measurement scale was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and multiple linear regression were employed to analyze the data. Analysis results indicate that students are generally satisfied with quality of training at these Universities. Additionally, the model results reveal that several factors significantly affect student satisfaction with quality of training, including facilities and equipment, school reputation, Instructors quality, extracurricular activities, and training programs. Among these factors, infrastructure and facilities strongly influence student satisfaction with the quality of education at universities in Mekong Delta region.*

Keywords: *Factors, Mekong Delta region, quality of training, satisfaction, student.*

I. Introduction

In the present era, ensuring quality of training has become a crucial factor for universities. Particularly for universities in Mekong Delta region, creating a conducive learning environment and providing quality education has become an urgent task. Moreover, with the increasingly fierce competition in job market, students

are required to choose a reputable and high-quality learning environment to meet demands of employers and needs of the workforce in the era of the fourth industrial revolution. Therefore, student satisfaction with quality of training at universities nationwide and specifically in Mekong Delta region plays a vital role in attracting graduating students to enroll

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in these institutions and facilitating their job search after graduation. However, in order to meet the ever-increasing needs of students and society, universities need to understand factors that influence student satisfaction with the quality of training. Ali and Ahmad (2010) and Okoli (2014) have shown that student satisfaction with quality of training at universities depends on various factors such as learning environment, infrastructure, teaching quality, curriculum, student support, and post-graduation employment opportunities. Each university has its own specific characteristics regarding these factors and requires specific research to find optimal solutions for each institution. Although universities in Mekong Delta region have made significant improvements in enhancing quality of training, there are still some issues related to student satisfaction with quality of training. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on factors influencing student satisfaction with quality of training at universities in Mekong Delta region as it provides crucial information to help universities gain a better understanding of which areas need improvement in order to enhance quality of training.

II. Literature Review and Research Methodology

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Theory of Higher Education and Quality of Training

Student satisfaction with quality of training has always been a topic of concern in many universities. To better meet student satisfaction, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the issues related

to training and quality of training. Higher education is a research field in education that focuses on studying methods, techniques, and university-level training programs. The theory of higher education encompasses aspects such as teaching methods, learning approaches, assessment, curriculum design, and scientific research. The theories of higher education are developed from learning theories and psychology, with a focus on identifying the most effective teaching methods and techniques to meet the needs of university students. These theories include positive learning theory, social learning, reflective learning, and applied learning. Moreover, theory of higher education also provides methods and techniques for designing university-level curricula. This includes setting learning objectives, selecting learning content, designing teaching methods, and using appropriate teaching documents (Tanya, 2012).

According to Harvey and Green (1993), quality of higher education is a complex and multidimensional concept, and there is still a lack of a single appropriate definition of quality of higher education. From the perspective of Cheng and Tam (1997), quality of training is characterized by a range of input, process, and output factors of the educational system that provides services to meet the needs of students and the societal demands for education. Quality of training is the positive outcome of all factors that constitute the educational system and the operational process of education within a specific environment. Furthermore, O'Neill and Palmer (2004) define quality of higher education as a broad concept

encompassing various aspects of teaching and learning activities, including quality of lecturers, facilities and resources, curriculum, teaching methods, assessment, student support, and student learning outcomes. Quality of higher education is achieved when these factors are optimized to meet the needs and desires of students, ensuring that they have the ability to learn and develop professionally after graduation. Additionally, quality of higher education must also meet the standards and evaluation criteria set by educational management organizations. In this study, the definition of quality of higher education by O'Neill and Palmer (2004) is used as it relates to student perception of training quality.

2.1.2. Theory of Satisfaction

One of the most important theories of satisfaction is the theory of satisfaction-disconfirmation by Oliver (1977). This theory states that an individual's satisfaction comes from the comparison between their actual outcomes and their expected outcomes. Actual outcomes refer to what a person has actually achieved, while expected outcomes are what they hope for or expect to achieve. If actual outcomes exceed expected outcomes, the person will feel satisfied; conversely, if actual outcomes fall short of expected outcomes, the person will feel dissatisfied. Satisfaction with quality of education focuses on learners' satisfaction with their learning experience.

SERVQUAL theory suggests that learners satisfaction depends on quality of services they receive from universities or educational institutions (Parasuraman et

al., 1988). Expectancy-Disconfirmation theory states that learners satisfaction depends on match between their expectations and their perceived reality of educational quality. If learners perceived reality of educational quality is better or worse than their initial expectations, they will feel satisfied or dissatisfied accordingly (Zeithaml et al., 1993).

These theories provide educational managers and trainers with an approach to study and evaluate learners satisfaction, thereby improving quality of education and enhancing learners learning experiences.

2.1.3. Review of Relevant Studies

Student satisfaction with quality of training is related to various factors such as quality of instructors, facilities, curriculum, and more. Currently, there have been numerous studies conducted on this issue. Specifically, the research by Yawson and Amoako (2011), Aziz et al. (2012), and Alqurashi (2019) suggests that instructors quality is one of the important factors influencing student satisfaction with quality of training. Instructors quality plays a crucial role in ensuring quality of training at universities. Professors with strong subject knowledge help students gain a deeper and broader understanding of their field of study, while good teaching skills facilitate interaction between students and faculty.

Additionally, the research findings of Yawson and Amoako (2011), Aziz et al. (2012), Tahir and Othman (2017), and Alqurashi (2019) demonstrate that facilities and equipment have an impact on student satisfaction with quality of training. Facilities and equipment play a vital role in

ensuring quality of training at universities. Among them, classrooms are the spaces where students frequently interact and learn, and teaching equipment, including projectors, computers, interactive boards, telescopes, laboratory equipment, and other teaching materials, need to be of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the teaching and learning needs. Libraries and laboratories serve as places where students engage in research activities, explore, and access new knowledge. According to the authors Yawson and Amoako (2011), Aziz et al. (2012), Nguyen (2013), Quy et al. (2015), Tahir and Othman (2017), and Alqurashi (2019), it is indicated that the curriculum influences student satisfaction with quality of training. Training programs is a highly important factor in ensuring quality of training for students at universities. The courses and teaching content need to be designed appropriately, meeting the requirements of the field and society. The teaching content needs to be regularly updated to cater to the emerging trends in the industry.

Moreover, research conducted by Rojas-Méndez et al. (2018), Alqurashi (2019), and Mai et al. (2021) reveals that extracurricular activities have an impact on quality of education for students. Extracurricular activities are an essential part of the student training process, playing a crucial role in developing the necessary skills and qualities for students to become positive contributors to society. Extracurricular activities help students cultivate soft skills such as communication skills, time management skills, teamwork skills, problem-solving skills, self-development skills, and more.

These skills are highly significant in both personal life and professional work.

According to research conducted by LeBlanc and Nguyen (1997), and Quy et al. (2015), School reputation has an impact on quality of training for students. The first aspect that both students and employers assess about a university is its reputation and prestige. Therefore, there is a strong correlation between reputation and prestige of an institution and quality of training provided to students. When a university has a good reputation and prestige, it attracts high-achieving students with better qualifications and capabilities, thereby ensuring quality of its student intake.

2.2. Research Model and Methodology

2.2.1. Construction of the Research Model

Research model is constructed based on analysis result of previous studies regarding student satisfaction with quality of training, including factors such as instructors quality (Yawson and Amoako, 2011; Aziz et al., 2012, Alqurashi, 2019); facilities and equipment (Yawson and Amoako, 2011; Aziz et al., 2012; Tahir and Othman, 2017, and Alqurashi, 2019); training programs (Yawson and Amoako, 2011; Aziz et al., 2012; Nguyen, 2013; Quy et al., 2015; Tahir and Othman, 2017; Alqurashi, 2019); extracurricular activities (Rojas-Méndez et al., 2018; Alqurashi, 2019, and Mai et al., 2021); and school reputation (LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1997; Quy et al., 2015). Therefore, the proposed theoretical research model is as follows:

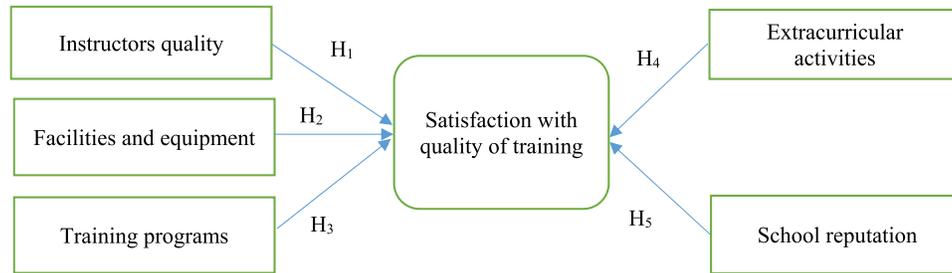


Figure 1. Proposed research model

2.2.2. The scale

The measurement scale of training quality is constructed based on the synthesized results from relevant studies. The author inherits and modifies the elements of the scale to fit the content and characteristics of the new research

Source: Author's compilation, 2023 context. Additionally, qualitative research findings are incorporated to supplement some observed variables in the research conditions at universities in Mekong Delta region. Observed variables in the measurement scale for training quality are represented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Measurement Scale for Training Quality

Symbols	The scale	Source
INSQ	Instructor quality	
INSQ1	Teachers prepare the lecture thoroughly and meticulously.	Trang et al. (2008)
INSQ2	Teachers convey knowledge clearly and in an understandable manner.	Trang et al. (2008); Quy et al. (2015)
INSQ3	Teachers effectively utilize technological devices in teaching.	Gamage et al. (2008)
INSQ4	Teachers support students in applying technology during discussions and group work.	Trang et al. (2008)
INSQ5	Teachers encourage students to apply technology in presentations and practical exercises.	Author's proposal
FACE	Facilities and equipment	
FACE6	Classrooms are clean, spacious, and well-ventilated.	Gamage et al. (2008)
FACE7	The teaching facilities are fully equipped to facilitate modern teaching and learning.	Chen et al. (2007)
FACE8	Students can access the internet anywhere within the school premises.	Quy et al. (2015)
FACE9	Electronic databases and technological devices serve well for studying and research purposes.	Quy et al. (2015)
FACE10	The library provides comprehensive study and research materials for students.	Gamage et al. (2008)
TRAP	Training programs	
TRAP11	University publishes complete and explicit program objectives for student training.	Quy et al. (2015)
TRAP12	Training programs provide students with comprehensive knowledge to meet societal needs.	LeBlanc and Nguyen (1997)

Symbols	The scale	Source
TRAP13	Training programs help students develop practical application skills.	Gamage et al. (2008)
TRAP14	Training programs help students develop autonomy and responsibility.	Quy et al. (2015)
TRAP15	The content of the courses is regularly updated to keep pace with technological advancements.	Author's proposal
EXTA	Extracurricular activities	
EXTA16	University offers various extracurricular clubs that provide beneficial activities for students.	Chen et al. (2007)
EXTA17	University provides numerous Training programs s and workshops on soft skills and research skills to enhance students' participation in various programs, job fairs, scientific conferences, and entrepreneurship activities.	Author's proposal
EXTA18	Extracurricular activities help students gain practical experiences.	Gamage et al. (2008)
EXTA19	Extracurricular activities help students enhance their ability to interact and work in teams during their studies.	Author's proposal
EXTA20	University establishes connections with businesses to provide students with access to real-world environments.	Author's proposal
SCHR	School reputation	
SCHR21	Each university has collaborative relationships with numerous other universities as well as with businesses both within and outside the country.	Author's proposal
SCHR22	Universities regularly organize forums to connect with guest speakers from various businesses, facilitating exchanges and sharing of experiences in production and business operations.	Mai et al. (2021)
SCHR23	Graduates are evaluated to have high ethical standards and strong professional competence in their work.	Jain et al. (2013)
SCHR24	Training programs of the university are accredited and meet quality standards suitable for the context of Industry 4.0.	Mai et al. (2021)
SCHR25	University is a public higher education institution that receives attention and investment from the local government to develop the human resources for Mekong Delta region.	Author's proposal

Source: Author's compilation, 2023

Quality of training at the university is evaluated based on the aspect of student satisfaction using the measurement scale constructed in Table 1. In this scale, a 5-point Likert scale is used to measure the level of student satisfaction (1. Very Dissatisfied; 2. Dissatisfied; 3. Neutral; 4. Satisfied; 5. Very Satisfied).

2.2.3. Sampling Method

According to the sampling principles suggested by Tho (2011) and

Hair et al. (2010), for exploratory factor analysis studies, the minimum sample size should be 50, and the observation-to-variable ratio should be 5:1, meaning that for each observed variable, there should be at least five observations. Therefore, with the proposed 25 observed variables in Table 1, the study needed to be conducted with a minimum sample size of 125 observations. However, to ensure high representativeness, the authors surveyed 350 students. The survey was

conducted by sending a survey link to final year students with the assistance of academic advisors in the Mekong Delta region. Due to time constraints, the survey was mainly conducted at the following universities: Bac Lieu University, Dong Thap University, Can Tho University of Technology - Can Tho University, Mekong Delta Construction University, and Tra Vinh University. A total of 300 valid questionnaires were collected.

2.2.4. Analysis Method

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was employed as a method to assess the reliability of the measurement scale. Additionally, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was utilized to explore new latent factors that influence satisfaction with training quality. Multiple regression analysis was employed to estimate the relationships between multiple independent variables and a dependent variable (Y). Regression equation took following form:

$$Y_i = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \dots + \beta_k X_{ki} + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

in wich:

Y: The dependent variable, represents students satisfaction with

quality of education at universities in Mekong Delta region. Y is measured by a 5-point Likert scale.

X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k : Independent variables formed from the results of exploratory factor analysis.

α : Estimated value of Y when k variables X have a value of 0.

β_k : Regression coefficients.

ε_i : Error

III. Research Findings

3.1. Reliability Testing of the Measurement Scale

According to Peterson (1994), any measurement scale with a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient lower than 0.6 should be excluded from the research model, and observed variables with a total correlation coefficient below 0.3 are considered as “junk variables” and should also be excluded from the measurement scale (Nunnally & Burnstein, 1994).

Results of the reliability testing for the measurement scales and observed variables that meet the standards are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Cronbach’s Alpha Testing

The scale	Cronbach’s Alpha	Result of Cronbach’s alpha test			Items Deleted
		Cronbach’s Alpha if Item Deleted	Number of variables observed	Number of variables observed after being deleted	
Instructor quality	0.902	0.723 - 0.830	5	4	INSQ5
Facilities and equipment	0.907	0.609 - 0.852	5	5	
Training programs	0.882	0.717 - 0.807	5	5	
Extracurricular activities	0.932	0.812 - 0.903	5	4	EXTA20
School reputation	0.876	0.657 - 0.763	5	5	
Total			25	23	2

Source: Data processing from a survey conducted with 300 graduated students from universities in Mekong Delta region, 2023.

Examination results indicate that out of the initial proposed 25 observed variables belonging to 5 measurement scales, the remaining 23 observed variables belonging to 5 measurement scales meet the requirements. Among them, 2 observed variables were excluded, including INSQ5 (Instructors quality scale), and EXTA20 (Extracurricular Activities scale). These variables were considered as “junk variables” and were removed from the measurement scales because their Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients were lower than Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of the respective measurement scales (Tho, 2011).

3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Analysis

Table 3: EFA Analysis Results

Observed variables	Factor				
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
EXTA18	0.873				
EXTA17	0.866				
EXTA19	0.841				
EXTA16	0.801				
SCHR23		0.811			
SCHR24		0.810			
SCHR22		0.807			
SCHR25		0.788			
SCHR21		0.765			
FACE7			0.845		
FACE8			0.788		
FACE9			0.760		
FACE6			0.742		
FACE10			0.602		
TRAP12				0.843	
TRAP13				0.837	
TRAP11				0.802	
TRAP14				0.773	
INSQ2					0.804
INSQ4					0.781
INSQ3					0.768
INSQ1					0.731

Observed variables	Factor				
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Eigenvalue	2.107				
Cumulative (%)	78.476				
KMO	0.877				
Sig. in Bartlett’s test	0.000				

Source: Data processing from a survey conducted with 300 graduated students from universities in Mekong Delta region, 2023.

Factor rotation method is a multivariate analysis technique that does not involve dependent or independent variables but relies on the correlation between observed variables. This method is used to reduce k observed variables into a set, often referred to as factor F ($F < k$), where the F factors have greater significance. The process of factor analysis is carried out through four validation steps as follows: (1) The factor loading coefficients of the observed variables in the factor rotation matrix are all greater than 0.5, indicating the reliability of these observed variables; (2) The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure is greater than 0.5, indicating the suitability of factor analysis if $0.5 \leq KMO \leq 1$ (Hair et al., 1998); (3) The significance level (Sig.) has a value < 0.005 in Bartlett’s test, indicating significant correlations among the observed variables in the population, thereby making them appropriate for factor analysis; (4) The extracted variance values, or cumulative variance, indicate the percentage of total variance explained by factors or the variation of factors explained by the observed variables. According to Gerbing and Anderson (1988), a cumulative variance greater than 50% is suitable for factor analysis. Table 3 below summarizes the results of factor rotation for 23 observed variables that are up to standard.

The exploratory factor analysis

results in Table 3 indicate that the criteria of the four mentioned validations are satisfied, and six new factors (F1 - F5) have been formed. Specifically, F1 represents Extracurricular activities factor, F2 represents School reputation factor, F3 represents Facilities and equipment factor,

F4 represents Training Programs factor, and F5 represents Instructors quality factor.

Therefore, these five newly formed factors will be included in the regression model to analyze and examine their correlation with dependent variable (Y).

3.3. Multiple regression analysis

Table 4: Results of the research model

Variables	B	Beta	Std. Error (B)	Sig.	VIF
F1	0.171	0.162	0.061	0.006***	1.617
F2	0.342	0.217	0.078	0.001***	1.203
F3	0.375	0.303	0.080	0.001***	2.050
F4	0.155	0.104	0.078	0.047**	1.347
F5	0.249	0.183	0.084	0.004***	1.890
Constant	-1.379		0.345	0.000***	
Sig.				0.000	
Adjusted R Square				0.622	

Note: **, *** correspond to significance levels of 5% and 1% respectively

Source: Data processing from a survey conducted with 300 graduated students from universities in Mekong Delta region, 2023.

The model's test results show a very small level of significance (Sig. = 0.000), indicating that the model is statistically significant at a 1% level. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.622 implies that 62.2% of variation in student satisfaction with training quality can be explained by linear correlation between the dependent and independent variables included in the research model. Additionally, Variance Magnification (VIF) with variables in the model is significantly smaller than 10, leading to the conclusion that variables included in the model do not exhibit multicollinearity.

Regression results reveal that all five factors significantly affect student satisfaction with training quality. These factors include F1 (Extracurricular

activities), F2 (School reputation), F3 (Facilities and equipment), F4 (Training programs), and F5 (Instructors quality). Among them, factors F1, F2, F3, and F5 have statistically significant effects at a 1% level, while factor F4 has a statistically significant effect at a 5% level. All of these factors positively correlate with student satisfaction with training quality. These findings align with previous research studies. For instance, Yawson and Amoako (2011), Aziz et al. (2012), and Tahir and Othman (2017) have demonstrated that training programs have a positive correlation with student satisfaction with training quality in universities. Similarly, Rojas-Méndez et al. (2018), Alqurashi (2019), and Mai et al. (2021) have also indicated that extracurricular

activities are factor influencing quality of student training. Instructors quality is recognized as one of the crucial factors affecting student satisfaction (Alqurashi, 2019). Additionally, LeBlanc and Nguyen (1997), Quy et al. (2015) have shown that *School reputation* has an impact on quality of student training. Furthermore, Yawson and Amoako (2011) has revealed that *Facilities and equipment* have an impact on student satisfaction with training quality. Regarding the level of influence of factors, based on the standardized regression coefficients (Beta) in Table 4, the order of increasing impact of factors on student satisfaction is as follows: Training program factor (Beta = 0.104), Extracurricular activities factor (Beta = 0.162), Quality of instructors factor (Beta = 0.183), School reputation factor (Beta = 0.217), and Facilities and equipment factor (Beta = 0.303).

IV. Conclusion

Overall, students are quite satisfied with the quality of education in universities in the Mekong Delta region. The analysis results indicate that there are positive correlations between certain factors and student satisfaction regarding training quality. These factors include Training programs, extracurricular activities, instructors quality instructors, school reputation, and facilities and equipment. Specifically, Training programs factor encompasses the following aspects: the university clearly and comprehensively states the program objectives for students; the training program equips students with knowledge that meets societal needs; the program helps students develop practical application skills; and it fosters

student autonomy and responsibility. Extracurricular activities factor comprises the availability of various beneficial extracurricular clubs for students; opportunities for soft skills and research skills training that enable students to participate effectively in programs, job forums, scientific conferences, and entrepreneurship; extracurricular activities that provide students with practical experiences; and activities that enhance students' interaction and teamwork abilities.

Regarding instructors quality, factors considered are instructors' thorough and meticulous lesson preparation; clear and understandable knowledge transmission by instructors; effective use of technological devices in teaching; and instructors' support in applying technology during discussions and group work. School reputation factor includes the university's collaborative relationships with numerous domestic and international universities and businesses; regular forums connecting industry experts to exchange and share practical business operation experiences; graduates being recognized for their good ethics and high professional competence; and the university's quality assurance in its training programs. Facilities and equipment factor cover clean, spacious, and well-ventilated classrooms; fully equipped teaching tools that facilitate modern teaching methods; students' internet access throughout the campus; electronic databases and technological devices that support learning and research; and a library that provides comprehensive study and research materials for students.

The findings of this research provide scientific grounds for universities leaders in Mekong Delta region to propose specific solutions for improving and enhancing the quality of higher education in their respective institutions.

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