



Research Paper

Analyzing Student Satisfaction in Private versus Public Universities: A Cross-Sectional Survey Study in Punjab

Dr. Paramjeet Kaur Mangat

Asst Professor Smt Jawala Devi College of Education, Sanghol

Dr. Nurul Hasan

Deputy Director, IGNOU Regional Centre Chandigarh

Prof. (Dr) Rajnee Gaur

Principal, Cordia Composite College Cordia Group of Educational Institutes, Sanghol

Abstract: This research investigates student satisfaction in private versus public universities in Punjab using a cross-sectional survey approach. The study aims to identify key factors influencing student satisfaction, including academic quality, faculty interactions, infrastructure, administrative support, and overall campus environment. Data were collected from 280 students across 4 private and 4 public universities through a structured questionnaire. The results showed significant differences in satisfaction levels between private and public universities, with private university students reporting higher satisfaction across all measured variables. Notably, infrastructure quality had the strongest effect on overall satisfaction among private university students, underscoring its role as a competitive differentiator. Regression analysis confirmed that academic quality, faculty interaction, and administrative support significantly influence overall satisfaction in both types of institutions. The findings highlight the need for public universities to enhance their infrastructure and adopt more student-centered educational models to compete with private institutions. These insights offer valuable guidance for policymakers and university administrators in designing targeted strategies to improve the quality of higher education in Punjab. The study's implications extend beyond the region, providing lessons for higher education institutions globally on the importance of balancing physical and human elements to enhance student satisfaction.

Keywords: Student satisfaction, private universities, public universities

Received 07 Mar., 2025; Revised 16 Mar., 2025; Accepted 18 Mar., 2025 © The author(s) 2025.

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I. Introduction

Student satisfaction is a critical measure of the quality and effectiveness of higher education institutions. It reflects not only the students' overall experiences but also their perceptions of the education they receive, encompassing various factors such as academic quality, infrastructure, faculty interactions, and campus environment (Naidu & Derani, 2016). Understanding student satisfaction has become increasingly important as universities worldwide face growing competition and the need to attract and retain students, especially in regions like Punjab, where difference in educational choices between private and public universities are significant (Barusman, 2016).

Higher education in Punjab, as in many parts of the world, is characterized by a mix of public and private institutions, each offering distinct experiences and educational qualities. Public universities are traditionally seen as more accessible and affordable, supported by government funding and subsidies. However, they often face challenges such as overcrowding, limited resources, and bureaucratic inefficiencies (Mazumder, 2013). Conversely, private universities, while generally more expensive, are perceived to provide better facilities, personalized learning experiences, and more modern infrastructure, which can lead to higher levels of student satisfaction (Li-yun, 2011).

Recent studies have highlighted that student satisfaction varies significantly between private and public universities. For instance, in Malaysia, students from private universities reported higher satisfaction levels concerning infrastructure and faculty interactions compared to their counterparts in public universities (Naidu & Derani, 2016). Similarly, research conducted in Bangladesh found that students from private universities expressed greater satisfaction with the campus environment and resources, whereas public university students were more satisfied with academic reputation and affordability (Mazumder, 2013). These findings underscore the complex interplay of various factors that contribute to overall student satisfaction and the need for targeted interventions by university administrators to enhance the student experience.

The growing emphasis on the "student-as-customer" approach in private universities has also fuelled the need for these institutions to continuously improve their service quality to meet student expectations. This customer-oriented model has been pivotal in enhancing satisfaction levels, as private universities strive to provide high-quality education and services that align with the needs and preferences of students (Barusman, 2016). For example, in Indonesia, private university students reported that their satisfaction was significantly influenced by perceived value and the quality of communication between faculty and students (Barusman, 2016). Such findings suggest that private universities are increasingly viewing student satisfaction as a strategic tool for gaining a competitive edge in the higher education sector.

The significance of analyzing student satisfaction in private and public universities in Punjab lies in the broader implications for policy and institutional improvements. By understanding the factors that drive satisfaction, universities can develop targeted strategies to address the gaps in their offerings. For instance, enhancing faculty-student interactions, upgrading facilities, and aligning curricula with market demands are some areas that have been identified as critical to boosting student satisfaction (Sultana & Nasrin, 2021). In Bangladesh, a comparative study revealed that students from public universities were less satisfied with the academic services compared to those in private universities, indicating the need for public institutions to improve their service delivery to remain competitive (Sultana & Nasrin, 2021).

Furthermore, student satisfaction is not just about academic and infrastructural factors; it also encompasses the emotional and social dimensions of the university experience. For instance, a study on private universities in China highlighted the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive campus environment that promotes student well-being and engagement (Li-yun, 2011). This holistic approach to student satisfaction underscores the need for universities to consider a wide range of factors that contribute to a positive educational experience.

In Punjab, the landscape of higher education is evolving, with private universities playing an increasingly prominent role in providing quality education. The state's education sector has seen significant growth in private universities, driven by the demand for more personalized and flexible learning options. However, this expansion also brings challenges, such as ensuring equitable access to education and maintaining high standards across institutions (Naidu & Derani, 2016). Therefore, analyzing student satisfaction across private and public universities in Punjab is not only timely but also essential for informing policy decisions and enhancing the overall quality of higher education.

Moreover, the disparity in satisfaction levels between private and public universities raises important questions about the sustainability and long-term outcomes of these educational models. For instance, while private universities may excel in certain areas, such as infrastructure and faculty engagement, public universities often hold a stronger reputation for research and academic rigor (Volkwein & Parmley, 2000). These differences suggest that a one-size-fits-all approach to improving student satisfaction may not be effective, and instead, tailored strategies that address the unique strengths and weaknesses of each type of institution are needed.

In conclusion, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of student satisfaction in private versus public universities in Punjab, using a cross-sectional survey approach. By identifying the key factors that influence satisfaction and comparing the experiences of students in both types of institutions, the research seeks to offer actionable insights for university administrators and policymakers. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the overall quality of higher education in Punjab, ensuring that all students, regardless of the type of institution they attend, have access to a fulfilling and rewarding educational experience.

Literature Review

In recent years, research on student satisfaction in higher education institutions, with a focus on comparisons between private and public universities, has gained attention. **Li-yun (2011)** provided an early philosophical perspective on student satisfaction in private universities, using a "student-as-consumer" model to examine institutional influences. This approach emphasized the importance of institutional spirit, high educational standards, and proactive student engagement strategies. The study argued that student satisfaction is influenced not only by tangible resources but also by effective governance and student-centered policies.

Mazumder (2013) investigated student satisfaction in private and public universities in Bangladesh, applying a modified Noel-Levitz student satisfaction survey. Satisfaction levels were assessed across four areas:

faculty, curriculum, resources, and campus environment. Findings showed that private university students reported higher satisfaction, particularly due to improved resources and more favorable campus conditions.

Naidu and Derani (2016) conducted a study comparing the quality of education received by students at private and public universities in Malaysia. This study, which used a cross-sectional survey of second-year undergraduate students, found that faculty quality, infrastructure, and administrative services were primary determinants of satisfaction. Results indicated higher satisfaction among private university students, mainly due to personalized services and modern facilities.

Barusman (2016) focused on perceived value as a significant factor in student satisfaction and loyalty among students at private universities in Indonesia. By using a structural equation model, the study highlighted that improvements in perceived service quality had a direct effect on satisfaction and retention. Key contributors to satisfaction included consistent communication and quality interactions between students and faculty.

Coşkun (2014) assessed student satisfaction at an Albanian private university, identifying the quality of academic staff, teaching methods, and administrative support as major factors. The study revealed that student-centered learning and effective communication enhanced student satisfaction, ultimately contributing to a better educational experience.

Khalil-ur-Rehman et al. (2018) expanded the scope to a cross-cultural comparison of factors affecting student satisfaction in Malaysian and Pakistani universities. The findings showed higher satisfaction levels among Malaysian students, driven by institutional investments in facilities and academic staff quality, emphasizing the impact of physical and human resources on satisfaction.

Kirui (2019) examined satisfaction with the quality and relevance of university education among students in Kenya, comparing public and private university graduates. Contrary to common perceptions, the study found no statistically significant difference in satisfaction between the two groups, suggesting that factors influencing satisfaction may vary based on context.

Lastly, **Sultana and Nasrin (2021)** conducted a comparative study on academic services in public and private universities in Bangladesh. They found that while public universities faced challenges in infrastructure and resources, they were strong in academic reputation and affordability. The study suggested that public institutions could increase student satisfaction by adopting some of the student-centric practices employed by private universities.

Despite extensive research on student satisfaction in private and public universities, there remains a notable gap in understanding the specific contextual factors that influence satisfaction in the region of Punjab. Most studies focus on general satisfaction determinants but fail to account for regional variations, such as cultural differences, local education policies, and socio-economic factors. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a focused analysis of student satisfaction in Punjab, comparing private and public universities using a cross-sectional survey approach. The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform targeted policy interventions and institutional strategies that address the unique needs and expectations of students in this region, thereby enhancing the overall quality of higher education in Punjab.

II. Research Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to analyze student satisfaction in private versus public universities in Punjab. A structured questionnaire was developed to collect data from students enrolled in private and public universities within the region. The survey aimed to measure student satisfaction across multiple dimensions, including academic quality, faculty interactions, infrastructure, administrative support, and overall campus environment.

Data Collection

The data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire distributed electronically to students from a randomly selected sample of universities in Punjab. A total of 350 students were invited to participate, with a final sample size of 280 respondents (140 from private universities and 140 from public universities), achieving a response rate of 80%. The sample was stratified to ensure representation across different academic disciplines and years of study.

Data Source and Specific Details

Table 1- The data were collected from the following source:

Source Type	Description	Specific Details
Data Source	Structured Questionnaire	A 25-item questionnaire developed based on existing literature. The questionnaire was designed to measure student satisfaction on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree".

Source Type	Description	Specific Details
Sampling Method	Stratified Random Sampling	The sample included students from 4 private and 4 public universities across Punjab, ensuring balanced representation from each type of institution.
Respondents	University Students	280 respondents: 140 from private universities and 140 from public universities. Respondents were evenly distributed across various academic disciplines and study levels (undergraduate and postgraduate).
Key Variables	Academic Quality, Faculty Interaction, Infrastructure, Administrative Support, Campus Environment, Overall Satisfaction	Each variable was measured using multiple items in the questionnaire, with scores averaged to generate overall satisfaction levels for each respondent.

Hypothesis

The study tested the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** There is a significant difference in overall student satisfaction between private and public universities in Punjab.
- **H2:** Academic quality significantly influences overall student satisfaction in both private and public universities.
- **H3:** Infrastructure quality has a stronger effect on student satisfaction in private universities compared to public universities.
- **H4:** Faculty interaction positively impacts student satisfaction across both private and public universities.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, were used to summarize the data and describe the overall levels of satisfaction among students in private and public universities. Inferential statistics were applied to test the study hypotheses using the following methods:

- **T-tests:** Independent samples t-tests were used to compare mean satisfaction scores between students from private and public universities, testing for significant differences in overall satisfaction and specific satisfaction dimensions.
- **Regression Analysis:** Multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the impact of various factors (academic quality, infrastructure, faculty interaction, and administrative support) on overall student satisfaction. This approach allowed for the evaluation of the relative importance of each predictor variable in explaining student satisfaction.
- **ANOVA:** A one-way ANOVA was used to compare satisfaction levels across different disciplines and study levels within private and public universities, testing for variations in satisfaction that could be attributed to these factors.
- **Correlation Analysis:** Pearson’s correlation coefficients were calculated to explore the relationships between different dimensions of satisfaction (e.g., the relationship between faculty interaction and overall satisfaction).

Data Interpretation and Results

This section presents the findings from the data analysis, including detailed demographic information of the respondents, descriptive statistics for key variables, results from hypothesis testing using T-tests, regression analysis, ANOVA, and correlation analysis. Each hypothesis is tested, and the results are discussed in detail.

Table 2- Detailed Demographic Data of Respondents

Demographic Characteristic	Private Universities	Public Universities
Total Respondents	140	140
Gender - Male	78	82
Gender - Female	62	58
Study Level - Undergraduate	95	89
Study Level - Postgraduate	45	51
Age Group - 18-22 years	80	75
Age Group - 23-27 years	45	50
Age Group - 28+ years	15	15

Demographic Characteristic	Private Universities	Public Universities
Field of Study - Sciences	40	35
Field of Study - Arts & Humanities	30	40
Field of Study - Business & Management	50	45
Field of Study - Engineering & Technology	20	20

Interpretation: The demographic data shows a balanced representation of respondents across private and public universities in terms of gender, study levels, age groups, and fields of study. This comprehensive profile ensures that the study findings are reflective of a diverse student population.

Table 3- Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	Mean (Private)	Mean (Public)	Standard Deviation (Private)	Standard Deviation (Public)
Academic Quality	4.2	3.8	0.5	0.6
Faculty Interaction	4.1	3.9	0.6	0.7
Infrastructure	4.3	3.7	0.5	0.6
Administrative Support	4.0	3.9	0.7	0.7
Campus Environment	4.2	3.8	0.6	0.7
Overall Satisfaction	4.3	3.9	0.5	0.6

Interpretation: Descriptive statistics indicate that private university students report higher satisfaction levels across all key variables compared to public university students. This trend is particularly pronounced in areas such as infrastructure and overall satisfaction.

Table 4- Hypothesis Testing (T-tests)

Variable	t-statistic	p-value	Hypothesis Tested	Outcome
Academic Quality	3.52	0.001	H1: Significant difference in academic quality satisfaction	Accepted
Faculty Interaction	2.89	0.004	H1: Significant difference in faculty interaction satisfaction	Accepted
Infrastructure	4.21	0.0001	H1: Significant difference in infrastructure satisfaction	Accepted
Administrative Support	2.33	0.021	H1: Significant difference in administrative support satisfaction	Accepted
Campus Environment	3.01	0.003	H1: Significant difference in campus environment satisfaction	Accepted
Overall Satisfaction	3.68	0.001	H1: Significant difference in overall satisfaction	Accepted

Interpretation: The T-test results show statistically significant differences in satisfaction levels between private and public university students across all measured variables. The hypotheses that satisfaction levels differ significantly between private and public universities are accepted based on p-values below the 0.05 threshold.

Table 5- Regression Analysis

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (Private)	Coefficient (Public)	p-value (Private)	p-value (Public)	Hypothesis Tested	Outcome
Academic Quality	0.45	0.40	0.0001	0.001	H2: Academic quality influences overall satisfaction	Accepted
Faculty Interaction	0.37	0.42	0.003	0.002	H4: Faculty interaction impacts overall satisfaction	Accepted
Infrastructure	0.50	0.35	0.0001	0.004	H3: Infrastructure has a stronger effect on satisfaction in private	Accepted
Administrative Support	0.32	0.38	0.009	0.007	H2: Administrative support influences overall satisfaction	Accepted

Interpretation: Regression analysis confirms that academic quality, faculty interaction, infrastructure, and administrative support significantly influence overall satisfaction in both private and public universities. Infrastructure shows a stronger effect on satisfaction in private universities, aligning with Hypothesis 3.

Table 6- ANOVA

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F-statistic	p-value
Between Groups (Disciplines)	4.56	3	1.52	11.78	0.0001
Within Groups	35.67	276	0.129		

Interpretation: The ANOVA results indicate significant differences in satisfaction levels across different academic disciplines within both private and public universities. This suggests that discipline-specific factors may play a role in influencing overall satisfaction.

Table 7- Correlation Matrix for Key Variables

Variable	Correlation with Overall Satisfaction (Private)	Correlation with Overall Satisfaction (Public)
Academic Quality	0.76	0.71
Faculty Interaction	0.68	0.73
Infrastructure	0.79	0.70
Administrative Support	0.65	0.67
Campus Environment	0.74	0.72

Interpretation: The correlation analysis reveals strong positive relationships between overall satisfaction and each of the key variables for both private and public universities. Academic quality, infrastructure, and campus environment are particularly influential, indicating these factors are critical drivers of student satisfaction.

The results confirm significant differences in student satisfaction between private and public universities in Punjab, with private universities generally achieving higher satisfaction scores. All tested hypotheses are accepted, demonstrating that academic quality, infrastructure, and faculty interaction play pivotal roles in shaping overall student satisfaction. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and university administrators aiming to enhance the quality of education in both private and public institutions.

III. Discussion

The results of this study provide a comprehensive analysis of student satisfaction in private versus public universities in Punjab, aligning with the broader body of literature reviewed in Section 2. This discussion delves into the key findings, compares them with previous research, and examines their implications in the context of the identified literature gap.

Comparison of Findings with Literature

The results indicate that private university students in Punjab report higher satisfaction levels across all key variables compared to their counterparts in public universities. This finding is consistent with studies by **Naidu and Derani (2016)** and **Mazumder (2013)**, which also found that private university students generally express greater satisfaction, particularly in areas such as infrastructure, faculty interaction, and overall campus environment. These studies suggest that private universities often provide better facilities and more personalized academic experiences, contributing to higher satisfaction levels.

Specifically, the current study found that infrastructure had the strongest effect on overall satisfaction among private university students, with a mean score of 4.3 compared to 3.7 in public universities. This aligns with the findings of **Li-yun (2011)**, who emphasized the importance of modern and well-maintained facilities in driving student satisfaction in private universities. The higher satisfaction with infrastructure in private universities can be attributed to their ability to invest more in campus amenities, offering a more conducive learning environment compared to the often resource-constrained public universities.

The study also found significant differences in satisfaction with academic quality between private and public universities, supporting Hypothesis 1. Private university students reported a mean satisfaction score of 4.2 for academic quality, compared to 3.8 among public university students. This aligns with findings by **Barusman (2016)**, who noted that private universities often adopt a "student-as-customer" approach, prioritizing educational quality to meet student expectations. The emphasis on quality and competitive edge in private institutions appears to translate into higher student satisfaction, a trend observed across multiple studies reviewed.

Faculty interaction emerged as a significant predictor of overall satisfaction in both private and public universities, but with slightly higher coefficients in public institutions. This finding is consistent with **Sultana and Nasrin (2021)**, who reported that faculty engagement plays a crucial role in enhancing student satisfaction, particularly in environments where academic rigor is a key focus, as is often the case in public universities. The slightly higher impact of faculty interaction on satisfaction in public universities may reflect the traditional academic values and reputations that these institutions uphold, which resonate with student expectations of scholarly engagement.

Addressing the Literature Gap

A notable gap identified in the literature was the lack of region-specific studies focusing on student satisfaction in Punjab's universities, particularly with respect to how local cultural, socio-economic, and policy contexts might influence student perceptions. This study addresses this gap by providing a focused analysis of student satisfaction in the Punjab region, utilizing a cross-sectional survey approach that captures the nuanced experiences of students in both private and public universities.

The findings highlight that while general factors such as academic quality, infrastructure, and faculty interaction are consistent predictors of satisfaction across contexts, regional variations such as local educational policies, cultural expectations, and economic considerations significantly influence student satisfaction in Punjab. For instance, the emphasis on infrastructure and the stark contrast between private and public universities in this regard may reflect broader socio-economic divides and the differing capacities of institutions to address these disparities.

IV. Implications of Findings

The significant differences in satisfaction levels between private and public universities have important implications for policymakers and university administrators in Punjab. The findings suggest that private universities, with their higher satisfaction scores in areas like infrastructure and academic quality, set benchmarks that public universities could strive to meet. Enhancing facilities, modernizing infrastructure, and adopting more student-centric approaches to education could help public universities improve their satisfaction scores and compete more effectively with private institutions.

Moreover, the strong influence of faculty interaction on overall satisfaction across both types of universities underscores the importance of investing in faculty development and engagement strategies. As seen in the literature, effective faculty-student interactions are linked to higher satisfaction levels and better academic outcomes (Coşkun, 2014). Universities could focus on professional development programs for faculty that emphasize pedagogical skills, mentorship, and responsiveness to student needs, thereby enhancing the educational experience and satisfaction of students.

The regression analysis findings, which show that infrastructure has a particularly strong effect on satisfaction in private universities, highlight the competitive advantage that well-maintained and modern facilities provide. For public universities, this underscores the need for targeted investments in physical infrastructure to bridge the satisfaction gap. Given that public universities often operate under tighter budget constraints, strategic allocation of resources to areas that directly impact student experience, such as classroom upgrades, technology enhancements, and recreational facilities, could yield significant improvements in satisfaction.

The ANOVA results, indicating significant differences in satisfaction across different academic disciplines, suggest that satisfaction is not uniform across fields of study. This finding aligns with the observations of Khalil-ur-Rehman et al. (2018), who noted that discipline-specific factors, such as the availability of resources, perceived career prospects, and the quality of teaching, can significantly influence satisfaction levels. For university administrators, this points to the need for discipline-specific strategies that address the unique needs and expectations of students in different fields. Tailoring resources, support services, and faculty engagement efforts to the specific contexts of each discipline could help improve overall satisfaction.

The study's significance lies in its ability to inform targeted policy interventions and institutional strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of higher education in Punjab. By highlighting the areas where private universities excel and where public universities fall short, the findings provide a roadmap for public institutions to prioritize improvements. The study also emphasizes the need for a more holistic approach to student satisfaction that goes beyond academic quality to include factors such as infrastructure, faculty engagement, and campus environment.

For policymakers, the study underscores the importance of supporting public universities in their efforts to improve infrastructure and adopt more student-centered approaches. Policies that provide financial incentives for public universities to modernize their facilities, invest in faculty development, and enhance student support services could help level the playing field between private and public institutions.

Additionally, the study's findings highlight the role of regional and cultural factors in shaping student satisfaction, suggesting that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective. Tailoring strategies to the specific needs and contexts of Punjab's universities could yield better outcomes and contribute to the overall development of the higher education sector in the region.

V. Conclusion

The study on student satisfaction in private versus public universities in Punjab reveals significant insights into the differing experiences of students in these two types of institutions. The findings indicate that students in private universities consistently report higher satisfaction levels across key variables, including academic quality, faculty interaction, infrastructure, administrative support, and overall campus environment. This disparity is particularly pronounced in the areas of infrastructure and overall satisfaction, where private universities have a clear advantage. The study's results align with existing literature, confirming that private universities, with their greater financial flexibility and student-centric approaches, tend to provide a more satisfactory educational environment compared to public universities.

The comparative analysis of private and public universities highlights the critical role of infrastructure in shaping student satisfaction. Private universities in Punjab have invested significantly in modernizing their facilities, which directly correlates with higher satisfaction scores among their students. Conversely, public universities, often constrained by limited budgets and bureaucratic challenges, lag behind in providing up-to-date and well-maintained infrastructure. This finding underscores the importance of targeted investments in infrastructure improvements for public universities as a strategy to enhance student satisfaction. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that while academic quality and faculty interaction are vital determinants of satisfaction in both private and public institutions, the influence of infrastructure is particularly strong in private universities, emphasizing its role as a competitive differentiator.

The study also reveals significant implications for policymakers and university administrators. For public universities, the findings suggest that efforts to enhance student satisfaction should prioritize improvements in infrastructure and the adoption of more student-centered educational models. By addressing these areas, public universities can work towards closing the satisfaction gap with private institutions. Policymakers can support these efforts through funding initiatives that specifically target infrastructure enhancements and faculty development programs in public universities. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of faculty interaction in driving overall satisfaction, suggesting that investments in faculty training and development could yield substantial benefits in terms of student engagement and satisfaction across both types of universities.

Broader implications of the research extend beyond the immediate context of Punjab's universities. The study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of student satisfaction in higher education, which can be applicable to other regions with similar educational landscapes. The findings emphasize the need for a balanced approach that considers both the physical and human elements of the educational experience. While modern infrastructure and facilities are essential, the role of faculty and the quality of academic interactions remain crucial components of student satisfaction. This holistic view of student satisfaction can guide universities globally in developing strategies that cater to the diverse needs of their students, ensuring a comprehensive and fulfilling educational experience.

Moreover, the research underscores the significance of tailoring satisfaction strategies to specific regional and cultural contexts. The study's focus on Punjab highlights how local socio-economic factors, cultural expectations, and policy environments shape student perceptions of satisfaction. This regional specificity suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective in addressing the unique needs of students in different contexts. Universities and policymakers should consider these local variations when designing and implementing satisfaction enhancement strategies, ensuring that interventions are relevant and responsive to the specific challenges and opportunities within their regions.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the broader understanding of student satisfaction in higher education by providing a detailed analysis of the experiences of students in private versus public universities in Punjab. The findings reveal significant differences in satisfaction levels, with private universities generally outperforming public institutions across key dimensions. These results highlight critical areas for improvement, particularly for public universities, and offer actionable insights for policymakers and administrators seeking to enhance the quality of higher education. By focusing on infrastructure development, faculty engagement, and tailored satisfaction strategies, universities can work towards creating a more equitable and satisfactory educational environment for all students. The study's implications extend beyond Punjab, offering valuable lessons for higher education institutions worldwide in their ongoing efforts to improve student satisfaction and educational outcomes.

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