

The Determinants of Graduate Students on Satisfaction: The Case of Graduate School at University of Internal Affairs, Mongolia

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ABSTRACT

The present article aims to study the level of satisfaction of the graduate students' satisfaction on Graduate school in University Internal Affairs, Mongolia /UIAM/. We try and understand the factors which influence graduate student satisfaction in higher education, as well as the consequences of it. We collected and analyzed data from descriptive research can help understand factors on graduate students' satisfaction. The data were collected from 98 graduate students who study graduate school of the curriculum on Disaster Studies, Border Studies, Law, Crime Studies Law, Police Studies, Forensic science, Information Security, and Economic Security in UIAM. The results, there were indicated positive graduate students' satisfaction of the hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2. Actually, the results indicated the dissatisfaction of the hypothesis-3. Therefore, it is recommended that the curriculum activities take the necessary measures in order to increase the students' satisfaction and the level of training activities. Our study is significant in considering both theoretical and practical issues and for practices in graduate school. Data were estimated by Smart PLS 3.0 and SPSS software and Cronbach's alpha index have been used for data analysis and reliability analysis of the questionnaire, respectively.

Keyword: satisfaction, skill, attitude and environment, University of Internal Affairs, Mongolia.

INTRODUCTION

Universities as providers of academic services are of great importance in any society since the progress of a society depends on its universities and scientific centers. Therefore, the members of a society seek education in order to develop their society. There are lots of studies examined

that the dissatisfaction of students, on the contrary, could have ominous consequences for both the university and the student, namely unsuccessful students. Locke (1976), one of the most well-known researchers in job satisfaction, defines the concept as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Locke differentiates the concept of satisfaction from other similar concepts like morale and job involvement by clarifying his belief that satisfaction is based on a past or present assessment.

However, Anderson & Sullivan (1993) and Kristensen et al. (1999) suggest that the influence of expectations is completely mediated by quality perceived. Still, on the other hand, Walker (1995) suggests that the impossibility of evaluating the main service causes students among other aspects to focus more on class environment and on the teachers' presentation.

Increased competition, dynamic educational environment, challenges such as budget cut, higher costs in obtaining college education, changing demographics in the population, declining enrollments, and a general public call for accountability have educational institutions realize the importance of student satisfaction (Cheng & Tam, 1997; Kotler & Fox, 1995). Studies have shown student satisfaction to have a positive impact on student motivation, student retention, recruiting efforts and fundraising (Borden, 1995; Frazer, 1999).

Student satisfaction refers to the attraction, pride, or positive feeling that the students develop toward the program or institution (Danielson, 1998; Hatcher, et al., 1992). Strike (1984) indicated that the level of students' positive feeling or satisfaction is associated with students' being able to find adequate resources to meet their academic and social interests. The students' ability to project and implement their self-concepts as a students or viewing themselves as part of the institution is also related to their positive feeling of satisfaction (Sedlacek, 1987; Stikes, 1984). The students' positive feeling and satisfaction is also contingent to the students' academic and social experiences obtained at the particular institution (Aitken, 1982; Betz, Menne, Starr, & Klingensmith, 1971; Danielson, 1998; Hatcher, et al., 1992; Stikes 1984; Tinto, 1993). The academic and social experiences of students are the vehicles that drive students into the life of the institution (Tinto, 1993). In his Interaction theory into argues that student persistence can be predicted by their degree of integration. He refers to two kinds of integration; academic and social integration. Academic integration refers to how students perform academically (grades) and social integration is how the students interact with faculty (Suhre, Jansen, and Harskamp, 2006). Interaction between faculty members and students is also a factor affecting student satisfaction in their academic experiences (Allen, 1987; Betz, et al., 1993). This implies that sufficient and positive faculty-student interaction will ontribute to overall student satisfaction (Danielson, 1998; Nettles, et al., 1986; Tinto, 1993). This study is a descriptive research study using survey method. The population included all the Master's students about 105 graduate students. In higher education, this reality is very similar, with the aggravation that within this sector study concerning satisfaction is in truth still very scarce in Mongolian cases.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

Student Satisfaction

Hoppock (1935) offered one of the earliest definitions of job satisfaction. He described the construct as being any number of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances which leads a person to express satisfaction with their job.

There are numerous theories attempting to explain job satisfaction, but three conceptual frameworks as content, process and situational theory seem to be more prominent in the literature.

Satisfaction would be the only method for judging a school's quality; this measure can greatly impact external perceptions of a university who are interested in statistics like student retention (Athiyaman 1997). Students will often choose their university or specific academic department based on its reputation, and universities and even the same school academic departments will often compete in attracting the best students. Unfortunately, many would argue that what pleases students is often not the most beneficial for their understanding of the different course's concepts (Winer 1999).

Evolution is not a useful measurement for assessing the quality of the faculty members' support their opinion by arguing that employers are often dissatisfied with students. Performance is saying that new graduates are not ready for work, so they feel that the expectations of students should continue to be more challenging than what student's desire. Balancing the satisfaction of students with the opinions of these external parties is a challenge for administrators and professors, but this equilibrium must be found (Winer 1999).

The researcher also notes the importance of student evaluation of professors as it can be an excellent way to assess the effectiveness of faculty's teaching. Research has even found a positive relationship between student assessments of faculty effectiveness and the self-assessments of professors themselves (Howard *et al.* 1985).

Some of the more widely used criteria include reliability, responsiveness, competence, access, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding the customer, and tangibles (Lagrosen *et al.* 2004).

Teachers' Skills

Higher Education (HE) has faced different challenges as a reflection of social-economic aspects that characterize societies in distinct times. Nowadays, Higher Education Institutions are pressured for an increasing competitiveness that demands high standards of knowledge and quality, internationalization and mobility programs, strategies that distinguish them from the others and focus on attracting new students and offering post-graduation options for those who are already enrolled in the system.

In recent years, HEIs have also been strained by some governments' agenda because of the issue of employability and this dimension has more and more often dictated financial support according to the obtained results (HEFCE, 2001). Student satisfaction has become a major challenge for the universities and it has been recognized that student satisfaction is the major source of competitive advantage and this satisfaction also leads towards student retention, the attraction for new students and positive word of mouth communication, as well (Arambewela & Hall 2009).

Hunter (1979) proposed that teaching is the process of making decisions and executing approaches to improve learning possibilities before, during, and after teaching students. Ander

and Burns (1990) argued that teaching is an act of interpersonal interaction that involves language as communication, and can help students learn or change their learning behavior.

However, teaching is not merely explaining or hinting at rigid instructional materials. Instructors need to establish good learning environments, through which to elicit learning, motivation and teach learners to learn on their own, and understand how to learn by doing and do by learning (Vermeule and Schmidt, 2008). Teaching involves more than “teaching” and “learning”. It is a composite concept that implicates complex concepts and activity processes. According to the literature review, in our study, it was hypothesized as below:

Hypothesis 1

- **H1: Teachers’ skills will have a positive impact on student satisfaction.**

Teachers’ Attitude

Learning and teaching skills are a complex construct that is difficult to define. Most definitions of learning describe it as a relatively permanent change in behavior or ability in response to practice or experience (Shuell, 1986). Learning outcomes show a significant relationship with success in the initial phase of graduates’ careers (Vermeulen and Schmidt, 2008).

Student feedback is increasingly being considered as an important indicator of the quality of education (Harvey, 2001). However, it may not necessarily represent what students have learned (Sokalingam, 2013). Increasingly, student satisfaction is also becoming an important indicator of the quality of teaching. Several studies suggest that both student satisfaction and grades are important indicators of student retention (Aitken, 1982; Bean, 1980). These various study findings indicate that teachers’ attitude can affect the impacts on student satisfaction. According to the literature review, in our study, it was hypothesized as below:

Hypothesis 2

- **H2: Teachers’ attitude will have a positive impact on student satisfaction.**

Training Environment

Student centered learning facilitated by the adoption of technology in the classroom has been identified as one of the key goals of the British Columbia education plan (Abbott, 2011). Despite this investment in tools and training, the adoption of new teaching practices to reflect the change from a teacher-centered to a student-centered model of instruction has been slow to materialize (Keengwe, et al, 2008).

Teachers with high efficacy tend to experiment with methods of teaching to meet their students’ needs, spend more time planning, persist longer with students who struggle, and promote achievement, efficacy, and motivation in their students (Henson, Kogan, & Vacha- Hasse, 2001). Teacher self-efficacy varies in different contexts as teachers may exhibit different levels of efficacy depending on the subject, student population, or school environment (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Chen (2010) found efficacy to be the most an important determinant of the extent to which pre-service teachers integrate technology for student-centered learning into their practice. Currently, no valid and reliable instrument for measuring teacher self-efficacy in relation to the

use of technology for student-centered learning exists. These various study findings indicate that training environment can affect the impacts on student satisfaction. According to the literature review, in our study, it was hypothesized as below:

Hypothesis 2

- **H2: Training environment will have a positive impact on student satisfaction.**

As a result, we agree with the research scholars, above whose findings, we utilized in our study. In our study, teachers' skills, teachers' attitude and training environment are independent variables and student satisfaction is the dependent variables. Teachers' skills, teachers' attitude and training environment will influence student satisfaction.

Our study explains how teachers' skills, attitude and training environment are influential on student satisfaction. The conceptual model of factors on student satisfaction is drawn in Figure 2.1.

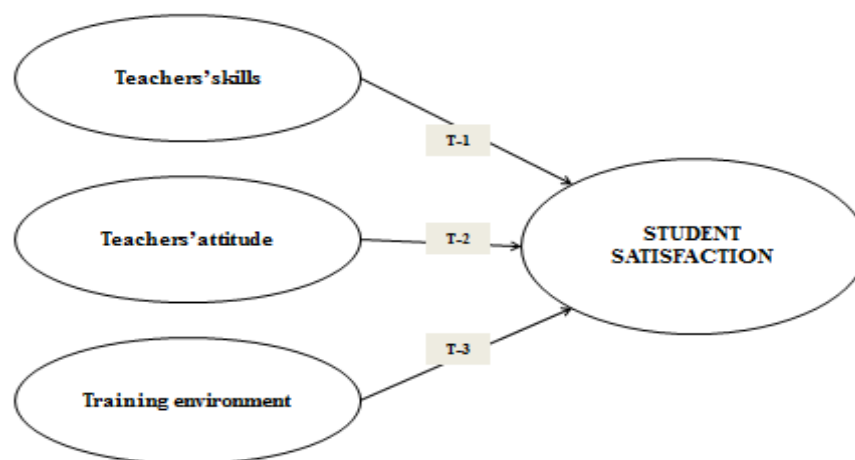


Figure 2.1: Conceptual models of factors on Student satisfaction

Source: Own model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection and Questionnaire Design

This study intended to employ a cross-sectional research design that enable the integration of the literature review and the real data survey that utilises both the subjective and objective measurement as the main procedure of data collection that will hinder and reduce the possibility of research bias and bringing the best accuracy in collected data (Azman et al 2014). Scholars suggest that the research paradigm refers to the philosophies and beliefs of how research is to be implemented (Ticehurst, M. D., P. A. Basford et al., 2000). Gummesson (2000) identified that the concept of the paradigm was brought to the fore by Thomas, in the early 1960's, and can be used to represent "people's value judgments, norms, standards, frames of reference, perspectives, ideologies, myths, theories, and approved procedures that govern their thinking and action" (John, 2004).

The purpose of causal research is to find out the variables that might establish the cause-and effect relationships between the variables causing particular actions and responses. Cooper et

al., (1998) described that most causal research relies on designed experimentation and simulation programs. Hussey (1997) studied the variables to find out the variables that might establish the cause-and effect relationships between the variables causing particular actions and responses (Sulaiman et al., 2012). Zikmund (2003) described exploratory research as the initial stage for research projects that plan to explore the nature of a problem before proceeding to the next step of research. Exploratory research is also commonly used to divide a big problem into a number of smaller and more precise sub-problems before making more detailed investigations (Tak, 2012).

Thus, our research includes two kinds of problems in terms of theoretical and practical perspectives. The first, in theoretical perspectives, previous researchers demonstrated much attention on satisfaction in many sectors. Second, from the practical perspectives, in school year 2021-2022 fall semester. The method suitable for our study questions include questionnaires. Questionnaires are a common method of collecting primary data in the survey. Based on the discussion above, the questionnaire method was chosen for the following reasons:

- The questionnaires were collected by online and hand paper in between November and December 2021.
- The questionnaires were able to gather data in a short period of time.
- The questionnaires were administrated to students who study in the major of curriculum on Disaster Studies, Border Studies, Law, Crime Studies Law, Police Studies, Forensic science, Information Security, and Economic Security in UIAM.

In our study, Likert scales were easy to use and understand. Zikmund (2003) identified that in some instances, the respondents need to select an appropriate answer from a list of specific answers or multiple choices in the closed-ended questions. In general, seven-point scales are found to reduce inaccuracy, whereas five-point scales restrict choice more (Tak, 2012). Therefore, five-point scales were used in this empirical study.

Selection of SPSS and SmartPLS Software Program

There are many software programs used to process data analysis, including Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), SmartPLS, SAS, STATPAK or Excel. The most popular program is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. In this study, SPSS and SmartPLS-3.0 were chosen for their simplicity and completeness. In this research, all the questionnaires were numbered in the sequence of their returned dates and we checked for the completeness of the questionnaire and eligibility of the respondents. Generally, one hundred questions were used in this survey. However, respondents did not answer all the questions, because they had either skipped or misunderstood the questions. After the reliable questionnaires were identified and the data was entered, data analysis began. This section describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Of all the 98 respondents were studying on graduate school of University of Internal Affairs, Mongolia.

Table 3.1: Information of participants

Nº	Gender	Number	Percent
1	Male	71	69.58%
2	Female	27	30.42%
TOTAL		98	100.00%

Note: Result of study

Table 3.2: Participants' classification of curriculum

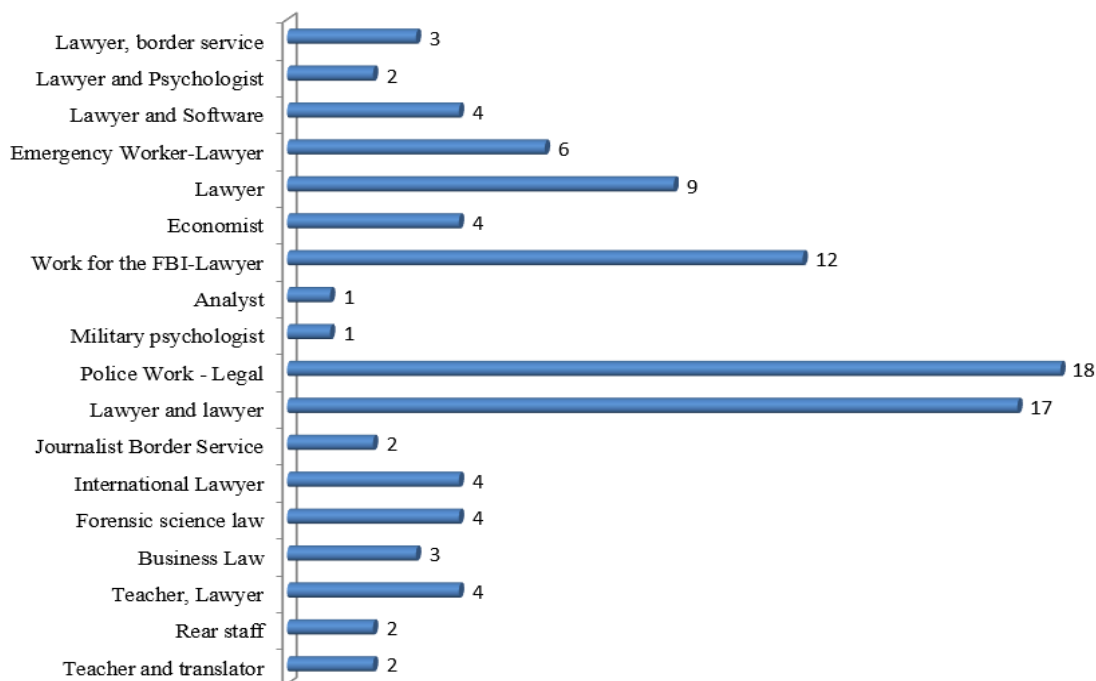
Nº	Curriculum	Number	Percent
1	Economic security	5	5.10%
2	Legal	12	12.24%
3	Border Studies	7	7.14%
4	Information Security	6	6.12%
5	Crime Studies and Law	39	39.80%
6	Police Studies	14	14.29%
7	Forensic Science	5	5.10%
8	Disaster Studies	10	10.20%
TOTAL		98	100.00%

Note: Result of study

Table 3.3: The information for graduate students' major

Nº	Profession	Number	Percent	Nº	Profession	Number	Percent
1	Teacher and translator	2	2.04%	10	Military psychologist	1	1.02%
2	Rear staff	2	2.04%	11	Analyst	1	1.02%
3	Teacher, Lawyer	2	2.04%	12	Work for Lawyer	12	12.24%
4	Business Law	1	1.02%	13	Economist	3	3.06%
5	Forensic science law	4	4.08%	14	Lawyer	9	9.18%
6	International Lawyer	2	2.04%	15	Emergency Worker-Lawyer	6	6.12%
7	Journalist Border Service	2	2.04%	16	Lawyer and Software	2	2.04%
8	Lawyer and lawyer	8	8.16%	17	Lawyer and Psychologist	1	1.02%
9	Police Work - Legal	37	37.76%	18	Lawyer, border service	3	3.06%
TOTAL						98	100.00%

Note: Result of study

**Graph 3.1: The information for graduate students' major**

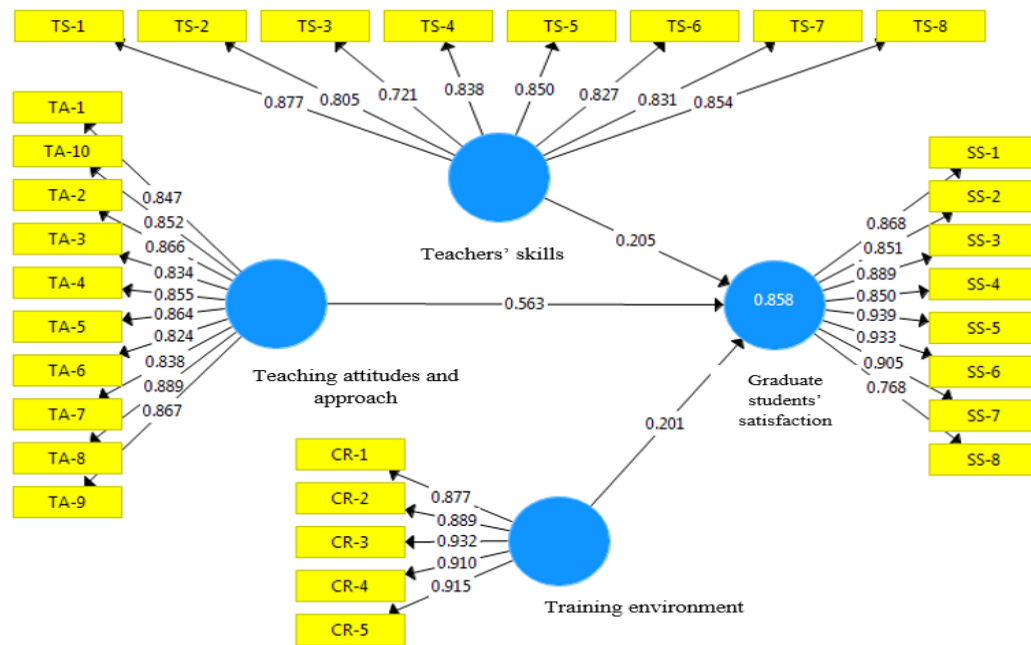
Note: Result of study

In graduate students, the outer loadings of 8 items measuring teachers' skills ranged from 0.721 to 0.877, Cronbach's alpha of 0.933, AVE was 0.686, Composite reliability of 0.945 and Rho_A of 0.937. The outer loadings of 10 items measuring teachers' attitude ranged from 0.824 to 0.889, Cronbach's alpha of 0.959, AVE was 0.729, Composite reliability of 0.964 and Rho_A of 0.940. Outer loadings of 5 items measuring training environment ranged from 0.877 to 0.932, Cronbach's alpha of 0.944, AVE was 0.819, Composite reliability of 0.9658 and Rho_A of 0.945. Outer loadings of 8 items measuring graduate student satisfaction ranged from 0.768 to 0.939, Cronbach's alpha of 0.956, AVE was 0.769, Composite reliability of 0.964 and Rho_A of 0.959. in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: List of Items for each Construct of Students

The factors	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Rho A
Teachers' skills	TS-1	0.877	0.933	0.683	0.945	0.937
	TS-2	0.805				
	TS-3	0.721				
	TS-4	0.838				
	TS-5	0.85				
	TS-6	0.827				
	TS-7	0.831				
	TS-8	0.854				
Teaching attitudes and approach	TA-1	0.847	0.959	0.729	0.964	0.96
	TA-2	0.866				
	TA-3	0.834				
	TA-4	0.855				
	TA-5	0.864				
	TA-6	0.824				
	TA-7	0.838				
	TA-8	0.889				
	TA-9	0.867				
	TA-10	0.852				
Training environment	CR-1	0.877	0.944	0.819	0.958	0.945
	CR-2	0.889				
	CR-3	0.932				
	CR-4	0.91				
	CR-5	0.915				
Graduate students' satisfaction	SS-1	0.868	0.956	0.769	0.964	0.959
	SS-2	0.851				
	SS-3	0.889				
	SS-4	0.85				
	SS-5	0.939				
	SS-6	0.933				
	SS-7	0.903				
	SS-8	0.768				

Note: TE- technical skills, TA-teaching attitudes and approach, CR -training environment, -SS-Graduate students' satisfaction



Note: TE- technical skills, TA-teaching attitudes and approach, CR -training curriculum, -SS-Graduate students' satisfaction

Figure 3.1: Results of Structure Analysis of Graduate students

Source: Result of study

Table 3.3: Latent Variable Correlations analysis

ITEMS	Teaching attitudes and approach	Graduate students' satisfaction	Training curriculum	Technical skills
Teaching attitudes and approach	0.854			
Graduate students' satisfaction	0.914	0.877		
Training curriculum	0.902	0.867	0.905	
Teachers' skills	0.831	0.828	0.77	0.827

Source: Result of study

All latent variables in this survey had a highly significant constructed reliability and thus these measures indicated that the measurement model is reliable. In this section, the discriminant validity was highly achieved. The analysis shows that five considered latent constructs are all correlated with each other.

Table 3.4: Estimated Path Coefficients of Graduate students

Hypothesis	Mean	Standard Error	T Statistic	P-value	Remarks
Hypothesis-1. Teachers' skills will positive relate on graduate students' satisfaction	0.203	0.09	2.275	0.023	supported
Hypothesis-2. Teaching attitudes and approach will positive relate on graduate students' satisfaction	0.573	0.187	3.016	0.003	supported
Hypothesis-3. Training curriculum skills will positive relate on graduate students' satisfaction	0.194	0.16	1.258	0.209	nonsupport

Note: Result of study

As results, firstly, H-1 such as teachers' skills positive related on graduate students' satisfaction ($p=0.023$). Secondly, H-2 such as teaching attitudes and approach positive related on graduate students' satisfaction ($p=0.003$). Finally, H-3 such as training curriculum skills positive not related on graduate students' satisfaction ($p=0.209$).

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The findings showed that all effects such as teachers' skills, teachers' attitude and training curriculum have a positive relationship with student satisfaction of Graduate school at Internal Affairs University, Mongolia. It means that graduate students can take more impacts in order to retain more satisfied employees are more productive than those who are less satisfied.

The results from 98 participants who are graduate students studying at 2021-2022 academic year in curriculum program on Disaster Studies, Border Studies, Law, Crime Law, Police Studies, Forensic science, Information Security and Economic at Graduate School.

Actually, two hypotheses were supported in all major of chosen that hypothesis 1, 2 were related and positive impact on graduate student satisfaction.

- The teachers' skills positive related on graduate students' satisfaction.
- The teaching attitudes and approach positive related on graduate students' satisfaction.
- The training curriculum skills positive not related on graduate students' satisfaction.

Finally, the results from our study may help the essential features of supervisors in detecting the things that need to be improved in our university in order to improve the student satisfaction of their effects on teachers' skills, teachers' attitude and training curriculum.

Recommendations and Limitation

We summarize the limitations of our research as follows. These include:

- The study is considered to be limited in time.
- Three predictive indicators can be considered limited.
- Only limited study results by Smart PLS-3.0 were compared with other qualitative research methods.

The TS-3 implicit variables of student satisfaction factor are lower than other ratings, as are the "We are advanced course teachers and often use more examples from foreign researchers in teaching lessons" evaluation team. Providing training in Law, Crime Studies, Law, Police Studies, Probation Studies, Information Security, and Economic Security programs and know you should follow rather than the direction of research work and research methodology.

Also, the hidden SS-8 and "I can get professional counseling from my classroom teacher when they are needed" scores less efficiently, so teachers not only provide professional advice for undergraduates who are taking the course, but also workloads and opportunities when graduate students request professional advice.

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