INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH
International Peer-Reviewed Research Journal
ISSN (Online): 3106-7980 | ISSN (Print): 3106-7972
Volume 3 • Issue 7 • November 2026

STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN SELECTED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN RAHIM YAR KHAN, PAKISTAN: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Fatima Qamar[*1], Fatima Batool[2], Aqsa Shakoor[3]

[*1]*Faculty of Education, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875, China*
[2,3]*School of Education, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan Campus 64200, Pakistan*

[*1]qfatima631@gmail.com

ORCID: 0009-0006-9898-2314

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24002463

Keywords
student satisfaction; learning experience; higher education; teaching quality; faculty support; learning resources; Pakistan

Article History
Received: 06 August 2026
Accepted: 20 October 2026
Published: 05 November 2026

Copyright @Author
Corresponding Author: *
Fatima Qamar

Abstract
This study examined students' satisfaction with their learning experience in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. Using a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional design, data were collected from 150 undergraduate and master's-level students through a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire assessed students' perceptions of teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, learning resources, and the learning environment. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, while Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire item groups. The findings showed that students generally reported positive satisfaction with their overall learning experience (M=1.99, SD=1.013); lower mean scores indicate stronger agreement because Strongly Agree was coded as 1. Students also expressed relatively favorable perceptions of teaching methods, faculty guidance, learning materials, group projects, and the classroom environment. However, comparatively weaker agreement was observed for remote-learning technology, feedback on assessed work, institutional infrastructure, and sports facilities. Cronbach's alpha values of .825, .760, and .797 for the three questionnaire item groups indicated acceptable to good internal consistency, although reliability alone does not establish scale validity. The study recommends improving feedback practices, strengthening faculty accessibility and academic support, upgrading learning facilities, and reviewing the availability and effectiveness of remote-learning resources. The findings provide context-specific descriptive evidence to support institutional planning and quality improvement in the selected higher education institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Student satisfaction is widely used as an indicator of students' perceptions of educational quality and institutional performance in higher education. However, it should not be treated as a standalone measure of educational quality, but

rather interpreted alongside other indicators of institutional performance and student learning outcomes (Winstone et al., 2022; Wong & Chapman, 2023). Students' perceptions of teaching, assessment, faculty support, learning resources, and academic support services can help institutions identify strengths and prioritize areas requiring improvement (Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023). Higher education institutions are expected not only to impart disciplinary knowledge but also to foster critical thinking, independent learning, and professional competence. Achieving these aims requires attention to students' educational experiences and their perceptions of the effectiveness of institutional teaching, assessment, support, and resource provision (Tomlinson et al., 2023). Student feedback can therefore complement other measures of educational quality, although satisfaction alone does not establish whether students have achieved specific learning outcomes (Winstone et al., 2022).

In this context, the present study examines students' satisfaction with their learning experience in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. The study focuses on students' perceptions of teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and institutional learning resources. By examining these dimensions, the study seeks to identify aspects of the learning experience that students perceive as strengths and areas that may require institutional improvement. The study contributes context-specific descriptive evidence that may inform institutional decision-making and future research on student satisfaction in Pakistani higher education (Bukhari et al., 2024; Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023).

1.1 Background of the Study

The quality of higher education depends not only on curriculum delivery but also on whether teaching practices support students' understanding, participation, and skill development. Student satisfaction is a multidimensional construct encompassing students' perceptions of course content, instructional methods, assessment and feedback, faculty accessibility, learning facilities, and institutional support services (Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023). These dimensions are particularly relevant when institutions seek to improve the educational experience and respond effectively to students' academic needs.

At the higher education level, students may expect clear instruction, constructive feedback, and opportunities for independent inquiry, and appropriate access to academic resources. Students also commonly expect accessible teaching staff and adequate learning resources (Tomlinson et al., 2023). The availability and quality of these opportunities may vary across institutions, disciplines, and student populations. Differences in institutional resources, teaching practices, and support systems may therefore contribute to variation in students' reported satisfaction (Bukhari et al., 2024; Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023). In District Rahim Yar Khan, examining students' experiences across selected higher education institutions can provide locally relevant information about the educational conditions students encounter. Such evidence may assist institutional administrators and educators in identifying priority areas for improvement. However, conclusions about the extent and possible causes of dissatisfaction should be based on systematically collected data rather than assumptions about institutional quality. Accordingly, the present study investigates students' satisfaction with their learning experience in selected institutions in the district, with particular attention to teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Student satisfaction provides useful information about how students perceive the quality of their educational experiences. However, identifying the specific aspects of the learning environment that students consider satisfactory or unsatisfactory requires systematic investigation. Without such evidence, institutions may find it difficult to

prioritize improvements in teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources. There is a need for context-specific evidence on students' satisfaction with teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources in selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan. Although recent research has examined the relationship between education quality and student satisfaction in Pakistani higher education (Bukhari et al., 2024; Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023), further local evidence is needed from the selected institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan. This study addresses that need by examining questionnaire responses from 150 students enrolled in five selected institutions. The study is limited to the participating students, five selected institutions, measured variables, and the period of data collection; therefore, its findings should not be generalized beyond these boundaries. Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted as descriptive evidence from the participating sample rather than as representative estimates for all higher education institutions in Pakistan.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to examine students' satisfaction with their learning experience in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.

- The specific objectives were:
- To assess students' reported satisfaction with teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources.
- To describe the demographic and academic characteristics of the participating students.
- To assess the internal consistency of the relevant questionnaire item groups using Cronbach's alpha.
- To identify aspects of the learning experience that students perceived as strengths and areas requiring improvement.
- To propose evidence-based recommendations for improving the learning experience and student support in the selected higher education institutions.

1.4 Research Questions

The study addressed the following research questions:

- What were students' reported levels of satisfaction with teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources?
- What were the demographic and academic characteristics of the participating students?
- What was the internal consistency of the relevant questionnaire item groups?
- Which aspects of the learning experience did students identify as strengths or areas requiring improvement?

1.5 Significance of the Study

- This study contributes to a better understanding of students' perceptions of their learning experience in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan. Its significance lies in providing locally relevant descriptive evidence about the educational practices and institutional conditions that students consider important (Bukhari et al., 2024; Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023).
- **For teachers:** The findings may help teachers understand students' perceptions of instructional clarity, assessment practices, feedback, and classroom interaction. This information may inform improvements in teaching and student engagement.
- **For institutional administrators:** The results may help administrators identify areas in which students report satisfaction or concern, thereby supporting evidence-informed decisions about learning facilities, academic support, and educational services.
- **For educational policymakers:** The study offers contextual evidence that may inform discussions on student-centered educational practices and institutional quality improvement. Its findings should be considered alongside evidence from other institutions and studies.

- **For students:** By documenting students' reported experiences, the study may help highlight areas where changes could make educational services more responsive to student needs.
- **For researchers:** The study may provide a local reference point for future investigations of student satisfaction, including research using larger or more representative samples and more detailed measures of academic outcomes.

The practical value of the study depends on the quality of the collected data, the transparency of the research procedures, and the appropriate interpretation of the findings.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focused on students enrolled in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. It included 150 students from six academic disciplines: Arts, English, BBA, Computer Science, Allied Health Sciences, and Education. The study examined students' reported satisfaction with teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources through a structured questionnaire. The analysis was limited to descriptive statistics and reliability analysis; no inferential tests were conducted. The findings therefore describe the reported experiences of the participating students and do not establish statistically significant differences or associations between institutions, disciplines, demographic groups, or other subgroups.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Student satisfaction: Students' reported evaluations of their educational experiences, including their perceptions of teaching practices, assessment, faculty support, and learning resources.

- **Learning experience:** The educational activities, interactions, resources, and institutional conditions encountered by students during their studies (Tomlinson et al., 2023).
- **Higher education institutions:** The colleges and universities included in the present study in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan.
- **Teaching practices:** The instructional approaches and classroom activities used by teachers to support students' understanding and learning.
- **Faculty support:** Students' perceptions of the academic guidance, feedback, communication, and assistance provided by teaching staff.
- **Learning resources:** The educational materials and facilities available to students, including relevant library resources, digital materials, internet access, and other facilities measured by the study.
- **Learning performance:** Students' achievement or progress in learning, as assessed through an explicitly defined measure. In this study, the term should be used as an outcome variable only if it was measured in the collected data.
- **Cross-sectional study:** A research design in which information about the study variables is collected at a particular period rather than through repeated measurements over time.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

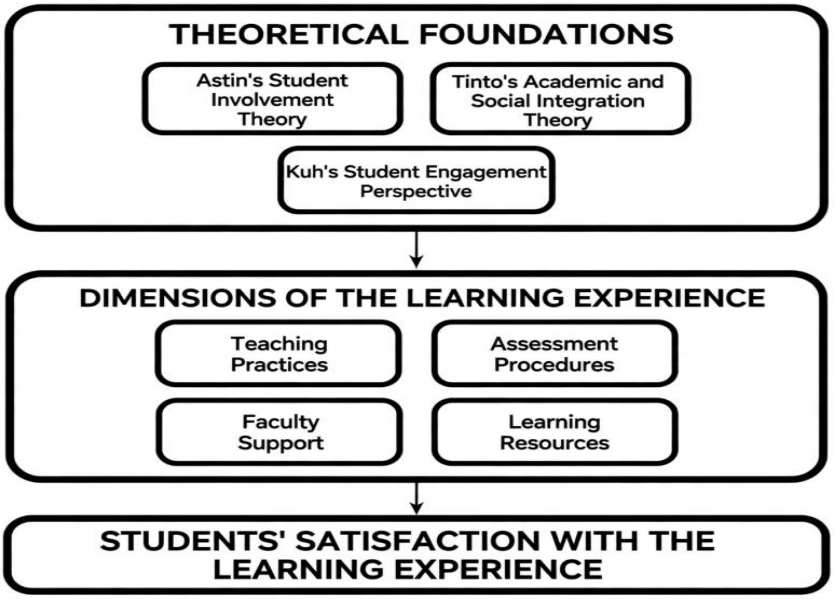
This study draws on Astin (1997) theory of student involvement, Tinto (2012) account of academic and social integration, and Kuh (2003) perspective on student engagement. Astin (1997) emphasizes students' investment of time and effort in educational purposeful activities. Tinto (2012) highlighted the role of academic and social integration in student persistence, whereas Kuh (2003) emphasized participation in educationally meaningful activities. Together, these perspectives provide a theoretical basis for examining students' interactions with teachers, peers, learning activities, and institutional resources.

Drawing on these perspectives, the study organized students' reported learning experiences into four areas: teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty support, and learning resources. These areas guided the description of students' perceptions; they were not treated as

independently validated subscales or tested predictors of overall satisfaction. Overall satisfaction is described using the questionnaire item addressing satisfaction with the learning experience.

Figure 1.1 summarizes this conceptual organization. Because the study used descriptive statistics and reliability analysis, it did not test the theories, estimate associations between the four areas and overall satisfaction, or establish causal relationships.

Figure 1.1 ***Conceptual Framework of Students' Satisfaction with the Learning Experience***



Note. The framework draws on Astin (1997), Tinto (2012), and Kuh (2003). Arrows indicate conceptual organization rather than tested associations or causal relationships.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Student satisfaction is an important dimension of higher education because it provides insight into how students perceive their academic experiences, interactions with faculty members, and access to institutional resources. Understanding these perceptions can help higher education institutions identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. However, student satisfaction is a multidimensional construct that cannot be adequately explained by a single factor. It may be associated with teaching quality, assessment and feedback practices, student engagement, faculty support, learning resources, institutional services, and the extent to which educational experiences meet students' expectations (Dhawan, 2022; Ikram & Kenayathulla, 2023; Wong & Chapman, 2023).

The literature on higher education emphasizes the importance of student involvement and engagement in the educational process. Astin (1997) proposed that student involvement plays a central role in educational development, while Kuh (2003) highlighted the importance of examining students' actual engagement in educationally meaningful activities rather than relying exclusively on institutional reputation or resources. Similarly, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) synthesized research on how college experiences relate to students' learning and development. The present chapter reviews literature relevant to student satisfaction with the learning experience. It examines the relationship between student satisfaction and academic experiences, teaching quality, faculty–student relationships, active learning, educational technology, academic guidance, learning

approaches, institutional context, facilities, and extracurricular participation. The chapter also considers the relevance of these themes to the study of students in selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. The purpose of this review is to establish the conceptual basis of the study, identify the factors that may be associated with student satisfaction, and clarify the research gap that the present investigation seeks to address.

2.1 Student Satisfaction and Academic Performance

Student satisfaction and academic performance are related but conceptually distinct outcomes. Student satisfaction concerns students' evaluations of their educational experiences, whereas academic performance refers to achievement demonstrated through defined measures such as examination results, grades, or other assessments. Although these constructs may be associated, satisfaction should not be treated as direct evidence of academic achievement.

Astin (1997) theory of student involvement emphasizes that students' participation and investment in academic activities shape their educational experiences. Tinto (2012) examined student departure and emphasized the importance of academic and social integration in students' educational experiences. His work suggests that students' relationships with their institutions and their sense of connection to academic communities are relevant to understanding persistence in higher education. These ideas provide a useful foundation for considering how institutional experiences may relate to satisfaction, although persistence and satisfaction should not be treated as identical outcomes.

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) reviewed research concerning the influence of college experiences on student learning and development. Their synthesis highlights the importance of considering students' experiences within the wider educational environment, including interactions, academic opportunities, and institutional conditions. Kuh (2003) likewise emphasized student engagement as a useful source of information for understanding educational quality. These perspectives suggest that student satisfaction should be examined in relation to students' educational experiences. Consistent with this view, Qamar (2026) found that social integration played an important role in students' academic success, while Qamar et al. (2026) identified institutional support, feedback quality, and social influences as important factors in students' academic experiences in Pakistan. However, because academic achievement was not independently measured, this study interprets its findings as reported satisfaction rather than academic performance.

2.2 Teaching Quality and Instructional Effectiveness

Teaching quality is a central determinant of students' educational experiences and satisfaction. Students may evaluate teaching in terms of the clarity of explanations, organization of course content, relevance of learning activities, opportunities to ask questions, quality of feedback, and fairness of assessment. These aspects may influence how students perceive the usefulness and effectiveness of their courses.

Chickering and Gamson (1987) identified seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education. These include student–faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, adequate time on task, clear expectations, and respect for diverse talents and ways of learning. Although these principles were formulated for undergraduate education, they offer a useful framework for examining instructional practices in higher education more broadly. Prince (2004) reviewed research on active, collaborative, cooperative, and problem-based learning. His review found support for important elements of these approaches, while also indicating that the evidence varied across methods and contexts. This distinction is important because teaching strategies should not be assumed to produce identical outcomes in every discipline or learning environment.

Effective teaching requires constructive alignment among instructional activities, learning objectives, and assessment tasks. Clear expectations and constructive feedback can support student engagement and learning. Teaching quality is therefore a relevant dimension of student satisfaction, although satisfaction ratings reflect students' evaluations rather than an independent measure of instructional effectiveness.

2.3 The Student–Teacher Relationship

The relationship between students and teachers is another important aspect of the higher education experience. Faculty members influence learning through their subject knowledge and instructional practices, but their accessibility, communication, fairness, and willingness to provide academic guidance may also shape students' perceptions of the learning environment.

Chickering and Gamson (1987) emphasized the importance of contact between students and faculty members. Such contact can provide opportunities for students to clarify difficult concepts, seek feedback, discuss academic interests, and obtain guidance on their progress. These interactions may be especially relevant when students encounter academic difficulties or need assistance with independent work. Supportive faculty relationships may also help students feel that their questions and concerns are taken seriously. Faculty support and feedback quality have previously been identified as important elements of students' academic experiences in Pakistan's higher-education context (Qamar et al., 2026). In contrast, limited access to teachers, inconsistent communication, or perceptions of unfair treatment may negatively influence students' educational experiences. These possibilities should be investigated through student feedback rather than assumed to occur in every institution. Faculty–student relationships may be especially important in advanced study, where students may require individualized guidance and academic mentoring. Faculty support was examined through students' perceptions of communication, feedback, and academic guidance.

2.4 Student Engagement and Active Learning

Student engagement refers broadly to students' participation in and investment in educational activities. Kuh (2003) discussed engagement as an important consideration in evaluating the quality of the educational experience, emphasizing the value of information about students' actual participation in learning activities. Engagement can be considered in several related ways. Behavioral engagement involves observable participation, such as attendance and contribution to class activities. Emotional engagement concerns students' interest, motivation, and sense of belonging. Cognitive engagement involves the mental effort students devote to understanding material, solving problems, and developing knowledge. These dimensions offer a useful conceptual lens for examining students' educational experiences, although they should only be treated as measured variables when the research instrument includes suitable items.

Active learning provides opportunities for students to participate rather than relying exclusively on listening to lectures. Examples include structured discussion, collaborative tasks, problem-solving exercises, presentations, and practical projects. Prince (2004) reviewed evidence concerning several active-learning approaches and found broad, although uneven, support for their core elements. The effectiveness of a particular approach may depend on how it is implemented and whether it suits the learning objectives. Active learning may help students clarify their understanding and apply concepts, although its effectiveness depends on appropriate design and alignment with learning objectives. Student engagement was relevant to this study through students' perceptions of classroom participation and instructional practices.

2.5 The Use of Technology in Learning

Educational technology can support learning by providing access to course materials, digital

libraries, online communication platforms, assessment tools, and learning management systems (Simon et al., 2025). These resources enable students to review learning materials beyond classroom hours, communicate with teachers, and access additional learning opportunities.

However, the availability of educational technology does not automatically improve students' learning experiences. Its effectiveness depends on accessibility, reliability, instructional integration, and the availability of appropriate technical support (Liu et al., 2024; Simon et al., 2025). Digital resources that are difficult to access, poorly organized, or insufficiently supported may create additional barriers rather than improve learning. Access to suitable devices, reliable internet connections, and technical assistance may also vary among students. These differences are particularly important when institutions rely on digital resources to support academic activities. Students' ability to benefit from technology may therefore depend on both institutional provision and their individual circumstances. Accordingly, technology should be evaluated in terms of its educational purpose and its contribution to course objectives and student learning. In this study, technology was examined through students' perceptions of digital learning resources and remote-learning support.

2.6 Academic Advising, Guidance, and Support Services

Academic guidance and institutional support services can contribute to students' experiences by helping them understand program requirements, address academic difficulties, and identify appropriate sources of assistance. Institutional support has also been identified as an important factor influencing students' academic performance and educational experiences (Qamar et al., 2026; Qamar, 2026). Depending on institutional provision, these services may include academic advising, mentoring, tutoring, counseling, career guidance, and administrative support. Students may benefit when information about academic requirements is communicated clearly and assistance is accessible when needed. Conversely, unclear procedures, limited availability, or insufficient awareness of services may prevent students from obtaining support. The availability of a service should therefore be distinguished from students' awareness of it, their access to it, and their perceptions of its usefulness. Faculty members may also provide informal guidance through consultations, feedback, and discussions about academic progress. Such support can complement formal services, although the two should not be treated as interchangeable. The importance of support services may vary across institutions, disciplines, and stages of study. Academic guidance and support services were examined as dimensions of students' learning experiences.

2.7 Learning Approaches and Individual Differences

Students differ in their prior knowledge, educational experiences, interests, language backgrounds, and familiarity with academic expectations. These differences can influence how they approach learning tasks and respond to particular teaching practices. Recognizing individual differences is therefore important when considering students' perceptions of educational quality.

Bloom (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives provides a framework for considering different levels of learning, from knowledge and comprehension to more complex forms of intellectual activity in the original taxonomy. The framework can help educators align teaching and assessment with the intended learning outcomes. Kolb (1984) developed an experiential learning framework that emphasizes learning through experience, reflection, conceptual understanding, and experimentation. This perspective draws attention to the role of experience in learning and offers one way to consider the variety of activities that may support educational development. Fleming and Mills (1992) discussed a questionnaire concerning sensory preferences as a catalyst for reflection on learning. Their work is relevant to the history of discussions about

individual learning preferences. However, preference categories should not be used to assume that students learn best only through a fixed, assigned style. Teaching decisions should be guided by the learning objectives, relevant evidence, and opportunities for students to engage with material in appropriate ways. A varied learning environment can provide complementary opportunities for students to understand concepts and demonstrate knowledge. Individual differences were considered only where they were measured in the study.

2.8 Formal and Informal Learning

Formal learning generally takes place within organized educational structures, including courses, scheduled classes, assessments, and prescribed curricula. Informal learning may occur through independent reading, peer discussion, research activities, professional experiences, and other educational interactions outside formally organized instruction. Dewey (2007) emphasized the relationship between experience and education, drawing attention to the importance of meaningful experiences in the learning process. Knowles (1980) likewise discussed adult education and the significance of learners' experiences and participation in their own learning. These perspectives provide a theoretical basis for considering learning as a process that extends beyond the delivery of classroom instruction.

In higher education, peer interaction, independent study, seminars, and practical application of knowledge may complement formal instruction. The balance between formal and informal learning may differ among academic disciplines and programs. Research-oriented programs, for example, may involve substantial independent work, while other programs may emphasize structured classroom activities or practical instruction. This distinction provides context for students' educational experiences, although informal learning was not independently measured in this study.

2.9 Institutional Type and Educational Context

Higher education institutions differ in their academic missions, organizational arrangements, resources, student populations, and program structures. These differences may influence the educational opportunities available to students and the expectations they bring to their studies.

Astin (1997) examined factors associated with college experiences and emphasized the importance of understanding what students experience within institutions. Tinto (2012) also highlighted the importance of academic and social integration when examining students' continuation in higher education. These perspectives suggest that institutional context should be considered when investigating student experiences. Students may evaluate their institutions according to the opportunities they expect and the experiences they receive. Relevant considerations may include access to qualified faculty, the availability of academic resources, opportunities for participation, and the support available for completing academic tasks. Such expectations may differ according to program requirements and students' educational goals. Institutional comparisons require caution because differences in satisfaction may reflect student composition, discipline, study level, resources, or other factors. This study describes the experiences of students in five selected institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan; because convenience sampling was used, the findings should not be generalized to all institutions.

2.10 Campus Facilities and Learning Resources

Campus facilities and learning resources provide the practical conditions within which educational activities take place. Relevant resources may include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, study spaces, internet access, digital materials, and other facilities required by particular academic programs. The availability and suitability of these resources may affect students' ability to complete academic tasks and participate in educational activities. For example, access to appropriate laboratory facilities may be important in practical disciplines, while access to library and digital

resources may be especially relevant for research and independent study.

The quality of a learning resource depends not only on its availability but also on its accessibility, functionality, adequacy, and ease of use. Students' perceptions can provide useful information about their experiences of these facilities. However, perceptions alone do not constitute a technical audit of institutional resources. Where possible, questionnaire findings should be interpreted alongside relevant institutional information. Campus facilities and learning resources were examined through students' perceptions of their adequacy and usefulness.

2.11 Extracurricular Activities and Student Belonging

Extracurricular activities can provide opportunities for students to interact with peers, develop interests, and participate in the wider institutional community. Examples include academic societies, student clubs, sports, seminars, cultural activities, and volunteer initiatives. Such activities may complement formal education by creating opportunities for collaboration, communication, leadership, and social participation. They may also contribute to students' perceptions of belonging when activities are accessible and responsive to different interests and circumstances.

Tinto (2012) emphasized the relevance of academic and social integration when examining student departure. This perspective supports consideration of students' wider institutional experiences, although it does not establish that extracurricular participation necessarily increases satisfaction in every context. Participation in extracurricular activities may depend on time, transport, financial resources, and academic responsibilities. Extracurricular activities were not a tested factor in this study unless they were included in the questionnaire.

2.12 Student Satisfaction in the Pakistani Higher Education Context

Student satisfaction should be understood in relation to the educational, institutional, and social context in which learning takes place. Findings from one country or institutional setting cannot automatically be applied to another because student populations, academic structures, available resources, and expectations may differ.

In Pakistan, investigating student experiences across individual institutions and academic disciplines can provide context-specific information for institutional improvement. Recent research in southern Punjab has highlighted the importance of institutional support, feedback quality, family expectations, career aspirations, and social influences in students' academic experiences (Qamar et al., 2026). Relevant areas of investigation may include teaching practices, assessment procedures, faculty accessibility, learning resources, and the availability of academic support. However, the importance and prevalence of particular issues should be established through verified research or the data collected for a specific study. The present research focuses on students in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. Its local focus allows the study to examine the reported experiences of students within a defined setting. The inclusion of students from different institutions and academic disciplines may also provide an opportunity to describe variation within the participating sample. The findings should not be used to make unsupported claims about all Pakistani higher education institutions. A stronger understanding of student satisfaction in this setting therefore requires systematic data collection, clearly defined variables, transparent analysis, and careful interpretation of the findings. The present study contributes to this objective by examining the responses of its participating students and identifying areas for further investigation.

2.13 Research Gap

The literature reviewed in this chapter establishes several important considerations for investigating student satisfaction in higher education. Existing theoretical and empirical research highlights the relevance of student involvement, instructional practices, faculty interaction, engagement, institutional context, learning resources, and educational opportunities. However, the implications of these perspectives must be examined in relation to the specific population, institutional context, and regional setting under investigation.

First, the relationship between student satisfaction and academic performance requires careful distinction. Satisfaction reflects students' evaluations of their experiences, whereas academic performance requires an independently defined measure of achievement. A study that measures satisfaction alone cannot establish whether students perform better academically.

Second, research findings from different institutional settings may not fully explain students' experiences in every local context. Although previous research has examined motivation, academic performance, social integration, and institutional support in Pakistani and international higher education contexts (Qamar et al., 2026; Qamar, 2026), further context-specific evidence is needed regarding students' satisfaction with teaching quality, assessment practices, faculty support, and learning resources in District Rahim Yar Khan, where locally grounded empirical research remains limited. The educational conditions and student expectations in selected institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan warrant examination using data collected directly from the participating population.

Third, student satisfaction can involve multiple dimensions, including teaching practices, assessment, faculty support, and learning resources. Examining these dimensions within one study may provide a more organized account of students' perceptions than considering a single aspect in isolation, provided that the questionnaire measures the relevant constructs adequately.

Fourth, because a convenience sample was used, the results describe the participating respondents and should not be treated as representative of all students. Accordingly, the present study examines reported satisfaction with the learning experience among 150 students from five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan. The study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional design to describe students' responses to the learning-experience items included in the questionnaire.

The study contributes context-specific evidence from the participating institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan.

2.14 Summary

This chapter reviewed literature relevant to student satisfaction with the learning experience in higher education. The discussion considered student involvement, academic experiences, teaching quality, faculty–student relationships, active learning, educational technology, academic guidance, learning approaches, formal and informal learning, institutional context, campus facilities, extracurricular activities, and the Pakistani higher education setting. The reviewed literature provides a conceptual basis for examining student satisfaction as a multidimensional construct shaped by students' perceptions of their educational experiences. It also highlights the importance of distinguishing satisfaction from academic achievement and of interpreting institutional comparisons within the limits of the research design. The chapter identified the value of investigating student satisfaction in a defined local context and examining the dimensions represented in the research instrument. These considerations inform the methodology presented in Chapter 3, which describes the study design, population, sampling procedure, questionnaire, data collection, ethical considerations, and statistical analysis.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used to investigate students' satisfaction with their learning experiences in selected higher education institutions in Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. It explains the research design, study setting, target population, sampling technique, sample size, research instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis, ethical considerations, and methodological limitations.

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected at a single point in time through a structured, self-administered questionnaire. No variables were manipulated; therefore, the study describes students' reported experiences rather than establishing causal relationships.

3.2 Study Setting

The research was conducted in five selected higher education institutions in District Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. These institutions were NCBA&E, Superior University, Islamia University, Women College, and Khawaja Fareed Post Graduate College. The findings relate primarily to the five selected institutions and should not be generalized to all higher education institutions in Pakistan.

3.3 Target Population

The target population consisted of undergraduate and master's-level students enrolled in the selected institutions. Participants represented six academic disciplines: Education, Arts, Computer Science (CS), Allied Health Sciences (AHS), English, and Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). Students from different disciplines were included to obtain a broader understanding of their learning experiences and satisfaction levels. Students enrolled in the selected institutions who were available and willing to participate were included in the study.

3.4 Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling technique was used to recruit participants. Students who were accessible and willing to complete the questionnaire were invited to participate. This approach facilitated data collection across different institutions and academic disciplines. However, convenience sampling may have introduced selection bias because participating students may differ systematically from those who did not participate. Consequently, the sample should not be considered statistically representative of the entire student population.

3.5 Sample Size

The study included 150 students from five selected higher education institutions: NCBA&E, Superior University, Islamia University, Women College, and Khawaja Fareed Post Graduate College. The distribution of participants by institution and academic discipline is presented in Chapter 4. The participants represented six academic disciplines: Education, Arts, Computer Science, Allied Health Sciences, English, and BBA. The final sample comprised 150 usable questionnaire responses. No formal sample-size calculation or statistical power analysis was conducted; therefore, the sample should be interpreted as adequate for descriptive analysis rather than for inferential hypothesis testing.

3.6 Research Instrument

Data were collected through a structured, self-administered questionnaire designed to assess students' satisfaction with their learning experiences. Participants' responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale. Responses were recorded as follows: Strongly Agree = 1, Agree = 2, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly Disagree = 5. For positively worded items, lower mean scores indicate stronger agreement because Strongly Agree was coded as 1 and Strongly Disagree as 5. Negatively worded items were interpreted separately and were not included in positively oriented composite scores. The questionnaire addressed students' learning experiences according to the items included in the administered instrument. The final research report should specify the

number of items, questionnaire sections, source, language, and development or adaptation process.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire underwent faculty review and pilot testing to assess the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. Faculty review can help assess the clarity and relevance of questions, while pilot testing can identify problems with wording, response options, and administration procedures.

However, the number of reviewers, pilot-test participants, and specific revisions made after the pilot should be documented in the final manuscript. Therefore, these procedures should not be presented as complete proof of validity. Reliability refers to the consistency or stability of questionnaire scores across items intended to measure the same construct. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency of items intended to measure the same construct. The internal consistency of the questionnaire item groups was assessed using Cronbach's alpha in SPSS. The reliability analysis produced coefficients for three item groups. The teaching and faculty support group consisted of 11 items and produced an alpha coefficient of .825. The learning resources and environment group consisted of eight items and produced an alpha coefficient of .760 in the available output. The third item group, consisting of nine items, produced a Cronbach's alpha of .797. The final reliability results should be confirmed after verification of invalid data values and the conceptual suitability of the items included in each group. Any reported coefficient must be calculated from the actual dataset and accompanied by the number of items and the sample used.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaire data were collected from students enrolled at the five selected institutions. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout data collection and analysis. For transparency, the final report should identify the actual data collection dates, questionnaire distribution method, recruitment procedure, number of students invited, and number of usable questionnaires. The response rate should only be calculated if the number of eligible students invited to participate is known.

3.9 Data Preparation and Analysis

Questionnaire responses were assigned numerical values from 1 to 5 and organized for quantitative analysis. The dataset should be checked for data-entry errors, duplicate records, missing responses, and invalid values. Missing data and negatively worded items should be handled according to documented procedures.

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used as the principal analytical techniques. Frequencies and percentages summarize participant characteristics and response distributions, while means and standard deviations describe questionnaire scores where appropriate. No inferential tests were conducted; the analysis was limited to descriptive statistics and reliability analysis. Data were analyzed using SPSS. The analysis comprised frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha. No inferential comparisons or correlation analyses were conducted.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and protection of participants' privacy. Students should have been able to decline participation without penalty, and questionnaire data should have been handled securely. The final manuscript should specify whether ethical approval or an exemption was obtained from the relevant institutional review body, including the committee name, approval number, and date. The committee name, approval reference, and date should be included where applicable. Formal approval or anonymity

should not be claimed unless supported by the actual research procedures and records.

3.11 Methodological Limitations

The study had several methodological limitations. Convenience sampling may have introduced selection bias, while the sample of 150 students from five institutions in one district limits generalizability. The cross-sectional design captured perceptions at one period and cannot establish causal relationships or changes over time. Furthermore, self-reported questionnaire responses may be influenced by individual interpretation and response bias. The strength of the conclusions also depends on the documented validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

3.12 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology used to investigate students' satisfaction with learning experiences in selected higher education institutions in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan. The study employed a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional design involving 150 students recruited through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert-type scale. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire item groups. The chapter also discussed instrument evaluation, data management, ethical considerations, and methodological limitations. Before submission, missing methodological details should be verified against the original research records to ensure accuracy, transparency, and reproducibility.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study, *Students' Satisfaction with the Learning Experience in Selected Higher Education Institutions in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan: A Cross-Sectional Study*. Data were collected from 150 students using a structured, self-administered questionnaire. The responses were entered into SPSS and analyzed using descriptive statistics and reliability analysis. The findings are presented using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The internal consistency of the questionnaire item groups was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. No inferential comparisons between institutions or academic departments were conducted.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 150 students participated in the study. The demographic analysis showed that respondents were drawn from five selected higher education institutions and six academic departments.

Table 4.1.1 Distribution by Institution

Institution	Frequency	Percentage
NCBA&E	39	26.0%
Superior University	28	18.7%
Islamia University (IUB)	27	18.0%
Women College	39	26.0%
Khawaja Fareed College (KFC)	17	11.3%
Total	**150**	**100%**

NCBA&E and Women College each contributed 26.0% of participants, followed by Superior University (18.7%), Islamia University (18.0%), and Khawaja Fareed College (11.3%).

Table 4.1.2 Distribution by Academic Department

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Arts	11	7.3%
English	42	28.0%
BBA	13	8.7%
Computer Science (CS)	39	26.0%
Allied Health Sciences (AHS)	28	18.7%
Education	17	11.3%
Total	**150**	**100%**

English had the largest proportion of respondents (28.0%), followed by Computer Science (26.0%), Allied Health Sciences (18.7%), Education (11.3%), BBA (8.7%), and Arts (7.3%).

Table 4.1.3 Distribution by Semester

Semester	Frequency	Percentage
1st	97	64.7%
2nd	6	4.0%
3rd	21	14.0%
4th	4	2.7%
5th	7	4.7%
6th	5	3.3%
7th	8	5.3%
8th	2	1.3%

Most respondents (n=97; 64.7%) were enrolled in their first semester. The third semester accounted for 21 respondents (14.0%). The remaining respondents were distributed across the second, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth semesters.

Table 4.1.4 Distribution by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	50	33.3%
Female	100	66.7%
Total	**150**	**100%**

The sample consisted of 100 female students (66.7%) and 50 male students (33.3%). Thus, female students represented approximately two-thirds of the respondents.

Table 4.1.5 Distribution by Locality

Locality	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	42	28.0%
Urban	108	72.0%
Total	**150**	**100%**

The majority of respondents (n=108; 72.0%) reported living in urban areas, whereas 42 respondents (28.0%) reported living in rural areas.

4.1.6 Parents' Educational Background

Among respondents' fathers, 32.7% had matric-level education, 28.7% had intermediate education, 29.3% were graduates, and 9.3% were classified as others. Among respondents' mothers, 33.3% had matric-level education, 24.7% had intermediate education, 18.7% were graduates, and 23.3% were classified as others.

4.1.7 Parents' Occupation

Among respondents' fathers, 46.0% were employed in jobs, 13.3% were involved in farming, and 40.7% belonged to other occupational categories. Among respondents' mothers, 83.3% were engaged in household responsibilities, 10.7% were employed, and 6.0% belonged to other categories.

4.1.8 Number of Siblings

The largest group of respondents reported having four siblings (25.3%), followed by three siblings (20.0%) and five siblings (16.0%).

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the three questionnaire item groups.

Table 4.2 Reliability Analysis

Questionnaire item group	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Teaching and faculty support	11	.825
Learning resources and environment	8	.760
Learning experience and course-related items	9	.797

International Journal of Advanced Research

The first item group, consisting of 11 items related to teaching and faculty support, produced a Cronbach's alpha of .825. The second group, consisting of eight items related to learning resources and environment, produced an alpha of .760. The third group, consisting of nine items, produced an alpha of .797. All three coefficients indicated acceptable to good internal consistency. However, reliability alone does not establish scale validity or confirm that all items within a group measure a single construct.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Questionnaire Statements

The questionnaire comprised 40 statements assessing students' learning experiences and satisfaction. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale, where strongly Agree = 1, Agree = 2, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly Disagree = 5. For positively worded statements, lower mean scores indicate stronger agreement. The overall learning-experience satisfaction item (S1) recorded the lowest mean score (M=1.99, SD=1.013), indicating relatively strong agreement among students under the reverse-coded scale. Several teaching and faculty-support items also received relatively positive responses, including the lecture method for evaluating achievement (S5; M = 2.09, SD = 0.992), guidance and support (S6; M = 2.26, SD = 1.167), and instructors' interest in helping students learn (S27; M = 2.27, SD = 1.151).

Learning resources and the learning environment were also viewed positively. Students agreed that learning materials were relevant (S3; M = 2.31, SD = 1.227), the learning environment was conducive (S7; M = 2.30, SD = 1.145), and technology enhanced learning (S13; M = 2.22, SD = 1.274). In contrast, comparatively weaker agreement was observed for remote-learning technology and software (S19; M=2.62, SD=1.241), institutional infrastructure (S2; M=2.49, SD=1.060), and sports facilities (S38; M=2.71, SD=1.298).

Regarding course organization and assessment, group projects contributing to meaningful learning (S9; M = 2.27, SD = 1.152) received a relatively positive response. However, useful feedback on tests and papers (S28; M = 2.64, SD = 1.265), course organization and understanding concepts (S29; M = 2.52, SD = 1.268), and examinations and projects measuring knowledge (S31; M = 2.50, SD = 1.252) received comparatively lower agreement. Items S20, S23, S24, S25, S39, and S40 were negatively worded or did not directly measure satisfaction with the learning experience; therefore, they were interpreted separately. Therefore, these items were interpreted separately and were not used to determine the overall level of student satisfaction.

Table 4.3 Summary of Descriptive Results for Major Learning-Experience Dimensions

Dimension	Representative Items	Mean Score/Range	Interpretation
Overall Learning Experience	S1	1.99	Strong agreement
Teaching and Faculty Support	S5, S6, S11, S17, S18, S26, S27	2.09–2.51	Generally positive
Learning Resources and Environment	S2, S3, S7, S10, S13, S19, S38	2.22–2.71	Positive, with relatively lower agreement regarding facilities and remote-learning technology
Course Organization and Assessment	S9, S28, S29, S30, S31	2.27–2.64	Mixed responses, indicating areas for improvement in feedback
Peer and Student Development	S15, S21, S32, S33, S34, S35, S37	2.21–2.49	Generally positive

Note. *Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree. Lower mean scores indicate stronger agreement with positively worded statements.*

International Journal of Advanced Research

4.3.1 Overall Learning Experience

The statement concerning overall satisfaction with the learning experience (S1) recorded a mean of 1.99 and a standard deviation of 1.013. This was the lowest mean among the 40 statements. Based on the coding scheme, this result indicates a relatively strong level of agreement with the statement of overall satisfaction.

4.3.2 Teaching Practices and Faculty Support

Several statements concerning teaching practices and faculty support recorded relatively low mean scores. The lecture method for measuring and evaluating academic achievement (S5) had a mean of 2.09 (SD = 0.992). Guidance and support (S6) recorded a mean of 2.26 (SD = 1.167), while instructor interest in helping students learn (S27) recorded a mean of 2.27 (SD = 1.151). The results also showed that instructor accessibility (S11) had a mean of 2.48 (SD = 1.262), teachers' knowledge base (S17) had a mean of 2.43 (SD = 1.302), and addressing students' doubts (S18) had a mean of 2.51 (SD = 1.208). These results indicate variation in students' responses concerning different aspects of teaching and faculty support.

4.3.3 Learning Resources and Learning Environment

The relevance of learning materials (S3) recorded a mean of 2.31 (SD = 1.227), while the conducive learning environment (S7) recorded a mean of 2.30 (SD = 1.145). The use of technology to enhance learning (S13) had a mean of 2.22 (SD = 1.274). Among the resource-related statements

reported here, sports facilities received the highest mean score (S38; M = 2.71, SD = 1.298), followed by remote-learning technology and software (S19; M = 2.62, SD = 1.241), indicating comparatively weaker agreement with these statements. Satisfaction with institutional infrastructure (S2) recorded a mean of 2.49 (SD = 1.060), while adequate sports facilities (S38) recorded a mean of 2.71 (SD = 1.298).

4.3.4 Course Organization and Assessment

The course-related statements also showed variation in respondents' perceptions. Group projects contributing to meaningful learning (S9) recorded a mean of 2.27 (SD = 1.152). The course organization statement (S29) recorded a mean of 2.52 (SD = 1.268), while useful feedback on tests and papers (S28) recorded a mean of 2.64 (SD = 1.265). The statement concerning confidence to undertake advanced work (S30) had a mean of 2.39 (SD = 1.197). The statement concerning examinations and projects measuring knowledge (S31) recorded a mean of 2.50 (SD = 1.252). Overall, course-related responses showed a range of opinions among the students.

4.3.5 Other Learning Experience Statements

The statement concerning supportive classmates (S37) recorded a mean of 2.21 (SD = 1.139). The statement concerning professional development opportunities (S15) had a mean of 2.46 (SD = 1.230). The statement concerning classroom activities being engaging (S21) recorded a mean of 2.39 (SD = 1.175). However, the wording of S21 should be checked before drawing a strong conclusion. The negatively worded items S20 and S25 were interpreted separately and were not treated as direct measures of satisfaction. Items S23, S24, S39, and S40 were not direct measures of learning satisfaction and were excluded from the overall satisfaction interpretation.

4.4 Summary of Findings

The study analyzed responses from 150 students enrolled in five selected higher education institutions in Rahim Yar Khan. The sample included students from six academic departments, with female students and urban students forming the larger proportions of the sample. The reliability analysis produced Cronbach's alpha values of .825, .760, and .797 for the three item groups analyzed. These values indicate acceptable to good internal consistency for the respective groups. The descriptive findings showed that the overall learning experience satisfaction statement (S1) recorded a mean of 1.99, indicating relatively strong agreement. Several teaching, faculty support, learning environment, and course-related statements also recorded means below 2.50. However, responses varied across individual statements, particularly regarding remote-learning technology, feedback, and sports facilities. The findings provide a descriptive account of students' reported learning experiences and satisfaction. They do not establish statistically significant differences between institutions or academic departments because no comparative inferential tests were conducted.

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to students' satisfaction with their learning experiences in five selected higher education institutions in Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. The discussion is based on the demographic characteristics, reliability analysis, and descriptive findings presented in Chapter 4. The chapter also presents the conclusion, recommendations, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

5.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Students

The study included 150 students from five selected higher education institutions in Rahim Yar Khan. The respondents represented six academic departments: Arts, English, BBA, Computer Science, Allied Health Sciences, and Education. The sample included 66.7% female and 33.3% male students. In terms of locality, 72.0% of respondents belonged to urban areas, while 28.0% belonged to rural areas. Most respondents (64.7%) were studying in the first semester. These demographic characteristics describe the composition of the participating

sample and provide context for interpreting their reported learning experiences. However, because convenience sampling was used, the sample should not be considered representative of all students enrolled in higher education institutions across Rahim Yar Khan.

5.1.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

The reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha values of .825 for the 11-item teaching and faculty-support group, .760 for the eight-item learning-resources and environment group, and .797 for the nine-item learning-experience and course-related group. These values indicated acceptable to good internal consistency for the respective item groups. The findings suggest that the items within each analyzed group demonstrated a reasonable degree of consistency in students' responses.

Nevertheless, Cronbach's alpha measures internal consistency only; it does not by itself establish content validity, construct validity, or the unidimensionality of an item group. The third item group should therefore be interpreted with particular care, and its final item composition should be justified according to the content of the questionnaire.

5.1.3 Students' Overall Satisfaction with the Learning Experience

The overall satisfaction score (M = 1.99, SD = 1.013) indicated relatively strong agreement, although the standard deviation indicated variation in students' responses. This finding suggests that the participating students generally held positive views of their overall learning experiences in the selected institutions. However, the standard deviation indicates that satisfaction was not uniform across all participating students. Therefore, the result should not be interpreted as evidence that every student was equally satisfied.

5.1.4 Teaching Practices and Faculty Support

Students reported relatively strong agreement with several aspects of teaching and faculty support, including lectures for evaluating achievement (M = 2.09), guidance and support (M = 2.26), and instructors' interest in helping students learn (M = 2.27). These findings suggest that students generally viewed certain aspects of teaching and faculty support positively. Teaching methods, instructor preparedness, and teachers' willingness to assist students are important elements of the learning experience.

However, instructor accessibility (M = 2.48), teachers' knowledge base (M = 2.43), and teachers' responses to students' doubts (M = 2.51) received comparatively less agreement. These findings highlight the need to maintain effective teaching practices while strengthening faculty accessibility, communication, and opportunities for students to seek clarification and academic assistance.

5.1.5 Learning Resources and Learning Environment

The results for learning resources and the learning environment indicated generally favorable student responses. The relevance of learning materials (S3) recorded a mean of 2.31, while the conducive learning environment (S7) recorded a mean of 2.30. The use of technology to enhance learning (S13) recorded a mean of 2.22. These findings suggest that students generally perceived learning materials, the learning environment, and educational technology positively.

However, the statement concerning technology and software used for remote learning (S19) recorded a comparatively higher mean of 2.62. Satisfaction with institutional infrastructure (S2) recorded a mean of 2.49, while adequate sports facilities (S38) recorded a mean of 2.71. These findings suggest that institutions should systematically evaluate the adequacy, accessibility, and instructional integration of physical facilities, digital resources, and remote-learning arrangements. This pattern is consistent with recent Pakistani evidence indicating that institutional support, learning facilities, and instructional resources are important determinants of student satisfaction (Bukhari et al., 2024{Ikram, 2023 #4{Ikram, 2023 #4).

5.1.6 Course Organization, Assessment and Feedback

The course-related findings indicated mixed but generally favorable perceptions of selected aspects of students' academic courses. Group projects contributing to meaningful learning (S9) recorded a mean of 2.27, and confidence to undertake more advanced work (S30) recorded a mean of 2.39. At the same time, useful feedback on tests and papers (S28) recorded a mean of 2.64, while course organization (S29) recorded a mean of 2.52. The statement concerning examinations and projects measuring students' knowledge (S31) recorded a mean of 2.50. These findings suggest that course organization, assessment alignment, and feedback practices require further institutional attention. Effective feedback can help students interpret their academic progress, identify specific areas for improvement, and develop greater confidence in their learning, particularly when it is timely, specific, and actionable (Jensen et al., 2023; Little et al., 2024).

5.1.7 Other Aspects of the Learning Experience

The statement concerning supportive classmates (S37) recorded a mean of 2.21, indicating relatively strong agreement with the importance or presence of peer support. The statement concerning professional development opportunities (S15) recorded a mean of 2.46. The negatively worded items on difficulty staying focused and paying attention were interpreted separately from positively worded satisfaction items. Items S23, S24, S39, and S40 were not used as evidence of overall learning satisfaction because they did not directly measure the learning experience.

5.1.8 Overall Interpretation

Taken together, the descriptive findings indicate that students generally reported positive perceptions of their overall learning experience, teaching practices, faculty support, learning materials, and classroom environment. At the same time, comparatively weaker agreement was observed for remote-learning technology, feedback on assessed work, institutional infrastructure, and sports facilities. These areas represent priority domains for institutional review and quality improvement. The findings describe the reported views of the 150 participating students and do not establish statistically significant differences across institutions, departments, gender, or other subgroups.

5.2 Conclusion

The present study examined students' satisfaction with their learning experiences in five selected higher education institutions in Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. Data were collected from 150 students using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and reliability analysis. The findings showed that respondents generally expressed agreement with the statement concerning their overall learning experience (M=1.99, SD=1.013). Students also reported relatively favorable perceptions of teaching methods, faculty support, learning materials, the classroom environment, and group projects. Cronbach's alpha values of .825, .760, and .797 for the three questionnaire item groups indicated acceptable to good internal consistency.

However, the descriptive findings identified several areas requiring improvement, including remote-learning technology, feedback on assessed work, institutional infrastructure, and sports facilities. The study concludes that, although participating students generally reported positive learning experiences, continuous improvement in faculty support, learning resources, assessment and feedback practices, and institutional facilities remains necessary. The findings describe students' reported experiences in the selected institutions and should be interpreted as perceptions of satisfaction rather than as direct evidence of academic performance.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Improve learning facilities:** Higher education institutions should regularly review

and improve classroom infrastructure, learning spaces, libraries, laboratories, and other educational facilities based on student feedback and institutional needs.

2. **Strengthen faculty support:** Faculty members should maintain regular consultation hours, respond promptly to students' questions, and provide accessible academic guidance and mentoring.

3. **Improve feedback practices:** Instructors should provide timely, specific, and constructive feedback on tests, assignments, and projects to help students understand their academic strengths, areas for improvement, and appropriate next steps. Feedback quality has been identified as an important factor in students' academic experiences in Pakistan's higher-education context (Qamar et al., 2026).

4. **Enhance remote-learning resources:** Institutions should evaluate the availability, reliability, accessibility, and instructional effectiveness of the technologies and software used for online and remote learning.

5. **Promote effective teaching methods:** Faculty members should use evidence-informed teaching strategies, interactive classroom activities, and well-designed group projects to promote student engagement and conceptual understanding.

6. **Review assessment practices:** Examinations, assignments, and projects should be aligned with course learning outcomes and designed to assess students' conceptual understanding and achievement of intended outcomes.

7. **Support student development:** Institutions should expand opportunities for professional development, co-curricular participation, and activities that support students' academic, personal, and professional growth.

8. **Maintain supportive learning environments:** Institutions should foster positive teacher–student relationships and promote peer cooperation, collaboration, and mutual academic support.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study had several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings.

First, the use of convenience sampling limits the representativeness and generalizability of the findings. Second, the findings are based on 150 students from five selected institutions in one district and should not be generalized to the wider Pakistani higher-education population. Third, self-reported questionnaire responses may have been influenced by students' personal interpretations, recall, social desirability, and response biases. Fourth, the cross-sectional design captures perceptions at one point in time and cannot examine changes in satisfaction over the course of students' academic programs. Finally, the analysis was limited to descriptive statistics and reliability testing; therefore, no inferential comparisons or associations were examined.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples drawn from a wider range of higher education institutions. Probability or stratified sampling techniques should be considered to improve the representativeness of future samples. Future research should examine differences in students' satisfaction across institutions, academic departments, semesters, and demographic groups using appropriate inferential statistical techniques. Future researchers should refine the questionnaire through expert content validation, cognitive interviewing, pilot testing, and confirmatory factor analysis to ensure that each item measures its intended dimension. In particular, unclear or unrelated statements should be revised or excluded, and the proposed subscales should be further evaluated. Longitudinal research should be conducted to examine changes in students' satisfaction over time and to determine how teaching practices, assessment methods, faculty support, and learning resources influence students' experiences throughout their academic programs.

References

Astin, A. W. (1997). *What matters in college?: Four critical years revisited*. John Wiley & Sons.

Bloom, B. S. (Ed.). (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook I: Cognitive domain*. David McKay.

Bukhari, S. G. A. S., Larik, A. R., & Siddiqui, M. A. (2024). Importance of institutional characteristics in fostering student satisfaction in higher education in Pakistan. *Journal of Social Sciences Advancement, 5*(4), 57–67. https://doi.org/10.52223/JSSA24-050406-102

Chickering, A. W., & Gamson, Z. F. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin, 39*(7), 3–7.

Dewey, J. (2007). *Experience and education*. Simon and Schuster.

Dhawan, S. J. M. (2022). Higher education quality and student satisfaction: Meta-analysis, subgroup analysis and meta-regression. *21*(1), 48-66.

Fleming, N. D., & Mills, C. J. T. i. t. a. (1992). Not another inventory, rather a catalyst for reflection. *11*(1), 137-155.

Ikram, M., & Kenayathulla, H. B. (2023). Education quality and student satisfaction nexus using instructional material, support, classroom facilities, equipment and growth: Higher education perspective of Pakistan. *Frontiers in Education, 8*, Article 1140971. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1140971

Jensen, L. X., Bearman, M., Boud, D. J. A., & Education, E. i. H. (2023). Feedback encounters: towards a framework for analysing and understanding feedback processes. *48*(1), 121-134.

Knowles, M. S. J. R. E. (1980). From pedagogy to andragogy. *75*(4), 202-211.

Kolb, D. A. J. E. P. H. (1984). Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development.

Kuh, G. D. (2003). What we're learning about student engagement from NSSE: Benchmarks for effective educational practices. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 35*(2), 24–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/00091380309604090

Little, T., Dawson, P., Boud, D., Tai, J. J. A., & Education, E. i. H. (2024). Can students' feedback literacy be improved? A scoping review of interventions. *49*(1), 39-52.

Liu, S.-f., Li, J., Zhang, H.-q., Li, Z., Cheng, M. J. H., & Communications, S. S. (2024). Development and implementation of digital pedagogical support systems in the context of educational equity. *11*(1), 1084.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research. Volume 2*. ERIC.

Prince, M. (2004). Does active learning work? A review of the research. *Journal of Engineering Education, 93*(3), 223–231. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2168-9830.2004.tb00809.x

Qamar, F., Murtaza, H., & Kashif, M. (2026). Beyond the intrinsic–extrinsic dichotomy: Motivational predictors of academic performance in Pakistan's collectivist higher education context. *International Journal of Social Sciences Bulletin*, *4*(3), 4140–4156.

Qamar, F. J. J. o. I. S. (2026). Cultural adaptation and academic success of international students in Beijing: The role of social integration. *16*(12), 155-172.

Simon, P. D., Jiang, J., Fryer, L. K., King, R. B., Frondozo, C. E. J. T., Knowledge, & Learning. (2025). An assessment of learning management system use in higher education: Perspectives from a comprehensive sample of teachers and students. *30*(2), 741-767.

Tinto, V. (2012). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. University of Chicago press.

Tomlinson, A., Simpson, A., & Killingback, C. (2023). Student expectations of teaching and learning when starting university: A systematic review. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *47*(8), 1054–1073. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2023.2212242

Winstone, N. E., Ajjawi, R., Dirkx, K., & Boud, D. (2022). Measuring what matters: The positioning of students in feedback processes within national student satisfaction surveys. *Studies in Higher Education*, *47*(7), 1524–1536. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2021.1916909

Wong, W. H., & Chapman, E. J. H. e. (2023). Student satisfaction and interaction in higher education. *85*(5), 957-978.

International Journal of Advanced Research