Original Article

Parental Satisfaction with University Services in a Philippine Private University

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Abstract. Parental perceptions and satisfaction have increasingly been recognized as critical indicators of educational quality in higher education, particularly in basic and secondary education, where both academic instruction and student welfare are essential to holistic development. Understanding how parents perceive various aspects of the learning environment provides valuable feedback on institutional effectiveness and identifies areas for improvement in both academic and administrative processes. This study was conducted to evaluate parental satisfaction with the services of a Private University in Mandaue City, Philippines, focusing on the five service quality dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Employing a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 200 parents from grades 4 to 10 using a structured questionnaire. Statistical analyses included frequency counts, weighted means, chi-square tests of independence, and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that parents were generally satisfied, with the highest ratings in tangibility, assurance, and empathy, while responsiveness and reliability, though slightly lower, remained positive. Income and gender significantly influenced satisfaction across specific dimensions. The study concluded that parental satisfaction is multidimensional and requires continuous attention to administrative efficiency, effective communication, infrastructure maintenance, and student welfare. A key contribution of this research is the insight that parents' perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding of service quality in higher education, extending beyond student-focused evaluations and emphasizing the importance of stakeholder engagement in institutional development.

Keywords: Parents' satisfaction; Philippines; Service quality; University basic education.

Parental satisfaction in higher education has emerged as a key indicator of institutional quality, student wellbeing, and community trust. Globally, universities are increasingly engaging parents as stakeholders, recognizing that their perceptions influence student retention, institutional reputation, and long-term support (Hoang, 2020; Jayaprakash & Pillai, 2021). Studies in North America and Europe have highlighted the correlation between parental confidence in academic programs, administrative efficiency, and student support services, and stronger institutional branding and student success (Perkins, 2019; Brown & Salmi, 2022). In Asia, research underscores the importance of aligning university services with family expectations, particularly in cultures where parents remain deeply involved in their children's educational journeys (Li & Chen, 2020). Moreover, stakeholder satisfaction is a factor to consider when assessing a university's productivity and adequacy (Micabalo et al., 2020).

It aligns with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable access to lifelong learning opportunities. By ensuring parents are satisfied with university services, institutions strengthen their accountability and contribute to the broader goal of sustainable and equitable educational systems. Legally, the study is grounded in the Philippine Higher Education Act of 1994 (Republic Act No. 7722), which mandates higher education institutions to maintain standards of quality and efficiency in teaching, research, and extension. Likewise, the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10533) highlights the role of stakeholder partnerships, including parents, in shaping the quality and delivery of education in the country. Within the ASEAN region, parental involvement in higher education remains a dynamic and culturally rooted phenomenon. In Malaysia and Singapore, parental trust in university services is linked to student engagement and retention (Tan & Yusof, 2019). Research in Indonesia and Thailand suggests that parents' satisfaction with facilities, curriculum relevance, and institutional support significantly shapes their willingness to recommend universities to others (Sukardi, 2021; Kongsuwan & Sitti, 2022).

In Vietnam and Cambodia, studies show that parents often evaluate universities not only by academic quality but also by the safety, support, and holistic development opportunities they provide to their children (Nguyen, 2020; Chan, 2021). In the Philippines, researchers have noted that parents' satisfaction is a measure of institutional effectiveness, particularly among private universities competing for student enrollment (Cruz & Castillo, 2019). Collectively, these ASEAN studies affirm that parents are not passive observers but active evaluators whose perceptions influence institutional growth, making it imperative to assess their satisfaction systematically. Despite the growing recognition of parental involvement globally and regionally, limited research has systematically examined parents' satisfaction with university services in the Philippine context, particularly at the University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue.

Existing literature tends to focus on student satisfaction, academic performance, and institutional reputation, leaving a gap in understanding of how parents and other key stakeholders perceive the services provided by higher education institutions. This lack of integrated evaluation obscures insights into how universities can strengthen trust and collaboration with families. Addressing this gap is crucial, especially as parents increasingly influence enrollment decisions and the continued support for institutional initiatives. Moreover, innovations in student support systems, digital services, and parent engagement programs worldwide have yet to be systematically assessed in local contexts, creating an opportunity for knowledge transfer and adaptation. This study, therefore, seeks to address this research gap by examining parents' satisfaction with university services at UCLM. By identifying which dimensions of university services most significantly influence parental satisfaction, the research provides actionable insights for administrators and policymakers. The researcher, an academic with extensive experience in educational research and higher education instruction, is well-positioned to conduct this study, drawing on both practical expertise and scholarly grounding. The findings aim not only to strengthen UCLM's service delivery but also to contribute to the broader discourse on quality education in the Philippines and the ASEAN region, aligned with both national legal mandates and the SDG agenda.

The researchers, with experience in higher-education teaching and research, are well-positioned to undertake this study. With a strong background in educational research and faculty development, the researchers have been actively involved in studies focusing on student and stakeholder satisfaction in academic institutions. As faculty members at the University of Cebu, Lapulapu and Mandaue, the researchers possess direct knowledge of the institution's organizational culture and educational services, which provide valuable contextual insight. This dual role as both practitioner and researcher strengthens the study's objectivity and relevance, ensuring that its findings contribute meaningfully to improving university services and to the broader discourse on parental satisfaction in higher education.

Methodology
Research Design
This study employed a quantitative, descriptive, correlational research design to evaluate parents' satisfaction with the services provided by a University in Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. The descriptive component enabled the researcher to determine the level of parental satisfaction across four independent variables: academic quality and support services; institutional facilities and safety; curriculum relevance and employability readiness; and administrative management and communication. The correlational analysis examined the relationships between these independent variables and the dependent variable, overall parental satisfaction. This design was

deemed appropriate because it enabled quantification of parents' perceptions and identification of predictive associations, thereby generating data-driven insights into institutional service dimensions that influence parental satisfaction.

Research Locale
The study was conducted at the University, located in Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. It is a private higher education institution that offers a range of undergraduate and graduate programs and is recognized for its commitment to quality education and community engagement.

Research Respondents
The study respondents were 200 parents or guardians of students officially enrolled in basic education grades 4-10 at UCLM during the 2025–2026 academic year. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation of parents across academic programs and their children's year levels. The inclusion criteria consisted of:

(a) Being a parent or guardian of an officially enrolled student.
(b) Having at least one semester of experience with their child enrolled at the University.
(c) Willingness to participate voluntarily in the survey.

Excluded from the study were parents of students who were on leave of absence, had already graduated, or were not formally enrolled during the study period.

Research Instrument
Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire developed by the researchers. The instrument consisted of two main parts:

(a) Profile Information – covering demographic variables such as age, gender, educational attainment, and source of income.
(b) Customer Satisfaction Survey – measuring perceptions across the four independent variables (IVs) and the dependent variable (DV). Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = Very Satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 3 = Moderately Satisfied, 2 = Slightly Satisfied, 1 = Not Satisfied).

The instrument was subjected to content validation by three experts in higher education and educational management to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. A pilot test was conducted with 30 parents of students who were not included in the main sample. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha yielded coefficients above 0.70, indicating high internal consistency of the instrument.

Data Analysis
The following statistical tools were applied:

(a) Descriptive Statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation, Frequency, and Percentage). To present the profile of respondents and the level of satisfaction in each domain.
(b) Weighted Mean. To determine the overall perception of parents on each variable.
(c) Chi-Square Test of Independence. To examine the relationship between the independent variables (IV1–IV4) and the dependent variable (overall parent satisfaction).
(d) Multiple Regression Analysis. To identify which factors significantly predict overall student satisfaction.
(e) Stepwise Method. To determine which independent variables significantly predict overall satisfaction, thereby establishing the strongest contributors to parent satisfaction.

Results and Discussion
This section presents the study's findings in relation to the stated objectives and research questions. The results are organized by the variables under investigation, beginning with the demographic profile of the parent respondents and then proceeding to their satisfaction levels across the identified domains. Statistical analyses, including descriptive and inferential statistics, are used to identify significant relationships and predictors of overall parent satisfaction. The findings are further discussed in the context of existing literature to provide meaningful insights and implications for educational practice and policy.

Table 1. *Profile of the People in the Community*

Variable	Categories	F	%
Age	18–22 years old	3	1.50%
	23–27 years old	6	2.90%
	28–32 years old	9	4.40%
	33–37 years old	34	16.70%
	38–42 years old	58	28.40%
	43–47 years old	56	27.50%
	48–52 years old	32	15.70%
	53 years old and above	6	2.90%
Gender	Male	23	11.30%
	Female	177	86.80%
	Prefer not to say	4	2.00%
Education	High School Level	27	13.20%
	High School Graduate	48	23.50%
	College Level	112	54.90%
	College Graduate	17	8.30%
Income	Employment (Rank and File – Top Management)	107	52.50%
	Business	47	23.00%
	Not Applicable	50	24.50%

Table 1 presents the respondents' profiles. The data revealed that the most significant proportion of parents was in the 38–42-year-old age group, comprising 58 respondents (28.4%). It indicates that most parents were in their middle adulthood, a stage associated with career stability and active engagement in supporting their children's educational development. Erikson's psychosocial theory emphasizes that individuals at this stage focus on generativity, particularly on guiding and nurturing the younger generation (McLeod, 2018). In the Philippine context, Ballesteros (2019) likewise noted that parents in this age bracket tend to demonstrate greater school participation and involvement in academic decisions. With respect to gender distribution, the majority of respondents were female (177; 86.8%). This finding reflects the traditional role of mothers as the primary partners of schools, often taking the lead in monitoring and supporting their children's learning. Cabrera et al. (2018) observed that mothers generally assume a more active role in school–home collaboration compared to fathers. Similarly, Bernardo (2020) emphasized that in Filipino households, mothers are considered the primary educational decision-makers, particularly regarding their children's academic performance and school engagement.

Regarding educational attainment, most respondents were college-educated parents (112; 54.9%). The dominance of this group suggests that many parents have higher levels of education, which may contribute to higher expectations for academic quality and greater involvement in their children's learning. Supporting this, Davis-Kean (2005) stressed that parental educational attainment is a significant predictor of children's educational participation. Likewise, Sarmiento and Orbeta (2020) highlighted that in the ASEAN region, parents with higher levels of education are more proactive in making educational investments for their children.

Finally, with respect to income, most parents were employed (107 respondents, 52.5%). This finding implies that most families rely on employment-based income, which provides relative financial stability in supporting educational expenses. Sirin (2005) confirmed that family income plays a critical role in shaping children's educational outcomes. In the Philippine context, Reyes et al. (2019) found that employed parents with regular income sources are better able to sustain consistent academic support than households with irregular or no income.

Table 2 presents the level of satisfaction among parents with university services. In the tangibility dimension, parents rated the neat and professional appearance of staff the highest, with a mean of 4.40, indicating they were *very satisfied*. In contrast, communication materials, such as brochures and online platforms, scored the lowest, with a mean of 4.15, indicating satisfaction. The aggregate mean was 4.30, indicating *very satisfied*. These findings underscore that visible professionalism and well-maintained facilities significantly shape parents' perceptions of university service quality. Recent studies by Ighomereho, Ojo, Omoyele, and Olabode (2022) and by Bartolo and Tinmaz (2024) confirm that factors such as campus infrastructure and staff presentation strongly influence stakeholder satisfaction in higher education.

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
A. Tangibility		
The physical appearance of staff and personnel is neat and professional.	4.40	Very Satisfied
The university buildings and classrooms are well-maintained and conducive to learning.	4.33	Very Satisfied
The university facilities (e.g., laboratories, libraries, clinics) are adequate and functional.	4.32	Very Satisfied
The campus provides sufficient safety and security for students.	4.30	Very Satisfied
Communication materials (e.g., brochures, announcements, online platforms) are explicit and presentable.	4.15	Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	**4.30**	**Very Satisfied**
B. Reliability		
The university consistently provides quality educational services.	4.32	Very Satisfied
Administrative services are dependable and trustworthy.	4.19	Satisfied
The university processes student records and documents accurately and efficiently.	4.18	Satisfied
Parents are provided accurate and reliable information when needed.	4.16	Satisfied
Promised services (e.g., schedules, requirements, assistance) are delivered on time.	4.03	Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	**4.18**	**Satisfied**
C. Responsiveness		
Faculty and staff are approachable and willing to help.	4.25	Very Satisfied
The university offers efficient communication channels for parents.	4.19	Satisfied
Staff respond promptly to parents' inquiries.	4.15	Satisfied
Immediate assistance is provided in urgent situations.	4.12	Satisfied
The university responds promptly to requests and concerns.	4.05	Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	**4.15**	**Satisfied**
D. Assurance		
The university inspires trust and confidence in its ability to provide quality education.	4.31	Very Satisfied
Staff and faculty consistently demonstrate professionalism in their interactions with parents.	4.25	Very Satisfied
Parents feel confident about the safety and welfare of their children at the university.	4.20	Satisfied
Staff provide clear and consistent information regarding school policies and requirements.	4.17	Satisfied
University personnel are knowledgeable and competent in their roles.	4.15	Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	**4.22**	**Very Satisfied**
E. Empathy		
The university offers opportunities for parents to participate in school activities.	4.28	Very Satisfied
Staff treat parents with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	4.27	Very Satisfied
Staff and faculty show genuine concern for the welfare of students.	4.23	Very Satisfied
The university considers parents' concerns when making important decisions.	4.15	Satisfied
Special needs and individual differences of students are given proper attention.	4.15	Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	**4.22**	**Very Satisfied**
F. Overall Parents' Satisfaction		
I believe the university provides good value for my investment in my child's education.	4.26	Very Satisfied
Overall, I am satisfied with my experience as a parent with UC-LM.	4.24	Very Satisfied
I am satisfied with the overall quality of services provided by UC-LM.	4.23	Very Satisfied
I am satisfied with the communication between the university and parents.	4.18	Satisfied
The services of UC-LM meet my expectations as a parent.	4.17	Satisfied
Aggregate Mean	**4.21**	**Very Satisfied**

For reliability, the university's consistency in delivering quality education scored highest at 4.32, indicating '*very satisfied*.' In contrast, the timely delivery of promised services scored the lowest at 4.03, which is interpreted as '*satisfied*.' The overall mean for reliability was 4.18, indicating satisfaction. It indicates that parents trust academic delivery but see room for improvement in administrative responsiveness. Research by Supriyanto and colleagues in 2024 and Del Río-Rama, Álvarez-García, Mun, and Durán-Sánchez in 2021 demonstrates that dependable academic service is a crucial driver of stakeholder satisfaction and retention in higher education.

Within responsiveness, the most appreciated aspect was the faculty's approachability and willingness to help, which received a mean of 4.25 and was interpreted as *very satisfied*. The lowest-rated was prompt action to requests and concerns, which received a mean of 4.05 and was interpreted as *satisfied*. The aggregate mean for responsiveness was 4.15 and interpreted as *satisfied*. It suggests that while parents value accessibility, they also expect swifter follow-through on their concerns. Studies by Akdere and colleagues (2020) and by Twum and Peprah (2020) emphasize that responsiveness, measured by staff speed and attentiveness, is crucial for fostering satisfaction in higher education settings.

Regarding assurance, the highest mean of 4.31 (interpreted as 'very satisfied') was given to the university's ability to inspire trust and confidence, whereas the lowest mean was 4.15 (interpreted as 'satisfied') for staff competence.

The overall mean for assurance was 4.22, indicating *very satisfied*. It suggests strong institutional credibility, albeit with an opportunity to showcase staff expertise more prominently. Assurance indicators, such as credibility and confidence, remain strong predictors of institutional loyalty among parents and students, as emphasized by Saeed and Hameed (2023) and Supriyanto et al. (2024).

As for empathy, the university's provision of opportunities for parents to participate in school activities scored highest at 4.28, indicating *very satisfied*, while sensitivity to parents' concerns and attention to special needs tied for the lowest at 4.15, indicating *satisfied*. The aggregate mean for empathy was 4.22, indicating *very satisfied*. It indicates appreciation for opportunities for involvement yet highlights the need for greater responsiveness to diverse concerns. Empathy, understood as personalized and inclusive attention, has been highlighted in recent research by Bagirova, Sandler, and Klyuev (2025) and by Ighomereho and colleagues (2022) as essential for cultivating lasting trust and satisfaction in educational services.

Overall, parents' satisfaction showed that the belief that the university provides good value for educational investment received the highest score of 4.26, indicating very satisfied, whereas the extent to which parental expectations are met scored lowest at 4.17, indicating *satisfied*. The aggregate mean was 4.21 and interpreted as *very satisfied*. It highlights that parents recognize the value of their investment but expect ongoing alignment with their evolving expectations. Recent findings by Supriyanto and colleagues (2024) and Del Río-Rama and colleagues (2021) confirm that stakeholder satisfaction in higher education is influenced not only by service quality but also by perceived value for money.

Table 3 presents summarized data on parents' perceived satisfaction with university services at the University of Cebu in Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue. Among the service quality dimensions, tangibles had the highest mean of 4.30, corresponding to a verbal interpretation of 'very satisfied'. It indicates that parents highly value the physical facilities and equipment, as well as the staff's neat and professional appearance, reflecting the importance of a conducive, well-maintained learning environment in shaping satisfaction. Recent studies have affirmed that tangible factors, such as modern facilities and the physical appearance of personnel, directly enhance parents' and students' confidence in the quality of education provided by an institution (Bartolo & Tinmaz, 2024; Ighomereho et al., 2022). In contrast, responsiveness yielded the lowest mean of 4.15, corresponding to a verbal interpretation of "satisfied." It suggests that while faculty and staff are approachable and supportive, parents expect more timely and efficient responses to their inquiries and concerns. Research in higher education highlights that responsiveness is a critical determinant of satisfaction, as timely support reduces anxiety and strengthens trust in institutional services (Supriyanto et al., 2024; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2021).

Table 3. *Summarized Data on the Level of Satisfaction with University Services*

Variables	Mean	Interpretation
A. Tangibility	4.30	Very Satisfied
B. Reliability	4.18	Satisfied
C. Responsiveness	4.15	Satisfied
D. Assurance	4.22	Very Satisfied
E. Empathy	4.22	Very Satisfied
Overall Aggregate Mean	**4.21**	**Very Satisfied**

Both assurance and empathy had a mean score of 4.22, corresponding to a verbal interpretation of "very satisfied," ranking second overall. It indicates that parents value the institution's trust, confidence, and personalized attention. Assurance reflects parents' confidence in the competence and professionalism of the university's personnel. At the same time, empathy underscores the institution's capacity to demonstrate genuine care and understanding of the needs of both students and parents. Literature emphasizes that assurance and empathy are vital components of service quality, as they reinforce engagement and cultivate long-term loyalty among stakeholders in higher education (Ali et al., 2021; Grönroos, 2020).

Finally, reliability had a mean of 4.18, with a verbal interpretation of "satisfied," ranking third among the service quality dimensions. It suggests that while parents recognize the university's consistency in providing quality education, they also see opportunities to improve the reliability and delivery of both academic and administrative services. Recent evidence confirms that reliability is a central dimension of service quality, significantly influencing stakeholder satisfaction and long-term institutional credibility (Del Río-Rama et al., 2021; Annamdevula & Bellamkonda, 2022). Overall, the aggregate mean was 4.21, corresponding to a verbal

interpretation of "very satisfied." It demonstrates that parents perceive the services of the University of Cebu Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue positively, with strengths in tangibility, assurance, and empathy, while highlighting responsiveness and reliability as areas requiring further improvement.

Table 4 presents the significant relationship between respondents' profiles and their perceived satisfaction with the University of Cebu services in Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue, as assessed by parents. The results revealed that most profile variables, such as age, gender, education, and income, generally showed no significant relationship with the service quality dimensions, as indicated by their non-significant p-values, which led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. However, notable exceptions warrant closer consideration. With respect to reliability, gender was significantly associated (p = 0.031), indicating that male and female parents differ in their perceptions of the consistency and dependability of university services. This finding suggests that gender influences how parents assess the reliability of academic and administrative services. Previous studies have reported similar results, noting that service expectations and satisfaction levels often differ across gender groups, particularly in contexts involving dependability and trustworthiness (Rashid & Mustafa, 2022).

Table 4. *Significant Relationship Between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Satisfaction with University Services*

Service Quality Dimension	Profile Variable	χ^2 (df)	p-value	Cramer's V	Sig.	Decision
Tangibility	Age	82.79 (77)	.305	.241	NS	Accept H_0
	Gender	20.75 (22)	.536	.226	NS	Accept H_0
	Education	32.62 (33)	.486	.231	NS	Accept H_0
	Income	30.66 (22)	.103	.274	NS	Accept H_0
Reliability	Age	101.33 (91)	.215	.266	NS	Accept H_0
	Gender	40.98 (26)	.031	.317	SIG.	Reject H_0
	Education	45.78 (39)	.211	.273	NS	Accept H_0
	Income	36.70 (26)	.080	.300	NS	Accept H_0
Responsiveness	Age	99.45 (98)	.440	.264	NS	Accept H_0
	Gender	18.28 (28)	.919	.212	NS	Accept H_0
	Education	25.22 (42)	.981	.203	NS	Accept H_0
	Income	41.40 (28)	.049	.319	SIG.	Reject H_0
Assurance	Age	93.25 (91)	.415	.256	NS	Accept H_0
	Gender	37.61 (26)	.066	.304	NS	Accept H_0
	Education	29.24 (39)	.872	.219	NS	Accept H_0
	Income	41.03 (26)	.031	.317	SIG.	Reject H_0
Empathy	Age	88.72 (84)	.341	.249	NS	Accept H_0
	Gender	23.16 (24)	.511	.238	NS	Accept H_0
	Education	30.55 (36)	.731	.222	NS	Accept H_0
	Income	43.12 (24)	.012	.329	SIG.	Reject H_0

Income also emerged as a significant factor influencing parental perceptions across multiple dimensions of service quality. For responsiveness, income was significantly associated with p = 0.049, indicating that parents' economic backgrounds shape their expectations regarding how promptly the university addresses their concerns. Similarly, under assurance and empathy, income was significantly related, with p-values of 0.031 and 0.012, respectively, suggesting that parents across socioeconomic levels perceive the institution's ability to inspire trust and provide personalized care differently. It highlights that financial resources and social standing shape parents' perceptions of the university's attentiveness, trustworthiness, and customized support. Recent literature affirms this, emphasizing the strong role of socioeconomic background in shaping satisfaction with higher education services (Zhou & Guo, 2023; Manzoor et al., 2021). Overall, the findings suggest that while most demographic factors, such as age and education, do not significantly affect parents' satisfaction levels, gender and income play critical roles in shaping perceptions of specific service quality dimensions. For practice, this suggests that the institution should consider differentiated service strategies that recognize the diverse needs of parents, taking into account their gender and socioeconomic status. Addressing these nuances in reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy can foster a more inclusive and equitable delivery of services, ultimately strengthening parental trust and satisfaction toward the university.

Table 5 presents the significant predictors of parents' satisfaction with the University of Cebu's services in Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue. All service quality dimensions, including assurance, responsiveness, tangibles, empathy, and reliability, were found to be significant predictors, as evidenced by their p-values of less than 0.001, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Among these predictors, empathy recorded the highest standardized coefficient, suggesting that parents place great importance on the university's ability to provide genuine care, understanding,

and personalized attention to the needs of students and their families. This finding highlights that parents' satisfaction is strongly influenced by the extent to which the institution demonstrates compassion and sensitivity, consistent with studies emphasizing empathy as a key factor in fostering trust and long-term relationships in higher education services (Ali et al., 2021; Zhou & Guo, 2023).

Table 5. *Significant Predictors of Parents' Satisfaction with the University Services*

Predictor Variable	β (Unstandardized Coefficient)	β (Standardized Coefficient)	t	p-value	Significance	Decision
Assurance	0.232	0.239	14.844	<.001	Significant **	H_0 Rejected
Responsiveness	0.210	0.232	15.337	<.001	Significant **	H_0 Rejected
Tangibility	0.165	0.158	14.838	<.001	Significant **	H_0 Rejected
Empathy	0.217	0.230	16.187	<.001	Significant **	H_0 Rejected
Reliability	0.179	0.193	13.233	<.001	Significant **	H_0 Rejected

Responsiveness was closely followed by a standardized coefficient of β = 0.232, indicating that parents value timely and efficient responses to their concerns and inquiries. Literature confirms that prompt service delivery and clear communication are vital to parent and student satisfaction, as they reduce uncertainty and enhance trust in the institution (Supriyanto et al., 2024; Manzoor et al., 2021). Assurance also emerged as a strong predictor, with β = 0.239, reflecting the importance parents place on the university's competence, credibility, and professionalism. Assurance strengthens confidence in the quality of education and institutional support, a finding supported by research underscoring the role of trust and professionalism in parental satisfaction with educational services (Bartolo & Tinmaz, 2024).

Tangibility, with a standardized coefficient of β = 0.158, was also a significant predictor of satisfaction, though with relatively lower strength than the other variables. It indicates that while parents recognize the importance of physical facilities, equipment, and staff professional appearance, they prioritize relational and service-related aspects more heavily. Finally, reliability, with β = 0.193, also significantly influenced satisfaction, underscoring the importance of consistency and dependability in delivering promised services. This finding is consistent with studies that affirm reliability as a cornerstone of service quality and a determinant of satisfaction in higher education (Annamdevula & Bellamkonda, 2022; Del Río-Rama et al., 2021). Overall, these results demonstrate that parents' satisfaction with university services is multidimensional, with empathy, responsiveness, and assurance emerging as the strongest predictors. It suggests that while tangible resources remain important, parents place greater value on trust, care, and timely service delivery, all of which reinforce their confidence in the institution and support long-term engagement.

Table 6. *Summary of Parents' Perceptions: Positive Aspects and Areas for Improvement on the University Services*

Theme	Positive Points	Negative Points / Concerns
Satisfaction with Academic and Student Welfare Services	Quality Education, Student Safety, Supportive and Caring Environment	–
Administrative and Enrollment Processes	–	Long queues at the cashier and accounting; inefficient online enrollment; issues with textbook purchase and fee processing.
Communication and Staff Interaction	–	Rude or unhelpful staff; insufficient teacher-parent communication; unclear announcements on cancellations or policies.
Infrastructure, Facilities, and Safety	Campus Safety Measures Acknowledged	Poor hygiene and comfort room conditions; flooding and slippery floors; infrastructure maintenance issues.
Student Behavior and Discipline	–	Bullying; favoritism; unequal treatment; breaches in academic integrity (e.g., cellphone use during exams).
Suggestions for Improvement	–	Improve LMS/online learning; address mental health needs; plan for emergencies; streamline administrative processes.

Table 6 presents a summary of parents' perceptions, specifically regarding the positive aspects and areas for improvement in the University's services. Parents generally expressed satisfaction with the University's academic and student welfare services, highlighting the quality of education, student safety, and a supportive environment as positive aspects, indicating that the university meets expectations in teaching and overall student welfare. However, concerns were raised regarding administrative and enrollment processes, including long queues, inefficient online systems, and issues with textbook and fee processing, suggesting operational inefficiencies that may reduce parent satisfaction. Communication and staff interactions were also noted as areas needing improvement, with reports of rude or unhelpful staff, insufficient teacher-parent communication, and unclear announcements on cancellations or policies, highlighting gaps in interpersonal service delivery.

While campus safety measures were acknowledged, parents identified infrastructure issues, including poor hygiene, uncomfortable restrooms, flooding, slippery floors, and maintenance deficiencies, indicating the need for enhanced facility management. Issues related to student behavior and discipline, including bullying, favoritism, unequal treatment, and breaches in academic integrity, were also observed, emphasizing the importance of promoting a fair and disciplined learning environment. Parents suggested improvements, including enhancing the LMS/online learning platforms, addressing mental health needs, planning for emergencies, and streamlining administrative processes, reflecting priorities for institutional development.

It implies several key areas for institutional improvement. Enhancing administrative efficiency by streamlining enrollment processes and addressing issues related to textbook and fee processing can alleviate parent frustrations and improve satisfaction. Improving communication channels between staff, teachers, and parents is crucial for fostering trust and ensuring that information is conveyed clearly and promptly. Addressing infrastructure concerns, such as maintaining hygiene and safety within campus facilities, is essential for creating a conducive learning environment. Implementing programs to promote student discipline and fairness can help mitigate issues related to bullying and favoritism. Additionally, investing in online learning platforms and providing support for mental health and emergency preparedness can align the institution with modern educational expectations and ensure student well-being.

Research indicates that various factors within higher education institutions influence parental satisfaction. Studies have shown that academic quality and administrative efficiency are significant determinants of parental satisfaction (Kahu & Nelson, 2018; Umbach & Porter, 2002). Communication between staff and parents plays a pivotal role in shaping parental perceptions and satisfaction levels (Epstein, 2011). Facility management, including the maintenance of hygiene and safety, is also critical in influencing satisfaction (Kotler & Fox, 1995; Choudhury & Mukherjee, 2019). Furthermore, promoting student discipline and fairness can enhance the overall educational experience and parental satisfaction (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). These findings align with the SERVQUAL model, which identifies tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance as key dimensions affecting service quality and satisfaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Al-Tit, 2015).

Recent studies have highlighted the importance of service quality in higher education. A 2024 study examined service quality and its functioning at a private higher education institution in the Philippines, emphasizing its impact on student satisfaction (Albayda, 2024). In the context of online learning, a 2025 study found that Learning Management System (LMS) self-efficacy positively impacts students' satisfaction with their education, underscoring the significance of effective digital platforms (Rubio et al., 2025). Regarding mental health, a 2025 study examined the mental health status, attitudes toward mental health services, levels of social support, and actual utilization and barriers to service use among college students at a university in Zamboanga City, Philippines, highlighting the need for accessible mental health services (Rubio et al., 2025). These findings align with the SERVQUAL model, which emphasizes that tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance are critical predictors of satisfaction (Harriet, 2024).

Conclusion

Service quality is a critical factor in higher education, influencing stakeholders' satisfaction and perceptions of institutional effectiveness. This study examined parents' satisfaction with the services of the University of Cebu in Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue, focusing on the five service quality dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, while also exploring the influence of demographic factors, including age, gender, education, and income, on their perceptions. The study concluded that income and gender significantly shape satisfaction across specific dimensions, highlighting the role of socioeconomic factors in shaping perceptions of service quality. By shifting the focus from students to parents as key stakeholders, the study provides fresh insights and adds depth to the understanding of service quality in higher education. Overall, the study concludes that UCLM has successfully met parents' expectations, particularly with respect to physical facilities, professional competence, and genuine staff care, while also identifying areas for improvement in responsiveness and reliability. Strengthening these aspects will further enhance parental confidence, trust, and loyalty toward the institution. Future studies could adopt a longitudinal design to track changes in parental perceptions over time, especially as the university implements improvements. Expanding the scope to include other stakeholder groups—such as faculty, alumni, and students—would provide a more comprehensive understanding of service quality across the academic community. Comparative studies between campuses or

institutions could also reveal contextual differences and best practices.

Contributions of Authors

Gloria P. Deniega served as the Principal Author and was responsible for the conceptualization, design, data collection, and overall analysis of the study.
Rafale M. Bachanicha provided critical oversight as the Ethics Reviewer, ensuring the study adhered to ethical standards.
Kingie G. Micabalo served as the Data Analyst, focusing on statistical analysis and interpretation of results.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the conduct of this study, the analysis of data, or the publication of its findings.

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