



Student Satisfaction with Online Education amid COVID-19 Pandemic at NOCCCD Colleges

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Introduction

Ensuring the quality of online education at community colleges is critical to benefit more people in effective and flexible educational options. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, NOCCCD college students have been taking classes online. We found it a unique opportunity to measure students' online education perception when both online-preferred and in-person preferred students were in online courses. A combination of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors and overall satisfaction was often used to measure the variables of interest (Seegmiller, 1977; Padilla-Velez, 1993).

The purpose of the study was to find factors that lead to satisfaction and factor lead to dissatisfaction in terms of online education. We also aimed to examine the change in instructional method preference after experiencing online classes.

Hypotheses

We predicted that NOCCCD college students enrolled in online courses were influenced by Herzberg's motivation and hygiene factors and changed their overall preference in instructional methods after the pandemic outbreak.

Method

Participants

Participants ($N = 130$) consisted of 77.7% female, 21.5% male and 0.8% non-binary. The mean age of the participants was $M=24.68$ years old. The ethnic background was as follows: 37% Hispanic or Latino, 32% Asian, 14% White or Caucasian, 12% multiracial, 3% Black or African American, and 1% Middle Eastern or North African.

Measures

We modified established questionnaires to fit community college students and conducted a survey online. The instrument was to measure students' overall satisfaction with their online education using Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Closed questions with the 5-point Likert Scale were used to collect data.

Procedure

Google form was used to create a questionnaire. The questionnaire was disseminated through instructors at Cypress and Fullerton colleges by email. Participants accessed the link in the email and voluntarily responded to the questionnaire. Data collection lasted for approximately four weeks.

Results

Table 1

Crosstabulation Table between Before/After the Pandemic and Instructional Method Preference

		Instructional Method Preference			Total	
		Online	In-person	No preference		
COVID-19 Pandemic	Before	n	12	101	17	130
		Within Before/After	9%	78%	13%	100%
		Of Total	5%	39%	7%	50%
	After	n	55	60	15	130
		Within Before/After	42%	46%	12%	100%
		Of Total	21%	23%	6%	50%
Total	n	67	161	32	260	
	Within Preference	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Of Total	26%	62%	12%	100%	

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Overall Student Satisfaction and Nine Motivation-Hygiene Factors

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
		Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Overall Student Satisfaction	Overall Student Satisfaction	130	1	5	3.54	0.1	1.14
	Achievement	130	1.25	5	3.67	0.07	0.85
	Recognition	130	1	5	3.39	0.08	0.87
Motivator	Work Itself	130	1	5	3.53	0.09	1.03
	Responsibility	130	1	5	3.44	0.08	0.93
	Growth	130	1.33	5	3.41	0.07	0.84
	Policy & Administration	130	1	5	3.59	0.08	0.89
Hygiene	Supervision	130	1	5	3.86	0.09	1.03
	Interpersonal Relationships	130	1	5	3.69	0.08	0.93
	Working Condition	130	1	5	3.76	0.08	0.9
	Valid N (listwise)	130					

Discussion

One of our hypotheses was to find if instructional method preference, online or in-person, changed after experiencing an online semester. Our results indicated an increase in online preference and a decrease in in-person preference after the pandemic outbreak. There was a relationship between two variables with a substantial effect size. Why we observed the change might be because the time flexibility of online courses benefitted students with outside responsibilities such as work and family needs. The other hypothesis was to examine whether Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors influenced online students' satisfaction. Our results suggested that all nine motivation-hygiene factors were correlated to the level of overall satisfaction. Significantly, the working condition hygiene factor and the work itself motivation factor explained a large part of the satisfaction.

Limitations

We acknowledge some limitations in this study. The majority of responses came from Cypress College students. Thus, the results might be influenced by it. Another bias may be included because gender is disproportional compared to the data of NOCCCD. Lastly, modification of survey questions may lead to limited internal validity.

Implications

The instructional method preference change may indicate that some students empirically realized the benefits of online education. Thus, continuing efforts to improve distance education would provide more education opportunities. Meanwhile, the factor that students expressed the least satisfaction in was recognition. Due to the large class size and difficulty receiving one-on-one assistance from college instructors, the perceived lack of recognition has been a common sentiment among students in higher education. On top of the concern, the limitation of technologies and unestablished practice of online class operations may be contributing to the lower score in recognition in our study. Our research study may help find areas to improve in current online education and inspire other researchers to study the topic in depth. We hope the district and educational institutes will address the weakness in online education and accelerate distance learning recognition momentum.

References

- Padilla-Velez, D. (1993). Job satisfaction of vocational teachers in Puerto Rico (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University).
- Seegmiller, J. F. (1977). Job Satisfaction of Faculty and Staff at the College of Eastern Utah. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, College of Eastern Utah, Price. (ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED 139 489)