

Management of Educational Environments to improve the perception of the quality of the student experience in a health school in Santiago de Chile.

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Abstract.

Various studies indicate that the learning of students in higher education, both in Chile and in other parts of the world, is influenced by the educational environment in which the students are immersed (Hardiman, 2012). The objective is to explore the perception of students about the educational environment in a health school in Santiago de Chile, with a quantitative research approach design; of a descriptive, transactional type. The instrument (DREEM) has international validation and validation in Chile. The population corresponds to 1460 undergraduate students. The sample consisted of 230 participating students, representing 15.06% of the estimated total population of students enrolled in 2021. The study has the approval of the Institutional Ethics Committee No. 282.2020 and has follow-up report No. 555.2022. The results show 5 strong items and 14 problematic ones. Conclusion: The exploration allows us to systematise student perceptions from validated and relevant instruments for decision-making with a focus on the quality of the student experience as part of the educational management model in health training careers to improve quality. of the educational service.

Keywords: DREEM, Medical Education, Health Education, Educational Environment, Student Experience.

1 Introduction

In Chile, numerous studies have been carried out on the Educational Environments in preschool education, but they have been addressed in a restricted way in primary education and, even more scarcely, in higher education. However, accreditation procedures emphasize the need to incorporate the perspective of students to promote educational quality (CNA, 2022). It is fundamental to explore the Educational Environments and continuously seek the opinion of the students, beyond the isolated moments of quality accreditation that are part of the institutional processes in higher education institutions. This will allow constant feedback to improve the management of the stu-

dent experience, which is essential for its integrity. Consequently, this research is considered a starting point, as a diagnosis, to understand the Educational Environment in a Faculty of Health.

The objective of this study is to explore the experience of students on the impact of the educational environment on their training in a health school in Santiago de Chile for the management of initiatives in pursuit of its improvement.

2 Theoretical Framework

The Educational Environment is based on the social representation that is built from the perception derived from the Student Experience in the environment of higher education. According to Hardiman (2012), Educational Environment is made up of different elements, such as educational infrastructure, teaching materials and methods, including the curriculum and profession-specific syllabus, such as clinical simulation or administration procedures of drugs. It also includes the agents that are part of the educational space, such as the campus or professional practice spaces, as well as the relationships that the student establishes with the materials and inter-agents involved in their training process (Peña, 2022). Among the critical factors of Educational Environment is the perception of interpersonal relationships between classmates and teachers in the classroom and in practice spaces, the quality of teaching and the didactic level of teachers, the self-perception of performance and learning expectations, among other aspects that influence the perception of the quality of educational centres in the Student Experience (Roff, 1997; Roff, 2005; do Vale Placa, 2015; Abusaad, 2015; Mousavi, 2020; du Toit-Brits, 2020).

Quality management in Higher Education is based on the Education Quality Assurance Law, which establishes a model, guidelines, standards, criteria and multi-agent evaluation mechanisms to promote quality in the system. education (MINEDUC, 2006). A fundamental part of these evaluation processes focuses on the perception of enrolled and graduated students since their participation and involvement influence the comprehensive evaluation of institutional quality (CNA, 2022).

Student Experience plays a crucial role in the perception of training quality (van Mannen, 2003). It is considered an enactive interpretation in human beings, which means that Student Experience directs the processes of understanding personal experiences within a community context, as in the case of health training (Varela, 2000; Ojeda, 2001; Garcia de la Cerda, 2009).

The Faculties of Health contemplate in their educational itinerary complex and rigorous training in biomedical and health sciences on university campuses, and the development of general and specific competencies through practices and internships in clinical institutions. In these spaces, critical incidents are reported (Soderlund, 2008; Rogers, 2014), which affect the perception of EA, and the quality of educational management (Roff, 1997; Roff, 2005).

3 Methods

The design of this research is a quantitative, descriptive and transactional approach. The instrument used has been internationally validated and also validated in Chile. The target population consists of 1460 undergraduate students from a health school selected for convenience. The sample is made up of 230 participating students, which represents 15.06% of the estimated total population of students enrolled in the year 2021.

The inclusion criteria for the participants are the following: being over 18 years of age, having a valid registration at the time of responding and taking classes during the year 2021. The instrument used is the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM), which compiles the perceptions of health students on a scale of 5 positions, ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The DREEM consists of 50 items and has been validated and translated into Spanish.

To interpret the concentration of agreements in the positions of the scale (0-4), the items that represent strong areas (with scores greater than 3) and problem areas (with scores less than 2) will be selected.

It is important to note that this study has been approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee under number 282.2020, and a follow-up report has been carried out under number 555/2022.

4 Results

The activity was carried out for 2 weeks between the 1st and 3rd week of May 2021 through a google form distributed by emails and the RRSS. The results are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Results DREEM.

Ítems	Prom.	DESV
1. am encouraged to participate in classes	2,55	0,915
2. Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach	3,25	0,749
3. There is a good support system for students suffering from stress	1,40	1,082
4. I am too tired to enjoy the degree I am studying	2,65	1,100
5. The study methods I had before continue to work for me now	1,84	1,171
6. Teachers have patience with people	2,40	1,012
7. Often challenging teaching	2,20	0,976
8. Teachers ridicule students	1,44	1,171
9. Teachers are authoritarian	2,29	1,071
10. I am confident that I will pass my subjects	2,48	1,054
11. The teaching environment is relaxed during visits to clinical fields	1,67	0,967
12. School schedules are well scheduled	1,94	1,174

13. Teaching is student-centered	2,24	1,095
14. I rarely get bored in the subjects I am taking	1,79	1,062
15. I have good friends at school	3,37	0,918
16. Teaching helps me develop my skills	2,80	0,910
17. Cheating in evaluations (eg plagiarism) constitutes a serious offense in the career	2,87	1,085
18. Teachers have the ability to communicate well with people	2,29	1,018
19. My social life is good	2,70	1,113
20. The teaching is well focused	2,33	1,003
21. I feel that they are preparing me well to practice my profession	2,43	1,068
22. Teaching in the career is concerned with developing self-confidence	1,92	1,173
23. The atmosphere is relaxed during theoretical classes and/or conferences	2,52	0,990
24. The time allocated to teaching activities is well used	2,35	1,043
25. Teaching in the career places too much emphasis on learning details	2,64	1,006
26. What was learned last year was a good basis for this year's work	2,36	1,091
27. I am able to memorize everything that is necessary for me	1,93	1,130
28. I rarely feel alone	2,09	1,210
29. Teachers give us adequate information about how our performance in studies is going	1,94	1,086
30. I have opportunities to develop my interpersonal skills	2,25	1,076
31. I have learned a lot about empathy in my profession	3,06	1,036
32. In the race, teachers give us constructive criticism	2,45	1,054
33. I feel comfortable, socially, in classes	2,65	0,990
34. The atmosphere in seminars and classes is relaxed	2,35	1,026
35. Teaching in the career places too much emphasis on learning details	1,46	1,051
36. My career experience has been discouraging	1,95	1,156
37. I am able to concentrate well	2,61	0,915
38. Teachers give clear examples	2,52	0,971
39. I am clear about the learning objectives of my courses	1,81	1,207
40. Teachers get upset or upset in class	3,08	0,853
41. Teachers go to their classes well prepared	2,90	0,903
42. Studying this degree is helping me develop my ability to solve problems	1,93	1,226
43. The degree to which I enjoy my studies outweighs the stress they generate for me	2,36	1,137
44. The environment of the race motivates me to learn	2,46	1,061

45. The way of teaching in the career encourages me to learn by myself	3,12	0,858
46. Much of what I have to learn seems relevant to my career as a health professional.	2,38	1,194
47. The physical environments of the school are pleasant	2,20	1,073
48. In school, long-term learning is emphasized over the immediate	2,47	0,990
49. School teaching is too teacher-focused	2,42	1,105
50. In the race I feel that I can ask all the questions I want	1,83	1,164

Here are areas of strength:

Table 2. Items selected strong areas from the DREEM results.

Ítems	(N=260)	Prom.	DESV
2. Teachers are experts in the subjects they teach		3,25	0,749
15. I have good friends at school		3,37	0,918
31. I have learned a lot about empathy in my profession		3,06	1,036
40. Teachers get upset or upset in class		3,08	0,853
45. The way of teaching in the career encourages me to learn by myself		3,12	0,858

Problem areas are presented:

Table3. Items problem areas selected from the DREEM results.

Ítems	Prom.	DESV
3. There is a good support system for students suffering from stress	1,40	1,082
5. The study methods I had before continue to work for me now	1,84	1,171
8. Teachers ridicule students	1,44	1,171
11. The teaching environment is relaxed during visits to clinical fields	1,67	0,967
12. School schedules are well scheduled	1,94	1,174
14. I rarely get bored in the subjects I am taking	1,79	1,062
22. Teaching in the career is concerned with developing self-confidence	1,92	1,173
27. I am able to memorize everything that is necessary for me	1,93	1,130
29. Teachers give us adequate information about how our performance in studies is going	1,94	1,086
35. Teaching in the career places too much emphasis on learning details	1,46	1,051
36. My career experience has been discouraging	1,95	1,156
39. I am clear about the learning objectives of my courses	1,81	1,207
42. Studying this degree is helping me develop my ability to solve problems	1,93	1,226

5 Discussion

The DREEM application provides an identification of the strong and problematic aspects of the Educational Environment (Hardiman, 2012; Peña, 2022) through a reliable and validated instrument (Roff, 1997; Roff, 2005; do Vale Placa, 2015; Abusaad, 2015; duToit-Brits, 2020). However, for long-term strategic management, it is necessary to incorporate a qualitative approach that allows for establishing the causes and explaining the factors that influence the strong and weak areas of the Student Experience (Van Manen, 2003). From the conceptual dimensions, the results of this study have allowed the Office of Health Education at the faculty level to design and implement specific improvement initiatives related to the identified items. For example, peer support programs have been developed for students experiencing stress, workshops to update study methods, and courses to develop teaching skills for academics in the health area. However, pending aspects have also been identified, such as the need to monitor and use guidelines in practical training during clinical visits, due to the political complexity associated with their implementation (USACH, 2022). One of the successful strategies was the implementation of Transversal Elective Courses, which facilitated the early meeting of future health professionals, promoting an intersectoral curriculum in the field of health. In addition, the peer student program has had positive impacts, especially in vocational counselling, where peers can share their experiences in practice situations and provide support (USACH, 2022). At the career level, a psychological care program has been established to deal with academic challenges and the university experience, especially in times of pandemic. Adjustments have also been made to the schedule and in the evaluation guidelines, based on the undergraduate regulations that guarantee the right to timely information and a training schedule. Likewise, the structure of the processes has been formalized through program agreements, evaluations and class calendars (USACH, 2022). These initiatives make it possible to guide and strengthen educational management from the students' perspective, recognizing them as key agents in the educational processes related to their training, based on the systematization of their perceptions.

6 Conclusions

The exploration and systematization of students' perceptions through valid and pertinent instruments improve the quality of the educational service in health training courses. By considering student perception, informed decisions are made to improve the educational environment. This recognizes students as key actors, taking into account their needs and experiences to implement concrete actions that promote their academic and professional development. In summary, this exploration allows more effective educational management, providing a quality training experience.

7 Limitations and Future Research

The study has limitations that must be considered. It is important to note that the results apply only to the specific moment in which the research was conducted. Also, it is suggested to improve the application experience by using other response form software. Different health schools were not compared, which could provide broader perspectives. Finally, the importance of problematizing the view of educational managers on management, through qualitative techniques, is highlighted. Despite these limitations, opportunities for improvement are considered for future research. Overcoming these limitations will allow for obtaining more solid results and will support decision-making in quality management in health training programs.

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