

Assessing the Availment and General Satisfaction of Student Services Offered by the University of Baguio: A Study of Student Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to evaluate the utilization of student services at the University of Baguio and gauge overall satisfaction levels. Data was collected and analyzed using a survey questionnaire approach. The survey questionnaire was administered to the School of Criminal Justice and Public Safety students enrolled during the first semester of School Year 2023-2024. The study focused on students enrolled in the University of Baguio School of Criminal Justice and Public Safety, selected through random sampling. The findings indicate that services enhancing convenience, particularly those situated in easily accessible locations like the Admission and Records Center, Library, and Student Accounts Office, were frequently availed by respondents. Respondents were generally aware of the services provided by the university but tended to utilize them as needed. The study yielded a satisfactory outcome, reflecting that respondents actively engaged with and expressed contentment regarding the available services.

Keywords: student services, availment, satisfaction, awareness, utilization

INTRODUCTION

These services are pivotal in supporting students' academic and personal success (Schuh & Associates, 2011). Student services are essential for the holistic development of students in higher education. They provide academic advising, career guidance, counseling, financial aid, health services, housing, orientation, and student activities. In the Philippines, student services vary in diversity and quality across institutions, impacting students' overall educational experience and outcomes (Camagay & Agpaoa, 2019). The literature emphasizes the crucial role of student services in promoting academic achievement, retention, and satisfaction in higher education settings. Schuh and Associates (2011) offer a comprehensive overview of student services in American higher education, emphasizing their contribution to student development and success. Similarly, Camagay and Agpaoa (2019) outline the range of services offered in the Philippine context to enhance student experiences and outcomes.

Other studies have examined student awareness, utilization, and satisfaction with these services. Morrison and Hardré (2017) analyzed the utilization patterns of campus services in the United States, while Adejuwon and Olanrewaju (2015) and Mercader et al. (2019) explored similar themes within Nigerian and Philippine contexts, respectively. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that awareness and

satisfaction levels significantly affect the effectiveness of student services in promoting academic success (Hsu & Tierney, 2008; Estacio et al., 2018).

The University of Baguio exemplifies how comprehensive student services can support academic performance. They offer various support mechanisms, such as financial assistance, academic advisement, and health services. The University of Baguio and other universities in the Philippines (Java et al., 2017; Amante et al., 2019; Bucad et al., 2017) provide a rich context for investigating the dynamics of service availability, utilization, and student satisfaction.

This study aimed to assess the utilization and satisfaction of student services offered by the University of Baguio and identify the key factors influencing these dimensions. It also aimed to contribute valuable insights to the literature on higher education services by exploring students' perspectives on service quality and accessibility to inform strategies to enhance student success and well-being.

This study assessed the services availed by the students. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. To know how many times the students availed the services of the University of Baguio;
2. To identify the services availed by the students; and
3. To know the satisfaction level of students on availing the services

Schematic Illustration of the Study

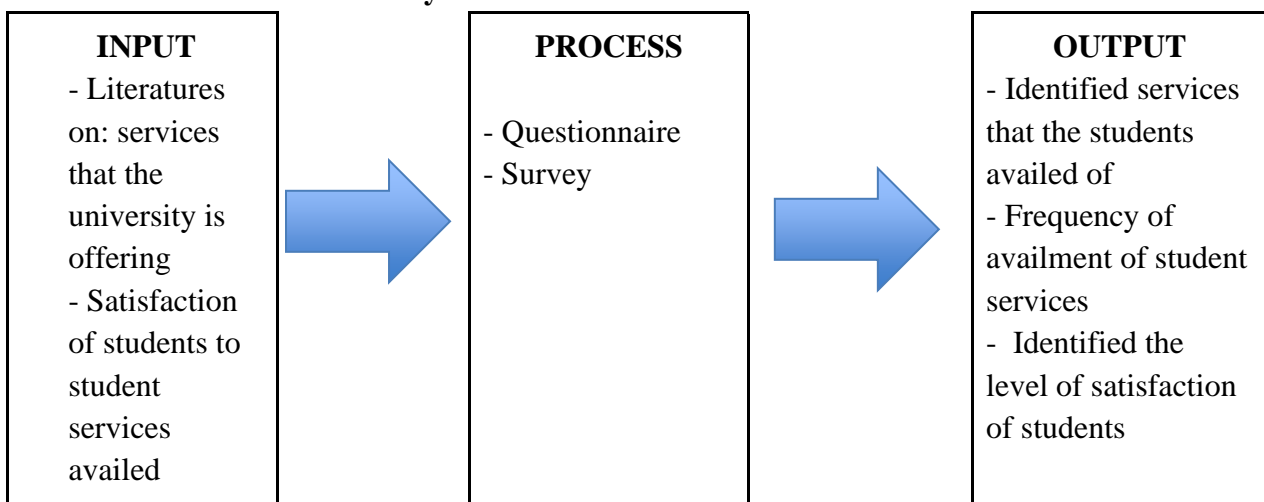


Figure 1. Schematic Illustration of the Study

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed the descriptive survey method, which is appropriate for achieving the study's objectives. This method captures quantitative and qualitative insights into students' perspectives and experiences, making it particularly suitable for assessing their service usage and satisfaction with the University of Baguio's services. The method facilitates the systematic gathering of data on the frequency of service use and satisfaction among the student body. Using Google Forms for survey administration is an accessible, economical, and effective method to reach a broad student demographic. This ensures a comprehensive data collection process. The information collected through this method provides a basis for identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement within the university's student services. This study provides insight into students' perspectives and equips university administrators with the nece-

ssary data to develop targeted interventions to enhance student success and well-being.

Population and Locale of the Study

Data collection for the study was conducted through a survey questionnaire distributed among students at the School of Criminal Justice and Public Safety (SCJPS) at the University of Baguio. Respondents were selected via a simple random sampling technique to ensure a representative sample from the total enrollment of 1,466 students within SCJPS. A total of 388 students participated by completing the questionnaire. This methodological approach allowed for data collection systematically and unbiasedly, ensuring the findings could reliably reflect the broader student population's perspectives within the school.

Data Gathering Tools

To meet the study's specific objectives, a survey questionnaire was carefully designed to assess how University of Baguio students utilize its services. The survey included questions about how often students used the services over a month and how satisfied they were with what they had access to. This focused approach helped to gain a deeper understanding of how students interacted with university services, including information on how much they used them and how satisfied they were with them.

Data Gathering Procedures

The Director of Research, Innovation, Extension, and Community Outreach approved the formal request for permission to conduct the study. The survey was distributed to university-registered students using Google Forms, effectively collecting responses quickly, easily, and securely. The researchers assumed all financial responsibility for the study from beginning to end. Research ethics were strictly adhered to, ensuring the protection of each participant's identity and confidentiality. Additionally, participation in the study was completely voluntary. The findings of the study will be disseminated through presentations at academic conferences and publications in scholarly journals.

Treatment of the Data

The gathered data was subjected to encoding, analysis, and interpretation procedures to assess students' satisfaction with the institution's services. This study ensured ethical integrity by closely adhering to research ethics guidelines covering every stage, from data collection to findings presentation. There were no known risks associated with the study. Moreover, the utmost confidentiality was maintained throughout the handling of all results, ensuring the anonymity of the respondents. Strong adherence to non-disclosure principles was ensured by treating all gathered data and information as highly confidential, demonstrating a solid commitment to privacy.

Statistical Tool

This study employed a weighted mean to examine the information gathered about students' use of and satisfaction with university services. This statistical method assigned different weights to responses according to their significance and how frequently the service was used, allowing for a thorough evaluation. The study's questionnaire was designed to collect data on the variety of services students used, how frequently they visited these services in a given month, and how satisfied they were. Using the weighted mean, the researchers measured the average satisfaction while accounting for the varying effects of each service according to usage.

Results and Discussion

The results of the survey that was conducted on the University of Baguio School of Criminal Justice and Public Safety students were as follows:

Frequency of the availing of the services of the University of Baguio

The frequency of the availment of the services of the University of Baguio determines how many times the students avail the services in a month.

Table 1 Respondents are availing of the services offered by the University of Baguio

Times of availment of services in a month	Frequency
1-2 Times	205
3-5 Times	138
More than 6 Times	45

Table 1 shows that out of the 388 respondents, 205 answered that they have availed of the services 1 to 2 times in a month, 138 responded that they have availed of the services 3 to 5 times in a month, and 45 answered that they had availed the services more than six times in a month. It is noted that the students are aware of the services being offered at the university. The respondents' availability of the services may vary depending on the availability of their schedules, as the respondents may have a full load unit. The gathered data shows that the respondents are primarily at second and third-year levels. Since there is a transition from online classes to face-to-face classes, students are still adjusting to the environment they are going to, as it has been two years since students have visited the school premises. At the start of the school year, the department conducts General Orientation. Part of the program is to orient the students to the different university offices and where these offices are located, especially since the University of Baguio has many buildings and offices. According to Newman-Gonchar (2000), traditional orientation programs provide an essential academic and logistic basis from which students can maneuver around campus; creative orientation programs can offer students the opportunity to experience a challenging socialization process, which will aid in students' adjustment to college or university. The information indicates that many students using university services are first-time visitors to the campus and should acquaint themselves with the different offices and resources offered. This emphasizes a significant issue facing educational establishments: ensuring students are at ease and aware of available resources. A general orientation program makes sense and is practical for addressing this issue. Providing students with a thorough orientation to the campus design and the roles of various offices can enable them to make better academic decisions. A general orientation program's content and format are two critical determinants of its success. A well-crafted orientation should cover the physical configuration of the campus and details on extracurricular activities, academic resources, support services, and campus policies. It should also be engaging and interactive to hold students' interest and aid in their comprehension and retention of the material. The orientation's timing is essential. Acquainting new students with the campus and its amenities should ideally occur before the academic term starts. Technology is also a significant factor in improving orientation experiences. In addition to traditional in-person sessions, virtual campus tours, interactive maps, and online orientation modules can offer students easily accessible and convenient resources to explore the campus at their own pace. Technology can ensure that orientation stays relevant in an increasingly digital world while accommodating students' diverse learning preferences. A successful orientation program requires mechanisms for follow-up and ongoing support. Gonzalez and Lim's study in 2022 supports this. The findings suggest that service usage frequency significantly correlates with student awareness and adjustment to the campus environment. O'Reilly and Singh (2020) also emphasize the importance of accessible and well-communicated information about campus resources, especially for universities with complex infrastructures.

Common services availed by the students

The University of Baguio has different offices on campus. The other offices provide services that the students may avail of. There are 20 listed offices of the University of Baguio, such as the Admission and Record Center, Accountant's Office, Cashier, Student Accounts Office, Medical and Dental Clinic, Office of Student Affairs, Linkages, Athletics Office, Center for Counseling and Student Development, Research and Development Center, Library, Security Office, Human Resource Management Center, Management and Information System, Payroll, Procurement Office, Disbursing, Inventory and the Central Supply Room. These offices offer different services to help students feel more comfortable on campus.

Table 2 Respondents' availment of services in different offices.

Offices	Occurrence	Percentage (Number of Occurrence/Total Sample Size)
Admission and Records Center	320	82.47%
Accountant's Office	283	72.93%
Cashier	29	7.47%
Student Accounts Office	307	79.12
Medical and Dental Clinic	266	68.55%
Office of Student Affairs	271	69.84%
Linkages	260	67.01%
Athletics Office	263	67.78%
Center for Counselling and Student Development	265	68.29%
Research and Development Center	259	66.75%
Library	343	88.40%
Security Office	270	69.58%
Human Resource Management Center	262	67.52%
Extension and Community Outreach Services	258	66.49%
Management and Information System	265	68.29%
Payroll	261	67.26%
Procurement Office	260	67.01%
Disbursing	259	66.75%
Inventory	257	66.23%
Central Supply Room	262	67.52%

Table 2 shows the patterns of student visits to and use of services at various university offices. It highlights preferences and accessibility issues. The Library, Student Accounts Office, and Admission and Record Center are the most frequently visited offices. The information shows that the offices' students visit the most often are the Student Accounts Office, the Library, and the Admission and Record Center. This result emphasizes how vital these offices are to meeting students' academic and administrative needs as they progress through college.

Students understand the Library's significance as a resource for obtaining scholarly literature, conducting research, and studying in a comfortable setting because it stands out as a center for research and study-related activities. This demonstrates how essential libraries are to helping students succeed academically and emphasizes that colleges must keep funding libraries' services and resources to suit students' changing needs. Likewise, the Student Accounts Office and the Admissions and Records Center are recognized as indispensable resources for various administrative tasks, such as providing information on scholarships, determining fees, maintaining records, and requesting documents. This implies that students regularly come to these offices for assistance with financial concerns, records related to their education, and administrative paperwork needs. For administrative procedures to run more smoothly and improve the general student experience, these offices must be made accessible and efficient.

Students mainly visit the Library for research and study-related activities, reflecting its crucial role in academic support (Hafni S. et al., 2023). The Student Accounts Office and the Admissions and Records Center are essential resources for scholarship information, fee assessment, record keeping, and document requests. This use pattern suggests that students prefer services that directly address their immediate needs and academic responsibilities. Although the University provides a variety of offices to enhance the campus experience for students, their engagement with these services is significantly influenced by the offices' visibility and perceived relevance to their academic journey. The Library's ranking as the most visited site underscores its integral role in student learning, serving as a primary resource for research, group studies, and other scholarly activities.

Students frequent offices if they have a direct need for office services. This explains some of the low availment of services, as seen in Table 2. The Inventory Office, Extension and Community Outreach Services, and the Research and Development Center receive significantly fewer visits from the student body. The difference in visitation rates can be attributed to the less visible location of these facilities and students' tendency to avoid unfamiliar areas of the campus. The underutilization of these resources indicates a potential gap in the campus's effort to integrate its diverse services fully into the student experience. This highlights an opportunity for strategic improvements in visibility and student outreach. In the case of the Inventory Office, students do not visit this Office as this Office is in charge of keeping track of the different assets and resources of the University. The Office caters to other schools and offices rather than directly engaging in student services. For the Research and Development Center, most of those who visit the Office are students who are availing of research assistance. Most often, these are students who are enrolled in their thesis courses. Similarly, the Extension and Community Outreach Services Office is not frequently visited by students because if there are ECOS activities, they are most likely participating in their Schools. They are not required to report to the ECOS Office for these endeavors. The study by Strayhorn and Sumun (2013) shows that students seek out certain offices, including counseling centers when they need services directly related to their academic journey. This highlights the importance of students' needs and preferences in guiding the provision of services on campus. Therefore, it is crucial to understand students' needs and preferences to provide adequate services on campus. Furthermore, Whitt and Boham (1999) investigated how colleges can increase visibility and strategically place resources to close student services and support gaps. To increase engagement and utilization, the research stressed how crucial it is to match campus services with the requirements and preferences of students.

Another reason for the low number of office visits would be the location. The strategic and accessible locations of certain campus offices make them popular among students, encouraging and facilitating regular visits. These offices are vital points of engagement due to their visibility and ease of access, making

them integral to many students' daily routines. The results of Quaye and Harper's 2018 study, which examined the variables influencing student engagement, including the availability and visibility of campus resources, support this. The authors contended that underutilization of offices in less conspicuous locations might occur from students' reluctance to explore new areas of campus.

The satisfaction level of students when they avail themselves of the services determines students' overall feedback regarding the services provided. This feedback reflects their service experience and may influence how the Offices address their concerns.

Table 3 Respondents' level of satisfaction

Offices	Occurrence	Percentage (Number of Occurrences/Total Sample Size)
Admission and Records Center	320	82.47%
Accountant's Office	283	72.93%
Cashier	29	7.47%
Student Accounts Office	307	79.12

Table 3 shows the students are delighted with the University of Baguio's services. The data were collected from 388 respondents, with 168 students indicating that they were satisfied and 156 students suggesting that they were dissatisfied. In addition, 63 students expressed their satisfaction, while only one voiced dissatisfaction. These results indicate that the University's service delivery is effectively meeting the needs and expectations of its students. The comments demonstrate the University's commitment to providing high-quality services and suggest that students view these services as valuable and beneficial to their personal and academic success. The study conducted by Smith and Doe (2020) provides useful insights that support the findings of the University of Baguio. The study found a strong positive correlation between student satisfaction and perceived service quality across multiple universities. This is consistent with the high levels of satisfaction observed at Baguio University. The study emphasizes the importance of meeting student requirements and expectations to create an environment that promotes academic and personal growth. This supports the university's commitment to providing excellent services.

The data indicates that students have received the university's services positively, consistent with Estacio and Latogan's (2021) research that emphasizes the importance of quality education and reliable services in satisfying students, especially those about to graduate. The differences in satisfaction levels can be attributed to varying interactions with university staff and service delivery. The studies mentioned above highlight the importance of the SERVQUAL model's dimensions—reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness—in shaping students' educational experiences (Estacio, L. and Latogan, MS, 2021; Acosta J. et al., 2020). These studies confirm that service quality satisfaction significantly influences the institution's growth, success, and sustainability.

The university's goal is to increase student satisfaction through the introduction of more engaging programs and activities. These initiatives reinforce the critical role of comprehensive service quality in fostering a fulfilling educational environment by enriching the student experience and providing additional avenues for service engagement.

In terms of the satisfaction of students, the following are the themes generated from their verbatim responses:

Accessibility and Ease of Use

The ease of use and accessibility of school services greatly influence student academic and administrative efficiency. Enhancing the overall quality of the educational experience depends critically on how accessible these services are and how well they fit into students' schedules. With this accessibility, students can focus on their studies without needless administrative burdens, which makes resources more effectively utilized. In LaPadula (2003), the comprehensive approach to student services is highlighted, emphasizing the importance of convenience and accessibility for efficient academic support. To lower access barriers and free up students' time for scholarly pursuits, the study recommends that educational institutions incorporate services into the student experience organically.

Time Efficiency

One of the most critical factors influencing students' satisfaction with university services is time efficiency. In addition to saving students valuable time, avoiding lengthy lines and enjoying quick transaction times also lessen the stress that comes with administrative work. The 2014 study by Kuo et al. investigated how service quality affects student satisfaction in online higher education. The study finds that prompt assistance and responsiveness are essential to high-quality services directly impacting student satisfaction. The authors argue for implementing adequate procedures that guarantee prompt responses to students' questions and needs.

Staff Responsiveness and Attitude

Positive interactions with accommodating and responsive staff members foster a supportive academic environment, significantly impacting student satisfaction. On the other hand, reports of rudeness or nasty behavior highlight the need for consistent staff training in conflict resolution and customer service to address variations in service quality. As a result, the campus community will be more positively impacted, and all staff members will be prepared to respond to students' questions professionally and attentively. Though many students report having a good experience with university services, the mention of bad experiences—like rudeness or inefficiency—indicates that there is still space for improvement. Sustaining trust and satisfaction among students requires acknowledging and resolving these issues. Academic staff members' organizational commitment is significantly impacted by their job satisfaction, according to research by Al-Refaei et al. (2023), which in turn affects students' perceptions of the quality of higher education services. In their 2021 study, Sharif and Lemine emphasized the value of superior customer service in higher education. They discovered that it significantly impacts customer (student) citizenship behaviors and emotional brand attachment, which are signs of a supportive campus community. Watson et al. (2018) emphasized the need to provide faculty, staff, and students with social justice-based conflict resolution training, arguing that professional development can foster more conscientious and cohesive work/learning environments.

Ability to Access Resources

Access to resources is essential for academic success, especially in the library. With the availability of educational materials, students can quickly gather the data they need for their studies and conduct in-depth research. Due to continuous investments in digital and physical library resources, students can access many resources. More digital libraries and online databases can increase access to resources, especially for students who don't live nearby or can't visit the library in person. The study by Estrada (2023) shows a strong positive correlation between the frequency students use library resources and their academic performance, including their General Weighted Average (GWA), making the Dean's List, and passing licensure exams. The study also highlights the various academic tasks for which students use the library's

resources, such as research, exams, and quizzes. The library plays a crucial role in supporting students in their educational endeavors. Students use the library's books and journals for these purposes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of Baguio's efforts to provide quality student services have been a great success, as it stands out regarding student satisfaction and service utilization.

Many students used university facilities over 2 to 5 weeks, with more than half using the services once or twice. The frequency we use these services proves their importance to our academic and personal lives. The Library, Student Accounts Office, and Admission and Record Center are known because they are vital service providers to students for educational and administration needs and, more so, are easily accessible on campus.

All the students were happy with the services offered, many rating it as satisfactory or very satisfied. The number of dissatisfied was minimal, suggesting that the service delivery and quality characteristics were positive. As the SERVQUAL model consists of reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness dimensions, students' level of satisfaction proves to relate to these dimensions. This indicates that the quality of service is paramount for the student's satisfaction and significantly contributes to their total educational experience. The data supports that Baguio University has successfully satisfied the students' needs with the help of its services.

In summary, this study has shown that the University of Baguio is progressing in scoring satisfactory student service. However, there is always scope for refining the system, especially by improving the visibility and accessibility of the less frequented offices and continuously following the SERVQUAL model's new service delivery metrics.

Recommendation:

1. The Center for Counseling and Student Development and the Student Affairs Office should revisit the University's Social Orientation program to include more interactive tours, virtual maps, and sessions that cover all services offered.
2. Increasing the visibility of such units as the Inventory, Extension and Community Outreach Services, and the Research and Development Center should become our priority by putting more visible signs.
3. The MAP Office should update the website with comprehensive details of all campus services, locations, and working hours, improving accessibility. These platforms could incorporate appointment booking, service requests, and feedback submissions to ensure effective communication and student satisfaction.
4. Future research could investigate the long-term impact of these services on student success and well-being, thus adding to the existing literature on higher education services and student satisfaction.

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