

Student satisfaction in undergoing Therapist and Yoga training at National Institute of Naturopathy,
Pune, India: An in-depth qualitative study.

Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (TOJQI)
Volume 13, Issue 1, January 2022: 329-335

Student satisfaction in undergoing Therapist and Yoga training at National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India: An in-depth qualitative study.

Professor (Dr.) Satya Lakshmi,¹ Dr Sathyanath D,² Dr Shrikanth Muralidharan³

Affiliations-

1. Director, National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India
2. Senior Medical Officer, National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India
3. Fellowship in Clinical Research Course Coordinator, National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India

Corresponding author-

Dr Shrikanth Muralidharan, Fellowship in Clinical Research Course Coordinator, National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India

Email id- shrikanthmuralidharan23@gmail.com

Abstract

Introduction:

The National Institute of Naturopathy (NIN), Pune, India has been running a course for training young adults to become professional therapists. Hence this paper is one such detailed attempt to explore the course outcome and its long term impact over 2 years; once the student passed out with the degree.

Material and methods:

A detailed in –depth interview was conducted on 20 participants (10 males and 10 females) who provided consent to participate in the study. The interview guide was prepared and approved from experts in qualitative research. The areas focused upon were- course work and any changes needed for the coming batches; job profile and satisfaction based on the training obtained; development in the overall personality and social skills of the student.

Results:

All the participants agreed that the training was job oriented. It was not difficult for them to procure a placement and the training gave them enough hands-on experience to adjust to any related job profile. It helped them to maintain documents, handle certain administrative issues and also have more confidence when they worked in commercial spas.

Conclusion:

The responses obtained was encouraging and serves as a basis to continue the curriculum in the same pattern for the coming batches.

Keywords: India, feedback, satisfaction, therapist

Introduction

A student's satisfaction is not related only to the teaching learning process but it also includes other factors;(K. Bell, 2021) specially related to the long term outcome of the taught course. Students' satisfaction is the key to the ranking of an institution and coming batches preferring the course and institution of choice.(A. R. Bell & Brooks, 2019) In India education and rankings are relatively new as compared to the West. The image of the institution is the strong predictor of student satisfaction rates.(Arambewela & Hall, 2009; Beerli Palacio et al., 2002; A. R. Bell & Brooks, 2019; K. Bell, 2021; DeWitz & Walsh, 2002) However while other factors did matter a lot for a better preference, campus environment, transport, extracurricular activities, social life and employment opportunities;(Arthur, 2020; Hanssen & Solvoll, 2015) Bell and Brooks suggested that teaching methodologies and also the organizational structure had a big impact on the outcome of satisfaction.(A. R. Bell & Brooks, 2018) There is a rising concern with regards to "tyranny of metrics".(Ball, 2012) Also an emerging trend is that students are just like customers' who expect a value for their money invested; which enables them to compete in the real world.(Frankham, 2017) Education should focus on making the student empowered, self-confident, worthy and with enhanced social capital and agency.(Leach, 2019) Students are actually behaving like customers and rationally judge the quality of the education being imparted.(Tsiligiris & Hill, 2021) Rationale judgements about the quality of education imparted may be overarching since it is a mixed bag of emotions and perceptions.(Stukalina, 2012) According to Bell and Reed, participation of students and their feedback is important for policy change and self-reflection.(K. Bell & Reed, 2021)

Backdrop of the study:

The National Institute of Naturopathy (NIN), Pune, India has been running a course for training young adults to become professional therapists. The course is aimed to provide training related to massage, acupressure, Yoga and hydrotherapy apart from exercise therapy. The course is a 12 months long certified; skill based course; which a student with a minimum of 10th grade pass can undertake to become a professional therapist or message expert. This course has been conducted since 2015 and has 80 intake of students per year. As a part of supporting the students; they are paid a monthly stipend of 5000 rupees. The fees for the entire course is 15000/-. Such courses have been run along the same lines as NIN, Pune. But there is seldom any course introspection reported for such allied skill based training in literature from Indian institutes. Hence this paper is one such detailed attempt to explore the course outcome and its long term impact over 2 years; once the student passed out with the degree.

Methodology

Ethical clearance was obtained before the start of the study from the Institution Ethics Committee. A detailed in-depth interview was conducted on 20 participants (10 males and 10 females) who provided consent to participate in the study. They have been working since 2 years across various states in India. The interview guide was prepared and approved from experts in qualitative research. The areas focused upon were- course work and any changes needed for the coming batches; job profile and satisfaction based on the training obtained; development in the overall personality and social skills of the student. Each interview lasted for 45 minutes and was conducted in local languages- Hindi and Marathi based on the preference of the participants. The entire study was completed from November 2021 to January 2022. The participants were not provided any incentive and a written permission was obtained from

Student satisfaction in undergoing Therapist and Yoga training at National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India: An in-depth qualitative study.

those who were accessible. For those working in distant places; the interview was telephonically arranged. The interview was conducted by one of the authors and it was audio recorded. NVIVO software was used for transcription and analysis. Themes based on the areas mentioned above were identified from the interviews.

Findings

1. Job satisfaction:

All the participants agreed that the training was job oriented. It was not difficult for them to procure a placement and the training gave them enough hands-on experience to adjust to any related job profile. The present job they worked in was much rewarding considering the pandemic in recent times and while comparing with their other friends and relatives. One said “**My engineering friends are struggling to keep up in spite of much investment and more years of studying. Thankfully; I didn't have to invest much and also time involved was less. So the course was an advantage for me; when I compare myself with them**”. No participant reported of any difficulty in finding placements after the degree was awarded. They reported that the staff and doctors at NIN, Pune were always happy to provide them with directions regarding openings available across different wellness centers and also share their own tips and experiences to learn from.

2. Learning by doing theory:

Since the training was varied and involved many aspects of therapy services; each one's job profile was not restricted to any one particular spa or clinic. It ranged from assisting in Yoga sessions to working in wellness centers with multiple facilities (all in one place). Another aspect which was identified was that each student was asked to undergo the therapies themselves to have a detailed understanding and ease of counselling the patients who are allocated to them, “...**since I myself took a steam bath and applied mud pack; I know what the patient may experience. So it becomes easy to explain to them that they may experience some discomfort. I can ask them to go to sleep and relax while the pack is being applied. So that way it helps me to have a better rapport with the patient. They are less anxious and apprehensive.**” The idea of learning by doing is an integral part of the training course which has an added advantage of improving skills and also adjusting at times; specific to certain patients, for example those who are handicapped or are with special needs like hearing impaired. All of them stated that they have learnt enough to even refer cases and handle those with extreme physical challenges; since they were all exposed to a variety of patients during their training period.

3. Personality development and professional behavior:

Public speaking and interaction was improved a lot due to English speaking classes held additional as a credit based training for the students. It helped them to maintain documents, handle certain administrative issues and also have more confidence when they worked in commercial spas. Overall there was a change in the personality identified by each of them. “**.I never knew to start a conversation before. But now, I can. We had to interact with patients during the course. We saw how the doctors spoke and learnt a lot from observation itself.**” Another similar statement was echoed where the participant said that this course changed their behavior for better; which was pointed

out by their family members and friends. **“Now my friends and relatives ask me about their health status and places where I can sort them out; I do...I also accompany them to hospitals and centers; so I know what to expect and able to grasp things much easily; related to health care”**. Of the 20 participants; 15 had enrolled for the course post their 10th standard completion. So their exposure to a new place and a new world of health care was mesmerizing. **“I have understood that I need to be more flexible. Some patients are challenging. So I can adjust accordingly. I have handled such cases during training. I am not shy, rather I can convince patients more than the physician himself to undergo message or other treatments.”** Some of them stated that their exposure to documentation process of patient details is proving handy in their working place. They know the medico legal implications of medical record maintenance. On an average each candidate earned around 20000 rupees minimum per month; with 7 hours of work shift. It also ensured enough time for their family and additional responsibilities; especially for the females.

4.Team work and participation:

The students are encouraged to form groups for discussion and sorting duty times and practical sessions. This has continued even after the course was over. **“ We still have our 2018 group intact. We discuss job options, newer techniques. In fact we actively watch videos on newer methods of providing acupressure, message or hydrotherapy related treatments. So that way we know what is happening at high end spas and we can recommend it to be included at our own workplace also.”**

5.Financial support given during the course tenure:

The major advantage pointed out by all the participants of undergoing the course was the financial support provided during the course. **“...it helped me to not ask money any more from my parents, so that way the course is good enough”**. This has helped them to pursue the course since they belonged to a poor socio- economic background.

6.Yoga as a medium of self-improvement:

Yoga is an integral part of the training. Not only are the students trained by the experts; but also they are allowed to take batches as trainers themselves to patients seeking Yoga therapy at NIN, campus. The participants mentioned it as a main reason for change in their personality. Yoga training sessions has encouraged all of them to make it as a part of their daily routine. **“Conducting Yoga sessions actually made me feel happy. I was also able to handle the patients well, teach them and it made me more tolerant...”** It was useful method to pass on tips of healthy life style practices through regular exercise and preventive therapies to avoid any form of diseases. Some of them had already started training their family members and friends with Yoga tips for daily practice.

7.Change in lifestyle practices:

Due to the course which was purely based on the principles of Naturopathy; lifestyle practices Natural diet and its health benefits was a part of the teaching curriculum. All of them stated that the course did give them a new insight into healthy eating practices. **“Since I was being taught about diet, I realized that so much of our eating practices are wrong, so I first changed for myself and then my family”**. This was echoed across all the participants. They shifted their diet from Non-vegetarianism to

Student satisfaction in undergoing Therapist and Yoga training at National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India: An in-depth qualitative study.

Vegetarianism. Also there was a drastic change with regards to consumption of fast food. Since most of them who joined the course were between 18 to 20 years; bringing out a change in their own behavioral pattern was easy and effective in the long run. NIN, Pune runs its own diet center with fresh and nutritious meal throughout the day and also provides evening meal at half the rate. This was observed to be beneficial to the students with regards to health as well as less burden on their pockets. **“We could have food whenever hungry. Also it was there at night, so we could complete our studies and have dinner; it reduces the pain of searching for outlets and travel to eat. Plus the cost is also less, we save money on this.”**

Discussion and Conclusion

The study outcome suggests that the initiative by NIN, Pune to run a course related to therapy and exercise was a success in the long run. During pandemic the participants were able to still continue working and earn a decent living, missed out by many; through home based therapies. Their satisfaction levels were not measured using a scale; since we believe that satisfaction may not necessarily reflect from the course curriculum but may be influenced by personal and professional commitments too. Kotler and Clarke (1987) define satisfaction as a state felt by a person who has experience performance or an outcome that fulfil his or her expectation.(Kotler P & RN, 1987) A recent report suggested that student satisfaction may not corroborate with learning and could be also an illusion of learning.(Carpenter et al., 2020) Feedbacks can always serve for revisiting the policy framework and course correction and hence this study was undertaken. Biesta suggested re-engaging with the question with regards to what exactly constitutes of good education.(Biesta, 2009) We agree that expectations change over time and with place. Hence satisfaction feedback reports need to be assessed with caution. Nevertheless we did not encounter any negative feedback or any suggestions with regards to teaching, learning, and environment or set up of the entire course from the students. Student satisfaction survey has been related to mostly in-house students and rarely focusses on the actual field response once the student enters the competitive world. His/her ability to sustain challenges is the true reflection of the success of any program. Hence rather than sticking to the age old practice of surveying students during the course work, we decided to ask those who had already finished the course and were in jobs at various set ups. Also there was no social desirability bias since they had already passed with a degree and had no obligations with the institution at present. From the practical perspective, we can deduce that overall the course was successful to train them for real world challenges. It was job oriented, more skillful and rewarding in terms of overall improvement in their personalities. These effects of social skills, English speaking, documentation, handling patients who needed additional care; were the hidden and indirect outcome based on the framework of the curriculum. Interestingly since they stated that they still continue to exchange ideas and look out for newer techniques; we achieved the task of making them lifelong learners. This alone ensures progress both personally as well as professionally. The purpose of starting the course by NIN, Pune was ensuring self-sufficiency in terms of job and financial assistance to such students. All of the students are still in touch with the medical doctors who trained and handled them. They also refer students to this course and keep sharing job opportunities with one another at regular intervals. The social skills of communication, conversations and making friends has made a permanent change to the overall personalities of the students undergoing this course.

Conclusion:

The present study focused on understanding the impact of the course training on the job satisfaction and overall development of the students. The responses obtained was encouraging and serves as a basis to continue the curriculum in the same pattern for the coming batches.

Suggestions

We encourage such feedbacks from other institutes too related to training of Therapists and Yoga experts for continual improvement.

References

1. Arambewela, R., & Hall, J. (2009). An empirical model of international student satisfaction. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 21(4), 555–569. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13555850910997599>
2. Arthur, L. (2020). Evaluating student satisfaction - restricting lecturer professionalism: outcomes of using the UK national student survey questionnaire for internal student evaluation of teaching. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 45(3), 331–344. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2019.1640863>
3. Ball, S. J. (2012). Performativity, Commodification and Commitment: An I-Spy Guide to the Neoliberal University. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 60(1), 17–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2011.650940>
4. Beerli Palacio, A., Díaz Meneses, G., & Pérez Pérez, P. J. (2002). The configuration of the university image and its relationship with the satisfaction of students. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 40(5), 486–505. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09578230210440311>
5. Bell, A. R., & Brooks, C. (2018). What makes students satisfied? A discussion and analysis of the UK's national student survey. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 42(8), 1118–1142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1349886>
6. Bell, A. R., & Brooks, C. (2019). Is There a 'Magic Link' Between Research Activity, Professional Teaching Qualifications and Student Satisfaction? *Higher Education Policy*, 32(2), 227–248. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-018-0081-0>
7. Bell, K. (2021). Increasing undergraduate student satisfaction in Higher Education: the importance of relational pedagogy. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1985980>
8. Bell, K., & Reed, M. (2021). The tree of participation: a new model for inclusive decision-making. *Community Development Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsab018>
9. Biesta, G. (2009). Good education in an age of measurement: on the need to reconnect with the question of purpose in education. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1), 33–46. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9064-9>
10. Carpenter, S. K., Witherby, A. E., & Tauber, S. K. (2020). On Students' (Mis)judgments of Learning and Teaching Effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 9(2), 137–151. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jarmac.2019.12.009>
11. DeWitz, S. J., & Walsh, W. B. (2002). Self-Efficacy and College Student Satisfaction. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 10(3), 315–326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10672702010003003>

Student satisfaction in undergoing Therapist and Yoga training at National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune, India: An in-depth qualitative study.

12. Frankham, J. (2017). Employability and higher education: the follies of the 'Productivity Challenge' in the Teaching Excellence Framework. *Journal of Education Policy*, 32(5), 628–641. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2016.1268271>
13. Hanssen, T.-E. S., & Solvoll, G. (2015). The importance of university facilities for student satisfaction at a Norwegian University. *Facilities*, 33(13/14), 744–759. <https://doi.org/10.1108/F-11-2014-0081>
14. Kotler P, & RN, C. (1987). *Marketing for health care organizations*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
15. Leach, T. (2019). Satisfied with what? Contested assumptions about student expectations and satisfaction in higher education. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 24(2–3), 155–172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2019.1596410>
16. Stukalina, Y. (2012). Addressing Service Quality Issues In Higher Education: The Educational Environment Evaluation From The Students' Perspective. *Technological and Economic Development of Economy*, 18(1), 84–98. <https://doi.org/10.3846/20294913.2012.658099>
17. Tsiligiris, V., & Hill, C. (2021). A prospective model for aligning educational quality and student experience in international higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 46(2), 228–244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1628203>