CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
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8.1 CONCLUSIONS

The questionnaire developed to measure student's satisfaction proved to be a fairly reliable instrument and factorially sound. It was noted while using it that educational factors could be classified in terms of educational content and educational context. The content-context dichotomy appeared to be empirically useful, although results differed from Herzberg et al. In the present study satisfaction scale was unipolar, so distinction between satisfaction and dissatisfaction could not be made.

Content factors were identifiable in terms of cognitive skills, recognition, personal growth, education itself, teacher competence, and non-cognitive skills, and context factors in terms of college policies and practices, interpersonal relationships, college environment, status and job opportunities. Content factors correlated positively among themselves, indicating interdependence of content factors. Presence of cognitive skills acted as reinforcer for the functioning of other content factors. Context factors showed low positive
relationships, suggesting that these factors were more likely to be affected by extraneous variables in the social conditions. Content factors were partially independent of context factors. Personal factors of demographic characteristics, achievement values and personality orientation showed low correlations with each other.

The results did not support Herzberg's contention that content factors will contribute more to satisfaction as compared to context factors. Both content and context factors together predicted satisfaction. It suggested that to derive maximum satisfaction both content and context factors should be emphasized equally. Factors of cognitive skills (content) and college policies (context) were the most important in predicting academic satisfaction, thus emphasizing the importance of curriculum and college policies and practices. Context factors contributed more to student performance than the content.

Personal factors alone did not predict academic satisfaction significantly, but its predictability in academic satisfaction was found to be greater, when combined either with content or context factors. This
implied that students background characteristics, achievement values and personality orientation were not sufficient enough to predict student satisfaction. Personal factors will function more effectively if curriculum was more challenging and college environment was healthy.

Content, context and personal factors together predicted satisfaction better than either of these taken singly, although not much different than contribution of content and context factors together. This indicated that content and context of education were important and personal factors will be equally useful in conditions where students are more motivated either by lower order needs/context factors or by higher needs/content. Greater satisfaction can be reinforced by providing congruency between students personal characteristics and college environment or education content. The entering of performance score in the regression equation containing factors of content, context and person did not result in higher prediction of satisfaction.

Personal factors affected student performance significantly but not so as compared to content or context factors. The predictability of personal factors was
higher when combined with context factors. This indicated that academic performance was more of a function of student's background and college environment, with less concern of educational content. Students coming from well educated homes, where emphasis is more on academic achievement will desire to have college environment conducive to the satisfaction of their achievement oriented behaviour. Of course, their performance will be better if they find a college environment congruent to the background characteristics.

A comparison of the interactive effects of content, context and personal factors on satisfaction and performance indicated that the predictability to academic satisfaction was greater than to student performance. There was significant increase of .23 in $R^2$. This meant that students' satisfaction depended more on challenging courses, good college environment which meet their needs. Hence, the satisfaction can be enhanced by creating favourable conditions in educational setting, whereas student performance was not only a function of content, context and personal factors but rather it depended on many more factors like students' ability, interest and attitudes. Personal factors are difficult to manipulate,
and these may work more effectively only in interaction with content and context factors. The addition of satisfaction score in the regression did not enhance the predictability of content, context and personal factors to performance.

Factors of content, context, person: if satisfied and contributed more to student performance as compared to either of these alone in various combinations. These accounted for 12 per cent of total variance. This suggested that if students satisfaction is derived from better educational content, good college environment, which meet their personal characteristics, it will increase their performance significantly.

The contribution of factors of content, context, and person and performance to satisfaction was greater than the contribution of factors of content, context and personal and satisfaction to student performance. This meant student's satisfaction was relatively more dependent upon reward system provided in terms of content, context and personal factors, whereas satisfaction of these factors will not contribute much to the student's performance. Results indicated 'U' shaped relationship between satisfaction and performance, implying that satisfaction did not lead to variation in students
performance. Performance was found to be unrelated to the satisfaction for large number of students. The relationship between satisfaction and performance seems to be dependent upon nature of rewarding system in-built in the educational and social system.

College type had significant impact on factors of context, satisfaction and student: performance. A good college provided better environment conducive to students' satisfaction and performance than the average or poor colleges. College type did not influence content and personal factors. Differences by sex and curriculum were not significant. An integrated theoretical perspective incorporating factors of content, context and person was more logical and meaningful in predicting academic satisfaction and performance.

8.2 IMPLICATIONS

The results of present study seems to have numerous implications for policy makers and programme administrators. Some of these may be listed as follows:

1. Students' satisfaction and performance are multidimensional behavioural outcomes. Its analysis and prediction should adopt a multi-method, multi-factor approach.

2. Factors of satisfaction and performance can be grouped into content, context and personal categories.
3. Colleges should be concerned with students' motivation to perform and students' satisfaction. Concern with performance is particularly understandable in the light of the increasingly competitive conditions for getting employment, while concern with student satisfaction is important to provide better personal and social development. An identification of relevant content, context and personal factors would seem useful for the administrators to suggest controls for avoiding students' unrest etc.

4. An identification of student characteristics and educational characteristics, would also be useful for the administrators in the selection of the students and to design the educational curriculum and college environment congruent to the students needs.

5. If the teachers know about the dominant orientations of their students, this information could be useful in adopting appropriate teaching methods and predicting the students' behaviour.

6. In the area of 'Student Choice' the knowledge of faculty, college environment, and courses, will help students to select colleges which might produce a fit with their own characteristics.

7. Colleges concerned with the selection and admission of the students, can ensure homogeneity in grouping by knowing the student characteristics. Colleges can create better environment suited to the students' needs.
8. If factors of satisfaction were viewed by educators as a primary criterion in designing educational contents, the students may find educational content and context more congruent with their personal characteristics and report a high degree of satisfaction.

9. The study suggested that content, context and personal factors together predicted satisfaction and performance much better than either of these alone. The programmers must therefore utilize this cue.

10. College policies were found to be the most important factors affecting students' satisfaction and performance. This suggested that more attention should be paid to college policies, departmental meetings with students to discuss policy concerning the students, seem to be quite appropriate for promoting understanding and clarity of goals and objectives. Suitable programmes can be drawn to involve them in thinking, planning and carrying out changes in college goals, syllabi and method of teaching.

11. Although it is difficult to bring changes in parents educational and economic status, but effective changes can be brought about in the college environment and in the course to meet the needs of the students coming from different backgrounds.
12. Students satisfaction was related to performance for a smaller number of students only. This suggests that administrators who wish to increase students performance, should increase the level of satisfaction among students by providing better reward system.

Colleges wish to use rewards as better context should select students on the basis of how important these rewards are to them. If better jobs is to be used as a rewarding criterion, for example, students who are motivated by a desire to get job should be selected. Similarly, if challenging courses are to be used students who desire to learn well should be selected.

13. The finding that type of college had significant effect on students' perception of context, overall satisfaction and performance, suggested the importance of providing good context (in terms of healthy college policies, adequate physical facilities, good faculty, more extra-curricular activities) in the average and low performing colleges to enhance student satisfaction and performance.

8.3 LIMITATIONS

Due to the limitations of time and other practical difficulties, common to most Ph.D. thesis the present investigation reflected quite a few shortcomings, of which the following appear to be obvious:
1. The sample consisted of only under-graduate students;

2. The sample consisted of only arts and science courses; and

3. A comparison by departments could not be made.

8.4 SUGGESTIONS

To make generalizations of these results possible, the following suggestions may be given:

1. In terms of future research on students' satisfaction it would be interesting to determine the importance of content, context and personal factors for two separate groups of satisfied and dissatisfied students. Melparn's study in industrial setting showed some significant relationship between level of satisfaction and importance of content and context factors.

2. There is need for further research to investigate the mediating effect of personal characteristics with content and context factors to discover optimal predictions.

3. This study had limited itself to college students, but it can be extended to school students, to test the generality of factors.

4. The present results can be further used to investigate the effect of educational levels on students satisfaction and performance. Students from postgraduate courses can be compared with the present sample. The satisfaction and performance patterns may differ at postgraduate level.
5. A longitudinal study may be done by following up the present students to see their levels of satisfaction and performance later at their jobs.

6. The questionnaire may be refined further, since the factor dimensions need to be confirmed by studies in educational setting.

7. The future research need to identify dimensionality of students satisfaction and academic performance and the specific conditions under which they are related. The importance of moderator variables which may influence the strength and even the direction of relationship between satisfaction and performance may be accounted.