

The role of teaching approaches in enhancing student retention: An assessment of student satisfaction at a comprehensive university in the Eastern Cape

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Abstract: This study investigates students' perceptions of teaching approaches and their impact on satisfaction within a higher education institution in South Africa. The study adopted Tinto's model of student engagement, which emphasizes the significance of academic and social integration in fostering student commitment and success. A total of 660 third-year students, selected through stratified random sampling, participated in the study. Data were collected using structured questionnaires to capture students' opinions on various teaching methods and satisfaction levels. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between teaching approaches and student satisfaction, with teaching approaches accounting for 68% of the variation in satisfaction. The study emphasizes the importance of both teacher-centered and student-centered teaching strategies in enhancing engagement and satisfaction. It recommends the adoption of innovative and flexible pedagogical approaches tailored to address diverse student needs. Institutions are advised to address campus-specific disparities and ensure equitable teaching quality. The study further emphasizes that fostering strong student-teacher relationships and providing ongoing professional development for educators are critical for improving teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. These insights are vital for creating supportive learning environments that enhance student satisfaction and promote academic success.

Keywords: Higher education, Pedagogical strategies, Teaching approaches, Student satisfaction, Tinto's model of student engagement.

1. Introduction and Context of the Study

In the higher education sector, student retention is a critical issue that universities around the world continually grapple with. Retention rates are a measure of student success and serve as an indicator of institutional effectiveness. According to Barbera, et al. [1] the retention of students, particularly in the early years of their studies, is a complex challenge influenced by multiple factors, including academic, social, and financial issues. One area that plays a pivotal role in determining whether students stay enrolled and complete their studies is the teaching approach employed by academic staff [2]. How content is delivered, the level of engagement fostered in the classroom, and the overall teaching strategies used can significantly impact the satisfaction of students with their learning experience, which in turn influences their likelihood of persisting through their academic journey [3].

In South Africa, student retention presents a significant challenge, particularly due to the deep-rooted socio-economic disparities and educational inequalities that continue to affect the country [4]. These disparities are further compounded by the diverse backgrounds of students entering higher education institutions, many of whom face additional barriers such as limited access to resources, inadequate preparation for tertiary-level education, and financial constraints [5]. Some universities in provinces such

as the Eastern Cape are a microcosm of these challenges. These institutions, which are distinct for offering a blend of academic and vocational programs, attract a wide and diverse student population. Among them are many first-generation university students who often lack the social and academic support systems available to their peers from more privileged backgrounds. For these students, traditional teaching methods may fall short of addressing their unique needs and circumstances. As a result, there is a growing recognition of the importance of adopting teaching approaches that are student-centered, inclusive, and adaptable. Such approaches emphasise active engagement, foster a sense of belonging, and are tailored to the diverse learning needs of students. In this context, rethinking teaching strategies is not just a pedagogical preference but a necessary response to the realities of South Africa's higher education environment.

Effective teaching approaches can foster a sense of belonging, increase student motivation, and enhance academic performance, all of which are vital factors in improving retention rates. However, despite the importance of teaching practices in influencing student retention, there remains limited empirical research that assesses the relationship between teaching approaches and student satisfaction, particularly within the context of universities in the Eastern Cape Province. This study seeks to fill this gap by assessing the role of various teaching approaches in enhancing student retention through the lens of student satisfaction at a comprehensive university in the Eastern Cape. The study aims to provide valuable insights into how teaching strategies can be optimised to improve academic outcomes and ensure that students remain satisfied and committed to their studies throughout their academic careers.

2. Problem Statement

Student retention remains a persistent challenge for universities in South Africa, particularly those located in historically disadvantaged regions such as the Eastern Cape. While several factors contribute to student attrition, the teaching approaches used in higher education classrooms are a key determinant of student engagement, satisfaction, and success [3]. At comprehensive universities that serve a diverse student body with varying academic preparedness, the need for effective, student-centered teaching approaches is even more pronounced. Yet, many students report dissatisfaction with traditional lecture-based models of instruction, which fail to meet their learning needs and contribute to high dropout rates.

Despite the availability of research on general factors affecting student retention, Aina, et al. [6] confirm there is a significant gap in understanding the specific impact of teaching approaches on student satisfaction and retention in comprehensive universities. Without a clear understanding of how various teaching methods affect student satisfaction, universities may struggle to implement the necessary pedagogical changes to support student success and improve retention rates. This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by evaluating the relationship between teaching approaches and student satisfaction at a university in the Eastern Cape. Through this research, the study aims to provide insights into how teaching practices can be adapted to meet student needs, enhance satisfaction, and improve student retention.

3. Theoretical Background

This study was underpinned by Tinto's Student Integration Model (SIM). This model was developed by Vincent Tinto in 1975 to understand the factors influencing student retention and dropout in higher education [7]. Inspired by Durkheim's theory of suicide, which emphasises the role of social integration in an individual's decision to remain part of a community, Tinto adapted this idea to the educational context. Tinto argued that a student's persistence or departure from a higher education institution depends on their academic and social integration into the institution [8]. Over time, Tinto refined this model to emphasise the importance of institutional support, active student engagement, and meaningful interactions between students and faculty [9].

The decision to use Tinto's model for this study is based on its relevance and applicability to retention challenges in higher education. First, it is one of the most widely recognised frameworks for analysing the factors influencing student retention [10]. It highlights the critical roles of academic and social

integration, aligning closely with the focus of this study on teaching approaches that foster engagement and satisfaction. The model has been validated in diverse educational contexts, making it a robust and evidence-based framework for examining retention strategies [11]. Its relevance is particularly significant in South Africa, where socio-economic disparities and educational inequalities present substantial barriers to student retention.

Adopting Tinto's model is important to this study as it emphasises the importance of creating environments where students feel academically and socially integrated. In comprehensive universities, such as those in the Eastern Cape, where many students come from disadvantaged and diverse backgrounds, academic integration can enhance student engagement and satisfaction with their learning experiences. Social integration, on the other hand, involves creating supportive and inclusive classroom environments that foster a sense of belonging. Institutions can address retention challenges by adopting Tinto's model, making it a valuable framework for assessing the role of teaching approaches in promoting satisfaction and persistence in higher education.

4. Literature Review

The literature review of this study will elaborate on students' satisfaction with the teaching approaches. It further investigated the teacher-centred and student-centred approaches to learning.

4.1. Satisfaction with Teaching Approaches

Teaching is a process that involves bringing about desirable changes in learners to achieve specific outcomes. The primary purpose of teaching at any level of education is to bring a fundamental change in the learner [12, 13]. Facilitation of the knowledge transmission process requires that the teacher apply appropriate teaching methods that best suit specific objectives and exit outcomes, as outlined by Ganyaupfu [14]. Adunola [15] indicates that to bring desirable changes in students, teaching methods used by educators should be best for the Ayeni [16], subject matter. Furthermore, Baradwaj and Pal [17] affirm that teaching methods work effectively mainly if they suit learners' needs since every learner interprets and responds to questions uniquely [18]. As such, alignment of teaching methods with students' needs and preferred learning influences students' academic attainments [19]. This study seeks to find the effect of teaching methods on student satisfaction in higher education.

This study is of the view that the most used teaching method in the college/university classroom today is teacher-centered as opposed to student-centered approach, mainly because the subject matter at the tertiary level requires higher-level abstraction skills that can only be satisfactorily delivered by teachers who have acquired mastery in that area. Baradwaj and Pal [17] aver that different teaching approaches used by lecturers can develop estimates of teacher effectiveness in producing student outcomes. Attafuah, et al. [20] suggest the need to adjust estimates either for individuals' backgrounds (within classrooms) or classroom composition (between classrooms), which increases equity concerning the context in which each teacher operates. The impact of teaching components on student learning can also depend on the type of outcomes measured, such as cognitive learning processes and students' learning contexts [21].

Until today, questions about the effectiveness of teaching methods on student learning have consistently raised considerable interest in the field of educational research [22]. Moreover, research on teaching and learning constantly endeavours to examine the extent to which different teaching methods enhance growth in student learning. Quite remarkably, regular poor academic performance by most students is fundamentally linked to the application of ineffective teaching methods by teachers to impart knowledge to learners [15]. Substantial research on the effectiveness of teaching methods indicates that the quality of teaching is often reflected by the achievements of learners.

Adunola [15] emphasises that for teaching methods to be effective, teachers must be proficient in a variety of strategies that address the complexity and depth of the concepts being taught. Ahmed, et al. [23] state that the quality of teaching and learning and the way they are improved impact students' retention and success rates. Mustafa [24] highlights seven principles for good practice in undergraduate

education, which keep retention rates high and ensure the sustainability of program courses. These include encouraging contact between students and faculty, developing reciprocity and cooperation among students, encouraging active learning, giving prompt feedback, emphasising time on task, communicating high expectations, and respecting diverse talents and ways of learning. The subsequent sections elaborate on the teacher-centred approach and learner-centred teaching approaches.

4.2. Teacher-Centered Approach

Sawant and Rizvi [25] define teacher-centred approaches as situations in which the teacher asserts control over the material that students study and how they study it, including when, where, how, and at what pace they learn it. In classes that would be considered teacher-centered, the teacher tends to be the most active person in the room and does most of the talking, for example, by lecturing, demonstrating concepts, reading aloud, or issuing instructions. At the same time, students spend most of their time sitting in desks, listening, taking notes, giving brief answers to questions that the teacher asks, or completing assignments and tests [26].

In addition, the approach is less practical, more theoretical, and memorising [27]. It does not apply activity-based learning to encourage students to learn real-life problems based on applied knowledge. Since the teacher controls the transmission and sharing of knowledge, the lecturer may attempt to maximise the delivery of information while minimising time and effort. As a result, both the interest and understanding of students may get lost. To address such challenges, Zakaria et al. [28] specified that teaching should not merely focus on dispensing rules, definitions and procedures for students to memorise, but should also actively engage students as primary participants.

A teacher who uses a teacher-focused strategy in a course conceives his teaching of that course in a limited way. There is coherence between a teacher's conception of teaching and his/her actual approach or behaviour. Consequently, if a teacher wants to change their teaching behaviour, they will need to reconsider their conceptions of teaching [29]. Studies such as [30], Nevgi et al. [31] and Lindblom-Ylänne, et al. [32] confirm the presence of teaching approaches in various contexts. In this setting, students either listen to their instructor or professor or may be asked to report on a topic to the class, as is the practice of many tertiary-level faculty. To ensure that the content being imparted is adequate, teacher-directed activities may be beneficial to an extent. Still, they could be considered lacking in some ways because they may not help them prepare for the reality shocks associated with real pre-service teaching. Walker [33] argues that a strong predictor for students' better outputs is instructional alignment or the linkage between the intended outcome, the instructional processes and the post-instructional assessment. Olivier, et al. [34] affirm that stronger linkages result in better alignment, leading to higher achievement. This suggests that a strong relationship between the teacher and the student is essential for achieving higher levels of student performance.

4.3. Learner-Centered Teaching Approach

One of the greatest challenges facing educators worldwide today is how to produce learners who are critical thinkers. In South Africa, the realisation that critical thinking is both an important life skill and educational concept gained prominence in 1995 when it was stated that "the Curriculum, teaching methods and textbooks at all levels and in all programmes of education and training, should encourage independent and critical thought" (RSA, 1997:10-12). This idea was translated into a plan of action when the development of critical thinking skills was adopted as one of the Critical Outcomes by the South African Qualifications Authority in 1997 [35]. The challenge is to ensure that all South Africans obtain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to become creative and critical thinkers. One way in which critical thinking can be fostered in the classroom is by applying learner-centered instruction and assessment

In contrast to teacher-centered learning, student-centered learning typically refers to forms of instruction that, for example, give students opportunities to lead learning activities, participate more actively in discussions, design their learning projects, explore topics that interest them, and generally

contribute to the design of their course of study [36]. Student-centered instruction is often associated with classrooms that feature desks arranged in circles or small groups (rather than rows of desks that face the teacher), with “self-guided” or “self-paced” learning, or with learning experiences that occur outside of traditional classroom settings [37]. Student-centered learning puts students' interests first, acknowledging student voice as central to the learning experience. In a student-centered classroom, students choose what they will learn, how they will learn, and how they will assess their learning [38].

There is a consensus that interactive as opposed to didactic teaching improves academic success and promotes the inclusion of learners who might feel like outsiders [39]. Student-centred learning is perceived as playing a more active role in their learning processes. Active learning is often associated with experiential, problem-based, and project-based learning, as well as other forms of collaborative learning, and is characterised by a reduced reliance on the large lecture format [40]. Table 1 presents a comparison between teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching approaches.

Table 1.

Comparison of Teacher-centered and Learner-centered paradigms.

Teacher-Centered Approach	Learner-Centered Approach
Knowledge is transmitted from the professor to the students.	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesising information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, problem-solving and so on
Students passively receive information	Students are actively involved.
Emphasis is on the acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address enduring and emerging issues and problems in real-life contexts.
The professor's role is to be the primary information giver and primary evaluator	The professor's role is to coach and facilitate Professor and students evaluate learning together
Teaching and assessing are separate	Teaching and assessing are intertwined
Assessment is used to monitor learning	Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning
Emphasis is on the right answers	Emphasis is on generating better questions and learning from errors
Desired learning is assessed indirectly using objectively scored tests	Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performances, portfolios, and the like
Focus is on a single discipline	The approach is compatible with interdisciplinary investigation
Culture is competitive and individualistic	Culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive
Only students are viewed as learners	Professor and students learn together

Source: Huba, et al. [41].

The teacher/traditional methods of the university educational process (lecture, explanation, exercise, etc.) are certainly important for professional development. On the contrary, competence, which is a student-based approach in the system of higher education, aims to increase attention to the effective and technological formation of professional competences [42]. Professional competence includes personal education that determines the productivity of professional tasks and consists of knowledge, skills and significant personal qualities, experiences and value orientations [43]. Student-centered outcomes include being able to interact constructively with teachers and peers, meet academic challenges and learn actively and collaboratively [36].

Woods and Copur-Gencturk [44] assert that in teacher-centered classrooms, control is of primary importance, and "authority is transmitted hierarchically", meaning that the teacher exerts control over the students. Critics of teacher-centeredness argue that such classrooms tend to value compliance over initiative and passive learners over active learners [45]. According to Murphy, et al. [46], for teachers to maintain control over students, instructional methods that promote a focus on the teacher are frequently used, such as lectures, guided discussions, demonstrations and “cookbook” labs Ghafar [45]. These forms of instruction lend themselves to having the teacher stand in the front of the classroom while all students work on the same task. In contrast, a constructivist/learner-centered teacher is interested in helping the child engage in problems and issues, search below the surface, try out various possible solutions or explanations and finally construct his or her own meaning [47]. In these classrooms,

teaching methods or strategies include reflective thinking, inquiry, exploratory discussions, role-playing, demonstrations, projects and simulation games [48].

In a learner-centered environment, design is consistent with evidence showing that learners use their current knowledge and beliefs to interpret new information [38]. Teaching and learning are not two distinct phenomena but are continuously interacting with each other. Furthermore, teaching does not automatically lead to learning or other changes as a result. The research on teaching approaches in higher education is very scarce. However, the only study reporting on the relations between approaches to teaching adopted by an individual teacher and approaches to learning adopted by his/her students is the one by Trigwell, et al. [49], in which they studied first-year chemistry and physics classes. This study found that when a teacher focused on their own actions or on transmitting knowledge, students were more likely to adopt a surface approach to learning, concentrating on the reproduction of information. However, when a teacher employed a more student-centered approach, students were more inclined to adopt a deep approach to learning, aiming for a greater understanding of the phenomena they were studying. Thus, a more sophisticated view of teaching amongst teachers seems to be associated with a more sophisticated view of learning amongst students. However, there is little evidence to show that quality teaching improves students' learning outcomes, which at a later stage will improve the student academic integration [50].

Another study by Kember and Gow (1994) stresses the importance of understanding the relationship between conceptions of teaching and the way courses are taught. Since a lecturer's teaching behaviour impacts the quality of student learning, and a teacher's approach is linked to their conception, teachers' conceptions of teaching can, indirectly, have a profound effect on students' learning outcomes. Today, most teachers apply the student-centered approach to promote interest, analytical research, critical thinking and enjoyment among students [51]. The teaching method is regarded as more effective since it does not centralise the flow of knowledge from the lecturer to the student Reigeluth and An [52]. According to Slavin [53] as cited in Ganyaupfu [14], the approach motivates goal-oriented behaviour among students; hence, it is highly effective in improving student achievement. According to Yakovleva and Yakovlev [42], the use of student-centered teaching methods encourages interest in the profession; promotes the efficient acquisition of training material; forms patterns of conduct; provides high motivation, strength, knowledge, team spirit and freedom of expression; and most importantly, contributes to the complex competences of future specialists. Institutions of higher learning apply different methods of teaching depending on the nature of the subject, the number of students, and the facilities available [38].

The various teaching methods explored in the text include the lecture method, training, case method, behavioural modelling, discussion, role play, and written assignments. The lecture method remains a cornerstone of higher education due to its cost-effectiveness, ability to cater to large student groups, and structured approach to content delivery [51]. In contrast, the training method emphasises active involvement and skill development, ensuring that students gain practical expertise and professional behaviours [24, 42]. The case method encourages critical thinking and problem-solving by analysing real or hypothetical scenarios, while behavioural modelling and discussion promote active student participation and the development of practical skills [25]. Role play provides an interactive and enjoyable learning experience, fostering deeper engagement with real-world situations [54]. Written assignments aid in organising knowledge and preparing students for exams, emphasising individual work and helping students assimilate facts effectively [55].

However, Doyle [50] notes that the effectiveness of teaching methods is influenced by context-related variables such as discipline, class size, student-teacher interactions, and assessment approaches. Researchers like Sinakou, et al. [56] emphasise the importance of considering these contextual factors when evaluating teaching methods, as they can significantly affect the outcomes of teaching practices. Biggs [57] sees the secret of high-quality teaching as ensuring that there is "alignment between what we want, how we teach and how we assess" in a system where all components address the same agenda. The researchers strongly believe that effectiveness in teaching promotes the development of high-order

learning processes, which eventually leads to high-achieving undergraduates. The study seeks to find out the effectiveness of teaching approaches applied by lecturers on student retention.

5. Research Methods

This section outlines the research methodology employed to explore students' perspectives on teaching methods and satisfaction. The study was conducted at a higher education institution (HEI) located in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. This HEI is a prominent and diverse institution, comprising four active campuses (A, B, C, and D), each with distinct characteristics, which contribute to its status as a large and well-rounded centre of learning. These campuses cater to a broad and varied student population, offering a wide range of academic programs across multiple disciplines. The institution plays a vital role in advancing higher education in the region and is committed to fostering academic excellence, inclusivity, and student engagement. This study utilised a quantitative research approach and a descriptive design to collect and analyse data. Quantitative research involves gathering numerical data for statistical analysis, facilitating objective measurement and the identification of patterns and relationships [58]. This approach was selected to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' views on teaching methods and academic engagement through the use of questionnaires. Hence, the following hypothesis was stated:

Ha: There is no relationship between student satisfaction and teaching approaches.

The study population included 6,600 third-year students from various faculties and campuses, from which 660 participants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaires served as the primary data collection tool due to their convenience and efficiency in gathering information from large groups of participants (Coppock & McClellan, 2019). These questionnaires were distributed to the selected third-year students, allowing them to share their opinions and perceptions on teaching methods and academic engagement. The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a widely utilised software for statistical analysis that offers tools for data manipulation, descriptive statistics, and inferential analysis [59]. Responses were entered into SPSS, and appropriate statistical tests were applied to identify relationships and patterns within the data.

Ethical considerations were upheld throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure they understood the research purpose and their rights. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by assigning unique identifiers to each questionnaire and securely storing the data. The study strictly adhered to ethical guidelines to safeguard the participants' privacy and well-being.

6. Presentation of Results

This section presents the results obtained from the questionnaire survey. After the data was analysed using SPSS, the following results were obtained:

6.1. Teaching Approaches and Student Satisfaction

The study investigates the students' perception of the teaching approaches and their satisfaction. The impact of teaching methods was observed through several items, including lecture methods used by lecturers, interaction between lecturers and students, punctuality by lecturers, and the use of information and communication technologies by lecturers. To determine the relationship of the observed variables, the study used a Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis to find out the relationship between a predictor variable of teaching approaches and the target variable of student satisfaction. The results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2.

Summary of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Showing Relationship between Teaching Approaches and Students' Satisfaction.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. D	R	Sig.	Remark
Teaching Approaches	648	28.171	5.295	0.680	0.000	Significant
Students' Satisfaction	648	167.849	33.689			

Table 2 reveals that there is a significant positive relationship between teaching approaches and students' satisfaction ($r = 0.68$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no relationship between student satisfaction and teaching approaches is not supported. The positive relationship implies that an increase in teaching approaches contributes to an increase in students' satisfaction and vice versa. This means that, among all possible factors influencing student satisfaction, teaching approaches alone explain 68% of the variance in student satisfaction.

A t-test on demographic variables of gender, campuses, residential status and source of funding was performed to establish their relationship with teaching approaches. The results are presented in Tables 3 to 6. Table 3 shows the findings between gender and the students' level of satisfaction with academic support.

Table 3.

The difference between male and female students satisfaction with teaching approaches

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.	Remark
Satisfaction with Teaching Appr.	Male	257	27.9961	5.21454	-0.709	648	0.479	NS
	Female	393	28.2977	5.36004				

Table 3 shows that gender has no significant influence on satisfaction with teaching approaches ($t = -0.71$; $df = 648$; $p > 0.05$). This means that gender has nothing to do with students' level of satisfaction with teaching approaches and their decision to stay within the institution.

Table 4 represents the t-test results performed to show the impact of campus on student satisfaction with teaching approaches.

Table 4.

Influence of Campus on satisfaction with teaching approaches

Campus		N	Mean	Std. D	F	Df	Sig.	Remark
Satisfaction with Teaching Approaches	Buffalo city	167	29.0299	5.05562	6.619	3, 646	.000	Sig.
	Butterworth	125	26.3920	4.90539				
	N.M.D.	332	28.3705	5.53359				
	Queenstown	26	28.8462	3.64079				

Table 4 reveals that campus has a significant influence on satisfaction with teaching approach ($F_{(3, 646)} = 6.62$; $p < 0.05$) where Buffalo City has the highest satisfaction means score (29.03), followed by Queenstown (28.84) followed by James H [60] and Butterworth has the lowest mean score (26.39). This means that the level of satisfaction with teaching approaches will be determined by the campus where the student is located. Clearly teaching methods used by four campuses are not the same.

Table 5 represents the t- test results performed to show the impact of residential status on student satisfaction with teaching approaches.

Table 5.
Influence of residential status on students areas of satisfaction

	Res. Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig.	Remark
Satisfaction with Teaching Appr.	on campus	323	28.1362	5.38747	-0.196	647	0.845	NS
	off campus	326	28.2178	5.22995				

Table 5 reveals that residential status has no significant influence on teaching approaches ($t = -0.20$; $df = 647$; $p > 0.05$). This implies that residential status does not influence the student satisfaction levels with teaching approaches. Based on the findings presented above, residential status does not matter to students' level of satisfaction with teaching approaches and their decision to stay within the institution.

A t- test was also performed to establish the impact of source of funding on student satisfaction levels with teaching approaches. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.
Influence of source of funding on teaching approaches.

		N	Mean	Std. D	F	Df	Sig.	Remark
Satisfaction with Teaching Approaches	Personal loan	19	27.0526	4.49041	1.645	5, 644	0.146	NS
	Scholarship	81	29.2346	5.22798				
	NSFAS	472	28.0487	5.22770				
	Self-financed	21	29.2857	5.83218				
	Parent/relatives	42	28.3810	5.54781				
	Others	15	25.8667	6.78093				

Table 6 shows that the source of funding has no significant influence on satisfaction with teaching approach ($F_{(5, 644)} = 1.65$; $p > 0.05$). Teaching approaches influence the level of student satisfaction irrespective of the source of funding received by the student.

7. Discussion of Results

The results show a significant positive relationship between teaching approaches and students' satisfaction ($r = 0.68$; $p < 0.05$). The results further reveal that teaching approaches account for 68% of student satisfaction, making it the most significant factor among all other potential influences. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no relationship between student satisfaction and teaching approaches is not supported. This is a sign of a positive significance finding because students reported being more satisfied with their experience if they had lecturers using teaching methods that suit learners' needs. The results further show that the demographic variables of gender, residential status and source of funding have no influence on satisfaction with teaching approaches. Campus shows a significant influence on satisfaction with teaching approaches. Based on the results, the campuses of the selected university are not the same; they differ greatly when it comes to their size, the type of campus and curriculum choices, such as a science emphasis, a more education-based, or a technical-based. Each of these factors helps in determining the university's characteristics, which, in turn, play an integral role in terms of the impact on the student with, and within, the surrounding environment. Depending on the institution type and size (for example, comparing campus A, which is very small with only one Faculty and Campus B, a very big campus with six faculties, the classroom environment will be structured differently, and the student outcomes will also be of a different nature. The classroom serves as a springboard for new relationships that will include the individual student as an integral part of the community at a college or university.

The findings align with the view that the quality of teaching and learning in higher education institutions significantly influences student satisfaction, as students often consider this when selecting a university Suarman, et al. [61]. Research by Theall and Franklin [62] emphasise that students are well-qualified to assess the productivity, informativeness, and general value of their learning experiences. While such opinions may not directly measure instructor or course effectiveness, they are valid indicators

of student satisfaction. Effective teaching is critical for fostering satisfaction, as it is linked to the thoughtful delivery of knowledge, diverse teaching strategies, and the creation of meaningful learning experiences. However, no single teaching method is universally effective, as teaching and learning processes are influenced by numerous factors [50, 63]. This highlights the need for educators to adopt a mix of teaching strategies tailored to the diverse needs of students to ensure comprehension, satisfaction, and success.

Modern higher education demands a shift from traditional teacher-centered approaches to more student-centered methods, where the focus is on meeting students' needs and fostering active engagement [64]. Building strong student-teacher relationships is essential for creating positive academic experiences and enhancing satisfaction levels [20]. Effective educators respect students' backgrounds, learning styles, and beliefs, using strategies such as differentiated instruction, open communication, and constructive feedback to promote growth [48, 65]. Additionally, fostering creativity, explaining lessons in plain language, and providing metacognitive training and self-assessment opportunities are vital for improving student outcomes and satisfaction. A well-structured course plan and the use of appropriate educational strategies enable comprehensive learning [45]. Ultimately, educators must embrace innovative approaches to address students' learning needs, enhance engagement, and reduce dropout rates.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that teaching approaches significantly influence students' satisfaction, making them the most critical factor in shaping positive student experiences. Findings from this study confirmed that students reported higher satisfaction levels when lecturers employed teaching methods tailored to their learning needs, highlighting the importance of effective pedagogical strategies. Furthermore, demographic variables such as gender, residential status, and source of funding were found to have no significant impact on satisfaction, while campus characteristics significantly influenced satisfaction levels. The distinct differences in campus size, curriculum focus, and faculty composition emphasise the role of institutional context in shaping student outcomes. These findings affirm the centrality of quality teaching in higher education and the need for institutions to address varying campus-specific dynamics to enhance the overall learning experience.

Based on these findings, higher education institutions should prioritise adopting diverse teaching approaches that align with learners' needs and preferences to enhance satisfaction and academic outcomes. Lecturers should be equipped with training and resources to implement innovative, flexible teaching methods, fostering active engagement and addressing diverse learning styles. More so, institutions should recognise and address campus-specific disparities by tailoring teaching strategies and resources to the unique needs of each campus environment. Ensuring consistency in teaching quality across campuses will help create equitable opportunities for students, regardless of their location or field of study. Finally, fostering strong student-teacher relationships and providing ongoing professional development for educators can further support effective teaching and improve student satisfaction.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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