Evaluating the Programs and Services Offered by the Student Affairs and Services Division in a State University

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Abstract: Student Affairs and Services offer many initiatives and support systems to improve student life and well-being. This descriptive survey evaluated Student Affairs and Services Division (SASD) services at a Philippine state university in the rural. A researcher-made questionnaire called Programs and Services Offered by Student Affairs and Services Survey was used to collect student data. Student welfare, student development, and institutional programs and services were the instrument's three domains, each with competency strands and assertions about SASD programs and services. Findings showed that SASD services were good overall and in each domain. Students ranked information and orientation, advice and counseling, career and job placement, and economic enterprise growth as good for student welfare but student handbook development as fair. Student activities, student government, leadership training, student discipline, and student publishing were good or very good for student development, according to student responders. Good institutional programs and services included admissions, scholarships and financial aid, culture and arts, and sports and development. Food, health, safety and security, multi-faith, student housing and residential, assistance for students with needs and PWD, and social and community involvement programs were good, while foreign/international services were fair. The study found that SASD programs and activities are well-implemented, providing possibilities for students' holistic development. The study suggested that the SASD strengthen the bUtlAk activity for student orientation and information dissemination and that units and colleges hold seminars, workshops, and conferences on student welfare and development.

1. Introduction

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Student Affairs and Services (SAS) has always been essentially a profession that voluntarily submits to recurrent review and ability assessment in order to guarantee the caliber of services provided. With several important departments under its umbrella, SAS's work subsequently involves gathering information that will be useful for assessing research and academic achievements in a school setting. These records included important demographic data as well as pertinent information on the needs of students for growth and support [26].

For instance, a number of policies have been put in place in the Philippines to control how SAS projects and activities are managed. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Memo Order No. 21 Series of 2006, titled "Guidelines in the implementation of student affairs services," contains the original SAS policies [27]. The CMO supports several offices and responsibilities that are included in SAS departments. Later revisions to this structure and the various duties held by SAS [28].

SAS is the services and programs in higher education institutions that are concerned with the academic support experiences of students in order to attain holistic development. It then falls into three categories when it comes to "academic support services": Student Welfare Services, Student Development Services, and Institutional Students Programs and Services [29].

In the Philippines, for instance, different higher education institutions are encouraged to perform research studies on SAS programs and to see through their diffusion and use by reading Article 10 of CMO No. 9 of CHED. An additional Article 11 Section 39 of the CMO specifies feedback systems for monitoring and evaluating SAS initiatives in order to determine their efficacy [30].

The field of student affairs and services (SAS) has historically been essentially one in which practitioners voluntarily submit to ongoing evaluation and capability assessment in order to guarantee the caliber of services provided, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [31].

2. Literature Review

Determining the competencies needed for the development of SAS professionals has also gained academic attention as a result of the growing emphasis on SAS studies. In one study, SAS professionals ranging from rank and file to high-ranking officials were questioned using the Delphi technique to determine the various theoretical knowledge, duties, and abilities expected of an entry-level SAS professional [5]. It was believed that the most important aspects of the job were engaging with pupils and helping them develop as individuals. Positive personal qualities and strong interpersonal skills greatly enhanced competence. With respect to theoretical knowledge, the three leading models were the Seven Vectors of Student Development by [7], the Moral Development model by [24], and Astin's Theory of Student Involvement.

When the quality of the information and knowledge that students receive in higher education is comparable to or higher than what they anticipated, it positively affects their minds, according to Albadawi and Salha [25]. In a similar spirit, Emiliani [9] emphasized that students' perceptions of their happiness are positively correlated with the quality of the educational services they receive. Consequently, according to Duque and Weeks [8], students' satisfaction is influenced by learning results, instructional quality, and support services.

The reputation of the university heavily influences decisions made by prospective students. University branding is an advanced form of advertising that can attract students, grab their interest, and make the school famous [3]. Meeting student demands and earning their faith in the institution's capacity to improve services are two important goals.

Student affairs services in this school apply Perry's theory of cognitive development to design programs, implement service learning, and organize various extracurricular activities that push students to think critically and creatively. The evaluation's activities and programs make sure that students' personalities grow even when services are delivered in a flexible way [14].

Yilmaz [23] argues that students experience both rational and emotional forms of contentment. The level of satisfaction felt by students is a measure of how well a university's instructional website is functioning. In order for schools to maximize their revenue, which they achieve through influencing and keeping students' behavioral attitudes and intents, satisfaction rating is an essential component.

The field of student affairs (SA) services regularly submits evaluations and assessments of competence to guarantee the service's quality [32]. In the event of a pandemic, the results of this study will help the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) execute its plan for the flexible delivery of student affairs and services to the country's many HEIs [33]. As a potent instrument for incorporating the institution's vision, purpose, aims, and objectives into the results in evaluating quality services, the research will be valuable to the University administration [34].

The assessment's subsequent use of the study's findings will help institutions provide better services to their students. Researchers interested in the long-term viability of student service performance evaluations at HEIs might use this work as a reference [35].

Mercado et al. [17] provided the main theoretical foundation for the study; they used a similar logic model in their policy study of the previous SA guidelines in CMO No. 21. series 2006, which was based on the current guidelines. Foundational requirements of the CMO No. 9 Series of 2013, which outlined the policies and standards expected within the increased

parameters, provided the independent variables of the study, which included student welfare, student development, and institutional programs and services. The goal of this study is to compare the various SAS programs based on how satisfied their student clients are with them, with client satisfaction serving as the dependent variable [36]. Students' happiness in SAS programs is thought to be affected by a conglomeration of factors, according to the conceptual paradigm, which includes student development, institutional applications and services, and student welfare.

Various Disciplines of Student Affairs and Services. "Acculturating curricula, improving teaching; addressing systemic inequities in enrollment patterns; addressing participation, success, and graduation outcomes; examining culture-fair assessment and evaluation procedures; ensuring equitable progression and learning outcomes; addressing retention issues; and ensuring the capacity of graduates to successfully negotiate and undertake careers of first-choice and social environmental surveys [38]" are some of the foci in SAS research and evaluation scholarship, according to the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's report "The Role of Student Affairs and Services in Higher Education" [37].

Straightforward explanations have not adequately represented the SAS's responsibilities. As student activism evolved, the SAS's responsibilities grew to accommodate students' diverse cultural backgrounds and political beliefs, which in turn allowed them to receive more personalized care [6]. As the workload of SAS officers increased, they discovered that technology helped them organize and promote student events.

One study aimed to determine students' perceptions of the SA directorate's service quality by examining the link between students' class levels and the frequency of their visits [21]. Using the SERVQUAL measure, researchers were able to gauge SAS service quality among a representative sample of students. Based on their research, Parasuraman et al. [19] developed a scale that measures five aspects of customer service: "assurance, empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and tangibles." According to the results, service perception decreases with increasing class level and rises with increasing visit frequency.

According to Major and Mangombe [15], the SAS is one of the many institutions that will need to adjust to the realities of multiculturalism, which are present in today's education system. In addition to enhancing classroom learning, the SAS's mission also includes ensuring the overall well-being of all students, guiding them toward positive social and cultural experiences, and delivering immersive socio-cultural immersion. Students from all walks of life need to be able to see this comprehensive effort. Multiculturalism and cross-cultural understanding are valuable in this context [39].

The assessment of SAS according to the CMO-proposed paradigm has been the subject of multiple investigations in the Philippines. By administering surveys to university students, professors, and administrators, Ibarrientos [13] made use of a quantitative research paradigm. Various performance metrics derived from the CMO mentioned above were crucial to the instrument's operation. The survey found that students had nothing but positive things to say about SAS overall and that the services were well-used. Findings from comparing the three groups' findings using a Kendall Coefficient of Concordance indicate that there is a substantial difference in the three groups' perceptions of SAS's functions. However, a policy analysis of SAS among HEIs in Bulacan was carried out by Mercado et al. [17]. With the exception of two departments mentioned in CMO—Student Housing and Students with Special Needs—the researchers discovered that SAS programs at chosen HEIs in Bulacan are "existent and implemented" and are applied to a "great extent," according to their analysis.

Students at the same university in the Philippines were found to be extremely satisfied with the services offered by the Student Affairs and Services department, according to another survey that aimed to assess student satisfaction with the same department [10]. The survey also highlighted that Admission Services had the greatest possible rating of "outstanding," while Sports Services was ranked as the lowest possible quality, with a grade of "Satisfactory." The results were "extremely satisfactory" in every category that was considered, including staff, infrastructure, and service quality [40].

One way to find out how well the actual program matches up with the blueprint is to do an implementation fidelity assessment. Sadly, the actual software that's used may vary. Poor results could be the consequence of an inefficient program or sloppy execution, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions regarding the program's efficacy [41]. Because of this, it is clear that conclusions regarding program efficacy and, by extension, student learning are more reliably drawn when implementation fidelity is considered as part of the outcomes evaluation process [42]. The ideas and procedures are relevant to academic programs as well, even though our instructional presentation of implementation fidelity centers on its significance in evaluating student affairs programs [11].

The SA is responsible for preparing students to be competent workers. This means the SA has a responsibility to help students get a head start in their professional lives. Examining job options for university students in the Midwest is one study that delves into this principle. In the context of this research, student employment means that students can act as fictitious workers for the SA department [2]. Findings indicate that various elements, including "length of employment, rank, sense of community, civic participation, and cultural awareness," serve as "strong predictors" of students' future professional aptitudes.

Their modification of Astin's student participation theory—an important component of SA operations is an intriguing finding from this study. Focusing pedagogy on the intended results of specific disciplines or programs is emphasized in this approach, which underlines the need for "connections between student involvement and outcomes" [2].

The field of student affairs is not new to the idea of assessment. Language in several foundational texts for the discipline (e.g., American Council on Education, 1937; 1949; in [4]) purposefully encourages practitioners to link evaluation to performance improvement. However, in reality, assessment is frequently seen as ad hoc and exclusive to some divisions. To add insult to injury, evaluation methods have failed to capture the all-encompassing character of professional work. A lot of people have found that evaluation leads to happy customers. Other people's conceptions of assessment have focused on things like student growth or learning outcomes [43]. The many facets of student affairs work, including service, growth, and learning, appear to have been under-represented in existing models. Therefore, it appears that there is a need for an all-encompassing evaluation framework that incorporates the various components of student affairs practise [44].

The majority of the student respondents are from higher education institutions in the Province of Laguna, according to Salandanan et al. [20]. The efficiency and efficacy of student affairs services are significantly correlated with the following areas of student affairs: information and orientation, guidance and counseling, student training, admissions, student organizations and activities, scholarships and financial assistance (SFA), and operations [45].

3. Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design to evaluate the programs and services offered by the SAS Division as assessed by the officially enrolled students of the university. A researcher-made questionnaire checklist titled Programs and Services Offered by Student Affairs and Services Survey was used to gather data from the respondents. The instrument consisted of three domains, and each domain had corresponding competency strands. In every strand were statements that focused on the programs and services offered by the SAS Division. The first domain is on student welfare, and the strands under this domain are as follows:

- Information and Orientation Services,
- Guidance and Counselling Services,
- Career and Job Placement Services,
- Economic Enterprise Development,
- Student Handbook Development and
- Alumni Relations Services.

The second domain pertains to student development, which covers:

- Student Activities,
- Student Organization and Activities,
- Leadership Training,
- Student Council/ Government,
- Student Discipline, and
- Student Publication.

The third domain is Institutional Programs and Services. The programs and services under this domain are as follows:

- Admissions Services,
- Scholarships and Financial Assistance,
- Food Services,
- Health Services,
- Safety and Security Services,
- Multi-faith Services,
- Foreign/ International Student Services,
- Services for Students with Needs and PWD,
- Cultural and Arts Programs,
- Sports and Development Programs and
- Social and Community Involvement Programs

The scores of an individual respondent in the questionnaire checklist were determined by adding the numerical equivalents of the options chosen, and then the mean and standard deviation were computed. This study transformed the means into a numerical scale with corresponding verbal descriptions.

Scale	Description
3-26-4.00	Very good
2.51-3.25	Good
1.76-2.50	Fair
1.00-1.75	Poor

4. Results and Discussion

The programs and services offered by SAS Division were ascertained in this study using the mean and standard deviation. Table 1 shows that the programs and services offered by the SASD were good, as shown in the overall mean score of 3.03 (SD =.41). When each of the programs and services of SAS was considered, the mean scores of each program and service were as follows: student welfare = 2.81 (SD =.45); student development = 3.13 (SD =.41); and institutional programs and services = 3.15 (SD =.38) and were all described as good.

The results typically imply that the different units in an organization provide a wide range of services to students. In the context of student affairs and services, "services offered" suggests various support and resources provided to students to enhance their academic and personal development. These services aim to create a supportive and enriching environment for students. It is also designed to support students in various aspects of their college experience, helping them to succeed academically, socially, and personally.

Table 1: Programs and Services Offered by Student Affairs and Services as an Entire Group

Academic support services	Mean	SD	Description
Student welfare	2.81	.45	Good
Student development	3.13	.41	Good
Institutional programs and services	3.15	.38	Good
Over-all Mean	3.03	.41	Good

Legend:

3.26 – 4.00 Very good
2.51 – 3.25 Good
1.76 – 2.50 Fair
1.00 – 1.75 Poor
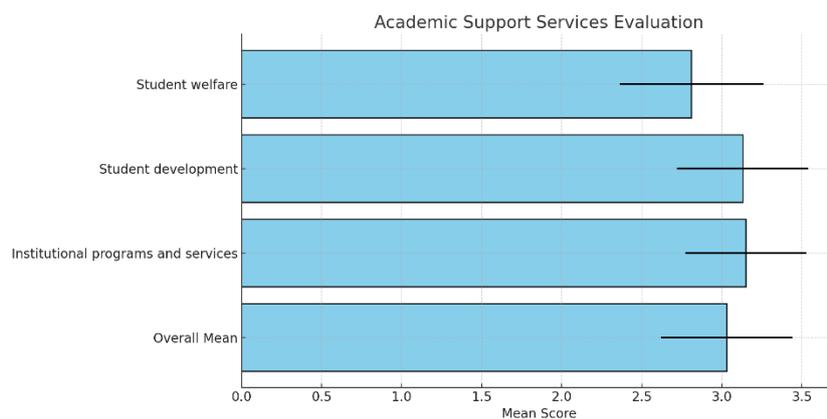
Figure 1: Academic Support Services Evaluation

In terms of student welfare, Table 2 presents the overall mean of 2.81, which is described as good, as observed in the student welfare. When each of the programs and services was considered, student respondents rated the following as good: information and orientation services = 3.05 (SD =.42); guidance and counseling services = 3.02 (SD =.40); career and job placement services

= 3.06 (SD =.37); and economic enterprise development = 2.76 (SD =.48) while fair in the area of student handbook development, the mean was 2.81 (SD =.45).

The results suggest that student respondents consider student welfare an essential part of creating a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes students' overall well-being and academic success. The university, in particular, offers services in a student welfare environment where students thrive both academically and personally (Figure 1).

According to Yesilyaprak [22], similar to guidance and counseling services, these programs and services help people get to know and understand themselves, accept their strengths and weaknesses, develop self-confidence, build healthy relationships, and achieve personal and social harmony.

Table 2: Programs and Services Offered by Student Affairs and Services as to Student Welfare

Student Welfare	Mean	SD	Description
Information and Orientation Services	3.05	.42	Good
Guidance and Counselling Services	3.02	.40	Good
Career and Job Placement Services	3.06	.37	Good
Economic Enterprise Development	2.76	.48	Good
Student Handbook Development	2.15	.56	Fair
Over-all Mean	2.81	.45	Good

Legend:
3.26 – 4.00   Very good
2.51 – 3.25   Good
1.76 – 2.50   Fair
1.00 – 1.75   Poor

As to student development presented in Table 3, an overall mean of 3.13 (SD =.41), described as good, was observed in this domain. When each of the strands of student development was considered, data revealed the following results: student activities = 3.45 (SD =.51) and student government = 3.36 (SD =.33) were very good, while student organizations and activities = 3.15 (SD =.33), leadership training = 2.98 (SD =.50), student discipline = 3.01 (SD =.44), and student publication = 2.81 (SD =.32) were good (Figure 2).
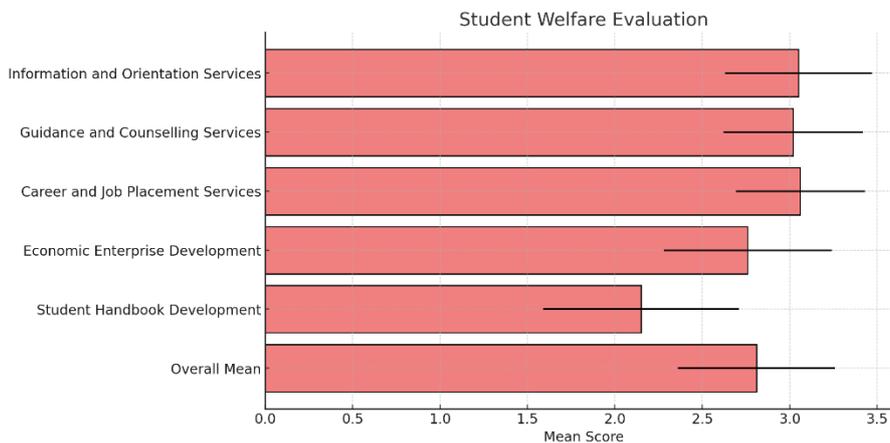
Figure 2: Student Welfare Evaluation

The results indicate that the university allows engagement and participation, a supportive environment, and diverse opportunities for the students. Having satisfactory programs and activities in student development means creating opportunities that foster the holistic growth of students. These elements help students develop not only academically but also socially, emotionally, and personally, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.

The results of the student development study corroborate those of McCluskey-Titus [16], who argued that students gain knowledge through participating in student organizations, which helps to assess and validate the effectiveness of offered programs and services. This aids in proving the worth of a certain service or program offered by student groups.

Because it provides students with important leadership, management, and expertise opportunities, it is a great way for them to grow as individuals [12]. Teamwork, determination, and citizenship were all positively impacted by student organization membership. Clubs on campus "often expedite theoretical and societal participation while pursuing a variety of activities," as Hall [12] puts it. Working independently does not give students the same exposure to and knowledge of a field as being involved in student organizations, claims Andrews [1].

Table 3: Programs and Services Offered by Student Affairs and Services as to Student Development

Student Development	Mean	SD	Description
Student Activities	3.45	.51	Very good
Student Organizations and Activities	3.15	.33	Good
Leadership training	2.98	.50	Good
Student Government	3.36	.33	Very good
Student Discipline	3.01	.44	Good
Student Publication	2.81	.32	Good
Over-all Mean	3.13	.41	Good

Legend:

3.26 – 4.00   Very good
2.51 – 3.25   Good
1.76 – 2.50   Fair
1.00 – 1.75   Poor

When the domain of institutional programs and services in Table 4 was considered, the programs and services described as very good were as follows: admission services = 3.32 (SD =.45), scholarships and financial assistance = 3.61 (SD =.25), culture and arts programs = 3.48 (SD =.28), sports and development programs = 3.58 (SD =.42). Meanwhile, the following programs and services were described as good: food services = 3.03 (SD=.29), health services = 3.16 (SD=.34), safety and security services = 3.18 (SD=.39), multi-faith services = 3.00 (SD=.42), student housing and residential services = 2.87 (SD=.37), services for students with needs and PWD = 2.99 (SD=.36), social and community involvement programs = 3.21 (SD=.46), while foreign/international services with an indicated mean of 2.35 (SD=.55) were fair (Figure 3).
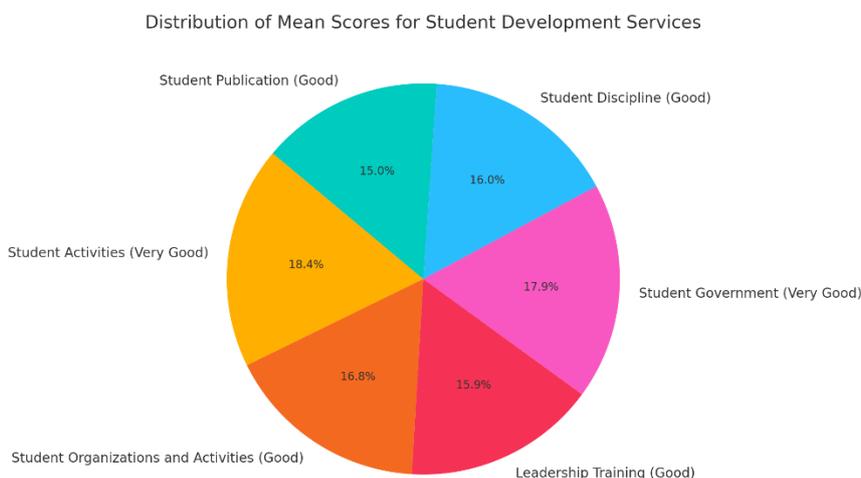
Figure 3: Mean Score distribution for Student Development Services

The findings suggest that the institutional programs and services in the university are characterized by several key attributes, such as clear mission and goals, collaboration and partnership, innovation and adaptability, and a student-centered approach, among others, that ensure they effectively support the institution's mission and enhance the overall experience for its stakeholders. By incorporating these attributes, institutions can develop programs and services that significantly contribute to the success and well-being of their students and the broader community.
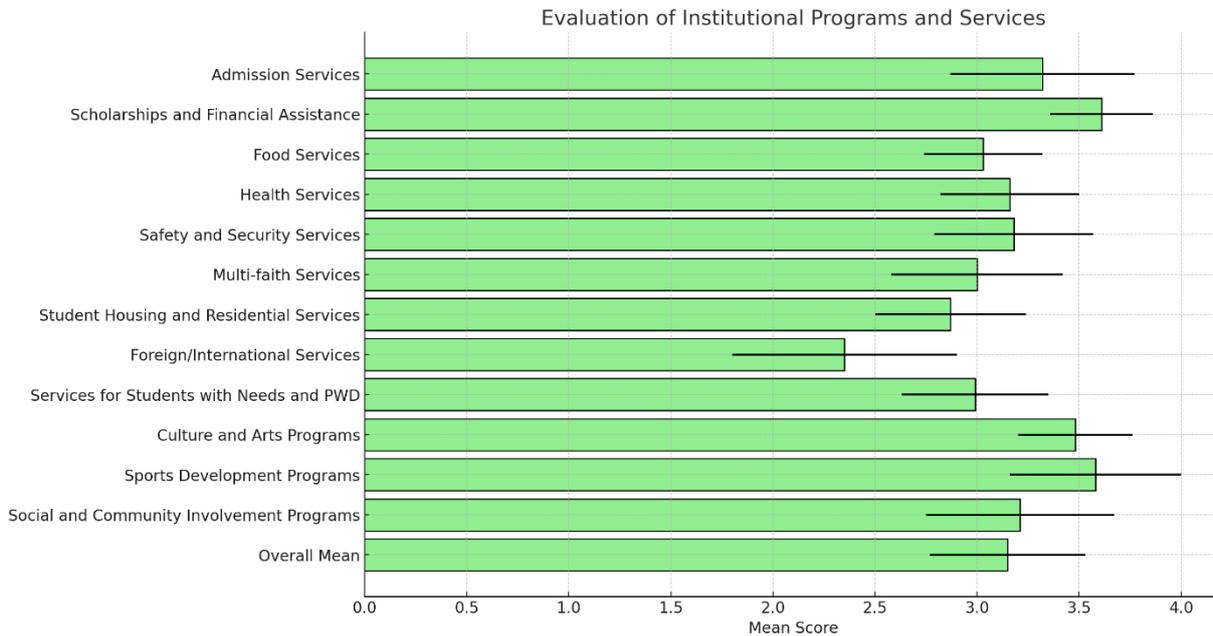
Table 4: Programs and Services Offered by Student Affairs and Services as to Institutional Programs and Services

Institutional Programs and Services	Mean	SD	Description
Admission Services	3.32	.45	Very good
Scholarships and Financial Assistance	3.61	.25	Very good
Food Services	3.03	.29	Good
Health Services	3.16	.34	Good
Safety and Security Services	3.18	.39	Good
Multi-faith Services	3.00	.42	Good
Student Housing and Residential Services	2.87	.37	Good
Foreign/International Services	2.35	.55	Fair
Services for Students with Needs and PWD	2.99	.36	Good
Culture and Arts Programs	3.48	.28	Very good
Sports Development Programs	3.58	.42	Very good
Social and Community Involvement Programs	3.21	.46	Good
Over-all Mean	3.15	.38	Good

Legend:

3.26 – 4.00 Very good
2.51 – 3.25 Good
1.76 – 2.50 Fair
1.00 – 1.75 Poor

In the context of admissions services, Orr [18] argues that a fair system should give students opportunities for success that are more weighted than their socioeconomic position. Because of this, admissions procedures are vital in addressing and resolving student injustices (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Evaluation of Institutional Programs and Services

In addition, a well-functioning admissions process finds the right college or university program for each student based on their interests and talents. It also allows for changes to study habits that are in step with the ever-evolving demands of both society and the job market.

5. Conclusion

The student respondents gave a positive evaluation of the programs and services offered by the Student Affairs and Services Division (SASD), reflecting its effectiveness in promoting student growth and development. SASD's initiatives provide valuable opportunities that support students' holistic growth, which includes not only academic success but also personal development across multiple dimensions. The programs and services are carefully implemented across three primary areas: student welfare services, student development services, and institutional programs and services. This structured approach helps ensure the well-being of students, enhances their potential for personal growth, and aligns with their academic goals. Furthermore, SASD programs and services fulfill a vital role in supporting students' physical, emotional, moral, spiritual, and intellectual development, contributing directly or indirectly to their overall educational journey. Through these programs, students are equipped to pursue academic excellence while developing life skills and values essential for future success. Programs focused on student welfare provide foundational support, while student development services foster leadership and responsibility, and institutional programs offer additional resources that encourage community involvement. Ultimately, SASD's commitment to student success is evident in its multifaceted approach, which not only addresses immediate academic needs but also prepares students for long-term success in both their personal and professional lives. This comprehensive support framework enables students to thrive within and beyond the academic environment, enhancing their overall educational experience.

5.1. Recommendation

In view of the findings, the following are recommended: In order to determine if SAS' programs and services are meeting the requirements and expectations of 21st-century learners, key officials of the University, Unit heads of the SAS Division, and other important stakeholders should regularly review and monitor the programs and services of SASD. Students who are interested in achieving both academic and personal success should think about actively engaging in the many SAS services and initiatives. Hence, these departments should periodically assess their current programs and services to see if they align with the university's mission and goals of producing well-rounded graduates.

It is necessary to do a more thorough analysis of the SAS Division's programs and services, taking into account additional factors that might have an impact on how effectively and efficiently SAS delivers its programs and services. In order to address relevant interventions for the students, the SASD should consistently deliver the student assessment instruments through the guidance and counseling unit. In order to address mental health difficulties, it is also recommended that regular synchronous or asynchronous mental health promotion programs be conducted among students. The SASD should take into account frequent student orientation and information distribution through various units, including bUtlAk and other programs and activities. Regular implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of pertinent seminars, workshops, and conferences pertaining to the welfare and development of students is vital.

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