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Examining The Educational Learning Environment Through The Lens of Students

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Abstract

Ensuring high-quality educational experiences for students requires understanding their perspectives of the learning environment. However, studies examining gender differences in perceptions are limited. This study employed a cross-sectional survey design using the validated DREEM instrument. A sample of 131 students rated domains like learning, teaching, achievement and atmosphere. Students reported moderately positive overall views. Mean ratings ranged from 3.46-3.81 on a 5-point scale, indicating aspects were generally favorable while some opportunities for improvement also emerged. However, females expressed slightly more favorable opinions than males across domains. The findings provide valuable insights into People's Campus' learning environment. Addressing gaps through evidence-based initiatives focused on gender equity can help optimize outcomes for all students. Regular assessments maintaining responsiveness to evolving student needs are recommended. This research contributes novel local data evaluating student experiences and potential disparities through a gender lens.

***Keywords**:* Academic, Education, Learning, Students

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1. Introduction

The learning environment encompasses the diverse physical, social, and academic contexts in which students engage in the learning process (Rusticus, Pashootan, & Mah, 2023; Dhanapala, 2021). It goes beyond the traditional classroom to include the overall culture and community within a school, program, or institution. Factors such as the quality of teaching methods, class sizes, available resources, curriculum design, assessment practices, leadership styles, and relationship dynamics all interconnect to shape a student's experiences and perceptions of their environment (Kamran, Kanwal, Afzal, & Rafiq, 2023). Research indicates that a positive learning environment, one that supports active participation, encourages intellectual growth, and fosters a sense of belonging, can deeply impact student development outcomes such as motivation, self-efficacy, mental wellness, academic achievement, and retention (Munna & Kalam, 2021). While foundational components like adequate facilities and access to materials matter, the relational elements of the learning environment centered on student-teacher and peer interactions are also critical for building a collaborative culture of learning. It is a dynamic multi-dimensional concept influencing how students engage with education (Amerstorfer & Münster-Kistner, 2021).

Research into the realm of learning environments holds great importance, as it provides crucial insights into how contextual conditions surrounding the education process can influence student outcomes. Understanding these impacts through empirical investigation allows institutions to make evidence-based decisions regarding strategic priority-setting, resource allocation, policy formulation, and practices aimed at enhancing the overall student experience (Darling-Hammond, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020). By regularly assessing the dynamic interplay between physical, academic, social and emotional components that define distinct learning communities, schools and universities can remain acutely attuned to evolving needs and maintain a culture of continuous improvement. Comparative studies conducted across different educational contexts through standardized tools offer opportunities to benchmark performance as well as identify and replicate proven strategies (Bingham, Dean, & Castillo, 2019). Such global

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sharing of best practices in cultivating optimal environments has the potential to lift standards across diverse settings worldwide. In this manner, ongoing scholarly inquiry into multi-dimensional learning environments contributes significantly towards maximizing student success, achievement and well-being.

Based on these considerations, it is important to examine the learning environment at People's Campus (PEC). As a pioneering nonprofit institution committed to quality yet affordable management education, understanding PEC's current realities from the student perspective could guide strategic efforts to uphold high standards accordingly over the long term. Linking above statement following objective was set to measure the learning environment of people's campus.

- To examine students' perceptions on various factors of the educational learning environment
- To investigate educational learning environment differences in mean perception scores between female and male students.

2. Literature Review

The learning environment is a critical aspect of education, with various studies conducted to improve it, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era. A study by Azizah et al. (2024) proposes the implementation of new Self-Organized Learning Environments (SOLEs) to address learning loss, particularly in English language learning, by employing a systematic review of relevant literature and analyzing the effectiveness of SOLEs in nurturing students who experienced learning loss. The study explores the evolving new role of teachers within SOLEs, the integration of SOLEs in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy, and the utilization of digital applications to enhance language-focused SOLE practices.

A bibliometric analysis by Raj et al. (2024) reveals that training, career choice, curriculum, self-employment, student psychology, better job opportunity, learning environment, and innovation are the most discussed in the vocational education and entrepreneurship literature. The study also develops an integrated framework that could benefit various vocations. These studies contribute valuable knowledge to the ongoing discourse on

educational recovery, with implications for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders invested in creating adaptive and effective learning environments.

Another study by Farzana (2023) investigates the feasibility of Content-Based Instruction (CBI) approaches for teaching literature in the context of EFL in Bangladesh. The study builds an environment in which students actively participate in literary conversations to acquire grammatical aspects of the target language and use them as a platform for the production of meaningful communication by combining form-focused and literature-based strategies. The study integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods for data analysis and concludes that CBI methodologies generate positive outcomes and may be utilized as an effective approach to teaching literature to EFL students in Bangladesh.

In the context of schools, managing the learning environment is crucial for improved quality education. A study by Eme et al. (2023) examines managing the learning environment in schools for improved quality education, focusing on principals and their responsibilities concerning the educational managerial conception. The study explains the various components of the learning environment and how they can be managed to produce an acceptable learning environment, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era.

A case study by Solovieva et al. (2022) took the project-based learning approach a little further by directly involving students as co-researchers in an ongoing research project in a higher education institution in Sharjah. The study found that the difference between the final grades of students in the project and non-project groups was statistically significant in 2020 and in 2021, indicating the effectiveness of this approach.

A study by salleh et al. (2022) in 2022 identified whether learning flexibility and environment will influence undergraduate students' online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia. The study found that there are significant relationships between learning flexibility, environment, and online learning, and that gender has a significant difference on online learning outcomes among students.

While much research has evaluated learning environments. However, this study aims to fill that void by specifically analyzing perceptions through a gender lens. Insights into

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gendered perspectives can illuminate nuances formerly overlooked. The findings will add new dimension to existing understanding of factors shaping distinct student subgroups.

3. Research Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design with a cross-sectional time horizon to assess students' perceptions. This approach allowed collecting primary data at one point in time to describe the current situation.

Population and Sampling

The target population comprised BBM and BBA students from People's campus. A convenience sampling technique was used to select 131 students. This non-probability method provided readily available participants for data collection.

Data Collection Tool

A standardized and validated questionnaire called DREEM (Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure) was adopted to collect primary data on students' perceptions. It is a reliable tool commonly used in medical education research.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from participants by attaching a consent page to the questionnaire. Confidentiality and anonymity of responses was maintained. Participation was voluntary without any coercion.

Reliability

Internal consistency as a reliability measure was calculated for the DREEM instrument using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Acceptable reliability was established confirming the tool's psychometric properties.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.838	33

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4. Results

Demographic Information

The study collected data from a total of 131 respondents studying at People's Campus. In terms of gender distribution, the majority of respondents were female, constituting 74% or 97 students. Meanwhile, 34 respondents or 26% were male. When analyzed by course of study, a near even split was seen with 66 respondents or 50.4% enrolled in the BBA program and 65 or 49.6% studying BBM. Regarding semester of study, the highest response came from third semester students at 44 or 33.6%. Next were fourth semester at 35 or 26.7% and sixth semester at 31 or 23.7%. The remaining 21 or 16% were in seventh semester. Overall, the respondent profile provided a good representation across gender, program of study and academic level to gather diverse perspectives on the learning environment from the student community at People's Campus.

Student's perception on learning

Table 1 Perception of students on learning

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel motivated to engage in class discussions.	3.8626	.90097
The instruction prioritizes the needs of students.	3.6489	.86757
Efforts are made to enhance my skills.	3.6641	1.03486
The teaching remains on target.	4.0611	.87491
My self-assurance is fostered by the instruction.	3.8168	.87532
Class time is utilized effectively.	3.8550	.75572
The course objectives are transparent to me.	3.8015	.78857
I am prompted to take an active role in my learning.	3.7939	.96650

Note. From Field Survey, 2024

Data provides the mean and standard deviation for students' perceptions in several areas related to their learning. Specifically, it examines how motivated students feel to engage in class discussions, whether instruction prioritizes student needs, if efforts are made to enhance skills, how on target the teaching remains, how self-assurance is fostered, the effective use of class time, the transparency of course objectives, and if students are prompted to take an active role. Across all dimensions, the average student response

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trended positively towards agreement, with means ranging from 3.6489 to 4.0611 on a 5-point scale. Perception that teaching remains on target received the highest mean of 4.0611. While views were generally favorable, there was some variability in individual responses as indicated by the standard deviations ranging from .75572 to 1.03486.

Students Perception on teachers

Table 2: Perception of students on teachers

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
The teachers are knowledgeable.	3.8244	1.13328
They teach based on research.	3.7405	.80944
They help me learn practical skills.	3.6031	.95014
They give good feedback.	3.7405	.97340
They offer helpful criticism.	3.5573	.91282
They use clear examples.	3.7863	1.03781
They're always ready for class.	3.9695	.77399

Note. From Field Survey, 2024

Above table examines students' views on how knowledgeable teachers are, whether teachers deliver research-led teaching, help develop practical skills, provide good feedback, give constructive criticism, use clear examples, and are well prepared for classes. Across all areas, students responded favorably toward teachers, with means above 3.5573 on a 5-point scale. Being well prepared for classes received the highest mean rating of 3.9695. However, there was some variation in individual responses as evidenced by the standard deviations ranging from .77399 to 1.13328. Overall, results indicate students generally hold positive perceptions of their teachers' abilities and competencies. At the same time, areas like providing constructive criticism and demonstrating knowledge had slightly larger standard deviations, suggesting potential for improvement.

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Student's perception on academic achievement

Table 3: Students perception on academic achievement

Descriptive Statistics		
	Mean	Std. Deviation
The strategies I used to learn before still help me now.	3.2748	.96120
I feel sure I'll pass this year.	3.8168	1.02883
The teaching boosts my confidence.	3.8244	.88995
What I studied last year prepared me well for this year.	3.3359	.89107
I can remember everything I need to.	3.2443	.98521
I've gained knowledge about scientific research methods.	3.3130	.98515
My ability to solve problems is improving.	3.3282	1.01104
Most of what I'm learning seems useful for a career in management.	3.5496	.99393

Note. From Field Survey, 2024

The students at People's Campus reported moderately positive perceptions regarding their academic achievement. They felt that the learning strategies they used previously were still helpful, with a mean rating of 3.27. Their confidence in passing this academic year was high, rated at 3.82 on average. The teaching methods effectively boosted the students' confidence, receiving a mean of 3.82 as well. However, what they studied in the previous year only somewhat prepared them for the current year, averaging 3.33. Their ability to remember everything needed was slightly lower at 3.24. Students indicated acquiring knowledge about research methods to some extent, rated at 3.31. Their problem-solving skills were perceived as improving to a moderate degree with a mean of 3.32. Finally, most of what they are learning seemed useful for a management career, achieving the highest average of 3.55. In summary, the students held a generally favorable view of their academic achievement and progress across various course-related aspects.

Perception on atmosphere

Table 4 Students perception on learning atmosphere

Descriptive Statistics

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	Mean	Std. Deviation
Classes have a relaxed atmosphere.	3.3053	1.03696
The course schedule is well organized.	3.5802	1.08808
Lectures are relaxed.	3.3206	1.03973
I can improve my interpersonal skills.	3.6336	1.00924
I feel socially at ease in class.	3.6183	.89836
Seminars and tutorials have a relaxed atmosphere.	3.4351	1.02356
I can concentrate easily.	3.4198	.88539
The fun of the course is more than the stress.	3.3969	.97412
The atmosphere encourages me to learn.	3.5649	.88665
I can ask the questions I need to.	3.4504	1.04671

Note. From Field Survey, 2024

The descriptive statistics revealed the students' moderate views regarding various aspects of the learning atmosphere at People's Campus. They found the class atmosphere to be somewhat relaxed, with a mean of 3.31. The course schedule was well organized according to an average rating of 3.58. Lectures were also relaxed to a similar degree of 3.32 on average. The students perceived they could improve their interpersonal skills to a good extent, reflected by a mean of 3.63. They felt socially at ease in class at 3.62 on average. Seminars and tutorials were moderately relaxed with a mean score of 3.44. Students could concentrate easily to a moderate level of 3.42. The fun of the courses outweighed the stress slightly as per a 3.40 mean. The atmosphere was deemed as encouraging learning to some degree, averaging 3.56. Posing questions did not seem to be an issue based on a mean of 3.45. Overall, while not highly positive, the students' responses indicated a reasonably conducive atmosphere for learning on campus.

Summary of educational learning environment

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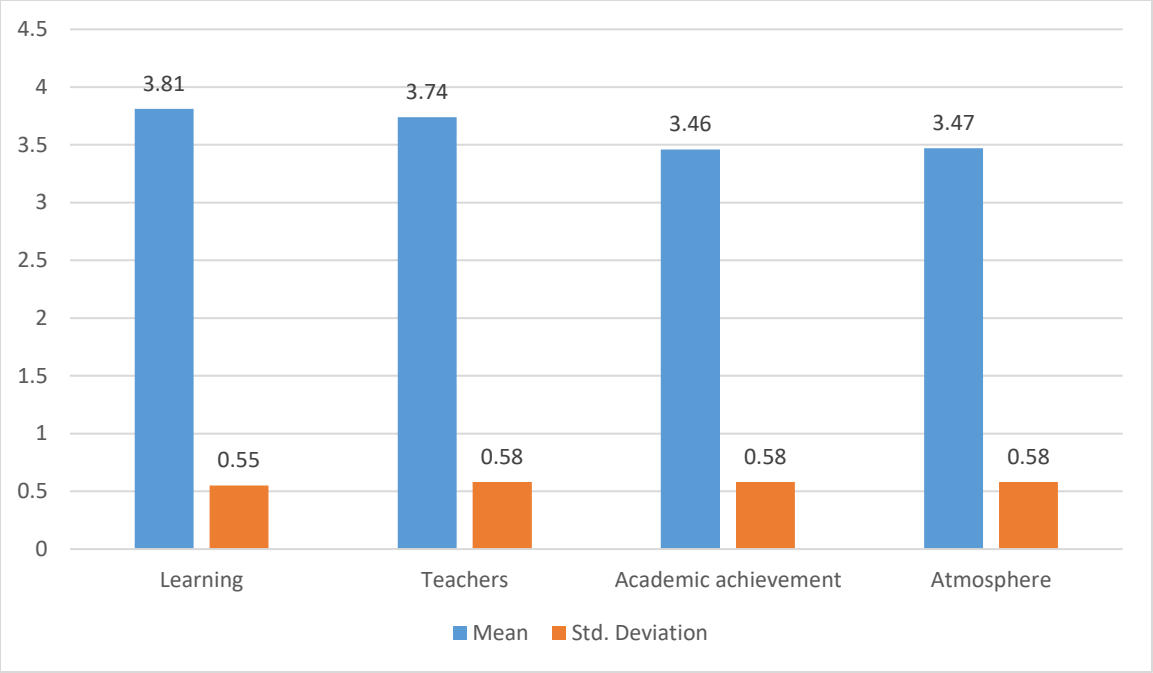

Figure 1: Educational learning environment

The survey captured students' views on four key domains pertaining to the learning environment - learning, teachers, academic achievement, and atmosphere. Across all 131 respondents, perceptions ranged from somewhat positive to positive. For the learning domain, responses averaged 3.81 out of 5, indicating students moderately agreed their learning needs were met. Teachers received a mean rating of 3.75, reflecting students' overall agreement that instruction was conducive. In terms of academic achievement, the mean was 3.46, showing students somewhat agreed with statements related to their progress and confidence. The atmosphere domain obtained a mean perception of 3.47, suggesting students somewhat concurred the surroundings supported their education. While means were above average for all areas, they were not greatly high. In summary, students held a reasonably favorable but measured opinion of People's Campus' learning environment when considering aspects such as instruction quality, scholarly development, and contextual factors together.

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Mean perception scores between female and male students.

Table 5: Perception on educational environment between male and female

Gender * education					
Measure: learning					
Gender	Education	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Female	Perception on learning	3.899	.054	3.792	4.007
	Perception on teachers	3.772	.059	3.654	3.889
	perception on Academic achievement	3.466	.059	3.349	3.584
	Perception on atmosphere	3.453	.060	3.334	3.571
Male	Perception on learning	3.566	.091	3.385	3.747
	Perception on teachers	3.672	.100	3.474	3.871
	perception on Academic achievement	3.445	.100	3.247	3.643
	Perception on atmosphere	3.529	.101	3.330	3.729

Note. From Field Survey, 2024

The results show some differences in mean perception scores between female and male students regarding the four key domains of the learning environment. Female students reported slightly higher ratings of the learning domain, with a mean of 3.899 compared to 3.566 for males. Their perception of teachers was also higher at 3.772 versus 3.672. For academic achievement, females gave an average rating of 3.466 while males rated it 3.445. Similarly, females perceived the atmosphere more positively at 3.453 mean compared to 3.529 by males. While the observed differences may not be statistically significant, the results indicate female students generally viewed the learning environment in a more favorable light across all domains. Their mean perceptions exceeded those of male students, suggesting females were somewhat more satisfied than males regarding factors such as instruction quality, scholarly progress, and contextual support provided at People's Campus based on this study.

Figure presents estimated marginal means of learning between male and female participants. The graph depicts two lines, one for males and another for females, showing their respective estimated marginal means of learning

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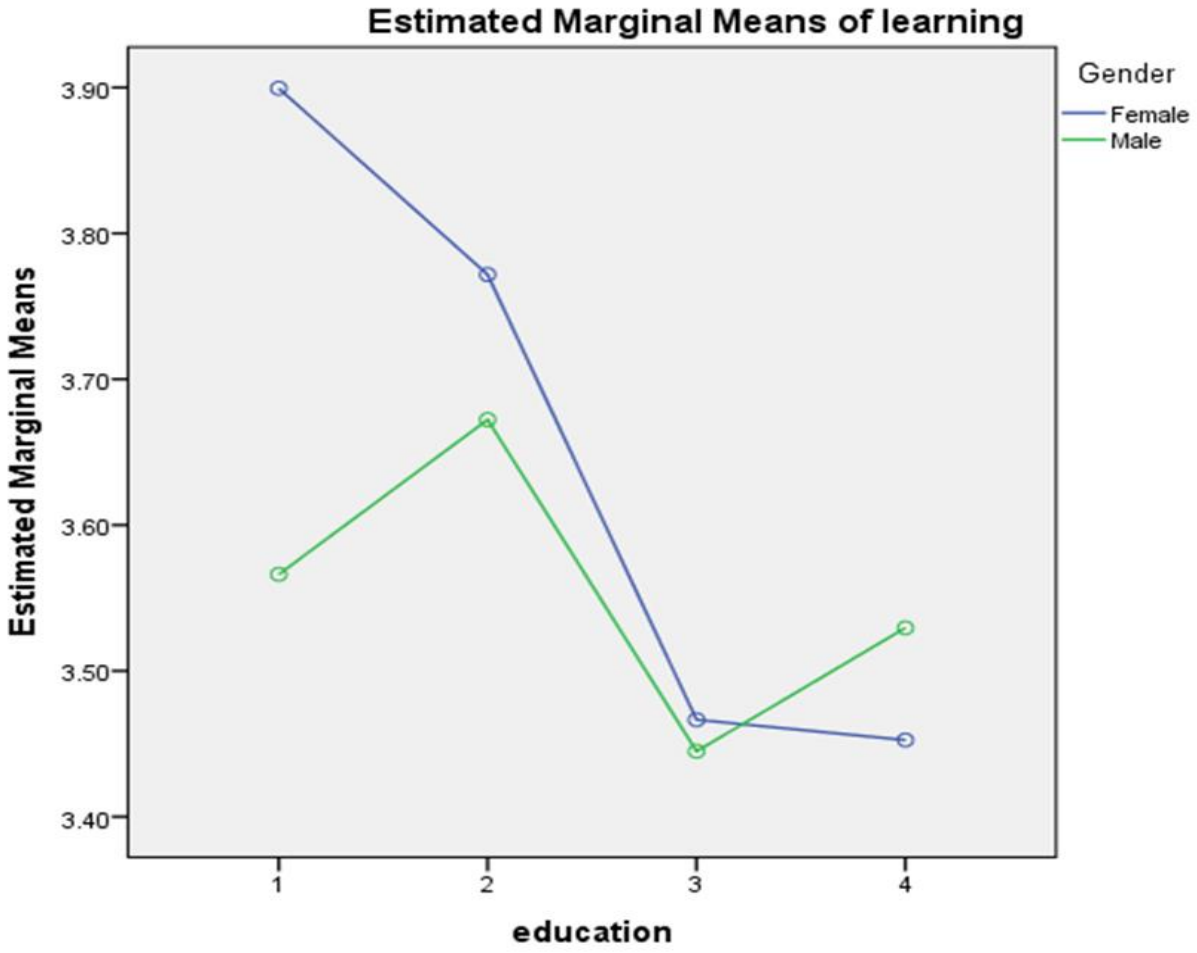

Figure 2: Mean Score

The figure shows perception scores for four educational dimensions - learning, teachers, academic achievement, and atmosphere - across gender. Female participants had higher average scores for perception of learning, teachers, and academic achievement compared to males. However, males had a slightly higher average for perception of atmosphere. Generally though, the mean scores were fairly similar between genders across all variables. Additionally, much of the confidence intervals for each variable overlapped between genders.

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5. Discussion

The study aimed to explore students' perceptions of various factors within the educational environment and investigate potential differences between female and male students. The findings provide valuable insights into the quality of the learning environment at People's Campus and shed light on areas for improvement. Overall, the results indicate that students hold moderately positive perceptions across different dimensions of the learning environment. In terms of learning, students expressed motivation to engage in class discussions, perceived efforts to enhance their skills, and felt confident in their ability to take an active role in their learning. These findings suggest that instructional practices and class dynamics are generally conducive to student engagement and participation. Similarly, students reported positive perceptions of teachers, indicating that they are knowledgeable, deliver research-led teaching, and provide constructive feedback. However, there were some variations in individual responses, particularly regarding the provision of constructive criticism and the clarity of examples. These areas may warrant further attention to ensure consistency in teaching quality and effectiveness. Regarding academic achievement, students felt moderately confident about their progress and preparation for future endeavors. While they believed that the teaching methods effectively boosted their confidence and that the majority of what they learned seemed relevant to a career in management, there were some concerns about the adequacy of preparation from the previous year's coursework. This suggests a need for continuous improvement in curriculum design and alignment with students' learning needs and future aspirations. In terms of the learning atmosphere, students perceived a generally relaxed environment conducive to concentration and social interaction. While they felt comfortable and encouraged to ask questions, there were some areas, such as seminars and tutorials, where the atmosphere was perceived to be less relaxed. These findings underscore the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that caters to diverse student needs and preferences. Furthermore, the study explored gender differences in students' perceptions and found that female students generally held more favorable views across all domains of the learning environment compared to male

students. While the observed differences may not be statistically significant, they highlight the importance of considering gender dynamics in educational settings and tailoring interventions to address potential disparities in students' experiences and outcomes.

This study provides valuable insights that have important implications for People's Campus. By gathering qualitative feedback directly from students, it offers a comprehensive understanding of learners' actual experiences of the campus environment. This gives leadership actionable data to identify strengths to accentuate as well as gaps requiring attention. The findings help benchmark institutional performance objectively and establish areas of improvement aligned with best practices. Notably, the study unveils differences in perceptions between gender groups that can help design more tailored and equitable support. Overall, the evidence generated underscores the need for targeted reforms across learning, teaching and support services. The data-driven recommendations can inform strategic planning to continuously optimize educational quality, outcomes and overall student experience over time. Regular re-assessment of the environment through such studies ensures People's Campus sustains its commitment to delivering a conducive learning ecosystem for all.

6. Conclusion

This study examined student views of their learning environment. It found moderately positive perceptions of factors like teaching, learning and academic development. Female students held more favorable opinions across domains. While strengths exist, improving feedback, skills application and consistency can optimize outcomes for all genders. Periodic reviews ensuring responsiveness to evolving needs will maintain standards. Continuous betterment as informed by student feedback should thus focus on both generalized and individualized support. Doing so confirms People's Campus as committed to fostering inclusive, high-caliber educational journeys.

Future researcher can incorporate qualitative methods like focus groups in addition to surveys. This provides richer nuanced data on student experiences beyond numbers.

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