

# Paradigms *for* Student Satisfaction Research

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# Issues for Discussion

- ▶ (1). What does “Student Satisfaction” mean?
- ▶ (2). How can Student Satisfaction research be approached?
- ▶ (3). What do Student Satisfaction data represent?

# Some arguments

- ▶ Student satisfaction research has been widely used.

Province-wide: “an understood and accepted measure of education quality” (2004/2005 Annual Service Plan)

Institutionally: “to pinpoint ... strengths and identify areas for improvement” (CISO, 2003)

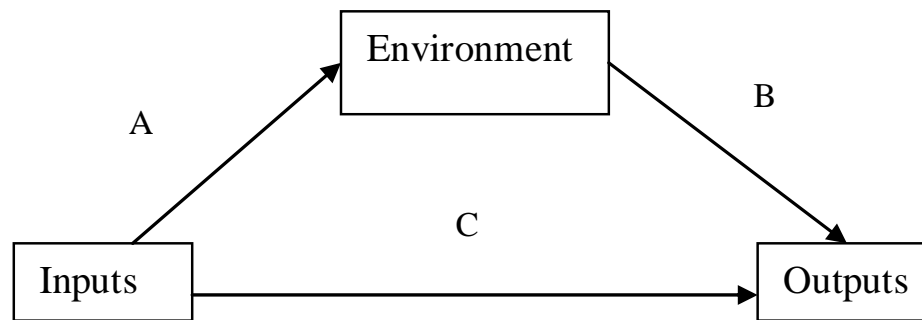
An indicator for a successful educational experience (CISO, 2007)

# What does Student Satisfaction mean?

- ▶ A contributor to institutional and student success
- ▶ A legitimate outcome in higher education
- ▶ Reflecting consumer orientation in higher education
- ▶ An indicator of quality of educational experience
- ▶ A multi-dimensional concept

# Student outcome assessment paradigm

- ▶ Student Satisfaction: an outcome in its own right
- ▶ A conceptual framework:



Astin's (1991) I-E-O Model

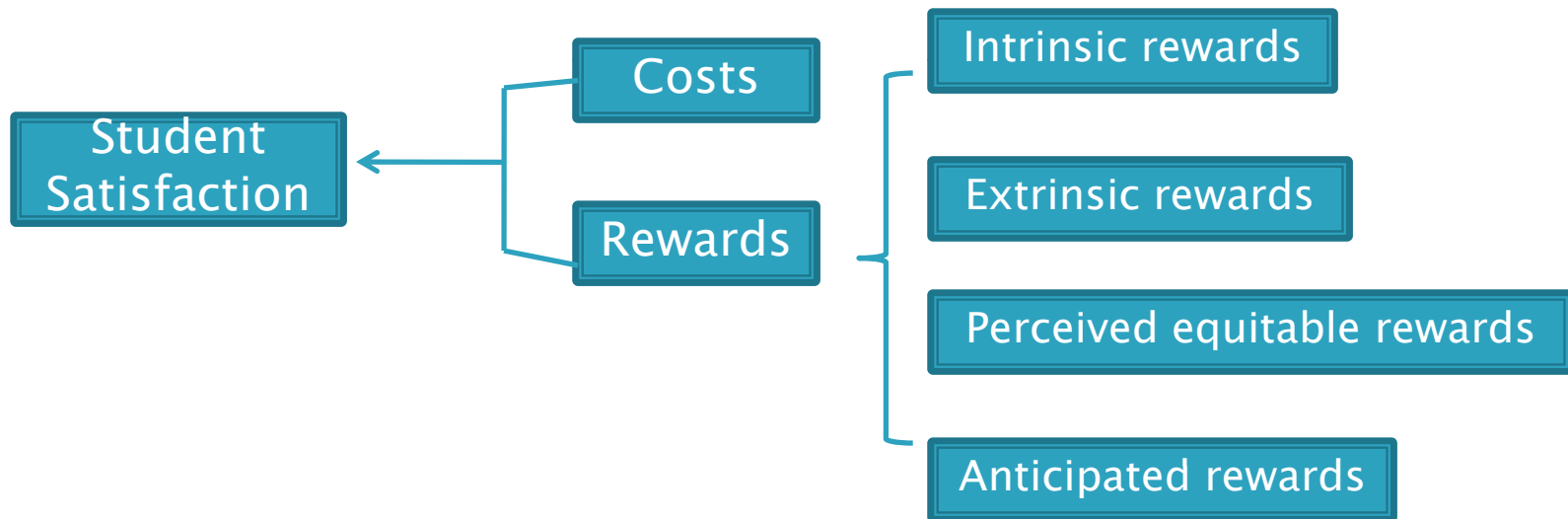
# Person–Environment Fit (P–E) paradigm



- ▶ A proxy measure of adaptation or adjustment
- ▶ Especially meaningful for issues related to satisfaction of international students
- ▶ Environment variables alone

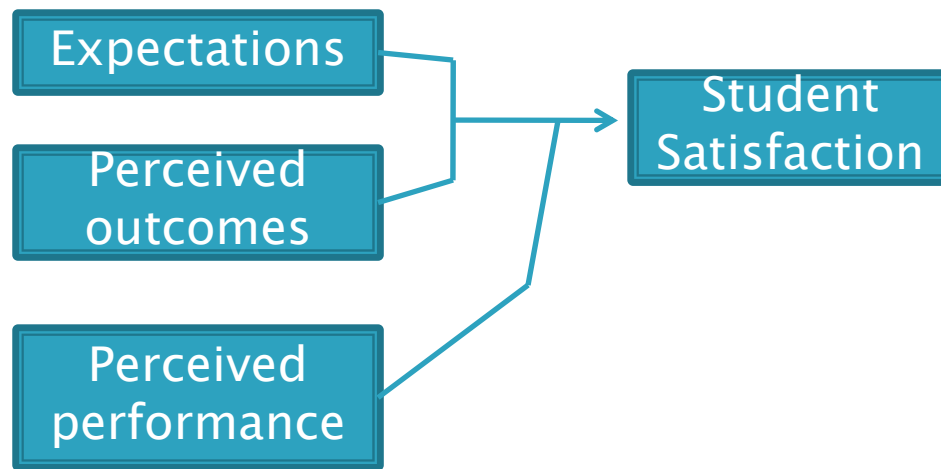
# Job Satisfaction paradigm

- ▶ Assessment of rewards and costs



# Customer Satisfaction paradigm

- ▶ Seeing students as consumers of educational services
- ▶ satisfaction = service quality



# Quality of Life paradigm

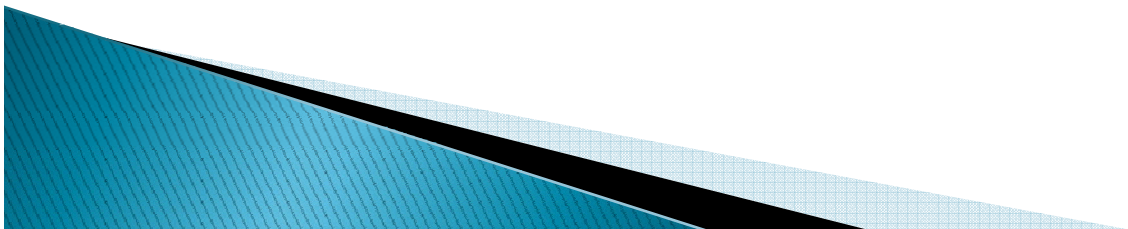
- ▶ Student Satisfaction: a proxy measure of quality of student life & an indicator of subjective well-being
- ▶ A socio-psychological approach
- ▶ Explanatory variables:
  - Multiple discrepancy theory
  - Resource theory
  - Quality of life models

# What Student Satisfaction data represent:

- ▶ Student Outcome paradigm: an indicator of institutional effectiveness
- ▶ Person–Environment Fit paradigm: indicating how well students fit or adapt to the institutional culture
- ▶ Job Satisfaction paradigm: a result from evaluating costs and rewards of being a student in the institution
- ▶ Customer Satisfaction paradigm: indicating how well the institution meets the needs/expectations of the students
- ▶ Quality of Life paradigm: indicating the quality of student experience or well–being while attending the institution

# Implications for Institutional Researchers

- ▶ Increasing awareness of the approaches and assumptions;
- ▶ Providing conceptual and theoretical tools



# Thank you for your participation!

Further comments are welcome.

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