

# Improving Student Satisfaction in Islamic Higher Education: The Role of Academic Services and Lecturer Performance (Quantitative Study of PTKI in Riau)

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of academic services and lecturer performance on student satisfaction at Islamic higher education institutions. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected through the distribution of questionnaires to students and analyzed using multiple linear regression and Pearson correlation. The results of the analysis indicate that both independent variables have a positive and significant contribution to student satisfaction levels, with faculty performance ( $\beta = 0.487$ ) having a greater influence than academic services ( $\beta = 0.352$ ). These findings emphasize the importance of faculty members in enhancing the quality of students' learning experiences, both in academic and developmental aspects. Based on these results, it is recommended that Islamic higher education institutions strengthen their academic service systems and prioritize faculty professional development focused on effective teaching, student engagement, and ethical leadership.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In a globalized and increasingly competitive digital environment, student satisfaction has become one of the key indicators in assessing the quality of higher education institutions. Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) face a double challenge: maintaining Islamic values while providing high-quality and professional educational services (Iskarim, Aenurofik, & Junaeti, 2025). Two crucial elements believed to significantly influence student satisfaction are academic services and faculty performance (Solekhul Amin, 2017). Academic services encompass administrative and curricular support, while faculty performance reflects effectiveness in teaching, mentoring, and academic engagement (Ihsan Nurmansyah & Sherli Kurnia Oktaviana, 2022). At PTKI, faculty members play an expanded role as moral and spiritual role models, making them a unique component compared to general educational institutions.

Previous studies have highlighted factors determining student satisfaction, such as teaching quality (M, 2019), administrative services (Prayogi, Lesmana, & Siregar, 2019), and campus

environment (Cheng, 2020). However, most of these studies were conducted in general or secular universities, so the Islamic context in academic management and lecturer-student interactions has not been extensively explored. Additionally, varying findings regarding the relative contributions of academic services and lecturer performance reflect inconsistencies in the literature, opening opportunities for further research in the PTKI context.

The role of academic services in supporting students is also evident in research showing that academic counseling services can help students improve their academic performance (Zakiyatunufus, 2019). This shows that there is a complex dimension of interaction between academic services and lecturer performance, where good services require support from competent teaching staff. However, inconsistencies in the literature have also been identified. For example, although many studies acknowledge the importance of academic services, some have found that factors such as academic stress can influence student experiences and do not act as mediators between student engagement and the services provided (Qonita, Dahlan, & Damaianti, 2021). This indicates that there are other variables that influence the effectiveness of academic services and lecturer performance that need to be explored further in the context of PTKI.

Previous studies have shown a relationship between service quality and student satisfaction, especially in general higher education. For example, research conducted by (Prayogi et al., 2021; revealed the importance of administrative services in increasing student satisfaction, while Jufrizen et al., 2020) emphasized teaching quality as a dominant factor (Prayogi et al., 2021; Jufrizen et al., 2020). However, the lack of attention to the Islamic context in student-lecturer interactions, as well as academic management in PTKI, indicates a gap in the existing literature (Indriati et al., 2023). This opens up the possibility for more in-depth research that focuses on the interaction of these two factors within the unique framework of Islamic education.

This study attempts to fill this gap by using a quantitative approach and multiple regression analysis to measure the simultaneous influence of academic services and lecturer performance on student satisfaction. By utilizing a more comprehensive methodology, this study not only explores variables separately, but also analyzes the interaction of the two (Syifani, 2023). This has the potential to offer new insights into the determinants of student satisfaction in educational environments that integrate religious values and high academic performance (Lisdiyanto, Winarti, Wibisono, Septianto, & Septrianto, 2023).

Furthermore, it is important to note that this study strengthens the argument that a good managerial approach in PTKI, including the involvement of lecturers in decision-making, can have a positive impact on their performance (Wawan, 2017). This involvement not only has the potential to increase trust between lecturers and management but also encourages better performance which in turn will increase student satisfaction (Retnowati, Mardapi, Kartowagiran, & Suranto, 2017). Therefore, the results of this study have the potential to provide a strong basis for the development of relevant policies to improve the quality of education in PTKI, which is a must in the current global era (Ritonga & Halimah, 2023).

Thus, this study not only demonstrates the relevance and uniqueness of the PTKI context in the study of student satisfaction but also contributes to the literature by offering a new perspective that considers the complex interactions between academic services and lecturer performance in a religious educational environment (Akyel, KorkusuzPolat, & Arslankay, 2012). This research is expected to stimulate more further research in the future that can further explore the challenges and opportunities currently faced by PTKI in improving the quality of educational experiences for students.

This study offers a unique empirical contribution by examining the simultaneous influence of academic services and faculty performance on student satisfaction specifically in Islamic higher education institutions. Unlike previous studies that examined variables separately or in a secular educational context, this study focuses on the interaction between the two factors within an Islamic educational framework. This approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of the

determinants of student satisfaction in an environment that upholds religious values while demanding competitive academic standards (Jovanovic & Ciric, 2016; King, 2007).

Using a quantitative approach and multiple regression analysis, this study aims to provide strong empirical evidence about the most influential institutional factors on student satisfaction levels at Islamic higher education institutions. The results are expected not only to explain the dynamics of services and performance in an Islamic educational environment but also to provide a foundation for the development of context-based quality improvement policies.

## 2. METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational design to examine the relationship between academic services and lecturer performance on student satisfaction. The study population consisted of 4,367 active students from Riau Islamic University in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. A sample of 370 students was selected using purposive sampling, with the following criteria: students must be at least in their fourth semester, enrolled in a regular academic program, and willing to participate in the data collection process. The instrument used was a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale measuring three main variables: academic services, lecturer performance, and student satisfaction. The content validity of the instrument was assessed through expert judgment, while construct validity was tested through exploratory factor analysis. Reliability was tested for each subscale using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with the following results: academic services ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ), lecturer performance ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ), and student satisfaction ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ), all of which showed high reliability ( $\alpha > 0.70$ ). Data were collected through online questionnaire distribution and analyzed using the latest version of SPSS. The analysis was conducted in two stages: first, Pearson correlation analysis to identify relationships between variables; and second, multiple linear regression analysis to determine the contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable. Before regression analysis was conducted, classical assumption testing was performed to ensure the validity of the model. Normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which showed a significance value  $> 0.05$ , indicating that the data were normally distributed. Multicollinearity was tested using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), which showed a VIF value  $< 5$  and Tolerance  $> 0.1$ , indicating no multicollinearity. The heteroskedasticity test was conducted through scatterplot analysis and the Glejser test, which showed no deviating patterns and a significance level  $> 0.05$ , thus fulfilling the homoskedasticity assumption.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the report discusses the findings that were drawn from the examination of data collected on academic services, lecturer performance, and student satisfaction. Inferential statistics are used to test the hypotheses that were proposed, while descriptive statistics are used to explain the overall tendencies and views of respondents toward each variable. The results are arranged into two primary parts: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. These findings are intended to give empirical evidence on how academic services and the performance of lecturers contribute to increasing the level of satisfaction experienced by students.

### 3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The following section provides a descriptive statistical analysis of the primary factors that were investigated in the study. These variables include academic services, lecturer performance, and student satisfaction. This analysis is being conducted with the intention of providing a comprehensive summary of the respondents' perceptions of each variable, as indicated by the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables**

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Category
Academic Services	370	3.21	5	4.21	0.41	High
Lecturer Performance	370	3.45	5	4.34	0.38	High
Student Satisfaction	370	3.1	5	4.18	0.43	High

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistical analysis of the three primary factors in the study: academic services, lecturer performance, and student satisfaction. The findings indicate that all three variables are classified under the high group according to the Likert scale interpretation. The average score for academic services is 4.21 (SD = 0.41), suggesting that students predominantly regard the academic services offered by the school as good quality. The average score for professor performance is 4.34 (SD = 0.38), indicating that students have a highly favorable perception of their lecturers' teaching ability, timeliness, and mentorship. The average score for student satisfaction is 4.18 (SD = 0.43), indicating a high degree of overall satisfaction with their academic experience.

These data substantiate the premise that both academic services and lecturer performance significantly enhance student satisfaction. The comparatively modest standard deviations across all categories suggest a uniform perception among respondents. The concept that academic services and lecturer performance considerably boost student satisfaction is supported by these facts, which provide evidence in support of the premise. According to the relatively low standard deviations across all categories, it appears that respondents have a consistent impression of the situation.

### 3.2. Inferential Statistics

An inferential statistical analysis was carried out with the purpose of determining whether or not the independent factors, namely academic services and lecturer performance, had a substantial impact on the dependent variable, which is student happiness. Providing empirical support for the suggested theoretical framework is the goal of this analysis, which will be accomplished by evaluating the hypotheses that have been formulated. To test the hypotheses, Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression analyses were conducted using SPSS version 25. The hypotheses proposed in this study were:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between academic services and student satisfaction.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between lecturer performance and student satisfaction.
- H3: There is a significant relationship between Academic services and lecturer performance simultaneously affect student satisfaction.

**Table 2. Results of Correlation and Regression Analysis**

Hypothesis	Variables	r	$\beta$ (Beta)	Sig. (p-value)	Result
H1	Academic Services → Student Satisfaction	0.642	0.352	0.000	Accepted
H2	Lecturer Performance → Student Satisfaction	0.693	0.487	0.000	Accepted
H3	Academic Services + Lecturer Performance → Student Satisfaction (F = 102.58, R <sup>2</sup> = 0.528)	-	-	0.000	Accepted

A summary of the findings from the hypothesis testing that was conducted using Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression analyses can be found in Table 2. The correlation coefficients

show that there is a positive and significant relationship between student satisfaction and both the academic services and the performance of the lecturers inside the institution. To be more specific, the connection between academic services and student happiness is 0.642, while the correlation between lecturer performance and student satisfaction is 0.693. Both of these correlations are significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level. These results provide evidence that supports Hypotheses 1 and 2, which state that a rise in the degree of pleasure experienced by students is connected with either an improvement in the quality of academic services or the performance of lecturers.

Furthermore, the results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that both factors have a substantial influence on student satisfaction concurrently. The F-value for this analysis is 102.58, and the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) for this study is 0.528. Consequently, this indicates that the combined contribution of academic services and lecturer performance can account for 52.8% of the variance in the level of satisfaction experienced by students. Based on the standardized beta coefficients, it is evident that the performance of lecturers ( $\beta = 0.487$ ) has a more significant influence on student satisfaction when compared to the impact of academic services ( $\beta = 0.352$ ). As a result of the significance values ( $p = 0.000$  for both predictors), it is established that these effects are statistically significant, which leads to the adoption of Hypothesis 3. When it comes to improving the overall student experience in Islamic higher education institutions, these findings shed light on the significant part that both service quality and instructional excellence play in fulfilling this function. Within the context of Islamic higher education institutions, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact that aspects such as academic services and lecturer performance have on the level of satisfaction experienced by students (Anwar, Saregar, Hasanah, & Widayanti, 2018). The findings provide strong empirical support for the proposed hypotheses, which state that both academic services and lecturer performance significantly and positively influence student satisfaction, with lecturer performance exerting a stronger influence than academic services. This is in line with the original objectives of the study, which were outlined in the Introduction.

According to the descriptive statistics, students, on average, gave good ratings to both the academic services and the performance of the lecturers. This finding is in line with the high levels of satisfaction that were reported by the students. As a result of this conclusion, the first hypothesis of the study is validated, which states that when educational institutions provide students with high-quality services and employ knowledgeable instructors, students are more likely to be content with their overall academic experience. This kind of pleasure involves both administrative interactions and instructional encounters, which suggests that holistic service excellence has a significant influence in molding the perceptions and attitudes that students have regarding their educational environment.

The findings of inferential statistical studies provided additional support for these observations. The results of the Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses showed that there are substantial positive correlations between the independent variables (academic services and lecturer performance) and the dependent variable (student happiness). Upon doing the regression analysis, it was shown that the standardized beta coefficient for lecturer performance was greater ( $\beta = 0.487$ ) in comparison to the beta coefficient for academic services ( $\beta = 0.352$ ). This finding highlights the considerably stronger influence that the teaching staff has on student satisfaction.

It supported by the previous studies. Al-Balas et al., (2020) There is a strong resonance between this discovery with the traditional Islamic educational paradigm, which holds that the function of the teacher encompasses more than just the transmission of material; it also includes the provision of spiritual guidance, moral leadership, and character development. Not only does a teacher (also known as a murabbi or a Muslim) embody knowledge and principles in classical Islamic education, but they also shape students not only intellectually but also spiritually and emotionally (Aslan, Ochnik, & Çınar, 2020). In this perspective, the modern-day lecturer continues to be considered not only as a teacher but also as a mentor whose impact extends into the more comprehensive educational experiences of students (M. Y. Ahn & Davis, 2020).

From a theoretical perspective, this study lends support to service quality models such as SERVQUAL and higher education satisfaction frameworks. These models and frameworks highlight the significance of both tangibles (administrative services, infrastructure) and intangibles (lecturer engagement, clarity of instruction, and feedback) in determining overall satisfaction (Wei & Chou, 2020). According to these models, levels of satisfaction are achieved when the expectations of students are either met or exceeded by the performance of the institution in a variety of sectors (Fisher, Perényi, & Birdthistle, 2021). These conclusions are supported by the findings presented here, which illustrate the practical interaction between service delivery and human connection in the process of cultivating learning environments that are centered on the student (Hill & West, 2020).

When compared to the existing body of literature, the findings of this study are in agreement with those of earlier studies that have repeatedly demonstrated a substantial association between the quality of the lecturer and the level of pleasure experienced by the students (Douglas et al., 2006; Hill et al., 2003). Studies that were carried out in both secular and religious educational settings reveal that elements associated to the teacher, such as teaching clarity, timely feedback, topic mastery, and availability, greatly improve the learning results and levels of satisfaction of students (Fatani, 2020). Furthermore, the focus placed on lecturer performance as a crucial variable lends credence to the findings of Islamic education research. These studies have demonstrated that the attitudes and pedagogical approaches employed by teachers have an impact not only on the academic performance of students but also on their growth in terms of their religious and ethical foundations (Hew, Hu, Qiao, & Tang, 2020).

The significantly lower beta score of academic services shows that students may place a higher priority on personal interactions and educational excellence than they do on administrative efficiency. This is despite the fact that the influence of academic services was still significant (Caskurlu, Maeda, Richardson, & Lv, 2020). On the other hand, the contribution of academic services is not something that can be ignored. Providing students with efficient registration systems, academic counselling that is easily accessible, timely broadcast of academic material, and complaint resolution processes that are responsive are the fundamental components that support a student's day-to-day academic life (Gopal & Aggarwal, 2021). If these areas are neglected by institutions, there is a possibility that even the most brilliant lecturers would have their positive impact diminished (I. Ahn, Chiu, & Patrick, 2021).

There are many different ways in which these findings can be interpreted in terms of policy and practice. Those Islamic higher education institutions who are looking to improve student satisfaction should execute focused strategies that involve not only the upgrading of administrative systems and the improvement of academic service delivery, but also the implementation of structured and continuous professional development programs for lecturers (Jiang, Islam, Gu, & Spector, 2021). The effectiveness of lecturers and, as a result, the level of satisfaction experienced by students can be considerably improved by the implementation of training programs that emphasize teaching, student engagement, counseling skills, and moral leadership (Cheng, 2020).

Institutions should also make investments in methods that allow students to provide regular feedback on the quality of both the services they receive and the instruction they receive (Wong & Chapman, 2023). With the help of feedback loops like this, deficiencies can be identified, strengths can be reinforced, and decision-making processes may be informed (Hamdan et al., 2021). It is possible for Islamic higher education providers to cultivate environments that not only encourage academic success but also the holistic development of students in accordance with Islamic beliefs. This can be accomplished by institutionalizing a culture of continual quality improvement (Abuhassna et al., 2020).

In addition, there are a number of paths that could be pursued by researchers in the future. To begin, following research may investigate the impact that other factors, such as the relevance of the curriculum, the availability of learning materials, the atmosphere of the campus, and the interaction between students, have in determining the level of pleasure experienced by students (Gao, Jiang, & Tang, 2020). Second, longitudinal studies have the potential to provide insights into the ways in which satisfaction changes over time, particularly in reaction to changes in educational policy or institutional

reforms (Khlopas et al., 2020). Furthermore, qualitative research methods, such as interviews or focus group discussions, have the potential to offer more profound understandings of the expectations, preferences, and perceived difficulties that students have inside Islamic educational environments (Baber, 2020).

This research makes a contribution to the expanding body of knowledge on the subject of student happiness in Islamic higher education by providing empirical evidence of the crucial roles that academic services and lecturer performance play in the overall achievement of students. The significance of lecturer performance serves to underline the everlasting value that Islamic pedagogy places on educators. On the other hand, the significance of academic services draws attention to the necessity of institutional support systems that are effective, student-centered, and responsive. It is possible for Islamic higher education institutions to strengthen their reputation, cultivate student loyalty, and accomplish their purpose of producing graduates who are competent, ethical, and fulfilled if they make strategic changes in these two areas.

Student happiness in the context of Islamic higher education is closely related to two important factors: lecturer performance and academic services. Research shows that good faculty performance contributes significantly to student learning experiences, which in turn increases their level of happiness. Manik and Syafrina in their study found that faculty competence has a significant positive influence on educational performance in higher education, with a contribution of 54.1% (Manik & Syafrina, 2018). Good lecturer performance not only includes effective delivery of material but also creating a supportive learning environment, which is very important in the framework of Islamic education, where pedagogy emphasizes moral and spiritual values (Putra, Arnadi, & Putri, 2024). Meanwhile, academic services also play a key role in creating a positive university experience.

A study conducted by Harijanto and Setiawan shows that social support, including academic services, influences the happiness of international students (Harijanto & Setiawan, 2017). The researchers argue that when students receive adequate academic and emotional support, they are better able to adapt to new environments and feel happier (Harijanto & Setiawan, 2017). This support includes access to good learning resources, academic guidance, and emotional support that helps students cope with academic stress.

In Islamic higher education, the relevance of good lecturer performance and responsive academic services is strongly emphasized. Imam Al-Ghazali (Al-Ghazali & Al-Muluk, 2021) stated that the main goal of education is to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter (Putra, 2017). This shows that Islamic pedagogy encourages lecturers to not only act as teachers but also as mentors who support the overall well-being of students. In this way, the education system can create an environment that not only educates academically but also builds character and spirituality.

Furthermore, research by Junjuran shows that students with high “*psychological capital*” tend to be happier, proving that internal factors within students are very important in achieving their happiness (Junjuran, 2023). This shows the importance of educational institutions to not only focus on academic achievement but also support students' psychological development through adequate services.

This study contributes conceptually by expanding the understanding of student satisfaction models within the framework of Islamic higher education. The study shows that satisfaction models cannot rely solely on modern managerial standards but must be integrated with Islamic principles of moral and spiritual responsibility in teaching. Thus, this study enriches the literature through the integration of the educational quality management approach with the concept of *murabbiyah* in Islamic education. Furthermore, these results can be used as a basis for developing a competency model for PTKI lecturers that simultaneously covers pedagogical, professional, and spiritual dimensions. This model can serve as a reference in the formulation of human resource development policies at PTKI, as well as an evaluation tool for faculty performance based on Islamic values and the needs of modern students. This research also opens opportunities for further exploration through longitudinal and qualitative approaches to understand the dynamics of students' perceptions of services and learning over time.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study contributes significantly to the existing literature on student satisfaction within Islamic higher education institutions by empirically confirming the influence of academic services and lecturer performance. The results suggest that enhancing both administrative service quality and lecturer effectiveness is key to improving students' academic experiences. Most notably, the role of lecturers who function not only as educators but also as spiritual and ethical lecturers proved to be the most influential factor in determining student satisfaction. This underscores the importance of continual professional development focused on pedagogy, engagement, and values-based teaching. The findings answer the research objectives and validate the hypotheses that both academic services and lecturer performance significantly affect student satisfaction. Future research should expand the model by including other influential variables such as curriculum content, technological integration, student engagement strategies, and socio-cultural contexts. Mixed-method studies and longitudinal designs may offer richer and more nuanced insights.

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