Guide to Interpreting Satisfaction and Importance Graphs in School Reports

Figures 3, 4, and 5 (in most reports) display the relationship between school means of students’ ratings of importance and satisfaction compared to the IUPUI means for importance and satisfaction. Effect size differences between a school’s mean satisfaction rating and the mean IUPUI satisfaction rating are plotted along the X-axis, while effect size differences between a school’s mean importance rating and the mean IUPUI importance rating are plotted along the Y-axis. The purpose of these graphs is to help you visualize your students’ rating compared to those of the rest of IUPUI. They also help identify possible opportunities for improvement (i.e., items that your students indicate are important, but about which they are less satisfied than the average IUPUI student).

Take the following graph as an example:

![Graph](image)

- **Mean Importance**
- **Mean Satisfaction**

- **General helpfulness of faculty**
- **Information your instructors give about course requirements**
- **Tutoring and other academic support services**
- **Use of technology in the classroom**

Keep in mind that effect sizes with an absolute value greater than 0.2 (i.e. greater than 0.2 or less than -0.2) are considered meaningful. Students in the hypothetical school report shown above rated the “general helpfulness of faculty” (symbolized by the red square, ■) as more important than all respondents in the population and were more satisfied than all respondents as well. Similarly, students were more satisfied with the “Information your instructors give about course requirements” (●) than the entire population. However, the effect size in importance rating between these students and the entire population was less than 0.2, so the difference was not large enough to be meaningful. With regard to “Tutoring and other academic support services” (▲), students rated it as very important compared to the population; however, they were much less satisfied than students campus wide. Tutoring and other academic support services might therefore be an area that this hypothetical school would like to explore in more depth to see if there are areas where improvements can be made.

Keep in mind, the shape of the marker doesn’t matter as much as the position in the graph. The triangle marker, for example, just distinguishes “Tutoring and other academic support services” from the other items should you choose to print the report in black and white.

Feel free to let me know if you have any other comments or suggestions. I can be reached at sgraunke@iupui.edu or at 317-274-3617 if you need anything.

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