# Fellows' overall satisfaction and self-perceived proficiency in Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Fellowship Program

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IFSO Latin American Chapter

## INTRODUCTION

- The rise of minimally invasive techniques in bariatric and metabolic surgery has driven general surgeons to seek advanced laparoscopic training.
- Fellowship programs play a crucial role in developing technical expertise and decision-making skills. To standardize high-quality education across multiple countries, the IFSO LAC established a fellowship program.
- Assessing fellows' satisfaction is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of the surgical program.[1] Factors such as case volume, autonomy, research opportunities, and mentorship significantly influence trainee experience and proficiency.[2] While these aspects have been studied in various programs, data on bariatric surgery fellowships in Latin America remain limited, highlighting the need for further evaluation.

## OBJECTIVE

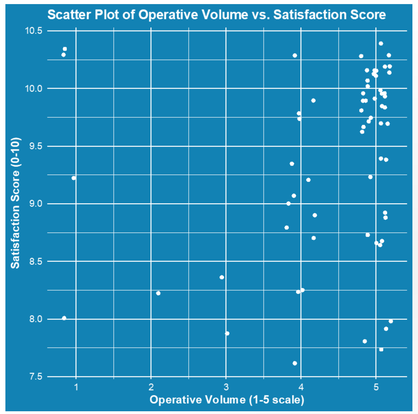
This study aims to assess the overall satisfaction and self-perceived proficiency of first-year fellows enrolled in the IFSO LAC Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Fellowship. Additionally, it aims to understand the expectations and areas for improvement identified by second-year fellows to optimize future training experiences

## METHODS

A cross-sectional survey was conducted among all fellows enrolled in the IFSO LAC Fellowship Program, class of 2023-2024. The survey was anonymous and administered at the five hospitals participating in the program. It evaluated aspects such as operative volume, hands-on training, academic sessions, research opportunities, and clinical rounds to assess fellows' satisfaction and self-perceived proficiency.

## RESULTS

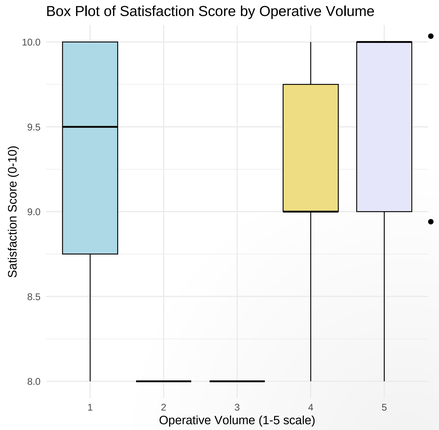
A total of **109 fellows from 12 countries** participated in the survey, with **64 completing it (59% response rate)**. The **mean satisfaction score** was **9.39** (scale 0-10). The **mean age** of fellows was **36.14 ± 4.8 years**, and the **median experience** as a general surgeon was **3 years (0-21 years)**.




- A statistically significant positive correlation was found between **operative volume and overall satisfac**tion (Spearman's ρ = 0.405, p < 0.01).
- A Kruskal-Wallis test confirmed that satisfaction scores significantly differed across operative volume categories (H = 14.31, p < 0.01), suggesting that **fellows in higher operative volume groups reported higher satisfaction.**
- Research opportunities were identified as the primary area for improvement.

## DISCUSSION AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Fellows' satisfaction is vital to the program's success, with operative volume as a key predictor, highlighting the importance of maintaining high surgical exposure.
- Increased surgical exposure reduces complications and improves patient outcomes. It also increases fellows' confidence in performing surgeries independently, thereby enhancing their satisfaction with their fellowship training.[3,4]




- Further evaluation is needed to assess how the level of autonomy granted during surgery and the supervision provided by attendings surgeons impact fellows' satisfaction.
- Research opportunities emerged as a notable area for improvement. Engaging in research fosters academic growth, and structured mentorship is crucial, particularly for fellows pursuing academic careers.

## CONCLUSION

Fellows in the IFSO LAC Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Fellowship reported high satisfaction levels across five hospitals. Operative volume emerged as a key determinant of overall satisfaction. Research opportunities should be prioritized to further enhance the fellowship experience and ensure continuous program improvement.

## REFERENCES

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