

University Image, Attitude, Student Satisfaction and Student Loyalty

Fachri Yafelli¹, Dwiyanto Aryo Pangestu²

¹*Department of Business Administration, Da-Yeh University, Taiwan (R.O.C)*

Email: fachriyafelli@gmail.com

²*Department of Human Resource and Public Relations, Da-Yeh University, Taiwan (R.O.C)*

ABSTRACT: University are trying to recruit many students into their universities. In order to support international environment and make the university greater, attracting foreign students is considered necessary. Universities are required to be able to satisfy their students in order to make them to become loyal. The more satisfied the students are to the university, the more likely they become loyal to the university. University image plays an important role in attracting as many students as possible to enroll to the university. However, sometimes the images students get about the campus does not match with their expectations. Attitude is what causes them to stay at the university. Therefore, this study tries to find out the relationship between the university image variable an attitude as independent variable on the dependent variable, namely student loyalty, where student satisfaction will be mediating variable. The results of this study indicate all of the hypotheses were supported. However, for hypothesis 1, “University image has positively significant effect on student satisfaction and will affect student loyalty as well”, it is only marginally supported.

KEYWORDS: Attitude, Student Loyalty, Student Satisfaction, University Image

I. INTRODUCTION

Most youngsters from Indonesia think overseas universities are better than universities in Indonesia. By having degree from a university in another country – they believe – they can get better job when they come back to Indonesia after finishing their study. They also consider about what they will get, including mastering new language, experiencing new culture and networking which can make them become outstanding applicant. Thus, going abroad for study is one of the best options for Indonesian youngsters in term of getting better future. Students are important for a university. One the indicator of successful universities can be seen from the number of students enroll to the university. According to Hill [1], students are the main shareholder of university which can determine of the success of the university. Universities will try to attract more and more students to come and study to their universities, especially overseas students. By having students from across the world, a university can have international environment and can be recognized globally which can support the university to become a great university.

Attracting students to come and study to a university is not enough to make a university to become great. A university should make their student to be satisfied then become loyal. Loyal students are necessary for universities in order to spread good news of the university. Loyal student can be seen as a delegation of university which can help a university in promoting the university in a good way. In term of satisfied or unsatisfied of student, it can be identified from the reaction of student. Satisfaction is an overall feeling towards products or services which depends on the fulfilment response of the customer [2][3]. Meeting students’ imagination of their needs and satisfying them can lead students to be loyal. However, some of students who study abroad do not get what they want when they go abroad for study. When a general image of a university does not meet with what a student expects, another factor that make them stay is their attitude towards the university. Attitude of students after they experience studying in the university will determine whether they will stay or quit from the university. According to Erdogmus et al. [4] on their study, attitude fully mediated the relationship between university performance and student loyalty. In this study, however, attitude will be used as independent variable. Overall, this study will try to examine the relationship between image and attitude towards student loyalty with student satisfaction as mediating variable.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

University Image : One of determining factors for selecting an educational institute is the image of higher education institution [5]. Image is an overall impression of someone about an object [6].

In this context, university image is about the perceived image that students get when they try to find out about a university. Several studies [7][8] show that university image has two different aspects, including functional and emotional aspects. On the one hand, educational facilities and infrastructure are in the functional aspects, while emotional aspects deal with student feelings. University image is related to a lot different of attributes, including type of university, academic programs offered by university [9], tuition fee [10], and service to students.

According to Helgesen & Nettet[11] and Palacio et al. [8], university image has significant effect on consumer behavior in the context of university. In addition, a good image can give various returns, such as increased profits, improved perception of value and improved of sales [12]. The more students impress with the university image the more a university will get benefit from it. Thus, having good images that meet with students' expectations will bring good impact to a university.

Student Attitude towards University: An attitude can be defined as a way of feeling or thinking about something which typically can be reflected in a person's behavior. A student's attitude towards a university can be seen from a student's feelings towards the university. As applied to Indonesian students for example, the students who have feeling towards their university will have a willing to earnestly study in the university. It can be concluded that If students like, love or respect their university, they have a positive attitude towards university that can lead to bring good emotional reaction. Different with previous study held by Erdogmus & Ergun [4] which use attitude as mediating variable, this study will employ attitude variable as independent variable. Attitude and image of university will be independent variables, while student satisfaction as mediating variable and student loyalty as dependent variable. According to several studies [13][14][15], attitude variable has a strong link to loyalty. It was proved that attitude has a positive influence on loyalty.

Student Satisfaction : One of the success indicators from a university is satisfied students. Satisfaction depends on the customer's fulfilment response of product or service perceived performance to expectations [3]. If students receive good academic service, they will be satisfied with the university, otherwise if they do not get good academic service, they will be unsatisfied. Kara, & DeShields [16] mention in their study that an educational institution can utilize student satisfaction as indicators to identify, improve and change services which are considered as unsatisfied to their students. Satisfied or unsatisfied students is important for a university to maintain the number of students in their university. According to several studies [11][17][18] [19][20], student satisfaction is a potential antecedent of student loyalty, and it can be seen as mediator variable which can be a linkage between independent and dependent variables. It is supported by the research conducted by Kara & De Shields [16] which shows that one of the factors that can leads student to become loyal is student satisfaction.

Student Loyalty: Student loyalty is important to universities in order to maintain their financial basis for academic or non-academic activities [19]. According to Hennig-Thurau et al. [21], student loyalty has similar components with customer satisfaction which consists of attitudinal and behavioral components. Loyalty in business can be interpreted as rebuying or re-patronizing a preferred product or service consistently in the future [3]. Furthermore, loyalty of students can lead to financial performance of an academic institution. Student loyalty also can be seen as a source of competitive advantage in the competition between existing universities [22]. Student loyalty is about psychological attachment of students to their university [23]. Loyal students have willingness to support their university, whether financial contribution, word-of-mouth recommendations to other potential students or re-enrollment in higher degree course. Hence, student loyalty can bring significant impact to the success of university.

Hypotheses : Based on above literature review, the proposed conceptual framework was indicated in Figure 1 and the hypotheses were listed as follow:

- H1: University image has positively significant effect on student satisfaction and will affect student loyalty as well.
- H2: Attitude has positively significant effect on student satisfaction and will affect student loyalty as well.
- H3: University image has positively significant effect on student loyalty directly
- H4: Attitude has positively significant effect on student loyalty directly

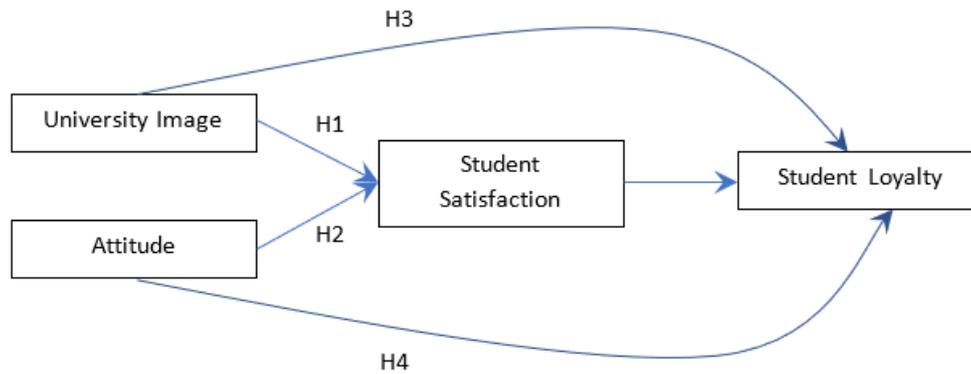


Fig. 1 - Proposed conceptual framework

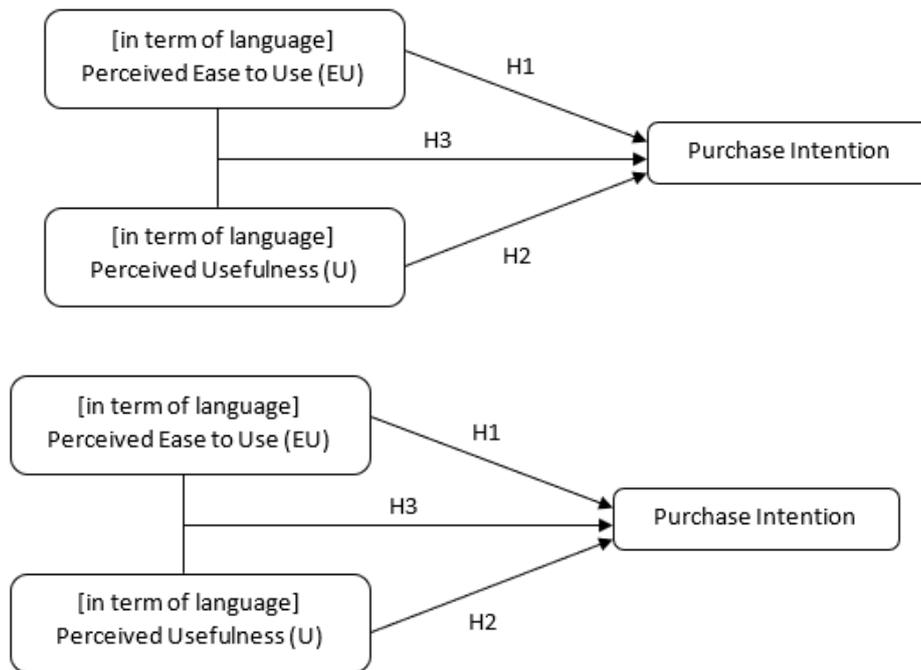
III. METHODOLOGY

The approach method used on this study is quantitative research model using a five-likert scale questionnaire. This selection is carried out to determine the level of agreement of the respondents to the statement given. The scale given is one to five, where a value of 5 indicates strongly agree with the statement and a value of 1 indicates strongly disagree with the statement. The questionnaire divided into 5 sections. The first section is used for gaining demographical data from respondents, including gender, residence, study degree, and major. The second and third section each contain questions related to university image and student attitude towards university. Finally, in the last section, four and five, there are questions used to identify the customer’s student satisfaction and student loyalty. Table 1 shows indicators or items used for the questionnaire.

Table 1 - Measurement Items

Construct	Measurement Items	Adapted from
University Image	This university was recommended to me by my relatives, friends or families	[18] [19]
	The university has a prestigious image	[18] [19]
	The university has a high academic reputation	[19]
	The university has a high teaching quality	[19]
	The university has good staff qualifications	[19]
Attitude	I like my university	[24]
	I respect my university	[24]
	I love my university	[24]
Student Satisfaction	This is the right thing to apply to this university	[4]
	I am satisfied with the university compared to expectations with what is gained	[11]
	My experience with the university is enjoyable	[4]
	I am satisfied because my skills and knowledge are increased	[25]
	Overall, satisfied with the institution offered	[4] [26]
Student Loyalty	I would recommend the university to my families, relatives, and friends	[4] [11] [26]
	If I was faced with the same choice, I would still choose the same university	[4] [11] [26]
	If I was faced with the same choice, I would still choose the same course	[4] [11] [26]

The first process of analysis was started with conducting validity and reliability test. The questionnaire items were tested to examine whether the items are valid and can be used for the next step or not. The final step of analysis is analyzing relationship between variables used in order to test the proposed hypotheses. Regression model analysis was chosen as the analytical method in this study.



IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile: Total amount of data obtained from online questionnaire is 208 data. The number of male student respondents (63.9%) is bigger than female student respondents (36.1%). All of student respondents is currently studying in South Taiwan, including Yunlin, Chiayi, Tainan, Kaohsiung, and Pingtung. Most of them are still in bachelor, including student exchange and Chinese overseas program (57,6%), while the rest are from Master (31,8%) and doctoral (10,6%) degree. The students mainly majoring on Business/Management/Social (51,9%), followed by Science/Engineering (25%), Design/Art (17,3%), and Others (5,8%).

Validity Test : In this study with the number of respondents (N) = 208, the value of r-table used on validity test is 0.1354. The value of Pearson correlation from each item compared to the value of r-table. If the value of Pearson correlation is bigger than the value of r-table, then the item will be accepted as valid items. Based on the output shown on the table 2, the instrument items of University Image variable are valid, respectively UI1 (0.849), UI2 (0.881), UI3 (0.862), UI4 (0.814), and UI5 (0.721). Then, items of Attitude variable, including A1 (0.735), A2 (0.775), and A3 (0.786) are valid too. Items of Student Satisfaction also produce Pearson correlation value more than r-table. Including SS1 (0.830), SS2 (0.844), SS3 (0.738), SS4 (0.775) and SS5 (0.870). Lastly, Student Loyalty, including SL1 (0.879), SL2 (0.796) and SL3 (0.788) produce Pearson correlation value bigger than r-table. As a result, it can be concluded that all of the instruments items used in this study are valid.

Table 2 - Result of Validity Test

Variable	Item	Pearson Correlation	r-table	Validity
University Image	UI1	0.849	0.1354	Valid
	UI2	0.881	0.1354	Valid
	UI3	0.862	0.1354	Valid
	UI4	0.814	0.1354	Valid
	UI5	0.721	0.1354	Valid
Attitude	A1	0.735	0.1354	Valid
	A2	0.775	0.1354	Valid
	A3	0.786	0.1354	Valid
Student Satisfaction	SS1	0.830	0.1354	Valid
	SS2	0.844	0.1354	Valid

	SS3	0.738	0.1354	Valid
	SS4	0.775	0.1354	Valid
	SS5	0.870	0.1354	Valid
	SL1	0.879	0.1354	Valid
Student Loyalty	SL2	0.796	0.1354	Valid
	SL3	0.788	0.1354	Valid

Reliability Test: Table 3 shows the number reliability of each variables. In this step, if the Cronbach alpha value of each variables is more than > 0.64 then the variables are valid and can be used. The result shows that all of the variables on this study are reliable.

Table 3 - Result of Reliability Test

Variable	Reliability
University Image	0.832
Attitude	0.879
Student Satisfaction	0.836
Student Loyalty	0.837

Hypotheses Test : Hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 are analyzed using Sobel test [27][28]. Specifically, the test is about to determine whether Student Satisfaction as mediating variable has mediation effect on the relationship between University Image and Attitude as independent variable with Student Loyalty as dependent variable. The mediation effects of Student Satisfaction on the relationship between University Image with Student Loyalty ($t = 2.823, p < 0.10$) is marginally significant, while the mediation effects of Student Satisfaction on the relationship between Attitude with Student Loyalty ($t = 7.177, p < 0.05$) is significant. Therefore, the results only marginally support hypothesis 1 (H1) and fully support hypothesis 2 (H2).

Table 4 - Result of Student Satisfaction as Mediating Variable

Variable	t-value	p-value
University Image	2.823*	.069
Attitude	7.177**	.000

Regression analysis was chosen in this study as the technique to analyze the hypothesis 3 and 4. With the number respondents 208, the value of t-table used in this study is 1.97. the p-value of University Image ($p = 0.000$) is less than the alpha value of 0.05 and t-value (4.151) bigger than t-table. The p-value of Attitude ($p = 0.000$) is also less than the alpha value of 0.05 and t-value (5.592) bigger than t-table. Hence, it shows that both hypotheses (H3 and H4) are supported. The results also show that Attitude has the strongest relationship with student loyalty with beta coefficient 0.571, followed by the relationship between University Image and Student Loyalty with beta coefficient 0.402.

Table 5 - Result without mediating variable

Variable	Beta	t-value	Significant
University Image	0.402	4.151	.000
Attitude	0.571	5.592	.000

V. CONCLUSION

This paper aims to examine the relationship between image and attitude towards student loyalty with student satisfaction as mediating variable. The results show that there is significant mediation effect of Student Satisfaction on relationship between Attitude and Student Loyalty, while only magnificently mediation effect of Student Satisfaction on relationship between University Image and Student Loyalty. It can be concluded that in term of attracting students to become loyal, attitude of students towards university combined with their satisfaction are more necessary than University Image. It can be interpreted that overseas students attitude together supported by their felling of satisfaction can lead to loyalty. Meanwhile, the findings also show that all variables, including University Image and Attitude, has directly relationship with Student Loyalty. The results support all of the hypothesis. Hence, Stakeholders of universities should more consider in developing their foreign student attitude by satisfying them with offering good academic service quality. In conclusion, this study identified that student satisfaction can be used as mediating variable in term of connecting independent variables, such as University Image and Attitude, towards Student Loyalty. This study also reveal that Attitude has the

stronger relationship with Student Loyalty than University Image. These findings and discussions on this study can be used as guidelines for universities which want to attract more foreign students, especially from Indonesia. As suggestions for future study, future researchers might put more variables such as Program Design, and future researchers might also consider to get respondents from several countries since foreign students in Taiwan are not only from Indonesia.

REFERENCE

1. Hill, F., M. (1995). Quality Assurance in Education. *Managing Service Quality in Higher Education: The Role of The Students as Primary Consumer*, 3(3), 10-21.
2. Fornell, C. (1992). *Journal of Marketing*. A National Customer Satisfaction Barometer: The Swedish Experience, 56(1), 6-21.
3. Oliver, R., L., Rust, R., T., & Varki, S. (1997). *Journal of Retailing*. Customer Delight: Foundations, Findings, and Managerial Insight, 73(3), 311-336.
4. Erdogmus, I., & Ergun, S. (2016). *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Science*. Understanding University Brand Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Attitudes towards The Department and University, 229, 141-150.
5. Sahin, O., & Singh, S., U. (2017). *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies*. A literary Excavation of University Brand Image Past to Present, 3(3), 174-187.
6. Dobni D., & Zinkhan G. M. (1990). *Advances in Consumer Research*. In search of brand image: A foundation analysis, 17, 110-119.
7. Perez, J., P., & Torres., E., M. (2016). *Contaduria y Administracion*. Evaluation of The Organizational image of a university in a higher education institution, 62, 123-140.
8. Palacio A., B., Meneses, G., D., & Perez, P., J., P. (2002). *Journal of Educational Administration*. The Configuration of The University Image and Its Relationship with The Satisfaction of Students.
9. Polat, S., Arslan, Y., & Yavaş, E. (2016). Importance Level of Image Attractors in The Process Of University Selection: An Application on Prospective University Students in Turkey.
10. Galinienė, B., Marėinskas, A., Mihkinis, A., & Drūteikienė, G. (2009). *Informacijos Mokslai*. The impact of study quality on the image of a higher education institution, 48, 68–81.
11. Helgesen, O. and Nettet, E. (2007). *International Journal of Educational Management*. What accounts for students' loyalty? Some field study evidence, 21(2), 126 – 143.
12. Alves, H. and Raposo, M. (2010). *International Journal of Educational Management*. The Influence of University Image on Students' Behavior, 24(1), 73-85.
13. Baldinger A., L., & Rubinson, J. (1996). *Journal of Advertising Research*. Brand Loyalty: The Link Between Attitude and Behavior.
14. Chaudhuri, A. (1999). *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*. Does Brand Loyalty Mediated Brand Equity Outcomes?, 7(2), 136-146.
15. Taylor, S. A. and G. Hunter. (2003). *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*. An Exploratory Investigation into the Antecedents of Satisfaction, Brand Attitude and Loyalty Within the (B2B) eCRM Industry, 16, 19-35.
16. Kara, A. and De Shields, O.W. (2004). *Business Student Satisfaction, Intentions and Retentions in Higher Education: An Empirical Investigation*, Pennsylvania State University-York Campus and California State University, Northridge.
17. Shahsavari, T. and Sudzina, F. (2017). *PLoS ONE*. Student Satisfaction and Loyalty in Denmark: Application of EPSI Methodology, 12(2)
18. Ali, M. and Ahmed, M. (2015). *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*. Determinants of Students' Loyalty to University: A service-based approach.
19. Brown, M.R., and Mazzarol, T. (2006). *Drivers of Student Satisfaction and Student Loyalty in an Australian University Setting*.
20. Kuanosorn, A. and Puttawong, D. (2015). *4th International Scientific Forum*. The Mediating Effect of Satisfaction on Student Loyalty to Higher Education Institution, 1(1), 449-463.
21. Hennig-Thurau, T., Langer, M. F., & Hansen, U. (2001). *Journal of Service Research*. Modeling and managing student loyalty: An approach based on the concept of relationship quality, 3, 331–344.
22. Lam, S. Y., Shankar, V., Erramilli, M. K., & Murthy, B. (2004). *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. Customer value, satisfaction, loyalty, and switching costs: an illustration from a business-to-business service context, 32(3), 293–311.
23. Verhoef, P. C., Franses, P. H., & Hoekstra, J. C. (2002). *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. The effect of relational constructs on consumer referrals and number of services purchased from a multiservice provider: does age of relationship matter?, 30(3), 202–216.

24. Keller, K., L. (2008): Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity. 3rd ed. Pearson/Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River.
25. Austin, J. A. and Pervaiz, S. (2017). European Scientific Journal. The Relation between ‘Student Loyalty’ and ‘Student Satisfaction’ (A Case of College/Intermediate Students at Forman Christian College).
26. Aritonang, L. (2014). Student Loyalty Model.
27. Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic and statistical considerations, 51, 1173–1182.
28. MacKinnon, D. P., Warsi, G., & Dwyer, J. H. (1995). Multivariate Behavioral Research. A simulation study of mediated effect measures, 30(1), 41–62.