

Antecedents and Consequences of Student Loyalty in Higher Education

Javeria Tariq^{1*}

Kamran Khan²

Syed Karamatullah Hussainy³

Shaista Tariq⁴

ABSTRACT

In the intense competition and financial uncertainty for higher educational institutions, student loyalty is an imperative and most essential factor for their ultimate survival and success. Student loyalty is a crucial measure for the success of institutions that are offering higher education with the sole aim of retaining students until their all educational necessities are met. The motivation of this research paper was lack of literature evidence when the antecedents and the consequences of student loyalty are being scrutinized, all on one single platform. Therefore, through this research paper, an attempt has been made to examine the causing roots that provoke loyalty in a student and to what extent it can be prolonged and at what point student loyalty is achieved completely. This study examined the existence of student loyalty derived from antecedents (perceived value, trust, corporate and brand image, student satisfaction and service quality) and consequences (word of mouth, retention, recommendation and commitment) in the context of higher education in Pakistan. A total of six business schools were selected, the data was collected using survey method. Several recommendations are made to the management of the higher educational institutions to ensure student loyalty among their students.

JEL Classification: I23, I21, I26

Keywords: Higher education institutions, student loyalty, student satisfaction, word of mouth

INTRODUCTION

Institutes of higher learning are significant, therefore today, education division is prominently known as an industry where private universities are competing for business with other private institutions as well as public universities (Arif, Ilyas, & Hameed, 2013). This intense competition and exceedingly competitive environment among universities is changing the urge to develop inimitable marketing strategies with a “prime and superior focus on the student” to help stand out amongst others (Simões & Soares, 2010). Therefore, talking about the last two decades, the higher education sector in Pakistan, has emerged and experienced relatively thoughtful changes, resulting in more competitive market structures that are threatening the survival and endurance of some existing institutions that are not producing satisfactory relationships and hence being forced into a progressively fierce antagonism for scarce resources along with a great number of probable contenders (Alves & Raposo, 2010). There was a time when universities were only focusing on increasing competitive and profitable environments, but with the passage of time the prime focus turned to the stratagem of addressing the quality of service delivery and interrelated factors as a way of attaining a competitive advantage in such increasingly challenging environment (Fares & Kachkar, 2013).

1,2,3,4-KASB Institute of Technology, Karachi, Pakistan
*Corresponding Author Email: jtariq11@gmail.com

All student loyalty indices are basically evaluated based on classical model that comprises of antecedents and consequences of student loyalty (Yap, Ramayah & Shahidan, 2012). There is always a need to elaborate a deeper consideration of the association concerning the antecedents and consequences of student loyalty, both logically and empirically, which specifies how student's expectations of perceived quality intermingle with the actual and authentic involvement of visible quality to produce satisfaction, influencing the probability of student's firm loyalty (Chen & Chen, 2010).

Students are also consumers in the context of educational sector because students are consuming educational services from the institutions just like any other services being rendered, and thus we can study a student as a consumer of educational services (Rojas-Méndez, Vasquez-Parraga, Kara & Cerda-Urrutia, 2009). As per the current competitive environment, if the higher educational institutions are to survive in such a dense competition, they not only require a unique point of parity and point of differentiation but also repeated purchase (admissions in new programs and courses), unique and competitive courses and retention. For this reason, keeping in view the current status quo, if the institutions goal is low percentage of reduction in potential students and dropouts, then they certainly need highest level of loyalty from their students for their ultimate survival (Navarro, Iglesias & Torres, 2005).

This research paper has four key aims. First, using some powerful reviews of the relevant literatures, antecedents and consequences of student loyalty is identified. Second, with brief evidences, it is objectified and debated on that how institutes of higher learning and student loyalty are linked. Third, it is explored critically that how student loyalty has been studied so far and keeping this in view. Finally, it tried seeking to find an answer that how higher educational institutes can take the advantage of loyalty from their students. Since antecedents and consequences of student loyalty in educational institutes lack empirical evidences (Kiran & Diljit, 2017). Therefore, basic objective of this research is to excavate the rudimentary factors that what are antecedents of student loyalty and the later developed consequences of this loyalty in the setting of higher education institutions in the context of Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Today, imparting education is one of the most crucial concept for every higher educational institution and it is need of time to meet those educational standards that are set in the minds of students as well as their guardians (Burlakanti, Kumar & Srinivas, 2014). Antecedents and consequences in higher education industry is least tapped and underrated when it comes to the loyalty (Sultan & Yin Wong, 2013). Therefore, there is scarce literature scrutinizing the impact of student loyalty in institutes of higher learning in the lime light of antecedents and consequences, and how the higher educational institutes can take advantage of that loyalty and at what step such loyalty is deemed and vanished. Hence the main concepts and impressions underlying this study are evaluated from various hypothetical and theoretical frameworks and models.

Students as Customers in Higher Education Setting

Students are regarded as customers or patrons of services; with the initiation of private educational institutions, where the students deliberately pick, select and purchase the service and hence have the complete right to be considered as customers in the learning process (Arif et al., 2013). This concept was further explained by Guilbault (2016) that, students are indeed the principal customers in higher education institutions because they are the most and only

people who are directly served by the organization. Therefore, people expect higher education institutions to provide not only value for money but also character building and a socially responsible setting for the better development of their children (Arif et al., 2013). Consequently, when regarding in the context of Pakistan, higher education is not only regarded as a service but also a place where there is character building and social responsiveness with positive constructive attitude (Siddiqui, 2007).

Antecedents of Student Loyalty

Academicians have introduced and deliberated a number of representations and variables to explain variations in loyalty in every sector and perspective (Leenheer, Van Heerde, Bijmolt & Smidts, 2007). Antecedents of student loyalty has been extensively explored and scrutinized by the both academia and practitioners (Allaway, Huddleston, Whipple & Ellinger, 2011) to extract a specific knowledge from the complete ideology of loyalty. Therefore, innumerable variables can be identified that influences student loyalty regarding their institution, but the main purpose of this research is to identify and select antecedents that are firmly believed to be important and part of student loyalty structure.

Perceived Value & Trust VS Student Loyalty

Developing grander and greater value for students can ensure sustainability of an institutions effectiveness and success (Kandampully, Zhang & Bilgihan, 2015). Keeping this grander value in mind, according to Brown and Mazzarol (2009), it is studied that before taking admission in any educational institution, students compare advantages and benefits received in contrast to the investment put in it, and after evaluation choose only those institutions that completely offers the unsurpassed value as compared to other alternatives available.

Trust is the utmost precarious element in the development of efficacious relationship amid a service and amenity provider and its customers or students (Kaur & Soch, 2012). Hence in the educational sector, the most authentic component of trust found has been performance or credibility trust, which implies assurance or credence in the capabilities of educational institutions to provide moral quality educational services, as expected in relations of their abilities and infrastructure, along with the skills and knowledge of faculty members (Martínez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2013). Therefore, the impact of perceived value and trust on student loyalty develops pertinently when provoked with substituting decisions with extreme level of perceived risk and ambiguity (Lam & Shankar, 2014).

H1: Perceived value can influence the decision of the students and is positively related to student loyalty.

H2: A student's trust in a service has a momentous and positive effect on their loyalty toward that service.

Corporate – Brand Image and Service Quality

Corporate and brand image has been elucidated as the common impression of the students concerning an institute or its marque. Corporate image and brand image are closely associated; in majority of the cases, their relation to various attributes of the institute is matching, such as product or service quality, relationship with the institutions employees such as faculty as well as with present students and the brand involvement and experience (Kandampully et al., 2015). A well-conversed brand image ought to help to institute a brand's position, reform the brand from competition, augment the brand's market presentation, and hence play an essential

role in edifice of long-term brand equity (Bian & Moutinho, 2011). It is studied that images residing in the mind are purely a symbolic process that is based on stored familiarities in associative reminiscence regarding products and its services (Hemsley-Brown & Goonawardana, 2007). Therefore, it is not wrong to state that brand image either it is corporate image or solely brand perception, is something that solely resides in brains of students, the impression and perception that gives it point of differentiation among its competitor institutes hence making the students stay loyal to it

According to Shukla, Banerjee and Singh (2016) service quality is considered as part of student experience that comprises the service personnel, technologies, co-creation of education and its customization. Therefore, if the delivered services are as per the expectations of the students in an educational institute than there are higher chances that they will stay loyal to their institution and will recommend it to their known ones but if the services rendered are low as per their expectations than students can not only switch the institute but can also defame it by spreading negative words against the institute. It is crucial that the service providers of education, i.e. higher educational institutions look into the necessity of the students and ensure that service quality that is expected by their potential or existing students (Bhardwaj, 2015).

H3: Corporate and Brand Image can influence the decision of student and is positively associated with student loyalty.

H4: Quality of service is positively related to Student Loyalty.

Student Satisfaction and Effecting Factors in Higher Education

Student satisfaction has always been believed as widely debated indicators of student loyalty; where it is found out that contented and satisfied students are much likely to repurchase, reconcile and spread positive WOM about the benefits associated with it (Noyan & Şimşek, 2014). The aggregate high and low level of satisfaction merely depends upon the class and level of the outcomes that positively meets the level of anticipation or negatively influences it (Rojas-Méndez et al., 2009). Hence students that are predominantly the customers of institutions of higher learning are satisfied when the received service is suitable as per their expectations, or become contented when the received service is as per their presupposition. Quite the reverse, students are dissatisfied from their institution when the service they received is below as per their forecasted imagination, moreover when the discontentment gap is extraordinary, they incline to converse the negative characteristics (Sharabi, 2013).

H5: Student Satisfaction is positively interlinked with Student Loyalty and if anyone decreases the other decreases simultaneously.

Since it is evident that satisfaction plays a pivotal role for the successful survival of an educational institution, therefore the most obvious factors that affect the student satisfaction are as follows:

Institution Reputation and Ranking

Reputation of an institute is a strategic managerial issue that fundamentally affects the institute's aptitude to recruit preferred faculty members, to attract generous donations, and to draw and retain motivated students. Image of an institutions for students before entering i.e. taking admission are usually the result of interaction and communication with recruiters, administrative literature, and other sources (Ali, Zhou, Hussain, Nair & Ragavan, 2016). For

some higher learning institutions, ranking classifications provide virtuous, worldwide unrestricted publicity where institutions publicize any of their favorable ranking situations in their marketing and persuasive materials to attract and recruit outstanding students helping in upsurge in their ranking (Thakur, 2007).

Quality of Teaching and Faculty

In this era of competition, quality teaching has turned out to be an issue of much importance in higher education due to continuous changes. The student body has extensively expanded and differentiated where new students opt for novel teaching methodologies (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). The more an institution has competent faculty, the more chances are that students will enroll and favor it. According to Rutkauksiene, Schreurs, Huet and Gudoniene (2010), superior quality of teaching and competent faculty members who excel in their fields are like backbone of an eminent educational institute providing higher education, which not only helps in better ranking of the institute but also attracting students and ensuring the students' families about their better brighter future.

Academic Support

The crucial factors that every institute must ensure for a better academic support are identified as, academic preparedness where students need career counseling for their better future, academic experience where proper technological aids should be used, academic and social match where socially a student must be motivated along with academics, financial aid where need based scholarships must be awarded and lastly university support with the administrative support (Arif et al., 2013). Therefore, to cope up with academic difficulties, the educational institutes must provide better academic support to their students so that they continue their education.

Campus Infrastructure

According to Helgesen and Nettet (2007), the student perceives and imagines about the institute's image among his/her circle of acquaintances, among general public and among his family before making final decision. If the infrastructure of the campus is old, out dated, grimy environment, no electricity backup then there is high chance that the student will not get himself enrolled no matter how highly ranked and well reputed the institute would be.

IT Services

With the technological advancement, students have also become ameliorated and acquainted with the technology. Now students use computers in institutes to analyze the data, authentic search for material and information, formulate reports, comprehensive presentations and work on theses. As of having the significance, the quality and convenience of using IT facilities is a prognosticator of student satisfaction (Gamage, Suwanabroma, Ueyama, Hada & Sekikawa, 2008).

Library Services

The real concept of libraries is that it encourages academics as well as research activities by means of providing access to superlative and top notch information resources (Hossain & Islam, 2012). Hence it is quite obvious to evaluate that students who are satisfied with the library services in their institutions also demonstrate higher levels of overall student satisfaction.

Price Fairness

Price fairness is said to be known as consumers' assessments of either a seller's price charge is reasonable, adequate or permissible (Hanif, Hafeez & Riaz, 2010). It is studied that price fairness is an important factor to be considered to gain student loyalty and satisfaction. If the price being charged is fair and justifiable as per the facilities being provided then student satisfaction increases but if the price is not fair and it is higher as compared to the facilities being provided then ultimately students become dissatisfied leading to switching or dropout (Wu, Liao, Chen & Hsu, 2011).

Placement Opportunity

After being graduated from institution, students seek placement opportunities and career development options. If after being graduated, a student gets an opportunity to start their career in even a small organization, doing causal or temporary jobs termed as internships, earning lower but have development chances, the student tends to stay satisfied from his institute, but on the contrary if he doesn't succeed in getting any respectable position, he not only becomes dissatisfied but can also start negative marketing of the institution from where he graduated (Rae, 2007).

Choice of Courses

When students are allowed to select courses themselves without any obligation from the institutes, they are motivated and the feeling of satisfaction takes place in their hearts, this satisfaction develops certain attitudes and behaviors such as loyalty, retention, commitment among the students and spread positive image of the institute among their peers (Paechter, Maier & Macher, 2010).

Security

Security and safety of the institute is significantly important especially in the context of Pakistan where the country is in the condition of war on terrorism. According to Khosravi, Poushaneh, Roozegar and Sohrabifard (2013), in the modern era, campus safety and security is use to assesses and perceive certain institutions responsiveness and sensitivity towards their student's personal life and their sanctuary.

Consequences of Student Loyalty

If the loyalty of the students is achieved by the educational institutions than there are several consequences and outcomes that can either be beneficial for the institute or can be a negative form for them.

Word of Mouth

Since long, word of mouth has been believed as a powerful source of evidence for everyone, either customers or students in universities (Lang & Lawson, 2013). Through word of mouth and review spreading across the globe, the technological enhancements has break down barriers of communication and is now considered as one of the most essential tool to evaluate an educational institute in modern setting (Giri, Biswas & Biswas, 2018).

The most famous communication behavior i.e. Word of Mouth is comprehended as intercommunication of students with their friends or colleagues regarding the institute subsequent to their enrollment (Casidy, 2014). Therefore, after graduating from their institutions, a loyal student may remain dedicated to support and favor his/her academic

institution, either financially and/or through constructive word of mouth to other forthcoming, existing or former students or even via some form of assistance (Rojas-Méndez et al., 2009).

H6: If the student is loyal than positive word of mouth is expected and they are positively related to each other.

Retention, Recommendation & Commitment

In context of educational institutions, retention is well defined by Crosling, Thomas and Heagney (2008), retention refers to the proportion of students who enroll and remain at a particular institution. Concentrating on enhancement of student satisfaction at educational institutions is essential in developing student value and opting for student loyalty. Earlier studies regarding student retention in institutions offering higher education have concentrated on academic aptitude as the predictor of retention (Jones, Fox, Taylor & Fabrigar, 2010). While offering problem solving solutions, and help in every day education, it is likely to have student retention in this age of modernization (Panigrahi, Azizan & Khan, 2018). Therefore, it is utterly important to attain student retention, the institutes of higher education must ensure such environment and facilities that the students are provoked to stay loyal and retain to their respective institutions.

Recommendations are commendations that have strong impact over the consumers purchasing decision behavior (Hsu, Chuan-Chuan & Chiang, 2013). Recommendations can be either positive or negative, it is evident that those students who are satisfied from their educational institution tend to spread positive recommendation and endorsement amid their peers and family, while those students who are dissatisfied from the lack of facilities and support from their educational institutions tend to spread negative recommendation and endorsement (Bontis, Booker & Serenko, 2007). According to Reichheld (2003) commendation and its intentions are the unsurpassed metric at envisaging not only students endorsing behavior, but also their repurchasing and retention behavior.

Commitment is successful long-term relationship with students of the institution who wish to continue their relationship with their existing educational institute. It is proved that long-term and efficacious relationships are built on the foundation of reciprocal commitment (Parasuraman, Berry & Zeithaml, 1991). Commitment is a permanent attitude or yearning for a specific institution. It is the degree to which students as members of the institute are passionately connected to the university, its name and the educational programs, sustained by continuous desire to remain with it (Kumar & Srivastava, 2013). Commitment is referred as a firm promise of the students of staying loyal to the institute, repurchase or re-enrollment in other programs offered by the institute, willingness to pay more; no matter how high the fee structure is but needs to be justified, advocacy in favor of the institution among peers and family, and altruism for the institute (Jones et al., 2010).

H7: Retention of students is foremost goal of educational institutes and is positively related to student loyalty.

H8: Positive and negative recommendations redirect the behavior of students and is positively associated with Student Loyalty.

H9: Commitment of students with their educational institute is positively linked with Student Loyalty.

METHODOLOGY

The research design in this study is descriptive. The selection of this research design is well supported by a researcher, according to him “descriptive design approach is used whenever the researchers are endeavoring to get the answer of ‘what is’ and ‘what was’ questions”(Grinnell & Unrau, 2005). According to Hair, Hult, Ringle and Sarstedt (2016), if the number of independent variables are 9 than as per the 5% minimum R2 the sample size should be above 150. The sample size being used in the research is as per the recommendation by the researchers. Target population for this study comprised business schools. All the students were approached who were enrolled in either Graduate program or Masters program or M.Phil. or Ph.D. program of the institute. The research for this paper started in December 2017 and ended in June 2018, in a time period of 6 months. For data collection, questionnaires were used because questionnaire are considered as straightforward means of communication, consumes less time from both; the researcher and the respondents, and can cater huge sample size (Mathers, Fox & Hunn, 2007). In this study the sampling technique will be non-probability sampling, where every respondent reached will be having a non-zero chance of being a part of the research. For this research, convenience sampling methods will be used. For the data analysis, Quantitative Analysis technique will be used. We use quantitative method as it requires units of coding that are needed to be scored in certain way (Beattie, McInnes & Fearnley 2004). The method of data collection is both online as well as offline sampling technique where we visited the institutions to get filled questionnaires and making the questionnaire on Google Docs to get offline filled answers from the respondents. A total of 380 respondents were approached, where 365 respondents agreed to participate. But several respondents submitted us with incomplete and inadequate questionnaires. Hence these questionnaires cannot be used for analysis. Therefore, total of 300 useful and practical responses were collected, where respondents approved the confidentiality of their involvement and contribution in the research. Since the model is complex and a new in higher education sector of Pakistan, Confirmatory Factor Analysis is used with involving Structural Equation Modeling due to nature of the topic chosen.

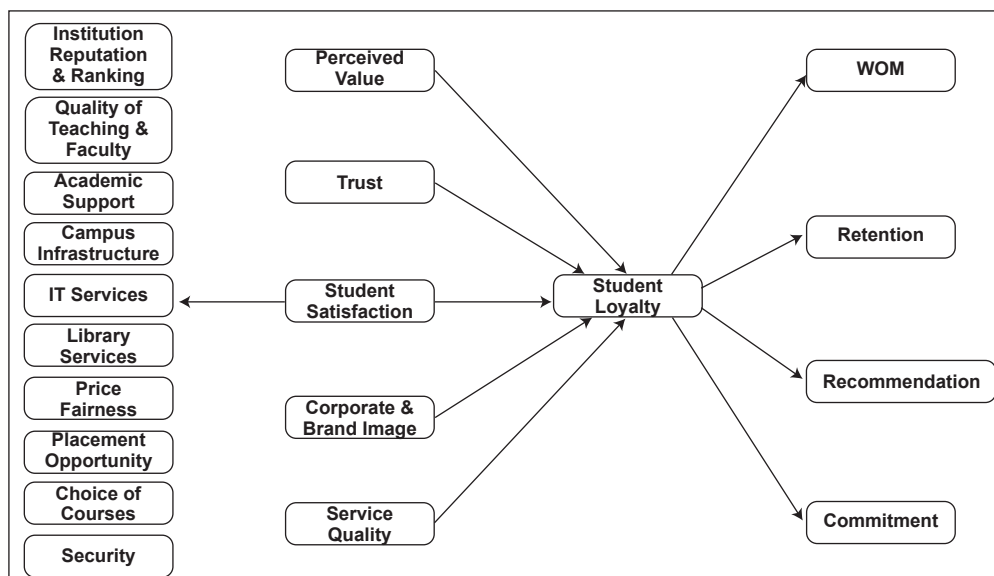


Figure 1. Research Model

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis & Data Consistency

Nunnally (1978) has indicated the threshold value of Cronbach's Alpha to be 0.7, as a satisfactory reliability coefficient. After running the reliability analysis on the data, the Cronbach's Alpha value found is 0.919 which is not only acceptable range, but also indicates higher satisfaction of data and excellent internal consistency, as shown in Table 1.

The analysis of demographics shows that the majority of the respondents were female (50.67 percent), age group is in between 21 to 30 years old (78 percent), household income level was 101,000 or above (71.33 percent), qualification level was masters (57.67 percent) and work experience was in between 1 – 3 years (47 percent) as shown in Table 2.

Table 1:
Reliability Analysis of Data

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.919
N of Items	60

Table 2:
Demographic Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	148	49.33
	Female	152	50.67
Age Group	Below 20 Years	1	0.33
	21 to 30 Years	234	78
	31 to 35 Years	63	21
	Above 35 Years	2	0.67
Household Income Level	Below 50,000	1	0.33
	51,000 – 65,000	2	0.67
	66,000 – 85,000	41	13.67
	86,000 – 100,000	42	14
	101,000 – Above	214	71.33
Qualification	Bachelors	120	40
	Masters	173	57.67
	M.Phil	5	1.67
	Ph.D.	2	0.67
Work Experience	Less than 1 Year	94	31.33
	1 – 3 Years	141	47
	4 – 6 Years	38	12.67
	7 – 10 Years	27	9
	Above 10 Years	0	0

Structural Equation Modeling – Path Model

Due to complexity of the model, path model is applied over the data. All the variables have certain effect over the dependent variable as shown in Table 3.

Table 3:
Path Model

Paths	Percentage Effect
Perceived Value → Student Loyalty	0.04
Trust → Student Loyalty	0.03
Student Satisfaction → Student Loyalty	41
Corporate & Brand Image → Student Loyalty	35
Service Quality → Student Loyalty	7
Student Loyalty → Word of Mouth	47
Student Loyalty → Retention	49
Student Loyalty → Recommendation	31
Student Loyalty → Commitment	53

The Table 3 indicates that Perceived Value has 0.04% effect on Student whereas Trust has 0.03% effect on Student, the Student Satisfaction has 41% effect on Student Loyalty, even Corporate & Brand Image has 35% effect on Student Loyalty while Service Quality has 7% effect on Student Loyalty. Student Loyalty has 47% effect on Word of Mouth, Student Loyalty has 49% effect on Retention, Student Loyalty has 31% effect on Recommendation and Student Loyalty has 53% effect on Commitment.

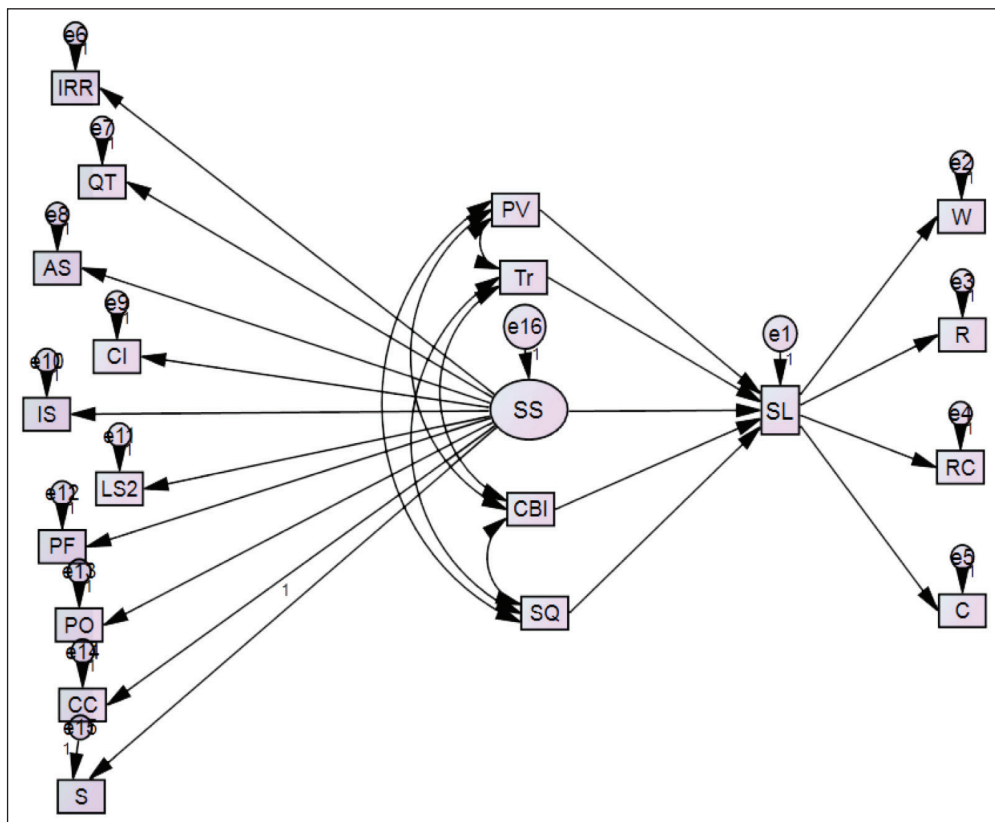


Figure 2. SEM Model

Hypotheses Assessment Summary

For the hypotheses, the summarized test results are evaluated and discussed in Table 4 and 5, respectively. Overall, the results show that student satisfaction drives student loyalty which indicates strong relationship with commitment from the students. Furthermore, student loyalty has strong relationship with the antecedents and consequences of it in higher education of Pakistan.

Table 4:
Summarized Test Results

Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label	p Value
SL <---	Tr	0.028	0.049	0.568	0.57
SL <---	PV	0.04	0.046	0.87	0.384
SL <---	CBI	0.351	0.062	5.672	***
SL <---	SQ	0.068	0.037	1.836	0.066
SL <---	SS	0.409	0.072	5.718	***
C <---	SL	0.53	0.093	5.688	***
RC <---	SL	0.308	0.067	4.589	***
R <---	SL	0.491	0.084	5.835	***
W <---	SL	0.47	0.062	7.598	***

Table 5:
Hypothesis and Results

No.	Hypothesis	Results
1	Perceived value can influence the decision of the customers and is positively related to student loyalty	Rejected
2	A students' trust in a service has a momentous and positive effect on their loyalty toward that service	Rejected
3	Corporate and Brand Image can influence the decision of a student and is positively associated with student loyalty	Accepted
4	Student Satisfaction is positively interlinked with Student Loyalty and if any one decreases the other decreases simultaneously	Accepted
5	Quality of service is positively related to Student Loyalty	
6	If the student is loyal than positive word of mouth is expected and they are positively related to each other	10% Accepted Accepted
7	Retention of students is foremost goal of educational institutes and is positively related to student loyalty	Accepted
8	Positive and negative recommendations redirect the behavior of students and is positively associated with Student Loyalty	Accepted
9	Commitment of students with their educational institute is positively linked with Student Loyalty	Accepted

DISCUSSION

There are several points that have emerged in this thesis that are analyzed critically. As per Table 5, the effect of Perceived Value on Student Loyalty was found to be 0.04% only whereas the p-Value is 0.384 which is greater than threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. According to the research conducted by Lam and Shankar (2014), there was a positive relation of perceived value on student loyalty, but it is rejected in our research because, in the context of Pakistan, majority of the students before taking admission in educational institutes do not compare the advantages or the disadvantages of getting enrolled in certain institute; they don't have prior perception regarding it. Further, the effect of Trust on Student Loyalty was found to be 0.03% only whereas the p-Value is 0.57 which is greater than threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. Veloutsou (2015) also rejected this hypothesis that trust can affect student loyalty, because, trust develops when you put your faith in something, before taking admission in an institute, a student cannot have trust developed in him, nor an institute can develop that virtually before providing them with the services. The effect of Corporate and Brand Image on Student Loyalty was found to be 35% whereas the p-Value is less than the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. This hypothesis was accepted in the paper by Reza Jalilvand and Samiei (2012), as before taking admissions in an institute, a student evaluates the image of the educational institution, how people will perceive about his image and how the image of that certain institute will either increase his acceptability in the society or would it decrease it.

The effect of Student Satisfaction on Student Loyalty was found to be 41% whereas the p-Value is less than the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. Noyan and Şimşek (2014) accepted that student satisfaction is a vital aspect when you are talking about student loyalty as if the student is satisfied with his institute or constructs a satisfactory image of an institute, he is more likely to remain loyal to his educational institute and will spread a positive image of it as well. The effect of Service Quality on Student Loyalty was found to be 7% whereas the p-Value is 0.066 which is near the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is 10% accepted. This hypothesis was actually rejected by Rojas-Méndez et al. (2009), but when we are studying the effects of service quality on student loyalty, it is partially acceptable. The reason is that every student walks in an institute with some expectations framed in his mind therefore if the services being provided by the institute are as per his expectations then there are chances he will turn into a loyal student and would always retain to the same institute for the fulfillment of his educational needs.

The effect of student loyalty on word of mouth was found to be 47% whereas the p-value is less than the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. This is an accepted hypothesis by Casidy (2014), because if a student is loyal to his institute than he will spread positive word of mouth regarding it and vice versa. WOM has a great impact in this modern age where students want to enroll in that institute that has higher positive reviews. The effect of Student Loyalty on Retention was found to be 49% whereas the p-Value is less than the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. This is also an accepted phenomenon by Setó-Pamies (2012) as if a student is loyal to his institution than he will never leave it. His prime choice for all his educational needs would be the same institute always. The effect of Student Loyalty on Recommendation was found to be 31% whereas the p-Value is less than the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. It was a partially accepted hypothesis by Hsu et al. (2013) because in their study the students were having

ambiguity about recommending their institute to their family or peers, but in the context of Pakistan, every new student who is seeking admission in an educational institution seeks recommendation from alumni, their close friends and family members. The effect of student loyalty on commitment was found to be 53% whereas the p-Value is less than the threshold value 0.01, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. It is also an accepted hypothesis by Jones et al. (2010) as in Pakistan, if a student is loyal to his institute then he is also committed to it. He will work for the welfare and betterment of his institute and will always play a positive proactive role to spread the positive words.

In a nut shell, it is evaluated that there is no effect of Perceived Value and Trust on Student Loyalty but strong effect of Corporate & Brand Image and Student Satisfaction over Student Loyalty, whereas Service Quality have a minimal effect. The consequences such as Word of Mouth, Retention, Recommendation and Commitment have effect and when a student becomes loyal, these four consequences will be found.

Managerial Implications and Recommendations

With the growth of higher educational institutions, there is dire need of understanding the psychology of a student when he joins an institute that what are the factors he is looking for and what can be the moments when a motivated student be so demoralized that he is left with only switching his institute. Gaining loyalty of a student is undoubtedly an important factor for any educational institute to get a positive image and a sincerest consideration from the forthcoming potential students. This research plays a pivotal role for higher educational institutions to understand the mind set of new generation and impending students that what are the crucial factors that can increase their student enrollment database and what can be the reasons that can decrease their student enrollment database as well as can hurt their prestigious image in the society.

To get loyal students, the management of the institutions must ensure quality services like best faculty, easily accessible campus location, infrastructure, academic support, secure and healthy environment etc. Finally to sustain that loyalty, the management must guarantee positivity within the institute and increase the quality of the services as per the expectations of the students.

After evaluating the nine hypothesis, it is important to note that perceived value and trust are the antecedents of customer of loyalty but when their impact was studied upon students, it was found out that students are not much into trust or perceived value scenario, due to lack of prior knowledge or lack of interest in gathering such data. From this research, it is found out that for the survival of the institutions the only option left is to emphasize over the quality being delivered, the environment being offered, the eminence of infrastructure, the uniqueness of faculty and courses being offered, ensuring secure surroundings for healthy nourishment of brains to ultimately get loyal students who not only recommend the institution to others, but also spread integrity and distinctiveness of it to others, remain committed and retain every single time for their educational needs and concerns. Therefore, it is recommended to the institutions to become such an exclusive institute that offers complete satisfaction to their students ultimately driving loyalty from them in return.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Regardless of the usefulness of the study mentioned above, the research has its limitations. First and foremost, the study can be strengthened by increasing the sample size and reaching the respondents from other geographical regions. It only caters to Karachi, not other cities of Pakistan. Secondly, the current study is limited to Business Schools only; it can be expanded to other fields of education as well to get more clearer and perfect analysis. Finally, the research is limited in expanding only the student satisfaction variable. For the future researchers, they can expand every antecedent and consequences to elaborate the study and be more specific and particular. It is recommended to use non-convenience sampling methodology to cater the entire populace of Pakistan to properly evaluate the antecedents and consequences of student loyalty in the higher education.

CONCLUSION

The sole aim of this study was to investigate the antecedents and consequences of student loyalty in higher education. As per the findings of this research paper, the antecedents that motivate or demotivate a student for optimistic or pessimistic point of view are corporate and brand image, student satisfaction and service quality, whereas for the consequences or the outcome of the loyalty are word of mouth, retention, recommendation and commitment. These antecedents and consequences can be a motivational factor for a student for joining an institute like decent brand image, satisfactory results and premium quality, and in return will always give positive word of mouth, will retain to study more, recommend to others and would be a committed student lifetime. Similarly if a student is not getting greater services from his institute, his issues are not being resolved timely, his satisfaction would be effected, ultimately decreasing his loyalty. Once the loyalty is decreased than for sure he will never spread positive reviews about the institute, would never retain nor recommend the institute to his acquaintances.

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