

**IJEM**

International Journal of Economics and Management

Journal homepage: <http://www.econ.upm.edu.my/ijem>

## Antecedents Influencing Parents' Decisions in Selecting Higher Education Institutions

AIFA ROZAINI MOHD RADZOL<sup>a</sup>, KENNY TEOH GUAN CHENG<sup>b\*</sup>, HASLINDA HASHIM<sup>b</sup> AND NOOR AZLIN ISMAIL<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia*

<sup>b</sup>*Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia*

### ABSTRACT

This study examines the factors that influence parent intention in selecting Private Universities for their children. Purposive sampling was used for the study. Target respondents were parents who have the intention to enroll their children into Private Universities in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. This research surveyed 394 respondents during various education fairs and private university open days. Underpinned by Consumer Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980) this study adopts Brand Equity, Involvement, Advertising, Satisfaction and Purchase Intention as the research constructs in the research framework; and examines the relationships between Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising to Satisfaction; and Satisfaction to Intention. This study also investigates the mediating effect of Satisfaction. Using PLS-SEM to analyze the data, seven hypotheses are proposed and supported by the results. They offer insights into how parents select Private Universities for their children; and should be useful to Private Universities for developing enrolment strategies.

**Keywords:** Brand Equity, Buyer Involvement, Advertising, Private Higher Educations, Satisfaction and Intention.

**JEL Classification:** M3, M39, M390

\*Corresponding author: [kent@upm.edu.my](mailto:kent@upm.edu.my)

## INTRODUCTION

Recently, the announcement by the Malaysia Government about budget cuts in public universities has attracted much parent attention. Under Budget 2017, the funding for public universities has been slashed by as much as 42%, compared to Budget 2015 (The Star Online, 2017). With this announcement, premier public universities have had to let go of their experienced staff, thus jeopardizing their standards. The slashing of government funds has also led to a poorer upkeep of facilities, posing a risk to students and staff.

As a result, it has sparked parents' interest in Private Universities as an alternative to Public Universities. In addition, parents have the impression that Private Universities are better than Public Universities because Private Universities only invest in the best facilities, equipment and academic talent (Naidu *et al*, 2016; and Hashim *et al*, 2010). It has been reported that graduates from Private Universities are more employable because they meet private sector demands better, in that they have the right qualities and skill (Marimuthu, 2008) Private University graduates have also been found to be more expressive when it comes to their ability to communicate in English. (Marimuthu, 2008)

Besides that, parents are also concerned about job opportunities after graduation. Usually, parents who enroll their children for tertiary education have two questions: Will my child be employable? Will the conferred degree open doors? Cost becomes a secondary issue because parents believe that a good education is about ensuring survival. Parents want to give their children an education that will be valuable for their future. Even middle income parents will want their children to get a good quality education (proper learning facilities and experienced academic talent) and they do not mind paying for it.

The dilemma among parents about their children's private tertiary education, presents a research gap. What are the factors that could increase parents' satisfaction in choosing Private Universities for their children? A review of literature has found that Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising could be meaningful antecedents to increase parent satisfaction. The development of the research framework is supported by Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980). This research proposes Brand Equity, Involvement, and Advertising as the independent variables of satisfaction; and Intention as the dependent variable. The reasons for integrating these constructs into a single framework are explained in the Literature Review section. To address the gap stated in the research problem, this research proposes three research questions. They are:-

- i. Which antecedents positively influence parent's satisfaction?
- ii. What is the relationship between parents' Satisfaction and Purchase Intention?
- iii. Does Satisfaction mediate the relationships between antecedents (Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising) and Purchase Intention?

In answering the research questions, this research formulates five corresponding research objectives. The research objectives of this research are to examine the relationships between:-

- i. Brand Equity and Satisfaction.
- ii. Involvement and Satisfaction.
- iii. Advertising and Satisfaction.
- iv. Satisfaction and Intention.
- v. The role of Satisfaction as a mediating effect between independent variables (Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising) and dependent variable (Intention).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section discusses the constructs in this research. Section 2.1 discusses Consumer Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980) which serves as the underpinning theory to support the research framework. Section 2.2 to Section 2.6 review the past research. Finally, the research framework is presented.

### **Underpinning Theory**

Consumer Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980) offers the view that satisfaction/ dissatisfaction occurs to the extent of the confirmation/disconfirmation, in relation to a specific phenomenon. This theory is also known as the Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP). Specifically, this theory uses the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Paradigm to predict Satisfaction. Confirmation (also known as positive disconfirmation) occurs when a product/service conforms to exactly what has been expected. In contrast, there also may be a form of disconfirmation (also known as negative disconfirmation) when worse than expected happens; but this becomes positive when performance is better than expected. This theory is widely accepted in all marketing fields.

### **Brand Equity**

The term “brand equity” has become one of the most important marketing concepts since the 1980s. Aaker (1991) defines brand equity as “a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name, and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm’s customers”. This research adopts the American Marketing Association definition where Brand Equity is defined as ‘a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them, to identify the product(s) of one company and to differentiate them from those of competitors’.

In services, the brand can play an important role as risk reliever, giving greater confidence and increasing trust (Erdem and Swait, 1998). Brand provides a signal or a promise to consumer about the service that the consumer will get, thus mitigating some of the associated risk and credence issues (De Chernatony and McDonald, 1998). Brand also can act as a source of information and serve as a tool for differentiation; and ease the consumer choice process by creating distinctiveness (Gabbott and Hogg, 1998). Consequently, brand has been increasingly acknowledged as an important determinant of consumer choice in the service sector (Turley and Moore, 1995).

Historically, the branding of Private Universities has been done to create awareness among prospective students, their parents, academia, industry, and alumni. Since Private Universities are profit oriented businesses, brand management strategy is critical for improving their rankings in the higher education market (Brunzel, 2007). Some Private Universities rebrand themselves to create an entirely new image, improve brand awareness, enhance perceived quality and to create stronger brand associations (Paden and Stell, 2006). Branding also has been successful in helping labor-intensive services differentiate themselves (Berry and Lampo, 2004). Brand, almost always, helps consumers by signalling a certain level of quality (Erdem and Swait 1998). The appeal of a brand is largely at the emotional level; and this is based on its symbolic image and key associations (Simms and Trott, 2006). In some cases, brands can develop relationships with consumers (Fournier, 1998). The cult-like devotion to enrolling children in Taylors University, Monash University and Multimedia University in Malaysia are examples of such relationships.

Sevier (2007) found that a well-branded university attracts more and better students, more full and fuller-paying students, more students who will persist, better faculty and staff, more donated dollars, more media attention, more research dollars, and more strategic partners. Hence, successful branding usually increases admission and better qualified students (LipmanHearne, 2011), increased retention rates for professors and students; increased faculty recruitment, recognition and donors (Moore, 2010) and increased graduation rates (Lockwood and Hadd, 2007). Consequently, this research proposes the first hypothesis:-

$H_1$  : There is a positive relationship between Brand Equity and Satisfaction.

## **Involvement**

The concept of Involvement was coined in 1947 by the social psychologists Sherif and Cantril. This concept entered the consumer behavior field in 1978 (Houston and Rothschild). This research defines Involvement as, “a person’s perceived relevance of the object based on their inherent needs, values and interests” (p 61)”.

Day (1977) found that the effects of product Involvement on Satisfaction are contingent, where products of low importance have weak relationships with satisfaction. Later, Swan and Trawick (1979) and Bloch (1982) drew the same conclusion. Bloch (1982) further added that important products are more likely to affect attitudes and behaviors.

Kaish (1967) provides the basis for goods classification, namely convenience goods, shopping goods and specialty goods. Kaish’s definition of goods is listed below:-

- i) Convenience goods – Purchase is not important to buyer because of low price, low durability or low ego involvement like cigarettes and soft drinks.
- ii) Shopping goods – Purchase where economics and psychology are important elements, contains significant performance differences and has physical qualities that are readily related to performance characteristics likes shoes and handbags.

- iii) Specialty goods – Economically and/or psychologically important and have different enough performance characteristics to qualify as specialty products like diamond rings and automobiles.

Following the above definitions, education in Private Universities falls in the specialty goods definition. Enrolling children in Private Universities involves economics and psychology: because of expensive education fees (economics); and the need for a good education for a better future (psychology). Thus, education at Private Universities constitutes specialty goods. As a result, Private Universities are also high involvement products which require thorough considerations before a decision is made.

Rothschild (1978, 1979) argued that high involvement products may increase a person's arousal at the early stages of decision making (i.e., awareness). Rothschild further added that low involvement consumers may have less consistent attitudes due to lower levels of information processing motivation. Houston and Rothschild (1978) argued that involvement enhances the intensity of judgment and the direction is influenced by the affective tone attached to the object. Bowen and Chaffee (1974) also presented empirical evidence which showed that highly involved consumers make different pre-purchase judgments, than do low involved consumers. Therefore, the second hypothesis is proposed:-

H<sub>2</sub> :There is a positive relationship between Involvement and Satisfaction.

## **Advertising**

In this research, Advertising is defined as “activities that communicate the product or service and persuade target buyers to purchase,” (Kotler, 1999). Generally, advertisement objectives are communicated through the mass media and the communications are paid by the business even if they involve high costs. Businesses spend huge sums of money annually for marketing and public relations; in direct and indirect form. In fact, businesses invest millions of dollars in creating advertisement to position their products apart from their competitors, to influence buyer behavior through the mass media.

It has been found that TV is one of the most effective media for advertising purposes because it has massive effects on viewers for a variety of reasons (Rice and Atkin, 2001). Advertising through TV offers three main advantages: Firstly, its pervasive presence; Secondly, its cost efficiency; and thirdly, the creativity put into the advertisements that create a strong impact in buyers' minds (Ramalingam *et al.*, 2006). Surprisingly, out of all marketing mix weapons, advertising is renowned for its long-lasting impact in buyer cognition (Dolak, 2007). Advertising certainly plays a major role in creating awareness in potential buyers' minds to make the eventual purchase decision (Mela *et al.*, 1997).

Halley and Balldinger, (1991) state that the entertainment and information about the product or service promoted in advertising, are the main reasons for the likeability of the product or service advertised. Entertainment could enhance involvement of the viewer with the advertisement; and product or service. It is obvious that if the advertiser is able to create a positive image of the product through entertainment and information, it could attract the involvement of the viewer (consumer) instantly; and affect the consumers' buying behavior

(Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989). Some consumers give importance to the quality of the product; while other consumers are persuaded just by the communication techniques.

This likeability which is created by the advertisers, through information and entertainment and involvement of the viewer, later becomes a solid component of the buying intention of the consumer (Smith *et al.*, 2010). The liking and disliking for the advertised product really matters because it further leads to persuasion and intention on the part of the consumer to buy the advertised product. The likeability is generated in the advertising, through creativeness, brand image and to some extent through the celebrity endorsement as well. All these factors are the real contributors towards the impact of advertising on consumer buying behavior. Therefore, the third hypothesis is proposed:-

H<sub>3</sub> : There is a positive relationship between Advertising and Satisfaction

### **Satisfaction**

A review of the extant literature indicates a wide variance in the definition of satisfaction; because of this, there is no uniform definition of satisfaction. The lack of a consensus on a common definition limits the contribution of satisfaction research. However, this research adopts the commonly accepted definition by Westbrook (1980). Westbrook (1980) defined Satisfaction as an internal positive feeling(s) that buyers have when they evaluate information, before they make a purchase of a desired product. To be sure, Satisfaction can be positive (when the evaluation of information leads to a positive feeling); or, it can be negative (when the evaluation of information leads to a negative feeling).

Studies show that customer satisfaction may have direct and indirect impact on business results. Anderson *et al.* (1994), and Luo and Homburg (2007) concluded that customer satisfaction positively affects business profitability. Many studies have investigated the relationship of satisfaction with customer behavior patterns (Söderlund, 1998; Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000; Dimitriadis, 2006; Olorunniwo *et al.*, 2006; Chi and Qu, 2008; Faullant *et al.*, 2008); According to these findings, customer satisfaction increases customer loyalty and influences (re)purchase intention. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is proposed:-

H<sub>4</sub> : There is positive relationship between Satisfaction and Purchase Intention.

### **Purchase Intention**

In this research, Purchase Intention is defined as “the probability that an individual will actually buy a product,” (Whitlark *et al.*, 1993). Intention to perform a specific behavior has been shown to be the antecedent of behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012; Esper and Rateike, 2012). Ajzen and Fishbein (1985) suggested two measurements of behavioral intention: one covering the likelihood of performing the behavior; and the other, the intention to perform the behavior. Likelihood and Intention are separate and distinct phenomena. Whereas, intention refers to a goal or purpose, likelihood refers to the subjective probability that the behavior will take place. Intention refers to a predisposition while likelihood can be thought of as resulting not only from the predisposition but from other variables such as the perception of the adequate resources to perform the behavior (Moital, 2004). For example, one may say that

one intends to own a Masserati (Intention); but says that it is very unlikely that it will happen perhaps because one does not expect to have the financial resources to do so (Likelihood).

In UTAUT, intention was used to predict the actual use of information technology. In this theory, intention is used to provide an explanation of the determinants of technology acceptance that is general, capable of explaining user behavior across a broad range of end-use computing technologies and user populations, while at the same time being parsimonious and theoretically justified (Venkatesh, 2003). However, this theory has been revised by Venkatesh *et al.* (2012) and named UTAUT2. UTAUT2 incorporates three constructs into UTAUT: hedonic motivation, price value and habits. Venkatesh *et al.* (2012) conducted an empirical test on this theory. The research found that hedonic benefits did not influence technology; but monetary sacrifice (i.e., price value) could influence technology use. In addition, habit was also shown to influence behavior. Therefore, Venkatesh *et al.* (2012) suggested that to strengthen the relationship between intention and behavior more marketing communication is required for hedonic motivation and habits.

This research focuses on Purchase Intention rather than behavior because Purchase Intention has wider implications and will often have a positive impact on an individual's actions (Schlosser *et al.*, 2006; Ajzen and Driver, 1992). This has been supported by many scholars who have studied the significance of Purchase Intention in various contexts (Yoo and Lee, 2009; Dubois and Paternault, 1995; Zeithaml, 1988). This research employs Purchase Intention as the dependent variable because Purchase Intention strongly predicts purchase behavior – it has been shown to be a key predictive component (Follows and Jobber, 2000).

In parents' minds Brand Equity is very important because Brand Equity presents the service value of the brand name. Brand Equity also marks the product or service distinctly from other competitors. Previous research by Walgren *et al.* (1995) and Chen and Chuang (2007) have found that Brand Equity and Purchase Intention have a positive relationship.

Similarly, Hollebeek *et al.* (2007) have found that Involvement and the likelihood to purchase (Purchase Intention) have a positive relationship especially when the product has a symbol and/or brand presenting the value of the purchase, like wines, cars and other expensive products. In contrast, Involvement is seen to have no significant relationship on the Purchase Intention of counterfeit products (Bian and Mountinho, 2011).

A recent study by Duffet (2015) has found that advertising through Facebook has a positive influence on the Purchase Intention; that, and TV advertising which show high quality features of the product or service, do influence Purchase Intention (Siddiqui, 2014). Therefore, it can be concluded that Advertising and Purchase Intention usually have a positive relationship between them.

Since there is a consistent (positive) relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable, therefore, this research proposes to investigate Satisfaction as the mediator between the independent variables and dependent variable. Therefore, the mediating effect hypotheses are proposed:-

H<sub>5</sub> :Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Brand Equity and Intention

H<sub>6</sub> :Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Involvement and Intention

H<sub>7</sub> :Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Advertising and Intention

Based on the above literature review, the conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 1. This framework is developed to examine the relationship between Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising to Satisfaction; and Satisfaction to Purchase Intention. This framework adopted Satisfaction Theory by (Oliver, 1980) as the underpinning theory. This research also extends the satisfaction concept, where the antecedents (Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising) are included to better understand the antecedents of satisfaction.

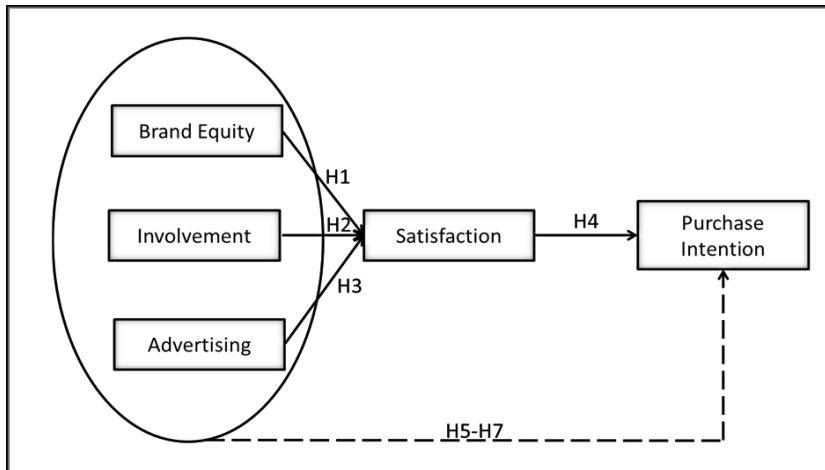


Figure 1: Research Framework

## METHODOLOGY

In this research, the quantitative approach is adopted. Parents were chosen as the unit of analysis because parents are the ones who pay for the education of their children at Private Universities. Therefore, understanding parents' Satisfaction is crucial because it could help marketers to develop and manage marketing strategy better. Section 3.1 discusses the sample and procedure employed in this research, and Section 3.2 presents the measurement items used in this study.

### Sample and Procedure

The list of Private Universities was obtained from "study malaysia.com" website. Overall, it reported that, in the Klang Valley, there are 34 Private Universities with university status, 13 private university colleges and 5 foreign branch universities. Target respondent were reached through their visits to private university open days and during education fair exhibitions, in and around the Klang Valley. Parents were chosen as respondents to answer the questionnaire.

Judgmental sampling was adopted, where respondents who fulfilled the following criteria were invited to participate in the survey: 'Do you (parent) plan to enroll your child in a private university?' If the respondent answered, "No", the respondent was disqualified; only those who answered, "Yes" were included into the data analysis. This survey adopted the self-administered data collection method.



Before the survey was conducted, the survey questionnaire was subjected to a face validity check where the questionnaire was checked by experts in the field. Their comments helped to improve the quality of the questionnaire.

During the three-month data collection (October 2016 – December 2016), a total of 420 questionnaires were distributed and 394 were completed and returned, yielding a 93.8% responses rate. The balance of 6.2% (24 questionnaires) were dismissed because of incompleteness and non-compliance with survey requirements. This sample size met the criteria suggested by Hair *et al.*, (2010), where any sample size larger than 200 is considered sufficiently large for an analysis that attempts to estimate unknown parameters.

## Measurement

For measurement, a 7-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the parents' perceptions of private university brand equity, involvement and advertising; parents' satisfaction level and their intention to enroll their child into a private university. All scale measurements ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). Table 1 presents the scales that were adapted to measure the research constructs.

Table 1: Research Item Measurement

Construct	Source of Scale	Number of Items
Brand Equity	Adapted from Verhoef <i>et al</i> (2007)	3
Involvement	Adapted from Zaichkowsky (1985)	19
Advertising	Adapted from Puto and Wells (1984)	18
Satisfaction	Adapted from Oliver (1980)	6
Purchase Intention	Adapted from Cronin and Taylor (1992)	3

## Analysis

The collected data were keyed into SPSS and ported to Smart-PLS to perform latent variable analyses (Ringle *et al*, 2015). The SEM-PLS technique allows for predictive relevance by maximizing the variance of the key target variables by different explanatory variables (Hair *et al*, 2014; Henseler *et al*, 2009). It is deemed more suited for current analysis instead of covariance-bases SEM due to several reasons. Firstly, the antecedents are not part of Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980) but are adopted to be the key constructs to assess satisfaction and purchase intention in a relatively unfamiliar context, where the focus of the study is on the explanative capacity by components, rather than the reproduction of a covariance matrix to achieve model fit (Hair *et al*. 2014). Secondly, since only parents who intend to enroll children to private university are the respondents, SEM- PLS is preferred because it requires lesser demands on sample size and also data normality (Astrachan *et al.*, 2014). Hence, SEM- PLS was chosen to perform latent variable and mediation analysis in this research.

## RESULT

This section discusses the analysis in this research. Section 4.1 presents the respondent demographics. Section 4.2 presents the research Measurement Model and lastly, Section 4.3 discusses the Structural Model of this research.

### Respondent Demographics

Table 2 presents the demographic information of 370 respondents for this research. Only parents were allowed to participate in this survey.

Table 2: Respondent Profile

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	181	48.9
Female	189	51.1
Age		
40-50 years	110	29.7
51-54 years	91	24.8
55-60 years	98	26.4
>60 years	71	19.1
Work		
Government	98	26.5
Private Sector	176	47.6
Own Business	74	20
Others	22	5.9

### Measurement Model

Table 3 shows the assessment of construct reliability and convergent validity for the constructs tested in this research. The Composite Reliability (CR) value of 0.924 (BE), 0.933 (INV), 0.947 (ADV), 0.911 (SAT), 0.933 (INT) demonstrates that these constructs have high levels of internal consistency. Also, these items demonstrate good convergent validity. All constructs achieved a minimum threshold value of 0.5 for average variance extracted (AVE) which is an indication that the items explains more than 50 per cent of the construct's variances (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

Table 3: Internal Consistency and Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Scale	Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability
Brand Equity	BE1	Reflective	0.901	0.802	0.924
	BE2		0.931		
	BE3		0.853		
Buyer Involvement	INV1	Reflective	0.651	0.5	0.933
	INV2		0.642		

Table 3 (Cont.)

Five Items Deleted because of Outer Loading less than 0.4 (Item No: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19)	INV3		0.675			
	INV4		0.799			
	INV5		0.77			
	INV6		0.794			
	INV7		0.771			
	INV8		0.754			
	INV9		0.733			
	INV10		0.692			
	INV11		0.718			
	INV12		0.698			
	INV13		0.62			
	Advertising One Item Deleted because of Outer Loading less than 0.4 (Item No: 16)	ANP1	Reflective	0.642	0.504	0.947
		ANP2		0.672		
	ANP3		0.681			
	ANP4		0.772			
	ANP5		0.786			
	ANP6		0.812			
	ANP7		0.775			
	ANP8		0.776			
	ANP9		0.8			
	ANP10		0.71			
	ANP11		0.786			
	ANP12		0.695			
	ANP13		0.725			
	ANP14		0.676			
	ANP15		0.707			
	ANP17		0.626			
	ANP18		0.516			
Satisfaction	PPS1	Reflective	0.741	0.633	0.911	
	PPS2		0.633			
	PPS3		0.814			
	PPS4		0.86			
	PPS5		0.864			
	PPS6		0.836			
Purchase Intention	PI1	Reflective	0.856	0.823	0.933	
	PI2		0.948			
	PI3		0.914			

Table 4 depicts the assessment of discriminant validity using the HTMT criterion as suggested by Henseler *et al* (2015). As illustrated, the square roof of AVE of each construct is larger than the correlation estimates of the constructs. This indicates that all the constructs are distinctly different from each other, implying that each construct is unique and captures phenomena that are not represented by other constructs in the model (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Similarly, the results demonstrate that the correlation values corresponding to the respective constructs do not violate the most conservative HTMT0.85 criterion for assessing discriminant validity (Henseler *et al*, 2015).

Table 4: HTMT Criterion

	ADV	BRAND	INVOLVE	SATISFACTION	INTENTION
ADV					
BRAND EQUITY	0.372				
INVOLVEMENT	0.536	0.504			
SATISFACTION	0.626	0.356	0.443		
INTENTION	0.122	0.307	0.29	0.397	

Note: Diagonal elements represent the square root of AVE. Off diagonal elements are simple bivariate correlations between the constructs

In addition, this research analyzed the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) to test the model fit, which is defined as the standardized difference between the observed correlation and the predicted correlation. The result shows 0.061, which is less than 0.08; the research model is categorized to have a good fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

### Structural Model

Before assessing a structural model, it is crucial to ensure that there are no collinearity issues in the structural model. Table 5 shows the outcome of the collinearity test. The VIF value for each of the constructs is lower than the offending value of 3.3 (Diamantopoulos and Sigauw, 2006), Table 5, suggesting that there is no issue with collinearity in this research.

Table 5: Collinearity Assessment

	Satisfaction	Intention
Advertising	1.372	
Brand Equity	1.299	
Involvement	1.534	
Satisfaction		1

Table 6 illustrates the results of path coefficient assessment using the bootstrapping procedure for each of the hypothesized relationship in the research model. The proposed relationships are all significant. Hence, it may be concluded that Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising have positive effects on Satisfaction in selecting Private Universities. The first three hypotheses are supported; and the fourth hypothesis is also found to be supported where, the feeling of satisfaction significantly influences parent purchase intention. Table 6 also presents the assessment of coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), the effect size ( $f^2$ ) as well as the

predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) of the exogenous variables in this research. The value for coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.371. This suggests that the exogenous variables in this study, namely, Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising, together, explain 37.1 per cent of the variance in Purchase Intention. Overall, the  $Q^2$  value of 0.23 for Purchase Intention, which is larger than 0 (Hair *et al.*, 2014) suggests that all exogenous variables possess predictive ability over the endogenous variable. Of the exogenous variables, Brand Equity, ( $f^2 = 0.018$ ) and Involvement ( $f^2 = 0.013$ ) have a small to medium effect size; while Advertising ( $f^2 = 0.274$ ) has a medium to large effect size.

Table 6: Consolidation of Path Coefficient Assessment, Determination of coefficient ( $R^2$ ), Effect Size ( $f^2$ ) and Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ )

H	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t -Value	Interval Estimate		Decision	$R^2$	$F^2$	$Q^2$
					LB	UB				
H1	BE →SAT	0.121	0.049	2.488	0.043	0.199	S	0.371	0.018	0.230
H2	INV →SAT	0.110	0.060	1.828	0.023	0.211	S		0.013	
H3	ADV →SAT	0.487	0.051	9.605	0.415	0.575	S		0.274	
H4	SAT → INT	0.356	0.047	7.570	0.289	0.447	S		0.145	

Table 7 elucidates the mediating effect of satisfaction on the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. It is found that satisfaction mediates all the relationships, which means H5-H7 are supported.

Table 7: Consolidation of Mediating Effect

H	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-Value	Interval Estimate		Decision
					LB	UB	
H5	BE→SAT→INT	0.043	0.020	2.163	0.015	0.081	S
H6	INV→SAT→INT	0.039	0.023	1.721	0.008	0.084	S
H7	ADV→SAT →INT	0.173	0.027	6.501	0.136	0.226	S

## DISCUSSION AND LIMITATION

This study provides evidence of the importance of Brand Equity, Involvement and Advertising by Private Universities to stimulate parents' satisfaction; and to increase parents' intention to choose particular Private Universities. All constructs used in this research have significant relationships with parents' enrollment intention.  $H_1$  shows that there is a significant relationship between Brand Equity and Satisfaction. This finding echoes the previous findings by Sevier (2007) and Moore (2010). In addition, this study found that parents' involvement and satisfaction ( $H_2$ ) have a significant relationship, which is similar to the findings of Bowen and Chaffee (1974). When parents are highly involved in selecting private education, this might shape positive feelings (satisfaction) towards the institution. Therefore, marketer of private education should focus on promoting parents' involvement to attract prospects. Other than

Brand Equity and Involvement, Advertising by private education also has a significant influence on parents's satisfaction ( $H_3$ ). The likeability created by an advertiser through information and entertainment, later becomes a solid component of the buying intention of the consumer (Smith *et al*, 2010). According to Consumer Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980), when buyers (parents) feel satisfied, it might increase the probability of the next action. In this study,  $H_4$  investigates the relationship between Satisfaction and Purchase Intention. Other than direct relationships, this research also investigated the mediating relationship of satisfaction between the independent variables and the dependent variable ( $H_5$ ,  $H_6$  and  $H_7$ ). It has been found that Satisfaction mediates all the tested relationships.

This research does not include any moderator in the framework; which, in the real world, is most unlikely to happen. A moderator represents a disturbance to the tested relationships, thus increasing the representativeness of the research framework. In future moderators should be included into the research framework. Moderators like eWOM, and Buyer Initial Trust could be useful for this framework. Other than moderators, various other antecedents can be proposed to test the relationships. Then, quite similar concepts can be group together which may help marketers develop better strategies to make their businesses perform better.

The sample is made up of parents who would like to enroll their children in Private Universities in Malaysia only; whereas, parents who intend to enroll their children to universities abroad, have not been included in this research. Similarly, this research also could be extended by targeting parents who enroll their children in private international schools. Considering the large sums of money to enroll their children in such schools, therefore, parents' satisfaction is a crucial phenomenon for study.

There is dearth of literature and empirical studies on investigating parents' involvement with tertiary education in Private Universities; but, vast studies have been conducted about the parents and schools relationship; and this relationship has been found to be consistently positive. Hence, this research constitutes a strong signal to marketers to develop strategies that promote parents' involvement with Private Universities.

## REFERENCES

- Aaker, D.A., Myers, J.G. and Aaker, D.A., 1991. *Advertisng Management. 3rd Edition. London: Prentice Hal International*
- Achrol, R.S. and Kotler, P., 1999. Marketing in the network economy. *The Journal of Marketing*, pp.146-163.
- Ajzen, I. and Fishbein, M., 1980. Understanding attitudes and predicting social behaviour.
- Ajzen, I. and Madden, T.J., 1986. Prediction of goal-directed behavior from attitudinal and normative variables. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 22, pp.453-474.
- Ajzen, I. and Driver, B.L., 1992. Application of the theory of planned behavior to leisure choice. *Journal of leisure research*, 24(3), p.207.
- Anderson, E.W., 1998. Customer satisfaction and word of mouth. *Journal of service research*, 1(1), pp.5-17.

- Astrachan, C.B., Patel, V.K. and Wanzenried, G., 2014. A comparative study of CB-SEM and PLS-SEM for theory development in family firm research. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 5(1), pp.116-128.
- Berry, L.L. and Lampo, S.S., 2004. Brand in Labour-Intensive Services. *London Business School Review*, 15(1), pp.18-25.
- Bian, X. and Moutinho, L., 2011. The role of brand image, product involvement, and knowledge in explaining consumer purchase behaviour of counterfeits: Direct and indirect effects. *European Journal of Marketing*, 45(1/2), pp.191-216.
- Bloch, P.H., 1982. Involvement beyond the purchase process: conceptual issues and empirical investigation. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Bowen, L. and Chaffee, S.H., 1974. Product involvement and pertinent advertising appeals. *Journalism Quarterly*, 51(4), pp.613-621.
- Bunzel, D.L., 2007. Universities sell their brands. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 16(2), pp.152-153.
- Chi, C.G.Q. and Qu, H., 2008. Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism management*, 29(4), pp.624-636.
- Cronin Jr, J.J. and Taylor, S.A., 1992. Measuring service quality: a re-examination and extension. *The journal of marketing*, pp.55-68.
- Cobb-Walgren, C.J., Ruble, C.A. and Donthu, N., 1995. Brand equity, brand preference, and purchase intent. *Journal of advertising*, 24(3), pp.25-40.
- Day, G.S., 1971. Attitude change, media and word of mouth. *Journal of advertising research*.
- De Chernatony, L., 2010. *Creating powerful brands*. Routledge.
- Diamantopoulos, A. and Siguaw, J.A., 2006. Formative versus reflective indicators in organizational measure development: A comparison and empirical illustration. *British Journal of Management*, 17(4), pp.263-282.
- Dimitriades, Z.S., 2006. Customer satisfaction, loyalty and commitment in service organizations: Some evidence from Greece. *Management Research News*, 29(12), pp.782-800.
- Dolak, D., 2007. The marketing communications (promotion) mix. Dave Dolak [Online]. Retrieved November, 20, p.2007.
- Dubois, B. and Paternault, C., 1995. Understanding the world of international luxury brands: the "dream formula." (Special Issue: Research Input into the Creative Process). *Journal of Advertising research*, 35(4), pp.69-77.
- Duffett, R.G., 2015. Facebook advertising's influence on intention-to-purchase and purchase amongst Millennials. *Internet Research*, 25(4), pp.498-526.
- Erdem, T. and Swait, J., 1998. Brand equity as a signaling phenomenon. *Journal of consumer Psychology*, 7(2), pp.131-157.
- Follows, S.B. and Jobber, D., 2000. Environmentally responsible purchase behaviour: a test of a consumer model. *European journal of Marketing*, 34(5/6), pp.723-746.
- Fournier, S., 1998. Consumers and their brands: Developing relationship theory in consumer research. *Journal of consumer research*, 24(4), pp.343-373.

- Gabbott, M. and Hogg, G., 1998. *Consumers and Services*, Wiley, Chicester.
- Grabner-Kräuter, S. and Faullant, R., 2008. Consumer acceptance of internet banking: the influence of internet trust. *International Journal of bank marketing*, 26(7), pp.483-504.
- Hair Jr, J.F. and Lukas, B., 2014. *Marketing research* (Vol. 2). McGraw-Hill Education Australia.
- Hair Jr, J.F., Black, W.C., Babin, B.J., Anderson, R.E. and Tatham, R.L., 2010. SEM: An introduction Multivariate data analysis: A global perspective (pp. 629-686).
- Haley, RI & Baldinger, AL., 1991. The ARF Copy Research Validity Project. *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol.31(2), p11-32.
- Hashim, R., Mahmood, R., 2011. Comparing commitment to service quality among academic staffs in private and public Malaysian universities, *Journal of International Management Studies*, 6.1,1-8
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C.M. and Sinkovics, R.R., 2009. The use of partial least squares path modeling in international marketing. In *New challenges to international marketing* (pp. 277-319). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C.M. and Sarstedt, M., 2015. A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), pp.115-135.
- Hollebeck, L.D., Jaeger, S.R., Brodie, R.J. and Balemi, A., 2007. The influence of involvement on purchase intention for new world wine. *Food Quality and Preference*, 18(8), pp.1033-1049.
- Hsin Chang, H. and Wen Chen, S., 2008. The impact of online store environment cues on purchase intention: Trust and perceived risk as a mediator. *Online information review*, 32(6), pp.818-841.
- Hu, L.T. and Bentler, P.M., 1999. Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural equation modeling: a multidisciplinary journal*, 6(1), pp.1-55.
- Joseph, M., Mullen, E.W. and Spake, D., 2012. University branding: Understanding students' choice of an educational institution. *Journal of Brand Management*, 20(1), pp.1-12.
- Kaish, S., 1967. Cognitive dissonance and the classification of consumer goods. *The Journal of marketing*, pp.28-31.
- Kandampully, J. and Suhartanto, D., 2000. Customer loyalty in the hotel industry: the role of customer satisfaction and image. *International journal of contemporary hospitality management*, 12(6), pp.346-351.
- Luo, X. and Homburg, C., 2007. Neglected outcomes of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 71(2), pp.133-149.
- MacKenzie, S.B. and Lutz, R.J., 1989. An empirical examination of the structural antecedents of attitude toward the ad in an advertising pretesting context. *The Journal of Marketing*, pp.48-65.
- Marimuthu, T., 2008. The role of the private sector in higher education in Malaysia. *Teaching: Professionalization, development and leadership*, pp.271-282.
- Mela, C. F., Gupta, S., & Lehmann, D. R., 1997. The long-term impact of promotion and advertising on consumer brand choice. *Journal of Marketing research*, 248-261.
- Moital, M. L., 2007. An Evaluation of the factors influencing the adoption of e- commerce in the purchasing of leisure travel by the residents of cascais, Portugal.



- Naidu, P. and Derani, N.E.S., 2016. A Comparative Study on Quality of Education Received by Students of Private Universities versus Public Universities. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 35, pp.659-666.
- Oliver, R. L., 1980. A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of marketing research*, 17 (November), 460-469.
- Oliver, R. L., 1997. Satisfaction: A behavioral perspective on the consumer. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 14, 448.
- Olorunniwo, F., Hsu, M.K. and Udo, G.J., 2006. Service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in the service factory. *Journal of services marketing*, 20(1), pp.59-72.
- Paden, N. and Stell, R., 2006. Branding options for distance learning programs: Managing the effect on university image. *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning*, 3(8), pp.45-54.
- Puto, C.P. and Wells, W.D., 1984. Informational and transformational advertising: The differential effects of time. *ACR North American Advances*.
- Ramalingam, V., Palaniappan, B., Panchanatham, N. and Palanivel, S., 2006. Measuring advertisement effectiveness—a neural network approach. *Expert systems with applications*, 31(1), pp.159-163.
- Rice, R.E. and Atkin, C.K. eds., 2012. *Public communication campaigns*. Sage.
- Rothschild, M.L., 1979. Marketing communications in nonbusiness situations or why it's so hard to sell brotherhood like soap. *The Journal of Marketing*, pp.11-20.
- Sancho Esper, F. and Álvarez Rateike, J., 2010. Tourism destination image and motivations: the Spanish perspective of Mexico. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 27(4), pp.349-360.
- Schlosser, A.E., White, T.B. and Lloyd, S.M., 2006. Converting web site visitors into buyers: how web site investment increases consumer trusting beliefs and online purchase intentions. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(2), pp.133-148.
- Sevier, R.A., 2007. Advancing the brand. *University Business*, 10(2), pp.46-51.
- Sherif, M. and Cantril, H., 1947. The psychology of ego-involvements: Social attitudes and identifications.
- Siddiqui, A.N., 2014. TV Ads Impact on Consumer Purchase Intention. In *International Conference on Marketing. Karachi: Institute of Business Administration. Pakistan*.
- Simms, C.D. and Trott, P., 2006. The perceptions of the BMW Mini brand: The importance of historical associations and the development of a model. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 15(4), pp.228-238.
- Smith, S. and Paladino, A., 2010. Eating clean and green? Investigating consumer motivations towards the purchase of organic food. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 18(2), pp.93-104.
- Söderlund, M., 1998. Customer satisfaction and its consequences on customer behaviour revisited: The impact of different levels of satisfaction on word-of-mouth, feedback to the supplier and loyalty. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 9(2), pp.169-188.
- Venkatesh, V. and Davis, F.D., 2000. A theoretical extension of the technology acceptance model: Four longitudinal field studies. *Management science*, 46(2), pp.186-204.
- Venkatesh, V., Morris, M.G., Davis, G.B. and Davis, F.D., 2003. User acceptance of information technology: Toward a unified view. *MIS quarterly*, pp.425-478.

- Venkatesh, V., Thong, J.Y. and Xu, X., 2012. Consumer acceptance and use of information technology: extending the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology.
- Verhoef, P.C., Langerak, F. and Donkers, B., 2007. Understanding brand and dealer retention in the new car market: The moderating role of brand tier. *Journal of retailing*, 83(1), pp.97-113.
- Westbrook, R.A., 1980. Intrapersonal affective influences on consumer satisfaction with products. *Journal of consumer research*, 7(1), pp.49-54. Whitlark, D.B., Geurts, M.D. and Swenson, M.J., 1993. New product forecasting with a purchase intention survey. *The Journal of Business Forecasting Methods & Systems*, 12(3), p.18.
- Whitlark, D.B., Geurts, M.D. and Swenson, M.J., 1993. New product forecasting with a purchase intention survey. *The Journal of Business Forecasting Methods & Systems*, 12(3), p.18.
- Zaichkowsky, J.L., 1985. Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of consumer research*, 12(3), pp.341-352.
- Zeithaml, V.A., Berry, L.L. and Parasuraman, A., 1993. The nature and determinants of customer expectations of service. *Journal of the academy of Marketing Science*, 21(1), pp.1-12.
- Zeithaml, V.A., 1988. Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *The Journal of marketing*, pp.2-22