



The Moderating Role of Brand Image in Academic Culture and Selection Decision Relationships of Private Universities in Bali

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Abstract

The high level of competition between universities encourages the university management to compete to create effective marketing strategies to attract prospective students to register. The purchase decision is one of the most important aspects of a marketing strategy. Academic culture and brand image are factors that can improve purchasing decision. Purchasing decision in this educational context are about college selection decision by students. This study aims to determine and analyze the influence of academic culture on brand image, the influence of brand image on the selection decision of private universities in Bali Province, as well as the moderating role of brand image on the influence of academic culture and selection decision of private universities in Bali Province. This research is an associative study with data collection techniques using survey methods and then analyzed using Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA). The respondents in this study were 150 new students from the Institute of Technology and Business STIKOM Bali, STIKI, STIMIK Primakara, STD Bali, STIMIK Bandung Bali, and STIMIK Denpasar. The results of the research show that academic culture has a significant effect on brand image and selection decision. Likewise, brand image also has a significant effect on selection decision. Brand image acts as a moderator that strengthens the relationship between academic culture and selection decision.

Keywords: Academic Culture; Brand Image; Selection Decision

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1. Introduction

Educational institutions, especially at the tertiary level, are competing to develop strategies to attract students to register. The large number of universities, especially in the Bali Province, makes the competition between these educational institutions increasingly tight. One of the strategies carried out by universities is to highlight their potential and advantages. One of the most important aspects of creating a marketing strategy is through purchasing decision. In marketing the products to be sold, companies must understand consumer needs, know consumer desires and tastes from consumers. Understanding of consumer needs can increase marketers' opportunities in influencing the consumer decision process, so that consumers are willing to buy what is offered by marketers [1].

Academic culture is one of the factors that can improve purchasing decision. This is in accordance with the results of research by [2] which state that cultural factors have a positive effect on purchasing decision. But on the other hand, [3] and [4] stated that cultural factors have a positive relationship but do not have a significant influence on purchasing decision. Academic culture is a way of life of a pluralistic, multicultural scientific society that is sheltered in an institution that is based on the values of scientific truth and objectivity [5]. In character education, the academic culture contains the implementation of values such as moral values, morals, character, truth, honesty, so as to build an atmosphere and academic actors who are moral, have character, have good character, value honesty, truth in thoughts and actions [6].

Brand image is an important aspect in improving purchasing decision. Brand image is the public's perception of the company or its products [7]. Brand image can act as a moderating variable on the relationship between culture and purchasing decision, because culture and brand image have a significant effect on purchasing decision. As the results of research by [8] who found that brand image has a positive and significant impact on purchasing decision, so the higher the brand image in the minds of consumers, the higher the consumer's purchasing decision. Other research by [9,10] also shows the same thing, where brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decision among buyers and prospective buyers.

The purchase decision itself is an act of consumers to form references among brands in the choice group and buy the most preferred product [7]. Purchasing decision in the context of education, especially universities, are the same as the decision of new students in choosing a college. This study aims to determine and analyze the role of brand image as a moderating variable on the influence of academic culture on the decision of new students in choosing private universities in Bali Province.

2. Materials and methods

The type of research used is associative quantitative research (relationship between two or more variables) with a descriptive approach. The data analysis technique in this study uses Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) with the help of Eviews software. The research population is all new students of private universities in Bali Province using proportional stratified random sampling technique. The number of samples required in the study refers to [11] who suggested a good sample size between 100 to 200 respondents. To achieve optimal results,

this study used a sample of 150 respondents from the Institute of Technology and Business STIKOM Bali, STIKI, STIMIK Primakara, STD Bali, STIMIK Bandung Bali, and STIMIK Denpasar. The technique of collecting data is survey method by distributing questionnaires regarding promotion, academic culture, costs, brand image, and purchasing decision.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of the research which is based on the influence of academic culture on selection decision by moderating brand image.

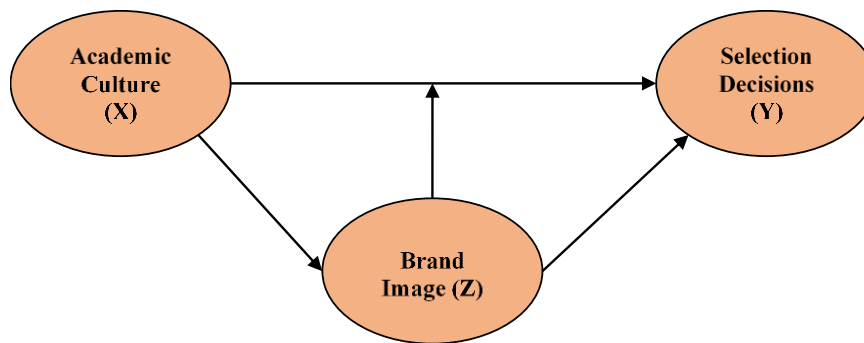


Figure 1: research conceptual model.

Based on the conceptual model above (Figure 1), the research hypothesis can be structured as follows:

- H1 Academic culture has a significant effect on brand image
- H2 Academic culture has a significant effect on selection decision
- H3 Brand image has a significant effect on selection decision
- H4 Brand image plays a role as moderator on the influence of academic culture on selection decision

3. Results

3.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents in this study consisted of 150 new students enrolled in private universities in Bali Province. Characteristics of respondents were described based on gender, private university origin, school origin, major and regional origin. Most of the new students who became respondents in this study were male with a percentage of 55.33 percent. This shows that the majority of new students from private universities in Bali are male. Based on the private university origin, the majority of new students who became respondents in this study came from the Institute of Technology and Business STIKOM Bali as many as 33.33 percent. This shows that the private university that is in great demand by prospective students is the STIKOM Bali college, because the number of new students is more than new students from other colleges. Then according to school origin, most of the new students who were respondents in this study came from SMA/SMU, which was 74.00 percent. This shows that SMA/SMU students tend to be more interested in enrolling in private universities than SMK students, so that the potential consumers of private universities in Bali Province are SMA/SMU students. Judging from the majors, the new students who became respondents in this study mostly came from the

information systems department, which was 42.00 percent. This shows that the department that is most in demand by prospective students is the department of information systems, because based on this study the department has the largest number of new students compared to other majors. Then from their area of origin, most of the new students who became respondents in this study came from Denpasar, namely as much as 22.00 percent. This shows that potential consumers (prospective students) of Bali Province private universities are from Denpasar, because most of the new students who became respondents in this study were quite a lot from that area.

3.2. Moderated regression analysis (MRA)

MR analysis was used to examine the moderating role of brand image on the relationship between academic culture and the decision to choose a private university in Bali Province. The MRA equation model in this study consists of 2 (two) models, namely as follows:

Model I: brand image as response variable

$$Z = a + 0,549(X) + error \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Model II: selection decision as response variable

$$Y = a + 0,529(X) + 0,359(Z) + 0,105(X \times Z) + error \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Description:

a = Constant

X = Academic culture

Z = Brand image

Y = Selection decision

error = Error model

Based on equation (1) above, it can be interpreted that if academic culture is increased by 1 unit, then the brand image will increase by 0.549. Then in equation (2), if academic culture and brand image are increased by 1 unit, then the selection decision will increase by 0.529 and 0.359, respectively. Then if the academic culture moderated by brand image is increased by 1 unit, then the selection decision will increase by 0.105.

After obtaining the above MRA equation, hypothesis testing will be carried out. The test results simultaneously obtained the F test statistic value of 70.428 with a probability of 0.000 less than the determination level of 0.05 which indicates that simultaneously academic culture, brand image, and academic culture which are moderated by brand image ($X*Z$) have a significant influence on selection decision. This shows that these factors

determine student decisions in choosing a private university in Bali Province. Then for partial (individual) hypothesis testing, it is presented in the following table:

Table 1: Hypothesis testing result.

Path Effect	Coefficient	Significance Probability	Result
Academic culture (X) -> brand image (Z)	0,549	0,000	Significant
Academic culture (X) -> selection decision (Y)	0,529	0,000	Significant
Brand image (Z)-> selection decision (Y)	0,359	0,000	Significant
X*Z -> selection decision (Y)	0,105	0,045	Significant

Table 1 above shows that the entire research hypothesis has been proven and accepted, because the probability value obtained is less than the determination level of 0.05, so that academic culture has a significant effect on brand image and selection decision. Likewise, brand image also has a significant effect on selection decision. In addition, brand image also acts as a moderator that strengthens the relationship between academic culture and selection decision.

The coefficient of determination in model I is 0.3009 which indicates that the academic culture variable can explain the brand image variable by 30.09%, while the remaining 69.90% is explained by other variables not examined. The influence of academic culture on brand image is weak, because the coefficient of determination is less than 0.33. Then the coefficient of determination in model II is 0.5914 which indicates that the variables of academic culture, brand image, and academic culture which are moderated by brand image can explain the selection decision variable by 59.14%, while the remaining 40.86% is explained by the variable others not investigated. The influence of academic culture, brand image, and academic culture on selection decision is moderate, because the coefficient of determination is less than 0.67.

4. Discussion

4.1. Impact of academic culture on the brand image of private universities in Bali Province

The first hypothesis which states that academic culture has a significant effect on brand image has been proven and accepted. If the academic culture applied to private universities in Bali Province is getting better, then the brand image of the university will also be getting better. Academic culture can build the brand image of private universities, because this culture is always applied from time to time, so that it can become the hallmark of a private universities that can support the brand image of the private universities. The image of the university is closely related to the culture of the university. The culture contained in the university embodies the brand image of the university itself. The results of this study are in line with the results of [12,13]. Reference [12] mentions that the focus of R&D as an organizational image is related to an adhocracy culture. The organization's core values are not identified by company insiders, who are employees, nor can these values be reflected to outsiders. As the results of the study, it can be said that a university has certain values that shape the image of the university. Higher education values are not reflected in the people in it (employees, students) nor are they

reflected in the opinions of outsiders (society). Then according to [13], the relationship between culture, image and identity forms a circular process of interdependence. Organizational identity is embedded as a culture that provides a picture of the organization. The image of the organization is then projected to the outside and reabsorbed into the system of cultural meaning and used symbolically to infer identity: who we are is reflected in what we do and how others interpret who we are and what we do. From the research it can be concluded that between culture, image, and identity have an interrelated relationship. The culture depicts the identity of the university and from this image an image is formed. Society describes universities with certain characteristics, for example, universities are known as private universities that respect differences in religion and belief, because universities close students during Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist holidays, and so on. Then in the private universities, religious facilities are also provided according to their respective religions.

4.2. Impact of academic culture on the selection decision of private universities in Bali Province

The second hypothesis which states that academic culture has a significant effect on selection decision has been proven and accepted. If the academic culture applied to private universities in Bali Province is getting better, the student's decision to choose the university will also be higher. This academic culture can be known or felt when new students feel that they are students at certain private universities, so that students really experience what academic culture is like. Most of them, before choosing a private university, will tend to ask alumni or students who are studying at private university about their academic culture. The existence of this information can make new students decide to register at a private university. This information can be trusted, because students and alumni are certainly experienced in experiencing what private university academic culture is like. This is certainly more convincing for new students' decisions to choose the private university. The results of this study are in line with the results of research by [2] which state that cultural factors have a positive effect on purchasing decisions. As the results of the study, it can be said that one of the determinants of a consumer, namely prospective students who decide to enroll in a private university, is determined by their academic culture. Prospective students will certainly continue to be involved in their campus, whatever is a habit on campus is also taken into consideration. This certainly can make it easier for new students to adapt which makes them feel comfortable carrying out their knowledge there. If it is felt that the campus culture is not comfortable, it will certainly make new students think again about registering. The results of this study are not in line with the results of [4] mentions that there are no important social, cultural, personal, and psychological differences in consumer purchasing power decisions. Likewise, with [3] which also states that cultural and social factors have a positive relationship but do not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions.

4.3. Impact of brand image on the selection decision of private universities in Bali Province

The third hypothesis which states that brand image has a significant effect on selection decision has been proven and accepted. If the brand image of private universities in Bali Province is getting better, the student selection decisions for these universities will also be higher. A student chooses a private university based on the brand image of the private university. Most students prefer universities that have a good image, because it becomes a matter of pride for them. Not a few private universities are competing to build their image in order to attract prospective students to register. A university that has a good image is certainly one of the considerations for

students to choose, because it becomes a matter of pride for prospective students to be part of the college. The results of this study are in line with the results of research by [9, 10, 8]. Reference [9] concludes that brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions among buyers and prospective buyers. Then [10,8] also mentions that brand image has an effect on purchasing decisions. As the results of this study, it can be said that the decision of new students to enroll in a private university is determined by the image of the private university. If the image of a private university is good, it will create pride for its students. This is because the image of the university will also reflect its students, for example a favorite private university, of course the student achievement is also good. The existence of this image further encourages prospective students to decide to register.

4.4. Impact of brand image as moderating variable on academic culture and selection decision relationship of private universities in Bali Province

The fourth hypothesis which states that brand image plays a moderating role in the influence of academic culture on selection decision has been proven and accepted. Brand image is able to strengthen the influence of academic culture on selection decision. If the academic culture applied to private universities in Bali Province is supported by a brand image, the student's decision to choose a private university will also be higher. The moderating type of brand image on the influence of academic culture on selection decision is quasi moderation, because academic culture, brand image, and academic culture moderated by brand image both have a significant influence on private universities selection decisions. In this case, brand image can act as a moderator on the influence of academic culture on selection decision. The academic culture applied in universities can create the image of universities. If the culture applied in university is good, then the image of the university will also be realized well. As [9] research concludes that brand image has a positive effect on purchasing decisions among buyers and prospective buyers. Academic culture that embodies the image of a university can influence the decisions of prospective students in choosing a college. As research by [2] which states that cultural factors have a positive effect on purchasing decisions. As the results of the study, it can be said that there is a relationship between academic culture, brand image, and selection decision. The high level of decision of prospective students to choose a college is determined by the academic culture and brand image of the university. If the culture applied in higher education is seen as a good culture or in other words it can make prospective students comfortable studying in higher education, of course there is no doubt for prospective students to choose that college, moreover, such a culture is supported by a strong brand image. good too.

5. Conclusion

The general conclusion in attracting new students is by reviewing selection decision through aspects of academic culture and brand image. These aspects can be a form of marketing strategy so that private universities can remain superior when compared to competitors. The importance of this research is to review whether these aspects can optimize the university's marketing strategy. This study concludes that academic culture has a significant effect on brand image and selection decision. Likewise, brand image also has a significant effect on selection decision. Brand image acts as a moderator that strengthens the relationship between academic culture and selection decision.

Some suggestions that can be given to the management of private universities in Bali Province are in attracting consumer interest, it is necessary to optimize marketing strategies through academic culture and brand image, because based on the results of this study, these two aspects are proven to have an effect on the decision to choose private universities. This aspect of academic culture needs to be a major concern, because apart from being able to affect brand image, academic culture can also influence selection decision. Several aspects in optimizing marketing strategies through academic culture are: a) In accepting students, private universities respect differences in religion, ethnicity, and culture; b) Private universities encourage their students to be able to use IT/ITC in learning by providing computer facilities, internet, and so on; c) There are regulations for private universities so that students maintain order in learning activities and campus activities. Several aspects that need to be improved in implementing marketing strategies through academic culture are: a) Regulations of private universities so that students are transparent in filling out scholarship files; b). Regulations of private universities so that students comply with campus rules and regulations in accordance with applicable rules; c) Private universities give sanctions to students if they violate the rules in private universities.

Constrain or limitations in this research is related to the discussion of research results. Researchers discuss research results based on theoretical and empirical studies related to the influence of academic culture on selection decision that are supported by brand image, this is certainly not strong if it is not explored further, for example through interviews with informants. Therefore, in further research, it is advisable to add qualitative studies through interviews with several informants in order to deepen and strengthen studies on the influence of academic culture on selection decision that are supported by brand image.

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