

## Student Loyalty in Perspective of Education Service Quality, Creative Promotion and Student Satisfaction

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to explain the student loyalty level through the perspective of education service quality, creative promotion, commitment, decision, and their satisfaction at private universities in Jember. The data collection technique carried out by distributing questionnaires online to 300 students of private universities in Jember. Data analysis carried out by using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) software. The research result showed that (1) the education service quality had no significant effect on students' decision that indicated with a probability value: 0.058. (2) The education service quality had a significant effect on students' satisfaction that indicated with the probability value: 0.000. (3) The creative promotion had a significant effect on students' decision that indicated with the probability value: 0.000. (4) The student commitment had not significant effect on students' decision that indicated with a probability value: 0.0760. (5) The student commitment had a significant effect on students' loyalty that indicated with the probability value: 0.000. (6) The student decision had not significant effect on students' satisfaction that indicated with a probability value: 0.611. (7) The student satisfaction had a significant effect on students' loyalty that indicated with the probability value: 0.000.

Keywords: Education Service Quality, Creative Promotion, Satisfaction, Loyalty



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### INTRODUCTION

Student is one of the important inputs in university. As the human body, student is one of the "nutrition" sources in the university. If there is a significant addition of student who register at the university, the university income source will also increase significantly. The number of universities that had well developed in Indonesia, it inevitably will bring up many alternative option for student candidates. Higher Education Database (PDDikti) in 2021 noted that there are around 4,600 universities in Indonesia. Based on this data, 3,191 or about 70% of them are private university: university, institute, academy, college, community academy and polytechnic. The

student candidates are free to choose a university that they are interesting and corresponding to their abilities, interests and talents.

A university cannot avoid intense competition between public and private universities. It happened because of the university proliferation. The "Merdeka Belajar" is program that initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia, Nadiem Makarim also provides various opportunities for each university to compete with each other in the universities' quality. One of the "Merdeka Belajar" activity is the student gets the right to 3 (semesters) study outside their Study Program which is form by internships or work practices, projects in villages, teaching at schools, student exchanges, research, entrepreneurial activities, studies or independent projects , and humanitarian projects. Each student is free to choose his or her study programs outside their university for the "Merdeka Belajar" activity. This policy makes students as "strategic consumers" to seek the best educational services to increase knowledge, soft skills and experiences that they have not yet obtained maximally in their study program (Latuconsina, 2020).

Jember is one of the regencies in East Java Province that has many universities. The number of private universities is very dominant in Jember. The Data from APTISI Commissariat V, there are dozens of private universities in Jember. Attracting new student candidates are not an easy matter in the midst of competition between universities. For private universities, although various effort to attract the new students interest have been done maximally such as use advertising, communication and socialization to SMA / SMK / MA schools, online promotion, WoM, and so on, a persuasive approach and service is still needed for influence student decisions to register to their universities. It is undeniable that private universities have prime in the field of student service with expect that the students who are "strategic consumers" will get the satisfaction of universities' service.

The next challenge is how to deal with the students who have various types and characters. After the students register, not infrequently, after 1 (one) year, many students drop out and regularly withdraw from one university to look for other university that they use wrong majors as a main reason, meanwhile poor academic service, unable to divide their time between study and work, and so on as other reasons. There are also students who survive until graduation, but do not necessarily want to make recommendation the university to their friends, relatives, or relatives. However, there are also students either who sincerely provide information and make recommendation the university to other parties, after graduating or when they are still students. The students who are willing to make recommendation the university are a form of students' loyalty to their universities. The student loyalty is very important and useful for the university survival and development. This study aims to describe the importance of student loyalty through the educational service quality perspective, creative promotion, decision, and their satisfaction. It became expectation that the loyal students of their university will have a good impact, especially for making the university recommendation to external parties so that the input of new students from the university will also increase. In the long term, the increase in the number of new students every year will have an impact on the quality and confidence in the community.

The education service quality is very important to provide satisfaction for student. The education service quality is including in service product. The educational service marketing mix is an element of educational organization that can be controlled by the organization in communicating with student and will be used to students' satisfied (Hurriyati, 2009: 154). According to Kotler (2012: 284), there are five indicators of service quality: physical evidence (tangibles), empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance. However, the community will not feel the good service quality without be supported by creative university promotion and socialization to the community. The student decision to choose a college is also important considering.

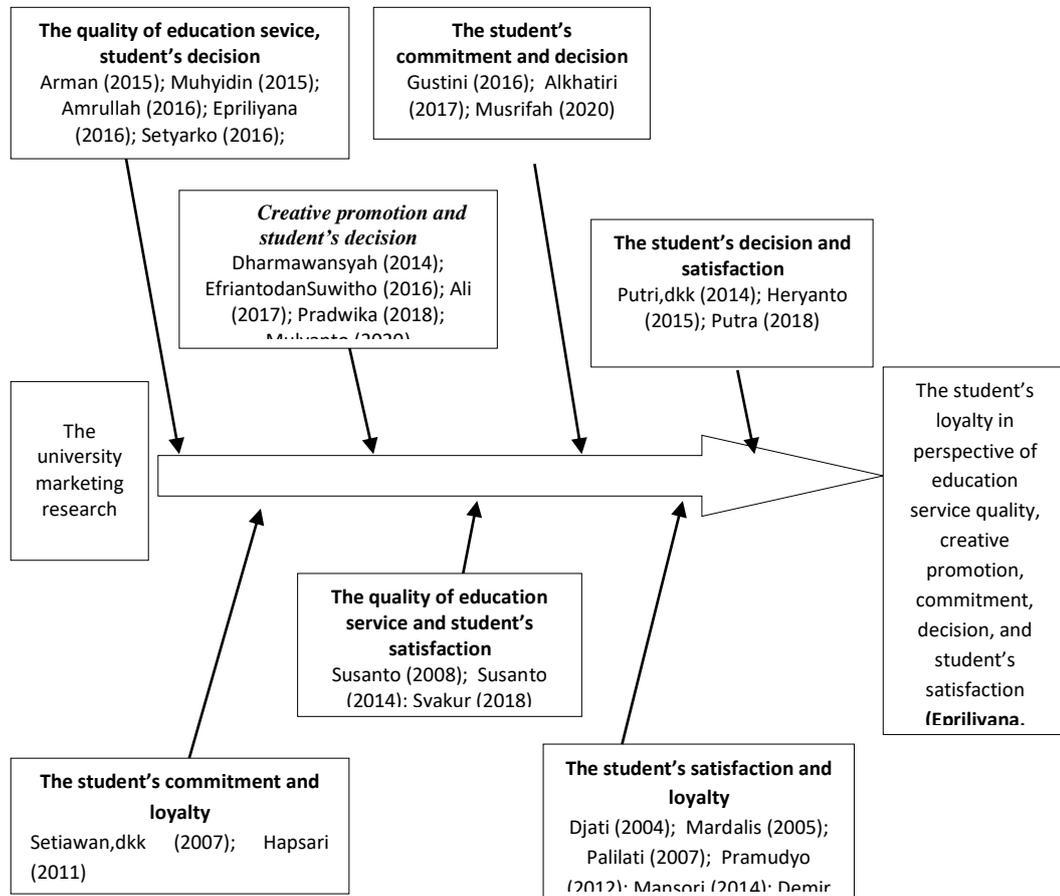
According to Epriliyana (2016), a student decision to choose a university can be influenced by the Quality of Academic and Human Resources, including: 1) Academic Quality is service quality of

the university that including the curriculum in university, the quality of the graduates produced, the job prospects of graduate, and the existence of good service in every lecture activity. 2) Human Resource is the existence of quality resource in the implementation of university, both of educator staff and educational staff. The educator staff consists of lecturer service in teaching and guiding student final assignment, meanwhile the educational staff consist of quality in administrative service. To get loyalty student to their university requires good service in administrative and academic field, so that student's satisfaction will be created. The satisfaction existence will create a high commitment, so that student will not move to other university.

The Education Service Quality and Student Decision. The education service quality can be carried out by a university both in the academic and administrative fields. In the academic field, it includes guidance service; lecture service; consulting service with the lecturer. Meanwhile in administrative service includes easy access to values; ease of administrative service carried out by educational staff. The quality of academic service affects the student's decision in choosing a university (Epriliyana, 2016). Meanwhile, according to Arman (2015), Muhyidin (2015), and Setyarko (2016) the quality of staff service affects consumer's decision. Therefore, it can be assumed that the quality of education service has a significant effect on student's decision. H1: the quality of education service has a significant effect on student decisions

The Quality of Education Service and Satisfaction. The quality of educational service is one element that can affect the level of student satisfaction. The quality of education service is measured based on five service quality indicators: physical evidence (tangibles), empathy (empathy), service reliability, responsiveness, and assurance determine the level of student's satisfaction. Susanto's (2008) research is strengthened by the findings of Susanto (2014) and Syakur (2018) explain that the quality of educational service affects student's satisfaction. H2: the quality of education service has a significant effect on student satisfaction

Creative Promotion and Student Decision. Using advertisement is carried out by a university in order to communicate or provide information about the advantages of a product or organization in a university indirectly, which it is arranged in such a way as to create a pleasant feeling that will change a person's mind to make a purchase (Tjiptono in Mulyanto, 2020). In an effort to get new students, a university needs to carry out creative promotional activity and integrate with IT. In Dharmawansyah (2014) research stated that advertising is a variable that is very influential in increasing the number of students. Other empirical researches Efrianto and Suwitho (2016), Ali (2017), Pradwika (2018) also concluded that a similar statement was that promotion had a significant effect on consumer's decision. Therefore, it can be assumed that creative promotion has an effect on student's decisions. H3: the creative promotion has a significant effect on student decision.



**Picture 1. Road Map of Research**  
 Source: processed research data, 2021

Student Commitment and Decision. Gunlach, Achroln and Mentzer in Setiawan (2007) reveal that commitment is an attitude, which is an intention to maintain long-term openness. Through strong commitment, a decision can be taken appropriately. Gustini's (2016) research; Alkhatiri (2017) also concluded that strong consumer's commitment affects consumer decisions. However, Musrifah's (2020) research concluded that commitment has no effect on consumer's decision. According to Fullerton and Taylor (2000), the concept of commitment differentiates into: (1) Affective commitment, it is commitment that refers to shared values and benevolence; (2) Continuum commitment, it is commitment that refers to sacrifice and dependence; (3) Normative commitment, it is commitment that refers to the overall construct which causes a sense of shared responsibility to grow. Therefore, it can be assumed that commitment has an effect on student's decision. H4 : the commitment has a significant effect on student decision.

Student Commitment and Student's Loyalty. The customer commitment is very important to know the customer's commitment to maintaining a long-term relationship with the company. Henning-Thurau et al., In Tahun, Bunga and Nyoko (2018) explain that commitment is measured by four indicators: (1) Commitment is something that is desired; (2) Commitment is very important; (3) Commitment is something that is very concerned about (4) Commitment require maximum effort to maintain it. A strong commitment will affect loyalty. Research by Hapsari (2008); and Tahun, Bunga and Nyoko (2018) reinforce the statement that student's commitment affects student's loyalty. Thus, it can be assumed that commitment has an effect on loyalty. H5 : Student commitment has a significant effect on student's loyalty

Student Decision and Satisfaction. The purchase decision (assumed a decision to choose) is a purchasing decision behavior that refers to the final purchasing behavior of consumers, both individual and household who buy goods and service for personal consumption (Kotler & Armstrong in Mulyanto, et al, 2000). According to Putri's research, et al. (2014) explained that student's decision have a significant effect on student's satisfaction. In line with this research, Heryanto (2015) and Putra, et al (2018) also reinforce the finding that consumer's decision has a significant effect on satisfaction. Based on this finding, it can be assumed that decision have an effect on student's satisfaction. H6 : student decision have a significant effect on student satisfaction.

Student Satisfaction and Loyalty. Student satisfaction is closely related to the suitability of the educational service quality between expectations and reality (Syakur, 2018). Student satisfaction evaluation can be used to determine the educational service quality factors that need to be improved, maintained, and even reduced in order to achieve the student satisfaction. Satisfaction will lead to loyalty which can be known from re-purchase and recommendation from the other party. Researches of Djati (2004); Mardalis (2005); Palilati (2007); Pramudyo (2012); Mansori (2014); Demir (2015) further strengthens that student satisfaction affects loyalty. Thus it can be assumed that student satisfaction affects loyalty. H7 : Student satisfaction has a significant effect on student loyalty.

## **METHOD**

This research was designed with a quantitative approach, namely explanatory research with a causal type. There are six research variables consisting of three independent variables, an intervening variable and two dependent variables. The independent variables consist of the educational service quality (X1), the creative promotion (X2), and the commitment (X3). The dependent variables consist of satisfaction (Y1) and loyalty (Y2). The intervening variable consists of Decision (Z). The data collection technique was enforced by distributing online questionnaires to 300 students of private universities in Jember Regency. The data was collected from the questionnaire, then it analyzed.

Data analysis was arranged by using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Version 22 of AMOS software (Analysis of Moment Structures). The analysis steps used in the SEM method in this study, such as: (Hair et al in Mulyanto, 2020) : 1) Establishing the Model, the specification step result is a path diagram which is a hybrid model or a combination of the measurement model and the structural model. In this study, there are 6 latent variables with 26 indicators in the research design. 2) Test the validity, reliability, normality, multicollinearity, and outlier. 3) Test the research model, enforced by testing the goodness of fit (GOF) between the data and the model using absolute fit measurement to determine the overall model prediction degree (Structural and Measurement Model) against the correlation and covariance matrices. 4) Testing the effect of the variables in the structural model using the t-test, which is comparing the value of the critical ratio (CR) to the t-table at the test level  $\alpha = 5\%$  that is equivalent to 1.96 or comparing the calculated probability value (p) to the research test level ( $\alpha$ ). If  $CR > 1,967$  or  $p < 0.05$ , the effect among the variables is significant.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study result will provide the research data analysis result overview. The first collected respondent data is tested for validity and reliability test. Based on the validity and reliability test result, it can be known that the data is valid and reliable so that it can be analyzed further. After testing the validity and reliability of each latent variable, then the assumption test is carried out to

know whether the requirements needed in SEM modeling can be completed. The requirement must be completed are multivariate normal assumptions, no multicollinearity or singularity and outlier.

The normality test needs to be performed for several variables properly that are used in the final analysis simultaneously. Testing the normality assumption can be enforced using the z statistical value for its skewness and kurtosis and also it can be seen from the Critical Ratio (CR) empirically. If the 5% significance level is used, then the CR value is between -1.96 to 1.96 ( $-1.96 \leq CR \leq 1.96$ ), it is called by normally distributed data. Based on Table 2, the multivariate C.R. value of 1.894 is between -1.96 to 1.96 so it can be called that the data are not normally distributed. Multicollinearity test can be known through the covariance matrix determinant. A determinant value that is very small or close to zero, indicates a multicollinearity or singularity problem. The data analysis result in this study indicates that the matrix determinant shows the number 43.715. This number is far from zero, so there is no singularity. Thus the data can be used for further research analysis. The outliers test is an observation from data has unique characteristic look very different from other observations that appear and are in the extreme values form, either for a single variable or a combination variable. The criteria used are based on the Chi Square value on the freedom degree to the number of indicator variables at the significance level of  $p \leq 0.05$ . The outliers test result shows that the greatest mahalanobis distance value is 88.832. This value is still below the  $X^2$  table value at  $df = 292$ , it is 332,853, so it can be concluded that there are no outliers in the research data.

**Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Results**

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Validity test		Reliability test Construct Reability
			CR	P	
X <sub>1</sub>	1	0,741	0	0,000	0,951
	2	0,809	10,729	0,000	
	3	0,689	8,981	0,000	
	4	0,867	11,618	0,000	
	5	0,844	11,257	0,000	
	6	0,758	9,979	0,000	
	7	0,817	10,855	0,000	
	8	0,849	11,332	0,000	
	9	0,882	11,836	0,000	
	10	0,841	11,208	0,000	
X <sub>2</sub>	1	0,696	7,509	0,000	0,837
	2	0,604	6,652	0,000	
	3	0,791	8,088	0,000	
	4	0,712	0	0,000	
X <sub>3</sub>	1	0,922	10,262	0,000	0,880
	2	0,903	10,231	0,000	
	3	0,689	0	0,000	
Z	1	0,459	0	0,000	0,837
	2	0,937	6,088	0,000	
	3	0,927	6,108	0,000	
Y <sub>1</sub>	1	0,859	0	0,000	0,868
	2	0,892	15,418	0,000	
Y <sub>2</sub>	1	0,892	0	0,000	0,893
	2	0,755	11,961	0,000	
	3	0,858	15,032	0,000	
	4	0,779	12,585	0,000	

Source : processed research data, 2021

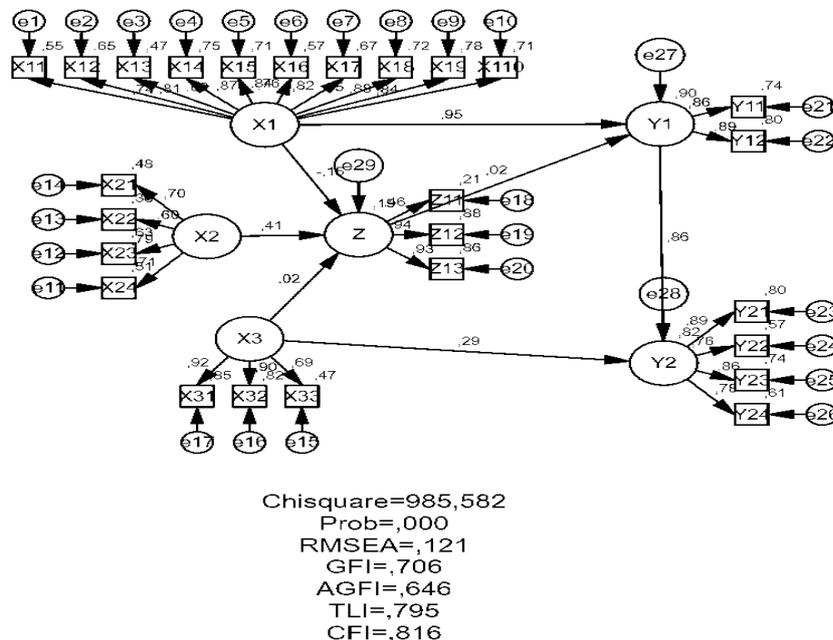
After testing the validity and reliability of all latent variables which provide valid and reliable results, normal multivariate data, no multicollinearity and no outliers, then the variables can be continued with model suitability test and variable causality significance test.

**Table 2. SEM Model Suitability Test Results (Goodness of fit test)**

Criteria	Cut Off Value	The calculation result	Result
Chi Square	Expected to be small ( $\leq$ X2 with df = 292)	985,582	Marginal
Sign. Probability	$\geq 0,05$	0,000	Marginal
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$	0,121	Good
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,706	Marginal
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,646	Marginal
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2$ atau 3	3,375	Good
TLI	$\geq 0,95$	0,795	Marginal
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,816	Marginal

Source : processed research data, 2021

Based on the SEM Model Suitability Test Results, It is known that two of the eight criteria used to evaluate the appropriateness of a model are completed. The test results using the AMOS program provide structural equation modeling results that show the relationship between latent variables, such as:



**Figure 2. SEM analysis results**

Source: processed research data, 2021

After testing the suitability of the research model, the next step is to test the hypothesis developed in the research model. The detailed path coefficient testing is presented as follow:

**Table 3 Hypothesis Testing Results**

Variable	Probability	Interpretation
Quality of Education Service (X1) → Decision (Z)	0,058	Not Significant (H1 is rejected)
Quality of Education Service (X1) → Satisfaction (Y1)	0,000	Significant (H2 is accepted)
Creative Promotion (X2) → Decision (Z)	0,000	Significant (H3 is accepted)
Commitment (X3) → Decision (Z)	0,760	Not Significant (H4 is rejected)
Commitment (X3) → Loyalty (Y2)	0,000	Significant (H5 is accepted)
Decision (Z) → Satisfaction (Y1)	0,611	Not Significant (H6 is rejected)
Satisfaction (Y1) → Loyalty (Y2)	0,000	Significant (H7 is accepted)

Student loyalty is a very important and must be pursued for the survival and development of the Higher Education. The effort to increase student loyalty, the higher education need to provide academic and administrative services intensively that can provide satisfaction to the students. The creative promotion is also expected to influence student decision choosing higher education.

Based on the study result, The education service quality does not have a significant effect on student decisions, which is indicated by the probability level of 0.058 (H1 is rejected). This data result does not strengthen Eprilyana's opinion (2016) which states that student decisions are influenced by the quality of academic services. The data result also do not strengthen the research of Arman (2015), Muhyidin (2015), and Setyarko (2016) which state that service quality affects consumer decisions. Several causes for the education service quality that do not affect student decisions because most of students will choose a study program according to their interests, talents and abilities, so that even though the service quality at the higher education is good and can make it easier for students to obtain information, students will still have a tendency to choose interests, talents and abilities.

The educational service quality has a significant effect on student satisfaction, which is indicated by the probability level of 0.000 (H2 is accepted). This data result strengthens Susanto's data result (2008), Susanto (2014) and Syakur (2018) explain that the educational services quality affects student satisfaction. The educational service quality can be interpreted as an effort to complete the necessary and desire of consumers and the accuracy of their delivery in balancing consumer expectation. The Service quality reflects the comparison between the service level delivered by the company and customer expectations. The service quality is a customer assessment of the superiority or product privilege or service as a whole.

Creative promotion has a significant effect on student decisions, which is indicated by the probability level of 0.000 (H3 is accepted). This data result strengthens Dharmawansyah's data result (2014) of his research stated that advertising is a variable that greatly influences the increasing of student numbers. The data result also strengthens empirical studies among the opinion of Efrianto and Suwitho (2016), Ali (2017), Pradwika (2018) and concludes that promotion has a significant effect on consumer decisions in the similar statement. The influence of creative promotion and student decision due to student interest in various higher education promotions through advertisements; word of mouth is based on the neighbor, friend, family's experiences, so that the sharing of these experiences can strengthen student decision of higher education institutions choosing.

Commitment has no significant effect on student decision, which is indicated by a probability level of 0.760 (H4 is rejected). This data contradicts the opinion of Gunlach, Achroln and Mentzer of

Setiawan (2007) that commitment is an attitude which is an intention to maintain long-term openness which has a very important role in consumer decisions. This is also does not strengthen the research of Gustini(2016); Alkhatiri (2017) who also concluded that strong consumer commitment affects consumer decisions. However, the data result support the Musrifah's (2020) study result which concluded that commitment has no effect on consumer decision. Several incidents can be the cause of students' weak commitment to the choosen decisions, for example because when they first entered a university, the study program they chose was not suitable with their interests or talents, so that students tended to move to the suitable study programs at other university. The condition of the higher education environment can also be the cause of the students' weak commitment to survive.

Commitment has a significant effect on student loyalty, which is indicated by the probability level of 0.000 (H5 is accepted). The Strong commitment will affect loyalty. The data strengthens the research of Hapsari (2008); and Tahun, Bunga and Nyoko (2018) stated that student commitment affects student loyalty. This condition is related to students who have obtained satisfaction through the academic and administrative service quality from the university.

Student decision has no significant effect on student satisfaction, which is indicated by the probability level of 0.611 (H6 is rejected). The purchase decision (assumed to be a choosen decision) is a purchasing decision behavior that refers to the final purchasing behavior of consumers, both individuals and households who buy goods and services for personal consumption (Kotler & Armstrong in Mulyanto, et al, 2000). This data result contradicts the research of Putri et al. (2014) which explained that student decision has a significant effect on student satisfaction. Based on this research, Heryanto (2015) and Putra, et al. (2018) also do not support the data result that consumer decision has a significant effect on satisfaction. Some of the causes can explain the data, such as different perceptions of differences in perceptions of student satisfaction.

The student satisfaction affects student loyalty, which is indicated by the probability level of 0.000 (H6 is accepted). This data result supported the research of Djati (2004); Mardalis (2005); Palilati (2007); Pramudyo (2012); Mansori (2014); Demir (2015) which stated that student satisfaction affects loyalty. Based on the research result, it can be assumed that student satisfaction will affect student loyalty, which is indicated by the willingness of students to refer higher education to external parties; provide positive testimonials to external parties; and willing to participate in finding new student candidates. Student loyalty will be believed to increase the new student numbers. The increasing student numbers will also improve the welfare of the university.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the study result, student loyalty can be cultivated by higher education which is influenced significantly by the level of student satisfaction and students strong commitment. The commitment and satisfaction can encourage students to show their loyalty to higher education with the students ability and willingness to provide positive testimonials; reference universities, as well as try to find prospective new students. Indirectly, the creative promotion of the higher education and the quality of academic and administrative service also affects student loyalty. Some of the reasons, namely the comprehensive promotion through socialization, advertisement, and converging to prospective students directly resulting in prospective students being motivated to join the almamater of a higher education.

The effort to increase student loyalty, The higher Education need to provide good quality educational services, for example, providing scholarships for outstanding students and adequate lecture facilities and infrastructures; accommodating students' interests and talents through student organizations; and having concern for underprivileged students. Creative promotion is needed to facilitate the prospective student necessary by higher education programs, for example through

‘word of mouth’ while maintaining good relations with alumni; attractive advertising; online registration to reach prospective new students as end users.

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