



The High School Students' Perception of Montemorelos University Image at Montemorelos N.L.

Karla Basurto

Montemorelos University

Abstract

To be able to know the perception of a high school student about the Montemorelos University (MU) is important because their willing to continue their education at MU will be affected if they perceive the wrong image from the university. The purpose of this study is to find out the perception of high school students on the image of MU. Specifically intended to answer the following question: What is the perception on the image of Montemorelos University among high school students from MU? Is there any significant relationship between age and gender and the perception on the image of MU? This was a cross-sectional research design survey where data was collected through questionnaire with 139 respondents. The results of our study show that the majority of the students' perception of UM image is between good and very good. Age did not have a relationship on the perception of image and females has a more significant perception of UM image than males from high school. No significant difference of perception on UM image among different age group of high school students.

Key words: Image, high school, university, marketing, brand, recruitment, image relationship with students and loyalty to the brand.

Introduction

There is a relationship between perceived image and the attractiveness of the product according to Costa (2006). Sung & Yang (2008), Hosseine & Nahad (2012) and Belanger, Mount, & Wilson, (2002) mention that until universities have realized how important is to have a distinguishing image in the students competitive market area, the image of the university has become a new subject that required attention from many universities that want to transmit a desired image. To be able to know the perception of a high school student about the Montemorelos University (MU), is important because their will to continue their education at MU will be affected if they are perceiving the wrong image from the university.

According to Perez & Del Bosque (2014) and Karaosmanoglu & Melewar (2006) image is the perception which an object is known and through which people describe, remember and relate to it. As a result of the interaction between beliefs, ideas, feelings and impressions that a person has about the company at a given point in time. Gioia, Corley & Schulz (2000), Barnett, Jermier & Lafferty (2006) and Dhalla (2007) state image as the perception of the members of the company to what external audiences believe it to be. Nguyen and LeBlanc (2001) explain that image is perceived by the public who, according to their ideas, personal interests, social experiences, makes a rational emotional valuation of tangible attributes and intangible assets of the institution, mentally constructing a particular impression about the same, which may be different depending on who evaluated it.

Perna (2005) emphasizes the significance of building positive emotions in universities which will help the enrollment goals. He recommended increasing a positive emotional experience through an enrollment funnel to create emotional attachment and loyalty; students search for educational services base on diverse emotional needs, such as love, power, safety and belonging, just as consumers do. Institutions can build positive emotional attachment if they make prospective students feel valued and to develop connection with them.

Study had been done on the image perception of public, however, there is no study yet on the image perception of high school students on Adventist universities. So study need to be done. The purpose of this study is to find out the perception of high school students on the image of MU. Specifically intended to answer the following questions: What is the perception on the image of Montemorelos University among high school students from MU? Is there any significant relationship between age and gender and the perception on the image of MU?

Method

This is a cross-sectional research design survey, where data is collected through questionnaire at the end of the school year (July 2014). Purposive sampling technique is used in selecting respondents. The high school students were surveyed at their classrooms. 139 respondents participate in this study. The distribution of females is equal to male. In Figure 1 we can observe that nearly half of the sample are female (51%) and another half are males (48.9%). In table 1 we observe that the majority of the sample has age between 15 to 20 years-old (85.6%) These are employees who once took high school class.

The survey instrument used in collecting data was developed by Meza (1996) with a reliability of .906 percent. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed to determine the perception of image of high school students toward MU while T-test is used to test the different of image perception between male and female. One Way ANOVA will be used to test the different of image perception between different levels of age.

Figure 1
Gender of high School students.

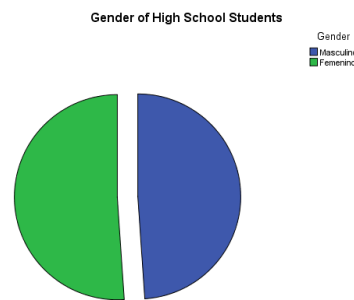


Table 1. Distribution of Age

Age	Frecuency	Porcentaje
15 - 20	119	85,6
21-25	10	7,2
26-30	4	2,9
31-35	3	2,2
36-40	3	2,2
Total	139	100,0

Results

In table 2 we observed the frequencies and the percentage of the perception of image from UM high school. The majority of the students answered that their perception on MU image is good (28%) and very good (27%). Only very few students said that they perceived as terrible (2%) on the image of UM.

Table 2 The Perception of High School Student on the Image of UM

Perception on UM image	Frecuency	Percentage
Terrible	3	2,2
Very bad	2	1,4
Bad	13	9,4
Regular	28	20,1
Good	39	28,1
Very good	38	27,3
Excelent	16	11,5
Total	139	100,0

A Pearson correlation was calculated to see the relationship between age and image. A weak correlation was found that is not significant, $r(139) = .114, p = .180$. Age has not a relationship with the UM image.

A t-test for independent variables was calculated to compare the means of UM image from high school students between male and female. There is a significant difference of perceived image of UM between females and males, $t(137) = -2.29, p < 0,05$. The mean of the males was lower ($M = 4,78, SD = .854$) than the mean of the females ($M = 5,08, SD = .668$).

The perception on image of UM by high school students was computed using One Way ANOVA. There is no significant different of perception on UM image and high school age. $F(4,134) = 1.458, p > .05$. The mean perception of age 21 to 25 is 4.96 ($SD = 1.36$), age 21 to 25 is 4.70 ($SD = 1.42$), age 26 to 30 is 4.5 ($SD = .57$), age 31 to 36 is 6.33 ($SD = .57$), age 36 to 40 is 6.00 ($SD = .00$).

Discussion

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship of UM high school students' perception of image with gender and age. The results of our study show that the majority of the students' perception of UM image is between good and very good. Age did not have a relationship on the perception of image and females have a more significant perception of UM image than males from high school. There is not a significant difference of perception on UM image among different age group of high school students.

The result of this study is consistent with the study that focuses on the image of the universities done by Guedez Fernandez y Osta Trestine (2012) that made a theoretical model. A semi-structured survey was also designed. It was

applied to a nonrandom sample of its administrative staff. The instrument survey have nine factors: Labor Aspects, Social, Cultural Aspects, Academic Quality, Service Quality, Accessibility, University Response to Industry Requirements, Administrative Aspects and Security, which grouped the 34 attributes that could define the institutional image of the University of Carabobo. This results can be used in the preparation of a definitive scale for future research, not only at the University of Carabobo, but in the Latin American context, which will serve as a tool for evaluation, allowing the detection of weaknesses and strengths in order to define management strategies for improving and strengthening institutional university image.

A similar study, but in different sample and purposes, was done by Sung & Yang (2008). They studied the relationship between perceived organizational personality, reputation, and external prestige of a university on students' supportive attitude toward the institution. This study suggests a model of university image and its relationship with students supportive attitude based on a review of educational, marketing, and public relations literature. The model's structure was confirmed through structural equation modeling using survey data from 1,642 freshmen at a large university in South Korea. The study reveals that one variable, in particular, that was a key determinant of the supportive attitude of freshmen: the perception of how others view the university they belong to. Therefore, it is inferred that students value how the institution is perceived by others more than their own perception—perceived personality and reputation. This indicates that universities' effort to directly communicate with and persuade perspective students may not be as effective as they are believed to be.

This study will help UM administrators to formulate their marketing plan to improve their retention and enrollment for years to come. It also will show them the importance on the image of the university to high school students. This study has limitation. The sample is only from the UM high school. It should include students from other high schools. It is suggested that for the future study other high school students should be included and not only perception but attitude and prestige.

Biography

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