

# The Influence of Servicescape Towards Students Satisfaction in Private University Setting in Jakarta

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## Abstract

**Purpose**—This paper aims to examine the the influence of servicescape on university students' satisfaction in Jakarta.

**Design/methodology/ approach** -We proposed hypotheses to examine relationships between servicescape, universities' image and service quality on students satisfaction. The total of 204 students in private universities in Jakarta were surveyed as respondents.

**Research Limitation** - This study generally concern on servicescape dimensions provided by private universities in Jakarta, Indonesia.

**Practical Implication** —The service providers (universities) should consider the influence of universities' environments in shapping service quality perceptions and their impact on students' satisfaction.

**Keywords** – Servicescape, student's satifaction, ambience, corporate image.

**Paper Type** –Research paper

## Introduction

This study investigates the impact of servicescape (Bitner, 1992) in university settings on customer satisfaction. In this research, the term of student is used as the reference of customer. Many factors could influence the multi-dimensional process of formating the student satisfaction. For students who enroll to a university, the physical environment is the first facet of the service perceived by the student. In this stage, the students are likely to make expectation of the level of service they will receive (Hooper et al, 2013). Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) statedthat the servicescape is probably being a significant determinant of customer satisfaction given its natural experience.

Bitner (1992) was the first who invented the servicescape term. A steady stream of research has sought to prove the impact of servicescapes on several post-consumption concepts such as emotion, customer satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2004), service quality (Hightower et al., 2002; Reimer and Kuehn, 2005), and store image (Baker et al., 1994).Elliott and Healy (2001) found that “campus climate” had a strong impact on student satisfaction with their overall educational experience. Campus climate refers to environmental athmosphere which Bitner (1992) coined as servicescape.

As the literature on the servicescape is likely to be quite devided on specific aspect (Kearney et al., 2007; Kuenzi and Schminke, 2009), in this paper, servicescape refers to a whole building on recent research in the area (Hooper et al., 2013).

University image, in similarity with university reputation, has been discovered to impact student satisfaction at a Spanish University (Palacio et al., 2002) while student satisfaction has been found to be connected with the institution's service quality (Athiyaman, 1997). And Hartman and Schmidt (1995) also posited that student satisfaction is formed by both the perceived quality of the service provider's performance.

Mai (2005) found that the impression of the quality of education, the quality of the school, lecturers responses towards complaints or suggestions and availability of study areas for students have a significant positive impact on students overall satisfaction in UK university.

This article is started by providing a general summary of the servicescape literature paying a specific attention to the various dimensions proposed in the literature (Hooper et al, 2013). Our model is based on servicescapes literature. Then the service quality literature is considered and a theoretical explanation for modeling the servicescape as a antecedent to service quality perceptions is provided leading to the hypothesized model. The research methods, results, a discussion of the theoretical, managerial implications and a conclusion are also included in this article.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Servicescape***

The physical evidence which is known as servicescape can be considered interms of three dimensional factors, those are: ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality; and signs, symbols and artefacts (Bitner, 1992).

The first dimension is ambient conditions which is likely considered to be the most affecting one of the five senses (Bitner, 1992). It is considered that the ambient factors do not directly motivate customer purchases even if it had been maintained. However, if any of these ambient evidence drops exceed the acceptable limits, or are absent from the environment, they would occur to a negative impacts on consumer behavior (Baker, 1987; Hightower et al., 2002)

The second normally found dimension associates to design evidences which are more visual. This dimension is might be one of the most crucial dimension as it facilitates the communication of the large number of messages to the consumer from how to behave, to the service levels expected to be received (Bitner, 1992).

In general, students categorize design elements into fuctional or aesthetic which is ranging from architectural design, to the materials and the color used in decoration (Baker, 1987). Following from that, the arrangement of furnishing and equipment, and the spacial relationship among those object also appear in the literature in terms of space and layout. (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Ryu and Jang, 2007).The function of equipment has also frequently occured in the literature. For some kind of services, they might be more dependent to the equipment, while in practice all services are likely involve some element of contact by the customer to the equipment.

According to Bitner model of servicescape, the dimension is expanded by "sign, symbol, and artefacts. This third dimension is crucial because of its part in communicating the corporate image. For example : The signs showed on both interior and exterior of a structure which can be used as directional purposes, to communicate the rules of behavior, and labels for marketing purposes. (Bitner, 1992).

### ***University's Image***

Kotler and Fox (1985) stated that image was one's overall impression about an object. Therefore, University image could be described as the total combination of beliefs an individual has towards the university (Landrum et al, 1998; Arpan et all 2003).

Based on Kotler and Fox (1995) research, a higher education image and reputation was frequently more crucial and important rather than its quality. Because, it might directly influence the students' perspectives. Apparently, the university image is one of many factors influencing the students' choice in applying to a university (Landrum et al., 1998; Fielder et al., 1993; James et al., 1999), and student satisfaction (Clow et al., 1997; Eskildsen et al., 1999; Cassel and Eklof, 2001).

Yavas and Shemwell (1996), Landrum et al. (1998) and Parameswaran and Glowacka (1995) discovered that the higher education has to maintain a differentiated image to create a competitive advantage as to respond to the escalating competitive market. Therefore, we assumed that image was one of the major influences in student's willingness to apply to a university. The university image also important in creating cooperation with other institution to do research and development (Alves and Raposo, 2007).

### Services Quality

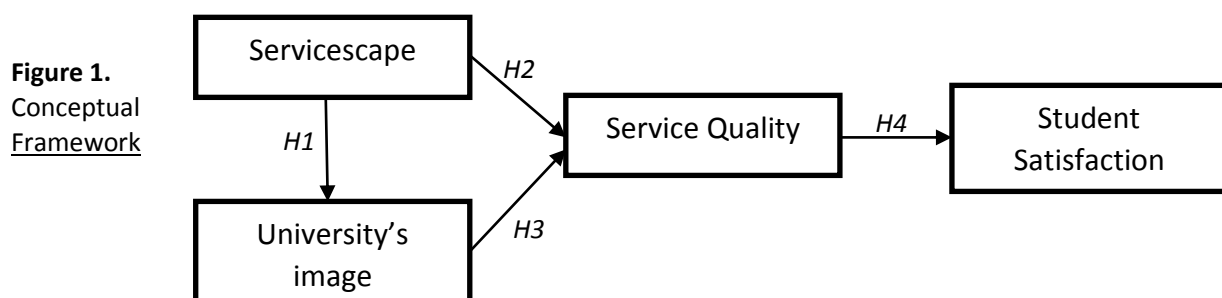
Service quality is one of the most important and widely observed topics in service marketing (Zeithaml, 2000). Service quality has attracted increasing interest in the past 20 years because of the increasing competitive market (Ismail et al., 2006). Service quality itself is defined as an overall appraisal or assessment of the service or product depending on costumers' prior expectation (Groenroos, 1984; Bitner and Hubbert, 1994). The quality of the university service could be assessed through student satisfaction (Petruzzellis Luca, et al, 2015). This process could be implemented by comparing the quality expected, quality provided and the actual quality perceived (Baccarani, 2003, 2004).

### Student Satisfaction

University must carefully considers the evaluation expressed by students on the quality of teaching-learning process. As the particular kind of public administration, the university system also provides the highest level of education. Therefore, the evaluation of its performance both the quality of services provided and the human resources (employees and staffs) becomes really essential (Petruzzellis Luca, et al, 2015).

### Conceptual Model

The conceptual model is referring to the correlation between independent variables and relationship between dependent and independent variable of this study (Zameer, et al, 2014).(Figure 1) which is based upon an elaborated exploration from literature and by investigating theoretical background.



## Hypotheses

### *The influence of physical environment on university's image*

The physical evidence which known as servicescape can be divided into three dimensions of physical factors: ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality; and signs, symbols and artefacts (Bitner, 1992).

Servicescape does much in shaping a place's brand image. Booms and Bitner (1982) stated that the servicescape of a hospitality firm had a significant positive effect on their brand image.

*H1. The quality of the physical environment has a positive influence on university's image*

### *Influence of servicescape on service quality*

Service quality refers to an overall assessment of a service which depends on consumers' anterior expectation (Groenroos, 1984; Bitner and Hubbert, 1994). There are description by Brady and Cronin (2001), Rust and Oliver (1994) and Wall and Berry (2007) and Pollack (2009) about how service quality can be estimated from the quality of servicescape.

Furthermore, customers may predict the quality of service they are about to receive by assessing the servicescape in which case the servicescape represents the primer expectations. Because of those reasons we proposed that servicescape should become an antecedent to service quality in this research model.

*H2. Servicescape perceptions will have a direct and positive effect on overall service quality*

### *Influence of university's image on service quality*

Image create an expectation of service quality in customer mind. Organization image refers to the "overall service impression" received by the customers' mind as the result of accumulative experiences, feelings, attitudes, and ideas with the organization which stored in memory and then transformed into a positive or negative meaning, retrieved to restore image when the name of the organization is heard or brought back to one's mind (Dowling, 1988; Fombrun, 1996; Kazoleas et al., 2001; Hatch et al., 2003; Bravo et al., 2009).

*H3. There is a positive relationship between university's image and reputation and the overall service quality offered by the organization*

### *Influence of service quality on student satisfaction*

Originate from significant empirical and conceptual work, the service quality is proved to precede customer satisfaction (Anderson et al., 1994; Brady and Robertson, 2001; Cronin et al., 2000; Heskett et al., 1997; Pollack, 2009). Service quality is considered to be cognitively orientated while customer satisfaction is considered to be both cognitive and affective. The more cognitive construct (service quality) should precede the more affective construct (customer satisfaction) (Brady and Robertson, 2001), that's why we proposed this hypothesis

*H4. Service quality has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction*

## Methodology

Bachelor students in a private university in Jakarta participated in this study and a purposive sample was used. From 209 responses collected, 204 valid responses were used in this analysis.

### Measures

#### Servicescape

##### *Ambience*

This construct consist of two items (e.g. “The lighting was comfortable”) were adapted from Reimer and Kuehn (2005).

##### *Design, Layout, Space*

This construct consist of three items (e.g. “the electronic equipment was excellent”) were adapted from Wakefield and Blodgett (1999), one item (e.g. “The architecture was attractive”) were adapted from Reimer and Kuehn (2005), and one item (e.g. “The interior design was attractive”) were adapted from Hooper and Coughlan et al (2013).

##### *Artifacts, Sign, Symbols*

This construct consist of two items (e.g. “Advertises university’s name accurately”) were adapted from McDonnell and Hall (2008) and one item (e.g. “Clearness of the facility signage”) were adapted from JEN et al (2013).

#### University’s Image

This construct consist of three items (e.g. “An innovative university focused on the future”) were adapted from Alves and Raposo (2010).

#### Service Quality

This construct consist of four items (e.g. “Lecturer and staff were always willing to help”) were adapted from Reimer and Kuehn (2005).

### Student Satisfaction

This construct consist of three items (e.g. “I was satisfied with my decision to attend this university”) were adapted from Athiyaman (1997).

## Result and Discussion

Table 1. Validity and Realibility Test

No	Variable and Indicator	Cronbach’s Alpha	Loading Factor	Result
<i>Servicescape</i>				
	<i>Ambience</i>	0.623		Reliable
1	The lighting was comfortable		0.857	Valid
2	The university’s setting was very clean		0.857	Valid
	<i>Design, Function, Space</i>	0.859		Reliable



1	The electronic equipment was excellent		0.794	Valid
2	The equipment was high quality		0.782	Valid
3	The architecture was attractive		0.858	Valid
4	The interior design was attractive		0.829	Valid
5	I found my way around easily		0.734	Valid
<b>Artifacts, Sign, Symbols</b>		0.777		Reliable
1	Clearness of the facility signage		0.832	Valid
2	Advertises university's name accurately		0.779	Valid
3	Signages were in the excellent condition		0.889	Valid
<b>University Image</b>		0.824		Reliable
1	A good university to study at		0.826	Valid
2	An innovative university focused on the future		0.899	Valid
3	A university which provides good preparation to its students		0.857	Valid
<b>Service Quality</b>		0.833		Reliable
1	Time-related promises were kept		0.817	Valid
2	Lecturer and staff were always willing to help		0.909	Valid
3	Staff was consistently courteous		0.826	Valid
4	Lecturer had the knowledge to answer questions		0.706	Valid
<b>Student Satisfaction</b>		0.954		Reliable
1	I was satisfied with my decision to attend this university		0.952	Valid
2	My choice to enrol in this university was a wise one		0.964	Valid
3	I think I did the right thing when I decided to enrol in this university		0.957	Valid

**Table 2. Frequency table based on Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
Man	80	39.2	39.2	39.2
Woman	124	60.8	60.8	100.0



Total	204	100.0	100.0	
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**Table 3. Frequency table based on Education**

Education	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cummulative Percent
University	171	83.82	83.82	83.82
Academy	33	16.18	16.18	100.0
Total	204	100.00	100.0	

**Table 4. Respondent distribution based on Gender and Education**

Education	Man	%	Women	%	Total
University	65	81.25	106	85.48	171
Academy	15	18.75	18	14.52	33
Total	80		124		204

**Table 5. Criteria Goodness of Fit Models**

Goodnes of fit index	Criteria (cut-off value)	Indicator Value	Result
Chi-Square	Close to 0	403.188	Poor Fit
Probability	≥ 0.05	0.000	Poor Fit
RMR	< 0.10	0.055	Goodness of Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.831	Marginal Fit
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.861	Marginal Fit
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.912	Goodness of Fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.10	0.084	Goodness of Fit

Based on the information above, we can conclude that the research using RMR, CFI, and RMSEA approach resulted in a fit model. Therefore, we can continue the hypothesis theory.

Hypotheses were tested on the basis of regression test analysis in SPSS 19:

**Table 5. Hypotheses test**

	Hypothesized Relationship	Estimate	P (Sig)	Result
H1	Servicescape → University's image	0.980	0.000	Supported
H2	Servicescape → Service quality	0.269	0.345	Supported
H3	University's image → Service quality	0.727	0.000	Supported
H4	Service quality → Student satisfaction	0.847	0.491	Supported

Based on the statistical test result, the coefficient of servicescape is .980. It means the higher perception of servicescape the higher perception of university image. The test result shows the p-value is  $0.000 < 0.05$  (alpha 5%) we can conclude that in confidence level of 95% there is an effect of servicescape towards university image. (Hypothesis 1 supported)

Showed on the statistical test result, the coefficient of servicescape is .269 which means that the perception of servicescape has a significant positive effect on service quality. The test result shows the p-value is  $0.345 < 0.05$  (alpha 5%) we can conclude that in confidence level of 95% there is an effect of servicescape towards service quality. (Hypothesis 2 supported)

Statistical test result shows that the coefficient of university image is .727. Indeed means the higher perception of university image the higher perception of service quality. The test result shows the p-value is  $0.000 < 0.05$  (alpha 5%) we can conclude that in confidence level

of 95% there is an effect of university image towards service quality. (Hypothesis 3 supported)

From this statistical test results, the coefficient of service quality is .847. It means service quality effects positively on student satisfaction. The test result shows the p-value is 0.491 < 0.05 (alpha 5%) we can conclude that in confidence level of 95% there is an effect of service quality towards student satisfaction. (Hypothesis 4 supported)

### **Limitation and Future Research**

There are several limitation of this study. First, the respondents in this study were only bachelor students. Since the students in higher education are fragmented into several segments which are master students and Phd. students. Second, we did not specify the demographic segments. The respondents were only classified by gender. Future study could consider different segments among different industries.

### **Conclusion and Practical Implication**

A model predicting the antecedents of servicescape towards customer satisfaction in various kind of industries were validated. And the present study stated that the servicescape in university settings has a strong effect on students' satisfaction.

This research provides insights for higher education providers which indicate that servicescape has the significant influence and is an important determinant to students' satisfaction involving service quality and university image. The findings of this study suggest that the university as the service provider need to consider the servicescape in shaping service quality perceptions and their impact on students' satisfaction.

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