

THE EFFECT OF SERVICE QUALITY AND EDUCATION COST ON PARENT LOYALTY THROUGH PARENT SATISFACTION AT PELITA KASIH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL LAWANG

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Abstract

A private educational institution needs to strive for its parental loyalty so it will be the main choice of people who need educational services for their children. Service quality and education costs are thought to be the important factors shaping parental satisfaction and loyalty, so this study examines and analyzes whether service quality and education costs affect parental satisfaction and loyalty. A total of 68 parents of elementary students in grades III to VI and junior high students in grades VII to IX from a population of 209 parents of Pelita Kasih Lawang Christian School became respondents using the purposive sampling technique. The research data were then analyzed using Partial Least Square (PLS) technique with SmartPLS 3.3.9 software. The results of the analysis show that service quality has a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction, but has no effect on parental loyalty, while the cost of education has a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction, but has no effect on parental loyalty. And, parental satisfaction fully mediates both the quality of service and the cost of education on parental loyalty.

Keywords: *service quality; education cost; parent satisfaction; parent loyalty.*

I. Introduction

Parents are secondary users of educational services who play a dominant role in determining schools for their children, mainly at primary and secondary education levels. It's the reason why school

management should not only pay attention to the needs of students as primary customers but also the needs of parents as secondary customers. Parent loyalty, especially to private schools, is important to build, maintain and improve. Indicators of the parent loyalty to schools can be shown by the behavior of: a) **retention**, parents' commitment to continue their children's class level at the same school, b) **re-purchase**, parents decide to send their other children to the same school, and c) **referral**, parents will recommend the school to others [6].

Pelita Kasih Christian School (PKCS) is one of the private schools in Lawang, Malang Regency. From the web page of the Data and Information Technology Center (Pusdatin) of the Education and Culture Ministry (2022), it is known that around 112 or 70% of PG/Kindergarten, Elementary, and Junior High schools in Lawang are private. The large number of schools scattered in the Lawang area encourages Pelita Kasih Christian School (PKCS) to continue improving its services to seize the parents' interest. So, it is hoped that the number of students will increase and most students will continue studying at PKCS to junior high grade.

During five years, starting in 2017-2021, data on new student admissions at PKCS experienced quite volatile movements and tended to decline at PG, elementary, and junior high divisions. The majority of PKCS new students are its graduates who continue to the next level. However, there are still many who do not continue to study at PKCS, especially graduates of PG (B) to kindergarten (A) and kindergarten (B) to elementary. Due to the information from the school administration staff, the average reason for not continuing in PKCS is moving out of town and education costs.

Another phenomenon was plenty of change of school cases within five years, with at least 40 students of PG-B, kindergarten, elementary, and junior high school levels for various reasons. Most of them were elementary students, with 31 children, 6 children in junior high, and 3 children in kindergarten. The transfer of students to other schools can be caused by many factors such as lower parental satisfaction with educational services, non-affordable educational costs, students' change of home, and other factors.

Parental loyalty in schools is shaped by parental satisfaction [12]. [6] Describe satisfaction as a feeling of pleasure or disappointment experienced by someone after comparing the perceived performance of a product or service with expectations. Thus, parental satisfaction, according to [3] is shaped by the quality of education services and the amount of school tuition.

Service quality according to Rahmah [12] is the size of the gap or mismatch between customer expectations and desires with the level of customer perception so service quality is said to be good if it can meet customer needs and expectations and vice versa. [5] Stated that there are six dimensions of service quality, namely: a) reliability, b) responsiveness, c) assurance, d) tangibles, e) empathy and f) ease of use.

Cost or price is the amount of money that can be billed to get a product or service [6]. According to Lupiyoadi & Hamdani (2011), there are four characteristics of price; (1) price affordability, (2) price compatibility with product or service quality, (3) price compatibility with product or service benefits, and (4) price competitiveness.

The education costs set by PKCS for each student include the cost of uniforms, books/equipment/tablets (e-modules), a year of programs, tuition fees, and registration fees. The total cost of education compared with other private schools in the Lawang sub-district is still in the average category. However, for some parents, the amount of this cost is still considered high, since the large number of parents who apply for fee waivers or are in payments arrears, mainly in the last two years.

Pelita Kasih Christian School strives to provide services that are commensurate with the education costs that have been incurred by parents. The personal and emotional bonding between teachers and students is being one of PKCS's promises. In terms of program excellence, PKCS has ongoing programs that are tailored to the needs of every level such as devotion, character building, and life skills (English, Mandarin, IT, Literacy, and Science).

PKCS also facilitates further counseling services for students and parents with counselors, special assistance services every Saturday for students who have learning difficulties, and extracurricular activities to facilitate students who have interests and talents in sports, art, and language skills. In terms of school fee payment, the school provides easy payment services via transfer or ATM debit through an EDC machine.

Research conducted by [3] states that education costs and service quality have a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction and loyalty; satisfaction partially mediates service quality and education costs on parental loyalty. Likewise, [4]; [2]; [7]; [9]; [10] state that satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on loyalty and service quality directly effects on loyalty. However, different results were shown by [11] who stated that service quality did not affect loyalty, [1] and [12] who stated that service quality did not affect satisfaction and loyalty.

Based on the phenomena and empirical gaps above, the purpose of this study is to determine and analyze the effect of; (1) service quality on parental satisfaction in PKCS, (2) service quality on parental loyalty in PKCS, (3) education costs on parental satisfaction in PKCS, (4) education costs on parental loyalty in PKCS, (5) parental satisfaction on parental loyalty in PKCS, (6) service quality on loyalty through parental satisfaction in PKCS, and (7) education costs on loyalty through parental satisfaction in PKCS. An overview of the research conceptual framework is as follows:

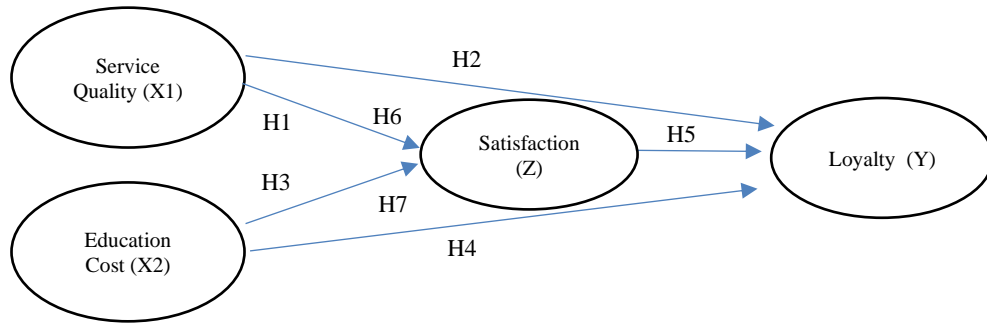


Figure 1. Research Design

Source: Researcher (2022)

II. Method

This study uses a quantitative approach. The source of data used in this study is primary data obtained by distributing questionnaires in the form of a Google Form link sent to the WhatsApp number of each respondent. The study population was 209 parents of elementary students in grades III, IV, V, and VI and parents of junior high students in grades VII, VIII, and IX.

The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, where respondents of elementary parents in grades III, IV, V, and VI are parents who have and are currently sending their children to PKCS starting from PG or kindergarten, and continuing to the elementary level. Meanwhile, respondents of junior high parents in grades VII, VIII, and IX, are parents who have and are currently sending their children to PKCS starting from PG, kindergarten, or elementary and continuing in junior high level. By using the Slovin formula, a sample of 68 parents of students was obtained; 40 respondents were parents of elementary students in grades III, IV, V, and VI and 28 respondents were parents of junior high students in grades VII, VIII, and IX.

The variables in this study can be identified into two independent variables, consisting of service quality (X1) and education costs (X2), the dependent variable is parental loyalty (Y), and the intervening variable is parental satisfaction (Z). The relationship between variables will be analyzed inferentially using Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis using SmartPLS 3.3.9 software.

The types of tests that will be carried out are (1) Outer Model measurement, which is to find out the results of the validity and reliability of the variables; (2) Inner Model measurement, which is to predict causality (cause and effect) relationships between latent variables or variables that cannot be measured directly; and (3) Hypothesis Testing, to prove the hypothesis by examining the t-statistic value > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05

III. Result and Discussion

Partial Least Square Analysis

1. Outer Model Measurement

A. Validity Test

1) Convergent Validity

This test is carried out to measure the validity of all reflective indicators of each construct, by looking at the value of outer loading (loading factor) > 0.70 and Average Variant Extracted (AVE) > 0.50, but the value of outer loading > 0.60 can still be tolerated. If the value is < 0.60, then the indicator must be dropped from the model and recalculated (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

Table 1.

Outer Loading (Valid)

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

Variable/ Indicator	Education Cost (X2)	Parent Satisfaction (Z)	Service Quality (X1)	Parent loyalty (Y)	Description
BP2	0.692				Valid
BP3	0.828				Valid
BP4	0.858				Valid
BP5	0.848				Valid
K1		0.626			Valid
K2		0.810			Valid
K3		0.704			Valid
K4		0.791			Valid
KL10			0.750		Valid
KL15			0.695		Valid
KL17			0.735		Valid
KL18			0.724		Valid
KL19			0.670		Valid
KL9			0.689		Valid
L1				0.896	Valid
L2				0.950	Valid
L3				0.933	Valid

Based on table 1 above, it can be seen that all indicators already have an outer loading value of > 0.60 which means the indicators meet the validity testing criteria. Furthermore, table 2 shows the values of the Average Value Extracted (AVE) as follows:

Table 2.

Average Variant Extracted (AVE)

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Description
Educational Cost (X2)	0,655	Valid
Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0,542	Valid
Service Quality (X1)	0,506	Valid
Parent Loyalty (Y)	0,859	Valid

It is known that all AVE values of each construct have a value of > 0.50 so they meet the criteria for convergent validity testing.

2) **Discriminant Validity**

a) **Fornell-Lacker Criterion**

An indicator is said to meet the criteria for discriminant validity if the square root value (AVE) of a construct is greater than the correlation between other constructs.

Table 3.

Fornell-Lacker Criterion (Not Valid)

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Education Cost (X2)	Parent Satisfaction (Z)	Service Quality (X1)	Parent loyalty (Y)
Educational Cost (X2)	0.809			
Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0.586	0.737		
Service Quality (X1)	0.503	0.573	0.711	
Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.465	0.747	0.559	0.927

From table 3 above, it is known that the AVE square root value of parental satisfaction (Z) of 0.737 is smaller than the correlation value of parental satisfaction (Z) with parental loyalty (Y) of 0.747, so it does not meet the criteria of discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Lacker Criterion value. This can be caused by several possibilities, including the existence of indicators or redundant questions so that respondents' answers tend to be the same or it could be a factor that respondents are less careful in answering questions, then causing data outliers.

For this reason, it is necessary to examine the correlation of both items and outlier data and then drop or eliminate the redundant indicator. From the results of the re-examination, it was found that one indicator indicated redundancy so it had to be removed from the model and recalculated. The following is the Fornell-Lacker Criterion value after recalculation.

Table 4.

Fornell-Lacker Criterion (Valid)

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Education Cost (X2)	Parent Satisfaction (Z)	Service Quality (X1)	Parent loyalty (Y)
Educational Cost (X2)	0.809			
Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0.587	0.736		
Service Quality (X1)	0.502	0.572	0.711	
Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.450	0.715	0.527	0.968

Based on table 4 above, it is known that all AVE values have met the criteria for discriminant validity values.

b) Cross-loading

This test is carried out by comparing the cross-loading value on the intended construct, which must be greater than the loading value with other constructs.

Table 5.

Cross- Loading

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Education Cost (X2)	Parent Satisfaction (Z)	Service Quality (X1)	Parent loyalty (Y)
BP2	0.686	0.397	0.359	0.279
BP3	0.824	0.475	0.386	0.236
BP4	0.860	0.552	0.428	0.419
BP5	0.853	0.463	0.444	0.480
K1	0.361	0.626	0.398	0.387
K2	0.435	0.804	0.499	0.521
K3	0.490	0.706	0.281	0.492
K4	0.445	0.795	0.489	0.666
KL10	0.458	0.438	0.749	0.497
KL15	0.302	0.436	0.685	0.312
KL17	0.430	0.355	0.738	0.315
KL18	0.388	0.367	0.722	0.301
KL19	0.284	0.388	0.668	0.266
KL9	0.277	0.433	0.701	0.480
L2	0.411	0.654	0.535	0.966
L3	0.459	0.727	0.487	0.970

From table 5, all marked indicators have the largest cross-loading value when compared to the cross-loading value of other variable indicators. Therefore, it can be concluded that the indicators have met good discriminant validity.

B. Reliability Test

A construct is declared reliable if it meets the criteria for composite reliability values > 0.80 and Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70 .

Table 7.

Cronbach's Alpha dan Composite Reliability

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Educational Cost (X2)	0,823	0,883	Reliable
Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0,716	0,824	Reliable
Service Quality (X1)	0,806	0,860	Reliable
Parent Loyalty (Y)	0,932	0,967	Reliable

Based on table 7 above, all variables already have Cronbach's Alpha values > 0.70 and composite reliability values > 0.80 so it can be said that all the variables; service quality (X1), education costs (X2), parent satisfaction (Z), and parent loyalty (Y) have met the reliability test criteria.

2. Inner Model Measurement

a. R-Square (R^2)

The R-square test was carried out to assess how much influence the exogenous construct had on the endogenous construct.

Table 8.

R-Square

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	R Square
Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0.447
Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.532

From table 8 above, it is known that the R-Square of parental satisfaction (Z) is 0.447 which means 44.7% of parental satisfaction is explained by the cost of education and service quality. While the remaining 55.3% was explained by other latent constructs which were not considered in this study. The R-Square value on parental loyalty (Y) is 0.532 which means 53.2% of parental loyalty is explained by the cost of education, service quality, and parental satisfaction. While the remaining 46.8% is explained by other latent constructs not considered in this study.

b. F-Square (f^2)

The effect size test (f^2) was conducted to determine the influence between variables on a research model. If the value of effect size (f^2) is 0.02 (small); 0.15 (medium); and 0.35 (large). However, if < 0.02 it can be ignored or considered to have no effect (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

Table 9.

Effect Size (f^2)

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Education Cost (X2)	Parent Satisfaction (Z)	Service Quality (X1)	Parent loyalty (Y)
Educational Cost (X2)		0.217		0.000
Parent Satisfaction (Z)				0.443
Service Quality (X1)		0.186		0.041
Parent Loyalty (Y)				

Based on table 9 above, the value of effect size (f^2) for the relationship between education costs and parental satisfaction is 0.217, which means that the cost of education has a moderate effect on parental satisfaction, while on parental loyalty, because the effect size value (f^2) is $0.000 < 0.02$, it considered has no affect. The effect size (f^2) value of service quality on parental satisfaction is 0.186, which means that service quality has a moderate effect on parental satisfaction, while the effect size (f^2) value of service quality with parental loyalty is 0.041 which means it has a small effect. The value of effect size (f^2) for the relationship between parental satisfaction and loyalty is 0.443, which means that parental satisfaction has a very strong influence on parental loyalty.

c. Q-Square (*Predictive Relevance*)

A predictive relevance test is carried out to assess how well the observed values are generated by performing a blindfolding procedure on SmartPLS. The model is said to have a good observation value if the Q^2 value > 0.05 .

Table 10.

Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Q^2
Educational Cost (X2)	
Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0.211
Service Quality (X1)	
Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.464

Based on table 10 above, it is known that the Q^2 value for the parental satisfaction variable (Z) is $0.211 > 0.05$ and the service quality (Y) is $0.464 > 0.05$, so it can be said that the variables of education

costs, service quality, and parental satisfaction used to predict parental loyalty variable already have good predictive relevance.

d. Model Fit (GoF)

The model feasibility test is carried out to check whether the model used or developed has met the model eligibility criteria by examining the SMSR value < 0.10 or < 0.08

Table 11.

Model Fit

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.095
d_ULS	1.218
d_G	0.671
Chi-Square	245.419
NFI	0.622

Based on table 11 above, the SMSR value of $0.095 < 0.10$, which means the model is fit or meets the model's eligibility criteria.

3. Hypothesis

Hypothesis testing is part of the inner model measurement in PLS analysis by running the Bootstrapping procedure. From the results of the path coefficients value, the positive or negative influence can be seen from the Original Sample (O) value and to determine the significance of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs, by examining the t-statistic value > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05 .

Table 12.

Path Coefficient Hypothesis

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Description
Education Cost (X2) -> Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0.401	3.813	0.000	Positive Significant
Education Cost (X2) -> Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.002	0.020	0.984	Positive Not-Significant
Parent Satisfaction (Z) -> Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.613	4.558	0.000	Positive Significant
Service Quality (X1) -> Parent Satisfaction (Z)	0.371	3.543	0.000	Positive Significant
Service Quality (X1) -> Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.175	1.408	0.159	Positive Not-Significant

Based on table 12 above, the results of hypothesis testing are as follows:

H1-Service quality has a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction is **accepted**.

H2-Service quality has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty is **rejected**.

H3-Education cost has a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction is **accepted**.

H4-Education cost has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty is **rejected**.

H5-Parental satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty is **accepted**.

Then, the results of the specific indirect effect analysis determine the alleged parental satisfaction variable (Z) as an intervening variable (mediator) that can mediate the effect of service quality and education costs on parental loyalty.

Table 13.

Specific Indirect Effect

Source: Output SmartPLS 3.3.9 (2022)

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Description
Education Cost (X2) -> Parent Satisfaction (Z) -> Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.246	2.779	0.005	Positive Significant
Service Quality (X1) -> Parent Satisfaction (Z) -> Parent Loyalty (Y)	0.227	2.555	0.011	Positive Significant

Based on table 13 above, the results of hypothesis testing are as follows:

H6 - Service quality has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty through parental satisfaction is **accepted**.

H7 - Education cost has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty through parental satisfaction is **accepted**.

Discussion

The Effect of Service Quality on Parental Satisfaction

The research states that service quality showed a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction so it could be said that service quality was able to build parental satisfaction. These results are in line with research conducted by Untaru, et.al (2018), Hartanti, et.al (2019), and Budiyanto et. al (2020) which state that service quality has a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction. Indicators that strongly reflect service quality variables are parenting seminar programs, the personal approach of academic staff to students, collaboration with other institutions to support learning, counselor services, and complaint management.

The Influence of Service Quality on Parental Loyalty

The service quality showed a positive but not significant effect on parental loyalty. This means service quality cannot make a significant contribution to building parental loyalty. It could be due to other factors that are thought to be more influential, or there needs to be an intermediate variable that can mediate service quality on parental loyalty. This result is in line with research conducted by Pramono (2017), Andayu (2019), and Rahmah (2020), which state that the effect of service quality is not significant on parental loyalty, but Hartanti et al. (2019), Kuswanto et al. (2018), Budiyanto et al. (2020) have a different result which state that service quality has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty.

The Effect of Education Costs on Parental Satisfaction

The effect of education costs on parental satisfaction shows a positive and significant effect. This means that the high and low cost of education set by the school greatly affects the level of parental satisfaction. The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by Hartanti et.al (2019), which states that the cost of education has a positive and significant effect on parental satisfaction.

The Effect of Educational Cost on Parental Loyalty

The education cost did not affect parental loyalty. This means that the high and low cost of education set by the school is not able to create parental loyalty to the school. However, different results were shown by Hartanti et al. (2019), which showed that education cost has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty. It is assumed that other variables are stronger in directly creating parental loyalty that was not examined in this study, such as parental trust, school image, parental commitment, or parental involvement. Research conducted by Siagian et al. (2017) stated that the marketing mix – product variables, teachers, employees, physical evidence, and school image – has been proven to lead to parental loyalty.

The Effect of Parental Satisfaction on Parental Loyalty

The results showed a positive and significant effect of parental satisfaction on parental loyalty. This means that the higher the satisfaction experienced by parents, the greater the loyalty of parents to the school, in other words, parental satisfaction plays a very important role in creating parental loyalty. This study is in line with previous research conducted by Pramono et al. (2017), Hartanti et al. (2019), Budiyanto et al. (2020), Nguyen et al. (2021), and Huang et al. (2022), which state that satisfaction has a significant effect on parental loyalty. However, Andayu (2019) stated that satisfaction does not affect parent loyalty to Ayodya Pala art studio students.

The Effect of Service Quality on Parental Loyalty Through Parental Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable

It was found that parental satisfaction fully mediates the service quality on parental loyalty. This means, that without satisfaction, service quality is not able to form parental loyalty. This test is in line with Rahmah (2020) who explains that parental satisfaction fully mediates service quality on loyalty.

The Effect of Education Costs on Parental Loyalty Through Parental Satisfaction as an Intervening Variable

The study found that parental satisfaction fully mediates the cost of education on loyalty. Without satisfaction, the cost of education is not able to form or increase parental loyalty.

While research conducted by Hartanti et.al (2019) states that satisfaction partially mediates education cost on loyalty so with or without satisfaction, education cost has a positive and significant effect on parental loyalty.

IV. Conclusion

From the results of the research can be drawn several conclusions as follows: 1) The quality of services and education costs have a positive and significant direct effect on parental satisfaction so the better the quality of services provided by the school and the more appropriate the education costs are set, the more parental satisfaction will increase; 2) The quality of service and the cost of education have a positive but not significant direct effect on parental loyalty; 3) Parental satisfaction has a positive and significant direct effect on parental loyalty. Any school policy that affects parental satisfaction will have an impact on the level of parental loyalty; 4) Parent satisfaction fully mediates service quality and education costs on parental loyalty. Without satisfaction, service quality and education costs are not able to form or increase parental loyalty directly.

Suggestion

For Pelita Kasih Lawang Christian School:

- a) Improving the quality of services, especially in the aspects of reliability, responsiveness, and empathy.
- b) Maximizing parent associations and school committees to increase parental involvement and build harmonious relationships between schools and parents, increase parental trust and build a good support system.

For further research, it is recommended:

- a) to add other variables that affect parental loyalty to enrich research insights.
- b) to use all samples that meet the purposive sampling criteria as research subjects.

- c) to develop research subjects and objects to give more comprehensive results regarding parental loyalty.
- d) to use a qualitative approach to get more meaningful study to increase parental loyalty.

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