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# POST-COVID-19 UNIVERSITY SERVICE MARKETING MODEL FOR INSTITUTIONAL IMAGE AND USER SATISFACTION

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## ABSTRACT

*A study was carried out in a post-pandemic higher education institution, whose objective was to determine the service marketing model supported by structural equations as a predictor of user satisfaction and institutional image. A quantitative approach methodology was used, of a correlational descriptive type, cross-sectional design, non-experimental, using the statistical technique for data processing using the structural equation model (SEM); the population was made up of 9779 students, of which a sample of 1230 students was considered, a model could be developed that explains the standardized effect of Service Marketing with a positive impact on the institutional image ( $\beta=0.83$ ), and the effect of Service Marketing on User Satisfaction is positive ( $\beta=0.77$ ). The relationship between Institutional Image and User Satisfaction is 0.63. All results are highly significant. It is concluded that the service marketing variable significantly influences institutional image and user satisfaction. An important model characterizes this result because it guarantees that, when applying service marketing, the institution ensures a good institutional image and a satisfied user.*

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**KEYWORDS:** Service Marketing, Institutional Image, User Satisfaction, University, Structural Equation Model, Education, Teacher, Student, Teaching, Marketing.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization in higher education implies the need for renewal and modernization of university institutions. Higher education in Europe is facing a strong evolutionary process; universities are facing an adaptation to the changes they are producing in their environment, which fundamentally impacts how university services are provided (Arriazu & Solari, 2020).

Emerging companies have taken advantage of these changes as a development opportunity based on technology, reengineering, the social, economic, internet, social networks, environmental protection, increasing humanization, and alliances for a global economy. As stated by Parra, Rhea & Gómez (2019), new models of administrative management in marketing must be created to help improve educational services. According to Rivera & Alarcón (2020), Marketing directors must actively participate in marketing management education decisions to promote educational competitiveness.

(The National Superintendence of Higher University Education [SUNEDU]. (2022) carried out the III Biennial report on the University reality in Peru in March. A study that delves into five fundamental aspects: (1) Institutions: supply and financing; (2) Students: trajectories, enrollment, and rights; (3) Teaching: degrees and professional development; (4) Research training, research, and institutional performance; (5) Graduates, labor insertion, employment conditions, and perceptions. Having favorable results, the Universidad Peruana Unión is 10th among the best private universities in Peru.

Fazal et al (2021) argued that students' gratitude for the university's investment in their relationship could influence their perceptions of its value because it would guide them toward what they receive and motivate them to give back. Gratitude could improve this relational dimension as students have demonstrated a highly relational orientation with the university and their learning. This research aims to determine whether a service marketing model supported by structural equations predicts user satisfaction and institutional image. For compliance with scientific rigor, databases such as ESCOPUS have been consulted, including related research for the service marketing variable 7451, institutional image 570, and user satisfaction 2666 related articles.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

### 2.1. Theoretical Base

#### 2.1.1. Marketing Mix of Educational Services

Marketing is the exchange relationship between two or more people through transaction processes, where the transaction process is understood as that in which a benefit and consideration are given between one party and the other, as stated by Kotler & Armstrong (2016), a process that companies go through to create value for their customers, establishing solid relationships by satisfying their needs. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), services are intangible benefits that provide satisfaction and that are not necessarily forced to sell goods, emphasizing the act of serving, helping, or benefiting; it is also defined as the behavior that seeks the well-being or advantage of another, these first definitions were made of marketing, they compare services with goods, as stated by Jochen (2009).

#### 2.1.2. Educational Marketing

Mahajan & Golahit (2020) mention that educational services marketing improves growth by including diverse students and development, improving their performance for a global option, making them satisfied, and motivating them to recommend their institution to others. Institutions can use this integration as a criterion to stay ahead of the market for students with a distinct competitive advantage. Manes (2005) defines it as the process of social research to develop educational services to satisfy users' needs according to their perceived value, distributors in time and place, and generating well-being between individuals and the institution.

### 2.2. 7 Ps of Service Marketing

#### 2.2.1. Product/Service

Kotler & Armstrong (2016) define service as an activity, benefit, or satisfaction offered by a sale that is basically intangible and does not involve possessing something. Service is the core of a company's marketing strategies. It becomes part of a finished product or service's complementary structure. Planning the marketing mix begins with creating a service concept that best meets the needs of the competition. It defines the core value proposition: a well-designed service meets a specific need (utility) and sets the business apart from the competition. If it meets expectations, it fosters customer loyalty; if it is generic, it leads to rejection.

#### 2.2.2. Price

The amount of money charged for the service or the sum of the values that consumers give in

exchange for the benefits of using the service. Setting the right price is one of the most challenging tasks for marketers, involving many factors. However, finding and applying the right pricing strategy is critical for success. Price serves as an indicator of quality (a very low price can raise suspicions), which can directly affect the perception of value and the likelihood of repeat purchases. A poorly designed price can erode profitability, even if the service is excellent.

### 2.2.3. *Market/Place-Time*

It is a place where it is decided where and when the products or services must be delivered, as well as the specifications of the means to be used; delivery may include physical or electronic channels as required by the nature of the service. Within this are distribution channels comprised of interdependent organizations that participate in making a service available to the consumer or business user. It determines accessibility and convenience for the customer. An efficient parking spot reduces wait times and effort, increasing satisfaction; a poorly located spot, on the other hand, causes immediate frustration.

### 2.2.4. *Promotion*

The company uses a specific mix of promotional tools (advertising, sales promotion, personal sales, public relations, and direct marketing) to communicate value to customers and establish persuasive relationships with them. It reduces uncertainty and builds trust. An effective promotion can ensure customer satisfaction and attract new customers. If it is misleading, it creates unrealistic expectations and damages your reputation.

### 2.2.5. *Process*

is by which the route for the provision of services is structured, optimizing time and resources. Smart managers know that when it comes to services, how a company does its work and its processes are very important in every activity related to service delivery. This is the most operational aspect and the one that has the greatest impact on productivity. It affects efficiency and perceived quality. Streamlined, error-free processes generate satisfaction and reduce costs. Bureaucratic or slow processes lead to customer churn.

### 2.2.6. *Personnel*

The most valuable capital of institutions is called the human resource, which is willing to provide effort and dedication in exchange for consideration of remuneration in return. Successful service

companies dedicate significant effort to employee recruitment, training, and motivation. In addition, by recognizing that customers can contribute (positively or negatively) to how others experience service performance, proactive marketers seek to shape the roles of these subjects and manage their behavior. It determines the quality of the relationship. A competent and empathetic staff builds loyalty and makes up for mistakes. An unmotivated staff undermines any strategy. It is the key differentiator in high-contact services.

### 2.2.7. *Physical Presence*

A place where the services are provided and the elements to be formed to carry out commercial transactions, the appearance of buildings, land, vehicles, interior furniture, equipment, personnel uniforms, signs, printed materials, and other visible signs provide the qualities for the provision of educational services. It conveys professionalism and trust. A clean, modern environment suggests reliable service. An exclusively digital presence can create uncertainty and undermine the credibility of your services. Poor design drives customers away, even if the technical service is good.

### 2.2.8. *Institution Image*

For their part, Günayan & Ceylan (2014) maintain that institutional image is a process based on the perception of an organization's users or staff that makes a differentiating and competitive assessment of its services. The concept of image has been associated with a culture's personality and identity and the reputation of an organization's internal and external clients (Seratamin, Pereira, & Rojo, 2017). According to the opinions of the various authors, organizational image is part of individual perceptions about the organization, analyzing its characteristics, processes, services, costs, and information received. Also, the organizational image can be defined as the set of beliefs or perceived attributes of the organization.

Dimensions of the organizational image developed by (Patlán Pérez & Martínez Torres, 2017) contribute to many higher education institutions because they are in a broadly competitive environment that demands high-quality higher education services.

University counseling and preparation

It is oriented to the attributes related to the university towards the students' society and the preparation it offers to the students.

Reputation of the institution

It is the perceived image regarding the prestige of

the educational institution and its levels of updating, an assessment made by different people (internal and external) about the organization's ability to meet expectations over time. It generally refers to the public perceptions of the organization that multiple people share over time. (Innocence et al., 2013).

#### Institutional maturity

The perceived image of the institution concerning its facilities, educational programs, environment, and training update that has been built over time, the level of maturity that the organization has is determined according to the current state of "best practices, identifying those aspects that must be improved" (Madero, 2018).

#### Affective image

It is the set of positive or negative perceptions and emotions expressed by users or members of an institution as boring, stimulating, stressful, relaxing, or lively.

### 2.2.9. User Satisfaction

Kotler & Armstrong (2016) state the degree to which the perceived performance of a service matches the consumer's expectations. Blázquez et al.

(2013) student behavior: What are students' demands, and how can a university achieve student satisfaction? The factors influencing student satisfaction can provide relevant information about students' thinking and the most important areas to consider.

Among its study dimensions, the following have been considered:

Basic infrastructure conditions, institutional service, security conditions, consideration of their economic situation, emotional security due to affection, sense of belonging to the institution, teaching and learning process, personal achievements, recognition of individual success, and self-actualization.

The different results show the positive impact of service marketing, corroborated by the theory on institutional image and satisfaction.

Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated

**H1:** Service marketing has a significant effect on the image of students in a private university.

**H2:** Service marketing has a significant effect on student satisfaction in a private university.

**H3:** Image has a significant influence on student satisfaction in a private university.

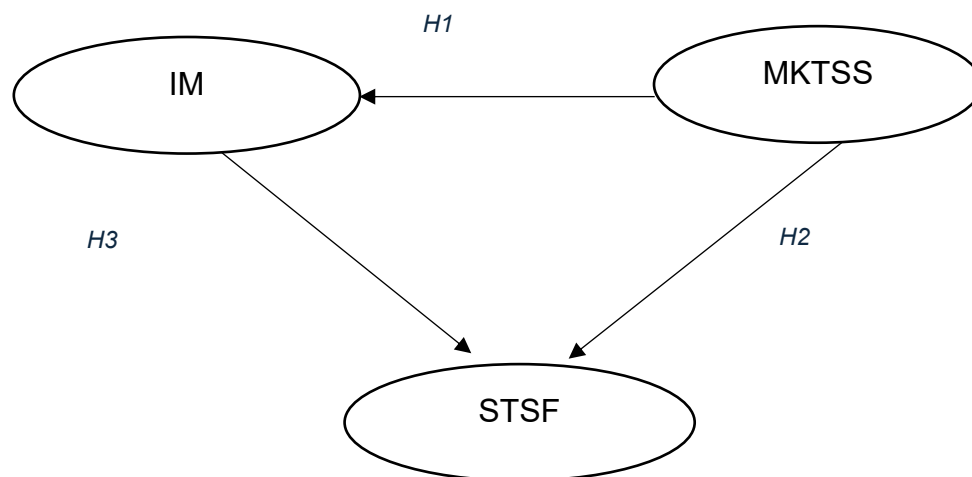


Figure 1: Theoretical Model.

## 3. METHOD

The sample has considered 1230 students in different professional careers. In the quantitative route, a sample is a subgroup of the population or universe of interest on which the relevant data will be collected and must be representative of said population (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza-Torres, 2018), as well as defined (Esteban, 2016) the sample is part of the population and is made up of a set of people selected according to a specific

sampling system, it must be ensured that the sample is representative; that is, it meets the general characteristics corresponding to the total population.

For the fit evaluation of the model, the Chi-square was used, reporting a good fit in the comparative goodness of fit index (CFI). The goodness of fit index (GFI) in these cases ranges between 0 and 1, with values close to or greater than 0.90 being acceptable and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) considered optimal when its values are

between 0.06 and 0.08 (Ruiz, Pardo and San Martín, 2010).

After the model is identified, an estimation is made. The central hypothesis that is contrasted is that the population variance and covariance matrix's sum is equal to the variance and covariance matrix associated with the theoretical model.

The sampling method was non-probabilistic convenience sampling, applied in three cities where the institution of higher education is located. Regarding the data collection technique, a survey using a questionnaire was administered online. Given certain time constraints, respondent distractions, and incomplete surveys, a rigorous evaluation was conducted to exclude surveys that did not meet the criteria for objectivity. Likewise, incomplete, inconsistent, or duplicate questionnaires were excluded, and the anonymity of participants was guaranteed to reduce social desirability bias.

First, it was possible to obtain the data virtually using the Google form, export it to an Excel sheet, and then transform the label answers into numerical ones. The IBM SPSSv26 statistical software was used,

where data cleaning was carried out through univariate and multivariate techniques such as the Mahalanobis Distance. Once the data were reviewed, we obtained tables of frequencies and percentages and the mean, standard deviation, asymmetry, and kurtosis as descriptive results. The normality test was performed for the inferential and correlation analysis of the variables studied. Then, the scale's internal structure was analyzed through CFA, using a Robust Maximum Likelihood (RML) estimation method, which has proven adequate for ordinal variables. The goodness-of-fit measures were chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) Comparative Fit Index (CFI > 0.95), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI > 0.95), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA < 0.08), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR < 0.06). The Weighted Root Mean Square Residual (WRMR < 1) designed for ordinal variables is also incorporated. Finally, reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

#### 4. RESULTS

*Table 01. Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the General Model.*

Absolute fit measurements	Acceptable adjustment levels	Obtained values	Acceptability
Absolute fit measurements			
Chi-squared likelihood ratio statistic		Chi-squared =147.66 p-value = 0.000	Acceptable Acceptable
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	>= 0.90	0.943	Acceptable
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<= 0.08	0.062	Acceptable
Incremental adjustment measures			
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.90	0.949	Acceptable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.972	Acceptable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	>= 0.90	0.928	Acceptable

Table 01 describes the goodness of fit of the general structural model of Structural Equations that is presented, which explains that the indicators are acceptable with a Chi-square of 147.66 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the RMSEA is equal to 0.062, which is less than 0.08, and the CFI is 0.972, which is greater than 0.90. Therefore, we proceed to interpret the effects and relationships found to meet the objectives and be able to contrast the hypotheses raised in the research. The

standardized effect was found, as shown in Figure 2, where the effect of Service Marketing positively affects the institutional image ( $\beta = 0.83$ ). The effect of Service Marketing on User Satisfaction is positive ( $\beta = 0.77$ ), and the relationship between Institutional Image and User Satisfaction is 0.63. All results are highly significant so that they can be generalized to similar populations.

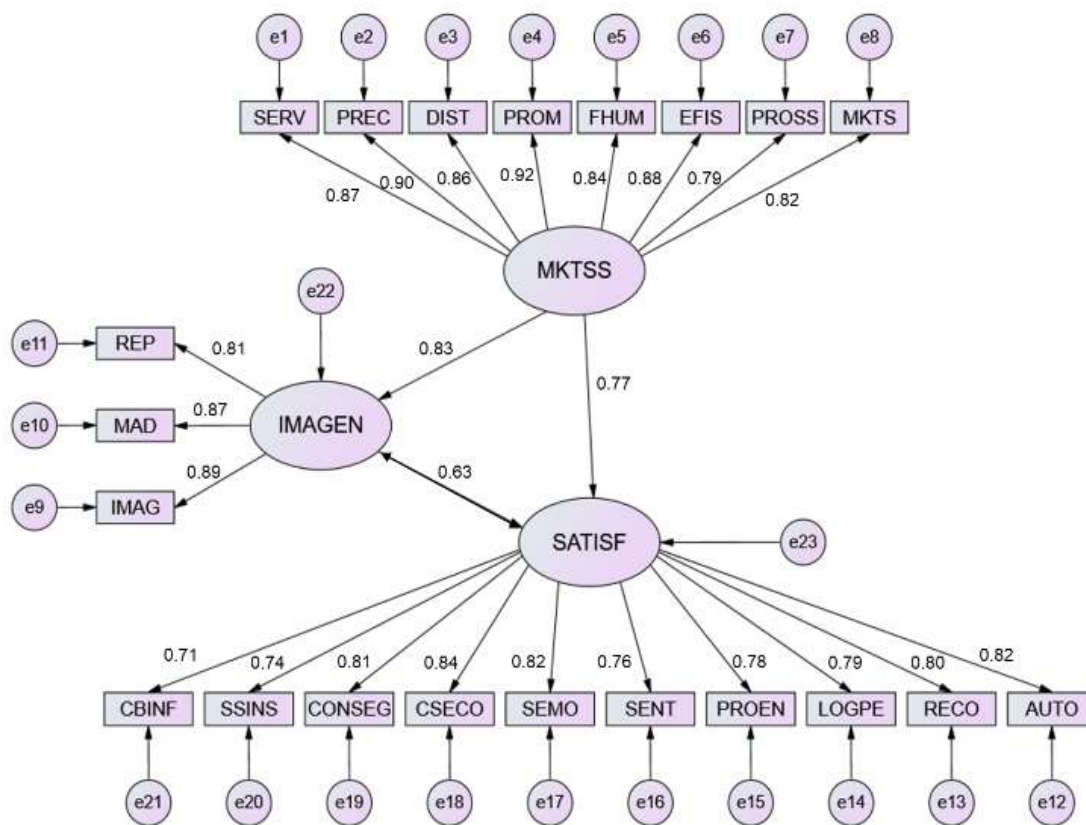


Figure 02: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the General Model.

Table 02: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the Lima Headquarters Model.

Absolute fit measurements	Acceptable adjustment levels	Obtained values	Acceptability
Absolute fit measurements			
Chi-squared likelihood ratio statistic		Chi-squared =143.23	Acceptable
		p-value = 0.000	Acceptable
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	>= 0.90	0.924	Acceptable
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<= 0.08	0.067	Acceptable
Incremental adjustment measures			
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.90	0.943	Acceptable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.967	Acceptable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	>= 0.90	0.917	Acceptable

Table 2 describes the goodness of fit of the general structural model of Structural Equations that is presented, which explains that the indicators are acceptable with a Chi-square of 143.23 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the RMSEA is equal to 0.067, which is less than 0.08, and the CFI is 0.967, which is greater than 0.90. Therefore, we proceed to interpret the effects and relationships found to meet the objectives and be able to contrast the hypotheses raised in the research. The

standardized effect was found, as shown in Figure 3, where the effect of Service Marketing positively affects the institutional image ( $\beta = 0.78$ ). The effect of Service Marketing on User Satisfaction is positive ( $\beta = 0.72$ ), and the relationship between Institutional Image and User Satisfaction is 0.51. All results are highly significant so that they can be generalized to similar populations.

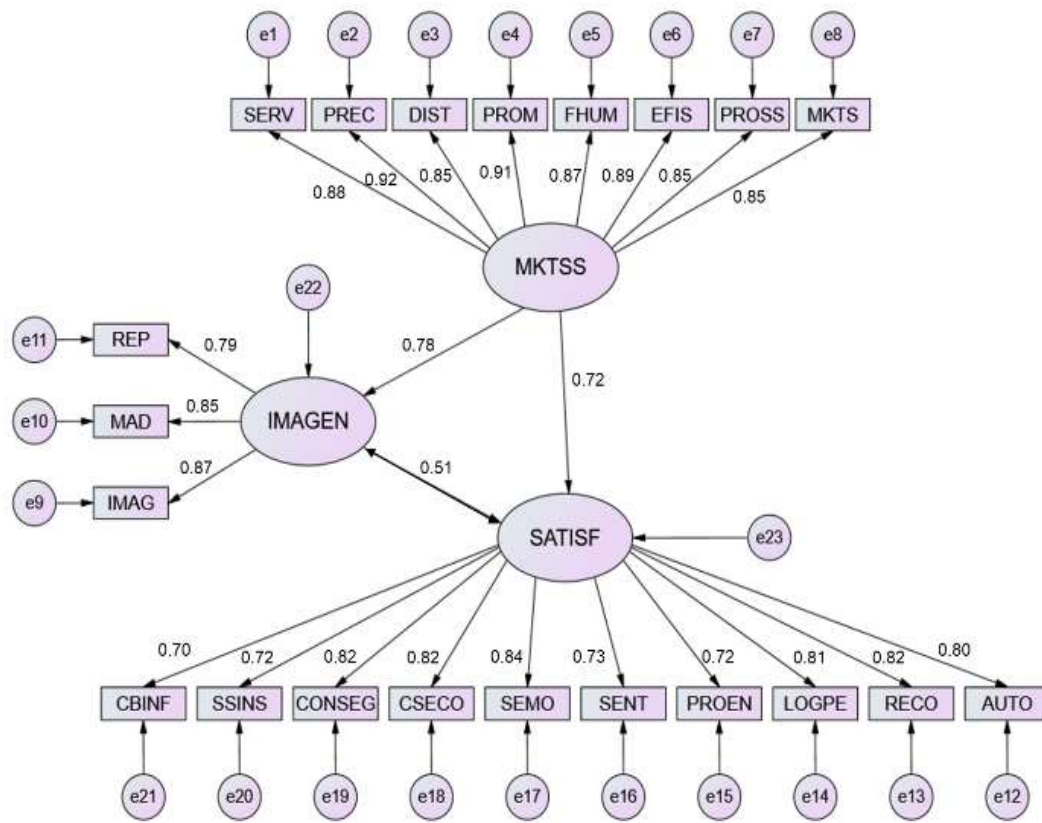


Figure 03: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the Lima Headquarters Model.

Table 03: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the Juliaca Headquarters Model.

Absolute fit measurements	Acceptable adjustment levels	Obtained values	Acceptability
Absolute fit measurements			
Chi-squared likelihood ratio statistic		Chi-squared =135.21	Acceptable
		p-value = 0.000	Acceptable
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	>= 0.90	0.941	Acceptable
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<= 0.08	0.065	Acceptable
Incremental adjustment measures			
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.90	0.942	Acceptable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.971	Acceptable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	>= 0.90	0.916	Acceptable

Table 03 describes the goodness of fit of the general structural model of Structural Equations that is presented, which explains that the indicators are acceptable with a Chi-square of 135.21 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the RMSEA is equal to 0.065, which is less than 0.08, and the CFI is 0.971, which is greater than 0.90. Therefore, we proceed to interpret the effects and relationships found to meet the objectives and be able to contrast the hypotheses raised in the research. The

standardized effect was found, as shown in Figure 4, where the effect of Service Marketing positively affects the institutional image ( $\beta = 0.86$ ). The effect of Service Marketing on User Satisfaction is positive ( $\beta = 0.74$ ), and the relationship between Institutional Image and User Satisfaction is 0.55. All results are highly significant so that they can be generalized to similar populations.

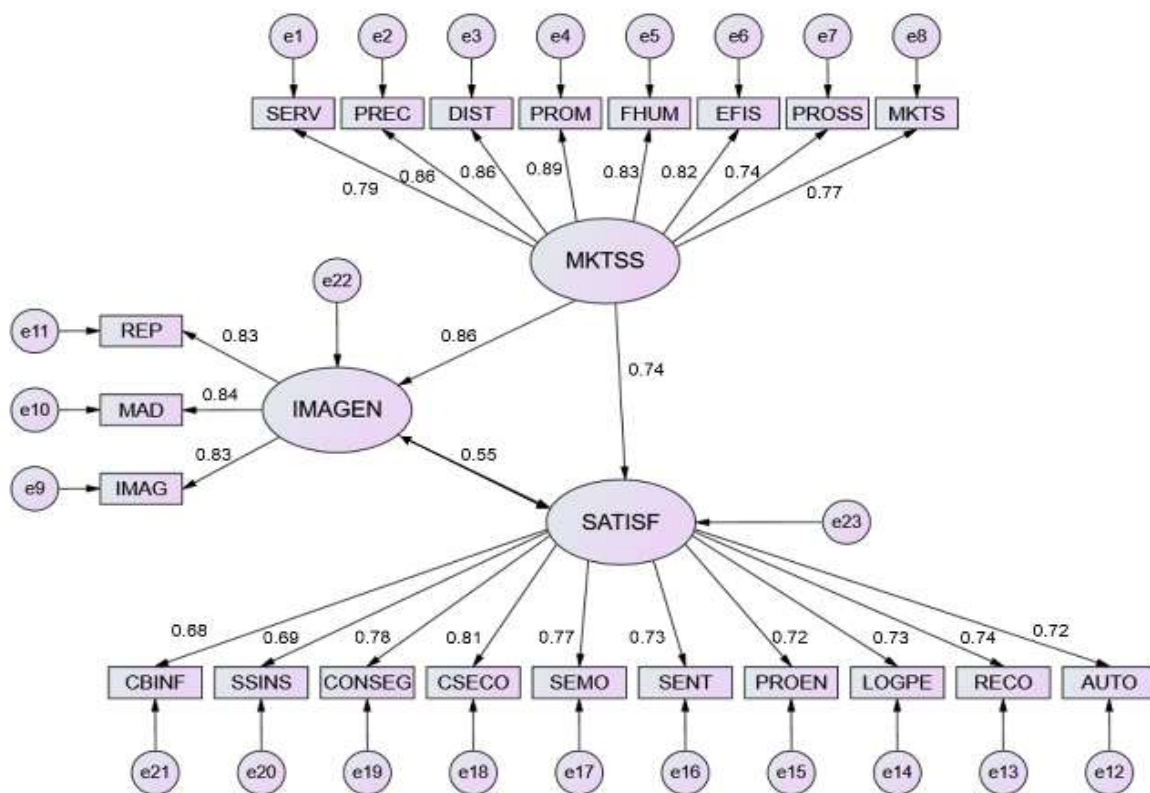


Figure 04: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the Juliaca Headquarters Model.

Table 04: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the Tarapoto Headquarters Model.

Absolute fit measurements	Acceptable adjustment levels	Obtained values	Acceptability
Absolute fit measurements			
Chi-squared likelihood ratio statistic		Chi-squared =132.68	Acceptable
		p-value = 0.000	Acceptable
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	>= 0.90	0.951	Acceptable
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<= 0.08	0.058	Acceptable
Incremental adjustment measures			
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.90	0.950	Acceptable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.90	0.969	Acceptable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	>= 0.90	0.921	Acceptable

Table 04 describes the goodness of fit of the general structural model of Structural Equations that is presented, which explains that the indicators are acceptable with a Chi-square of 132.68 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the RMSEA is equal to 0.058, which is less than 0.08, and the CFI is 0.969, which is greater than 0.90. Therefore, we proceed to interpret the effects and relationships found to meet the objectives and be able to contrast the hypotheses raised in the research. The

standardized effect was found, as shown in Figure 4, where the effect of Service Marketing positively affects the institutional image ( $\beta = 0.81$ ). The effect of Service Marketing on User Satisfaction is positive ( $\beta = 0.74$ ), and the relationship between Institutional Image and User Satisfaction is 0.53. All results are highly significant so that they can be generalized to similar populations.

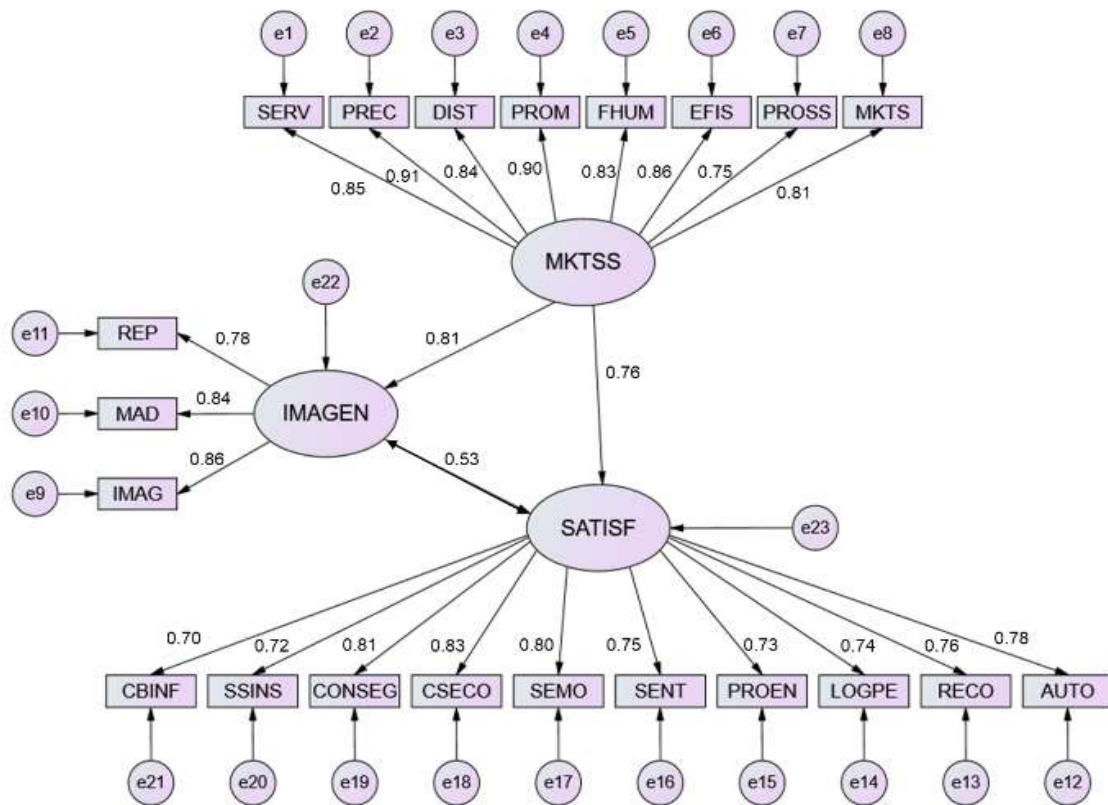


Figure 05: Measurements Of Goodness of Fit of the Tarapoto Headquarters Model.

### 5. DISCUSSION

Based on the general objective of the research, it has been determined that in the goodness of fit of the general structural model of Structural Equations that is presented, which describes that the indicators are acceptable with a Chi-square of 147.66 ( $p < 0.05$ ), the RMSEA is equal to 0.062, which is less than 0.08, if the CFI is 0.972, which is greater than 0.90, we proceed to interpret the effects and relationships found to meet the objectives and be able to contrast the hypotheses raised in the research. It has been shown that the effect of service marketing is positive on the institutional image ( $\beta = 0.83$ ) and user satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.77$ ). This explains why service marketing plays a crucial role within companies by influencing both institutional image and user satisfaction. Likewise, (Llanos, 2018) indicates that within his study with the chi-square hypothesis test, it is verified that the service marketing variable has a relationship with the customer satisfaction variable. The calculated chi-square value (385,742) and the value of ( $P = 0.000$ ) allow us to determine that the P value is less than the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Therefore, it mentions an influence, highlighting that the treatment with service shown by the company will be reflected in the

user's satisfaction. Another author (Vidalon, 2020) states that service marketing encompasses salient factors such as service to the community and improvement in customer service; therefore, there is an influence or link with user satisfaction, and finally (Romero, 2021) in his research he confirmed that, the relationship between service marketing and customer satisfaction, detailing that the better the service marketing, the higher the level of customer satisfaction. In turn, it has been shown that service marketing is important in generating a recognized corporate image and engaging the customer even more with the company (Girón, 2017). Thus, it is established that the services provided within the institution positively influence the company's institutional image and the user's satisfaction. Under this context (Cevallos et al., 2018), the price strategy is the mechanism by which companies or institutions establish criteria to generate income, offset costs, generate profits, and satisfy the needs of users or consumers (Riveros & Hinojosa, 2017). On the other hand, customers see price as a fundamental part of their costs to obtain the desired benefits. To calculate whether a particular service is "worth it," they should consider the money and other costs related to their time and effort.

(Trujillo & Vera, 2009) point out that the distribution of a company's products or services affects its institutional image and user satisfaction since everything starts from the tangible (Gonzales, 2018). According to the significance level (Sig. = 0.000) results, there is an average positive correlation between the variable promotion strategies and the variable customer satisfaction and vice versa.

(Agullo Gimeno, 2015) point out that the human factor, or workers, who direct the company to its objectives, promote user satisfaction. On the other hand (Bohórquez et al., 2020) indicate that if the company's workers perform their functions correctly and support the client and the society with which they deal, they will promote a correct institutional image.

## 6. CONCLUSION

It has been concluded that the service marketing variable supported by structural equations significantly predicts institutional image and user satisfaction. This result is characterized by service marketing, which ensures a good institutional image and a satisfied user.

Service marketing has a positive impact on an institution's image. With a  $\beta$  coefficient of 0.83, it is confirmed that effective service marketing management (price, location, promotion, processes, staff, and physical presence) directly strengthens the perception that students and the community have of the institution. For the university, this means that investing in service strategies improves its reputation and standing.

### Author Contributions

Conceptualization: Eber Paz

Data curation: Sandrita Huamán

Formal analysis: Eber Paz, Sandrita Huamán

Funding acquisition: Jose Tarrillo

Investigation: Eber Paz

Project administration: José Paz, Jose Tarrillo

Resources: Eber Paz

Software: Eber Paz, Sandrita Huamán

Supervision: Robin Diaz

Validation: Eber Paz

Visualization: Eber Paz

Writing – original draft: Eber Paz, Robin Diaz

Writing – review & editing: Eber Paz

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El marketing de servicios impacta directamente en la satisfacción del usuario ( $\beta = 0.77$ ). Esto valida que los estudiantes valoran no solo los contenidos académicos, sino también la calidad del servicio recibido (atención, procesos, personal). La institución debe priorizar la experiencia del alumno como eje central.

Price and distribution (location) are key determinants. According to the authors cited, price must balance costs and perceived value; distribution (physical and digital channels) affects accessibility. The institution should review its tuition fees, schedules, and online platforms to avoid barriers.

The human factor (staff) is critical to image and satisfaction. The performance and treatment of teaching, administrative, and support staff have a direct impact. Ongoing training in interpersonal skills is recommended.

Promotional strategies are positively correlated with satisfaction (Sig. = 0.000). The university must clearly communicate its benefits and guarantees, avoiding false expectations.

Based on this study, higher education institutions should comprehensively manage the 7 Ps of service marketing, with an emphasis on people and processes, to enhance their institutional image and student satisfaction—aspects that have been empirically demonstrated to contribute to the well-being and positive development of students. Furthermore, the study can be applied to other educational institutions, both public and private, to facilitate continuous improvement in educational services.

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