

Enhancing Brand Loyalty in Tanzanian Public Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

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In the competitive environment of Tanzanian public higher education, maintaining a competitive edge requires an innovative approach to institutional branding. This article focuses on understanding the elements that influence brand loyalty among local students, particularly university image, perceived teaching quality, self-efficacy, and intention. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, the research employed proportionate random sampling to select participants and distributed 1,000 questionnaires across five public universities in Tanzania, receiving 400 valid responses for analysis using Structural Equation Modeling. The results indicated significant direct effects of university image, perceived teaching quality, and intention on brand loyalty, while self-efficacy exhibited no statistically significant impact. The findings underscored the critical role of perceived teaching quality and university image in shaping student loyalty toward a university's brand. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of intention as a mediating factor in influencing brand loyalty. These insights contribute to enhancing institutional branding strategies in Tanzanian public higher education. The study also offers practical recommendations and identifies areas for future research to strengthen branding and foster loyalty among students.

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The global higher education sector is undergoing significant changes driven by globalization, intensifying competition among institutions (Liu, 2024; Nguyen & Saleem, 2024). To sustain themselves in this dynamic environment, institutions must adopt new strategies, particularly in branding (Dalik, 2024; Sullivan et al., 2024). Branding has become essential due to rising competitiveness across national and global levels (Chalupa & Sousa, 2025; Jiang & Xiao, 2024; Liu et al., 2023; Singh, 2024). Beyond competition, branding enhances the value of academic and non-academic offerings, providing a competitive edge (Long & Lijia, 2024). A strategic branding

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approach helps universities establish unique positions on the global stage (Dangaiso et al., 2022; Hardcastle et al., 2025; Jasper, 2024; Khan, 2024).

This article examines the factors influencing brand loyalty in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Tanzania, addressing gaps in academic knowledge. It focuses on how university image, self-efficacy, and perceived teaching quality shape student attitudes and commitment, offering insights into the complex phenomenon of student brand loyalty. Guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the study explores the connections driving student allegiance to their institutions. HEIs in Tanzania symbolize hope for the nation's future but face significant challenges, particularly in securing financial resources (Matembo et al., 2024), which limits their ability to provide quality infrastructure, research opportunities, and competitive faculty salaries. Additionally, maintaining consistent quality remains a critical challenge for these institutions.

Maintaining curriculum relevance, ensuring faculty proficiency, and applying rigorous assessments demand continuous attention (Vuong et al., 2024). Bridging the access gap between urban and rural areas remains a challenge, as many Tanzanian youth in remote regions face obstacles to pursuing higher education (Mazana, 2024). Promoting research culture and innovation is crucial for global relevance but is often hindered by limited funding and support (Matembo et al., 2024; Mzenzi, 2022). Aligning educational programs with the growing job market is vital to produce employable graduates (Amani, 2022a; Kessy, 2020). In Tanzania, understanding the factors that drive student loyalty, such as university image, self-efficacy, emotional brand attachment, and intention, is essential. Exploring these interconnections provides valuable insights into fostering loyalty among local students in public universities (Shehzadi et al., 2021; Zhai, 2022). This journal article examines university image, self-efficacy, emotional brand attachment, and intention. Additionally, it investigates the relationship between the behavioral intention and brand loyalty of local students to their university.

Literature Review

This literature review explores the key factors influencing brand loyalty among students in Tanzanian public higher education institutions (PubHEIs), focusing on university image, perceived teaching quality, and self-efficacy. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), it examines how these elements shape students' perceptions and intentions, ultimately fostering loyalty to their institutions. By analyzing the impact of these variables, the review highlights the complex relationship between student satisfaction and institutional loyalty, providing valuable insights for enhancing the competitive positioning of Tanzanian PubHEIs.

Brand Loyalty

Both behavioral and attitudinal components of brand loyalty in higher education represent students' dedication to sticking with a particular course or school. According to Aziz et al. (2024), devoted students are more likely to collaborate with the university, spread good word of mouth, recommend it to others, and intend to continue their education there. In this case, student retention is a crucial indicator of institutional performance and aligns with student loyalty (Nguyen & Saleem, 2024). Since keeping students ensures institutional viability, successful universities prioritize student

retention more than new enrollments (Liu, 2024; Minh et al., 2025). Retention and loyalty are crucial as institutions compete more to draw in eligible students. Retention and loyalty are significantly influenced by students' satisfaction with the quality of the services they receive (Abbas, 2019; Nguyen & Saleem, 2024). Contented students are more likely to remain enrolled, stay motivated, spread the word about the school, and possibly return for additional coursework all of which foster loyalty and aid in the expansion of the university (Long & Lijia, 2024).

Prior research highlights how crucial it is for HEIs to cultivate enduring relationships, retain students, and cultivate loyalty. By emphasizing student happiness with services, relationship marketing, which sees students as clients, is frequently recommended as a tactic to accomplish this (Sullivan et al., 2024). Because devoted alumni support institutions through employment possibilities and positive recommendations, student loyalty gives HEIs a steady financial foundation (Dalik, 2024). Additionally, studies reveal that branding has a big impact on international students' decisions to enroll, emphasizing its function in building loyalty (Shegia & Facultad, 2024). There is not much research on branding and student loyalty in Tanzania despite the country's HEIs growing quickly. HEIs can differentiate their goods and obtain a competitive edge by comprehending the elements that influence brand loyalty (Vuong et al., 2024). This study uses the Theory of Planned Behavior to investigate the factors that influence brand loyalty in HEIs.

Brand Intention and Brand Loyalty

Directing our attention towards the concept of "brand intention," scholarly research in the field of marketing posits a mutually beneficial connection between consumer brand intention and brand loyalty, as indicated by studies conducted by Pancić et al. (2023) and Irshad et al. (2024). The study conducted by Gardiana et al. (2023) sheds light on the emerging concept of brand intention in the field of marketing literature, with a specific focus on consumer behavior. The significance of behavioral intention in influencing re-patronage intentions has been emphasized in recent research conducted by Long and Lijia (2024) and Nguyen et al. (2024). Therefore, the pursuit of fostering deliberate brand conduct among customers presents itself as a commendable undertaking. Therefore, the present study aims to address the existing empirical void by examining the underlying factors influencing local students' intention toward their desired university. The aforementioned aim has the potential to function as a guiding principle that directs individuals towards exhibiting brand loyalty, thereby increasing their inclination to make greater investments, provide recommendations, and participate in positive word-of-mouth communication (Carvalho, 2019; Wu et al., 2022). Despite the limited number of empirical studies examining consumer intention toward a specific brand (Amani, 2022b; Mohamedy, 2023; Mushtaque et al., 2022; Singh, 2024), the present study aims to address this research gap. In the pursuit of comprehending the subject matter at hand, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₁: There is a significant correlation that exists between the intention to purchase a particular brand and the level of loyalty towards that brand.

Self-Efficacy and Intention

In the context of this article, self-efficacy is identified as a crucial factor that significantly impacts the prediction of customer intents and behaviors. According to [Latip et al. \(2022\)](#), self-efficacy plays a crucial role in the experiences of local students as they navigate the academic and cultural obstacles encountered during their enrollment in HEIs. Despite the increasing amount of scholarly study dedicated to students from Tanzania enrolled in HEIs, there is a conspicuous scarcity of published studies that thoroughly investigate this crucial intersection ([Ndiango et al., 2024](#)). Unfortunately, the relationship between self-efficacy and branding remains an area that has not been extensively explored, and there is a scarcity of research that provides a comprehensive understanding of their interplay ([Efendi et al., 2021](#)).

H₂: There is a positive correlation between self-efficacy and intention.

This hypothesis posits that students' self-efficacy or confidence in their abilities significantly impacts their intentions toward branding. As students navigate the challenges of local HEIs, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in their academic and cultural adjustment, as well as in shaping their brand intentions. By exploring this previously underexamined link, this research aims to deepen the understanding of how self-efficacy influences both academic and branding dynamics within Tanzanian HEIs.

Self-Efficacy and Brand Loyalty

Within the complex domain of service marketing, the interconnections of consumer self-efficacy provide a captivating storyline. Numerous scholarly investigations in this particular field, as demonstrated by [Efendi et al. \(2021\)](#), have provided evidence that individuals who possess a high level of self-efficacy are more likely to exhibit positive responses toward the services they experience. Individuals who possess strong self-efficacy beliefs tend to demonstrate superior performance and outperform their peers ([Campbell & Batista, 2023](#); [Shone et al., 2024](#)). Embark upon the domain of branding when the narrative undergoes further elaboration. According to [Deng et al. \(2022\)](#), brands play a significant role in accompanying customers as they go through the various problems encountered during their lives, establishing a deep connection with individuals on a personal level. The authors of this study suggest that there is a potential link between customer engagement with a particular brand and the enhancement of their self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in given circumstances ([Bandura et al., 2003](#)).

The interdependent association between brand and self-efficacy establishes a foundation for the development of brand loyalty. In addition to its impact on the service business, self-efficacy plays a significant role in other areas of academic research, such as technology adoption, where it serves as a strong indicator of behavioral intention ([Elnadi & Gheith, 2021](#); [Rosli & Saleh, 2022](#)). The significance of self-efficacy in influencing human behavior is emphasized, as highlighted in the influential research conducted by [Fishbein and Ajzen \(1975\)](#). Given the compelling context, the current study aims to elucidate the complex relationship between self-efficacy and brand loyalty.

This study aims to investigate whether self-efficacy, which has the potential to empower individuals and improve their performance, also plays a role in promoting brand loyalty.

H₃: There is a noteworthy correlation between self-efficacy and brand loyalty.

This hypothesis posits that individuals with a high level of self-efficacy are more inclined to develop enduring brand loyalty. The objective is to explore the interconnectedness between self-efficacy and brand loyalty, with the intention of enhancing the comprehension of human behavior in the realm of brand involvement.

Perceived Teaching Quality and Intention

The primary focus of this study is on the notion of perceived quality, which serves as a defining factor in the comprehensive evaluation made by international students regarding the level of teaching quality offered by public higher education institutions. This evaluation typically results in the classification of the teaching quality as either excellent or superior (Nguyen & Saleem, 2024). Within the esteemed realm of academia, the notion of quality can be succinctly encapsulated as the convergence of a student's contentment with the pinnacle of instructional excellence (Li, 2024; Liu, 2024; Singh, 2024; Sullivan et al., 2024; Vuong et al., 2024). Research conducted in the field of education, as demonstrated by Dalik (2024), presents an opportunity for business schools with strong teaching quality and learning outcomes to actively promote these strengths, contributing to a shift in the prevailing narratives about reputation to focus on these key aspects of business education. Hence, the concept of perceived teaching quality assumes a crucial role in the construction of brand loyalty.

H₄: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality of teaching and intention.

This hypothesis posits that there is a positive relationship between local students' perceptions of teaching quality as good or superior and their intentions toward the brand. The objective is to unravel the complex relationship between perceived teaching quality and brand intention, thus illuminating the trajectory towards a more profound comprehension of the dynamics within the educational and branding domains of public higher education institutions.

University Image and Intention

Within the field of academia, the notion of image, which is frequently emphasized in profit-oriented businesses, has often been marginalized within non-profit institutions such as educational facilities (Long & Lijia, 2024). Against this contextual backdrop, the research endeavors to address the existing gap by examining the significant role of university image and its influence on brand loyalty through intention (Nguyen et al., 2024). The importance of university image cannot be overlooked, as emphasized by Feng (2024). The authors astutely observe that a bad portrayal might function as a cautionary symbol, capable of eliciting emotional responses and impacting feelings of allegiance. However, the significance of this crucial relationship has received limited attention within the framework of higher education establishments.

H₅: There is positive relationship between university image and brand intention.

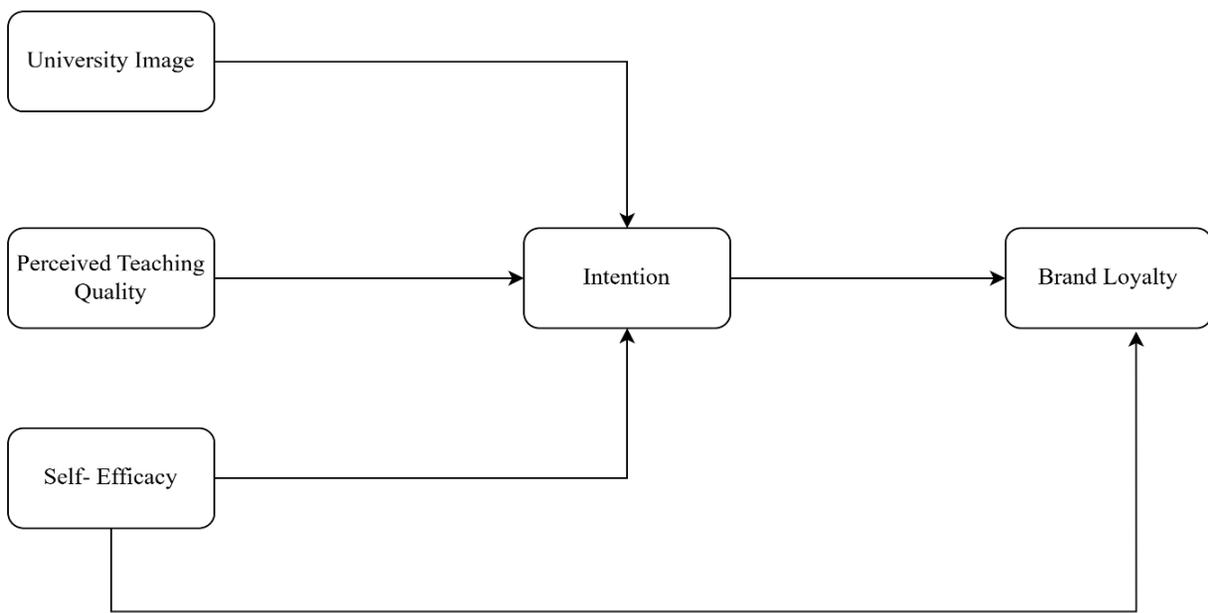
Theoretical Framework

At its essence, this theory suggests that the perception and portrayal of a university, regardless of being favorable or unfavorable, significantly impact individuals' attitudes and intentions towards the brand of that institution. In this scholarly endeavor, our objective is to explore the complex relationship between university image and brand intention, shedding light on the subtle dynamics inside the realm of education. This study is conducted at a significant point in time, aligning with the Tanzanian government's strong initiatives to encourage and enhance local HEIs as attractive options for studying. Tanzania's obvious goals revolve around its ambitions to position itself as the educational hub of the region. Within the given scenario, the article is highly relevant and opportune, as it aims to provide valuable suggestions to legislators and university marketing managers.

Through a systematic analysis of the components comprising the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1985), namely attitude (University image), subjective norm (Perceived instruction quality), perceived behavior control (self-efficacy), behavioral intention, and brand loyalty, the objective is to navigate uncharted territory. In this scholarly endeavor, the objective is to shed light on the trajectory leading to a more profound comprehension of the complex interplay of variables that shape student loyalty towards brands inside the higher education institutions of Tanzania. Therefore, the elements of the TPB including attitude (University image), subjective norm (Perceived teaching quality), perceived behavior control (self-efficacy), behavioral intention, and brand loyalty, were selected for the article. Figure 1 represents the Conceptual Framework.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Method

Study Design

The journal article employed a cross-sectional design. This design was chosen for several reasons. Traditionally, in consumer research, the cross-sectional design is more relevant than other types of research design. A self-administered questionnaire was utilized to obtain the data, and probability sampling was employed instead of non-probability sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), and analysis was done through the use of SMART PLS 4 (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Population and Sampling

Random sampling is used in this study's quantitative research to gather data. By guaranteeing that the sample size from each stratum corresponds to its population proportion, proportionate stratified sampling improves precision without incurring additional expenses. With an estimated 30,000 students (TCU, 2023). There were five universities for data collection data as follow: Ardhi University, University of Dar es Salaam, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Mzumbe University, and Sokoine University of Agriculture. The target population consists of local students ages 18 and up who are enrolled in public universities in Mainland Tanzania (Tanzania Commission for Universities [TCU], 2024). These universities reflect the larger national population by providing a range of programs and representing different socioeconomic categories (TCU, 2023). 1,000 questionnaires were distributed across five public universities in Tanzania, receiving 400 valid responses for analysis using Structural Equation Modeling.

Unit of Analysis

The analysis focuses on individual local students enrolled in public universities in Tanzania. Questionnaires were distributed to students with over a year of experience at their current institution, including both undergraduate and postgraduate students studying full- or part-time. These students were selected for their familiarity with university facilities and environment, enabling them to provide insights into factors influencing brand loyalty. This approach aligns with prior service marketing research in higher education, which considers semester and education levels (Ramli, 2016).

Data Collection Procedure

Marketing experts frequently employ intercept surveys to gather participant opinions and experiences. In earlier research, intercept surveys have been related to random sampling as well as convenience sampling because they reduce demographic characteristic variations (Kotler et al., 2022). This study employed an intercept survey to gather data.

Measures

This journal article looked at five constructs. These include brand loyalty, self-efficacy, intention, perceived teaching quality, and university image. Each construct was measured using items that were changed to fit the current study's setting and derived from earlier studies. A summary of the items and their sources is provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Measurement Units

Variables (Measurement Tool)	Number of items	Reliability	Sources
University image	7 items	AVE > 0.5, CR-Coefficient > 0.70, $\alpha = 0.922$	(Liu, 2024)
Perceived teaching quality	7 items	AVE > 0.5, CR-Coefficient > 0.70, $\alpha = 0.91$	(Ramli, 2016)
Self-Efficacy	10	AVE > 0.5, CR-Coefficient > 0.70, $\alpha = 0.94$	(Ramli, 2016)
Intention	8	AVE > 0.5, CR-Coefficient > 0.70, $\alpha = 0.859$	(Nguyen-Viet et al., 2024)
Brand loyalty	8	AVE > 0.5, CR-Coefficient > 0.70, $\alpha = 0.904$	(Irshad et al., 2024) (Ramli, 2016)

In [Table 1](#): All the measurements are adapted from the source shown in the table.

Ethical Considerations

The Directorate of Research and Postgraduate Studies (DRPS) at Mzumbe University, through its ethical and research committee, granted approval for this study before the commencement of data collection. Furthermore, written consent from respondents to participate in the survey was obtained at the outset. The study adhered to ethical guidelines by acknowledging all data sources and ensuring the respondents' anonymity.

Results

The Findings section of this study is divided into two critical components, each offering valuable insights into the research outcomes and their broader implications. These components include the Measurement Model Evaluation, and Evaluation of the Structural Model. The Measurement Model Evaluation serves as the foundation for assessing the reliability and validity of the constructs employed in the study. Using metrics such as Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), this subsection evaluates the robustness of the research model. These measures ensure that the constructs are both consistent and capable of capturing the intended theoretical concepts. By establishing the reliability and validity of the model, this subsection strengthens the credibility of the study's findings and provides a solid basis for subsequent analysis.

Measurement Model Evaluation

In [Table 2](#), the outer loadings of the observed variables for each latent construct were examined to assess indicator reliability. Loadings greater than .70 are considered acceptable, indicating that the indicators reliably measure their respective constructs (Hair & Alamer, 2022). These values demonstrate excellent indicator reliability. All loadings were within the acceptable range, confirming the construct's measurement reliability and validity. [Figure 2](#) shows the measurement model.

Figure 2
Measurements Model

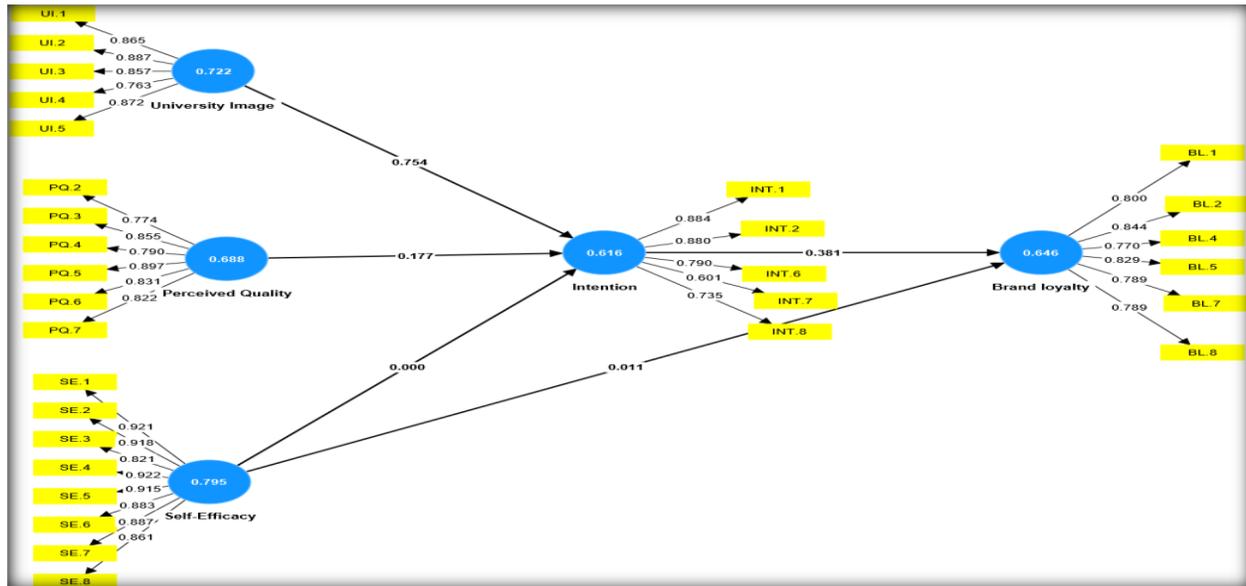


Table 2
Outer Loadings- Matrix

	Brand loyalty	Intention	Perceived Quality	Self-Efficacy	University Image
BL.1	.80				
BL.2	.84				
BL.4	.77				
BL.5	.82				
BL.7	.78				
BL.8	.78				
INT.1		.88			
INT.2		.88			
INT.6		.79			
INT.7		.70			
INT.8		.73			
PQ.2			.77		
PQ.3			.85		
PQ.4			.79		
PQ.5			.89		
PQ.6			.83		
PQ.7			.82		
SE.1				.92	
SE.2				.91	
SE.3				.82	
SE.4				.92	
SE.5				.91	
SE.6				.88	
SE.7				.88	
SE.8				.86	
UI.1					.86
UI.2					.88
UI.3					.85
UI.4					.76
UI.5					.87

In [Table 3](#) the constructs demonstrate strong reliability, as evidenced by high Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values. The AVE scores further confirm convergent validity, with all values exceeding the recommended threshold of .50 ([Fornell & Larker, 1981](#)). These results indicate that the measurement model is reliable and valid, providing a strong foundation for subsequent structural analysis.

Table 3
Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho _a)	Composite reliability (rho c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand loyalty	.89	.89	.91	.64
Intention	.84	.87	.88	.61
Perceived Quality	.90	.91	.92	.68
Self-Efficacy	.96	.96	.96	.79
University Image	.90	.91	.92	.722

In [Table 4](#), the results demonstrate that all constructs meet the Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity. Each construct's square root of AVE is greater than its correlations with other constructs, indicating that the constructs are distinct and measure different concepts effectively ([Fornell & Larker, 1981](#)).

Table 4
Discriminant Validity -Fornell -Lacker Criterion

	Brand loyalty	Intention	Perceived Quality	Self-Efficacy	University Image
Brand loyalty	.80				
Intention	.37	.78			
Perceived Quality	.28	.56	.82		
Self-Efficacy	-.10	-.29	-.41	.89	
University Image	.39	.84	.51	-.30	.85

Evaluation of the Structural Model

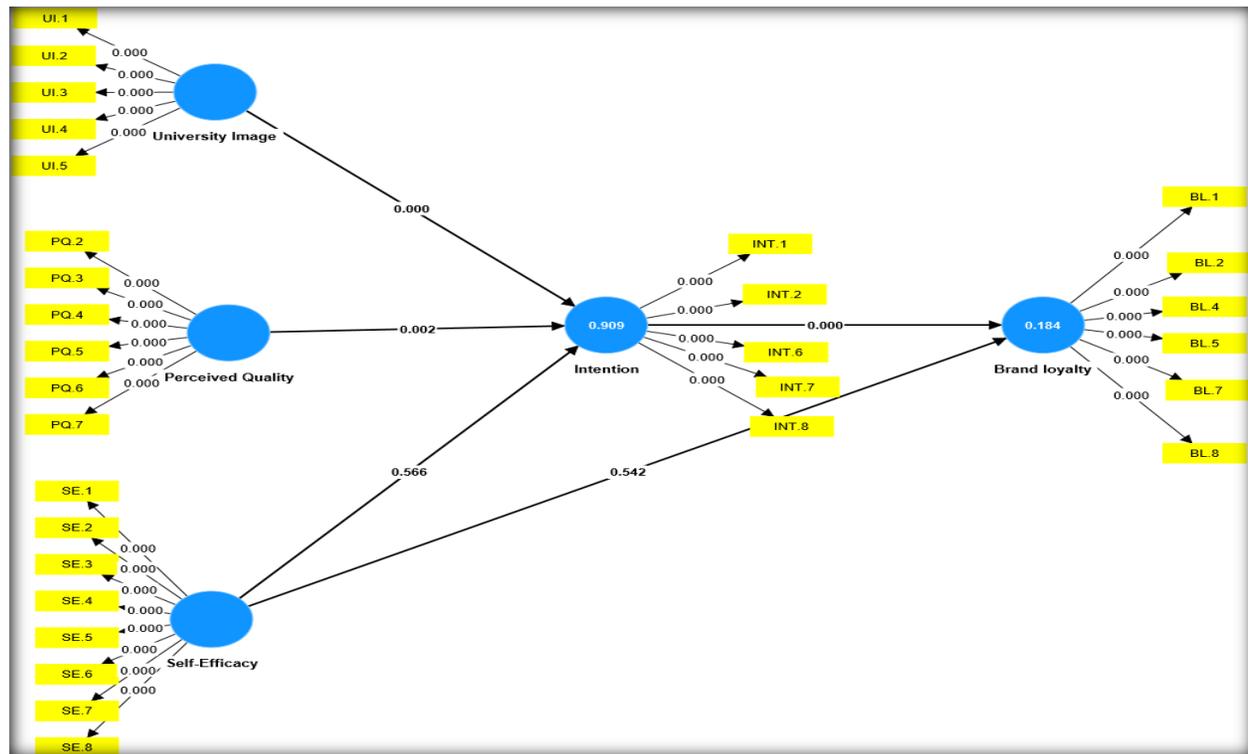
The structural model provides the results of the path coefficients, specifically, Hypotheses **H₁** to **H₅**. These findings, as shown in [Table 5](#), support the existence of a substantial association between the intention to enroll in Public Higher Education Institutions (PubHEIs) and brand loyalty.

In [Table 5](#) the results reveal significant positive relationships for **H₁**, **H₄**, and **H₅**, emphasizing the influence of Intention on Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality on Intention, and University Image on Intention. However, **H₂** and **H₃** are not supported, suggesting that Self-Efficacy does not significantly influence Intention or Brand Loyalty in this model. The aforementioned findings shed light on the complex network of relationships within the structural model ([Figure 3](#)), emphasizing the interaction between different elements that impact students' intents and loyalty towards Public Higher Education Institutions (PubHEIs).

Table 5
Path Coefficient – Mean, STDEV-T-Statistics-P Values

	Original sample (O)	M	SD	t	p
H ₁ : Intention -> Brand loyalty	.43	.44	.05	8.09	.000
H ₄ : Perceived Quality -> Intention	.15	.15	.05	3.03	.002
H ₃ : Self-Efficacy -> Brand loyalty	.03	.03	.05	.60	.542
H ₂ : Self-Efficacy -> Intention	.01	.01	.03	.57	.566
H ₅ : University Image -> Intention	.86	.86	.03	24.79	.000

Figure 3
Structural Model



In Table 6 the results indicate that the predictors of Intention explain a substantial proportion of its variance. whereas the predictors of Brand Loyalty explain a smaller but significant proportion. These findings provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the structural model's explanatory capacity.

Table 6
R-Square

	Original sample (O)	M	SD	t	p
Brand loyalty	.18	.19	.04	4.32	.000
Intention	.90	.91	.03	28.36	.000

Discussion

Intentions and Brand Loyalty

The hypothesis **H₁**, which proposes a substantial correlation between intention and brand loyalty, has garnered robust empirical evidence. The statistical analysis revealed a strong and significant relationship between intention and brand loyalty ($t = 8.09, p < .001$), indicating a large impact of intention on brand loyalty. Consequently, **H₁** was completely confirmed (Irshad et al., 2024). Hardcastle et al. (2025) emphasize the importance of understanding evolving student expectations to develop effective communication strategies that boost engagement. Abbas (2019) frames higher education institutions as service providers, with students as customers, supported by accreditation bodies and consultancy firms for informed decision-making. Sang and Cuong (2025) highlight the strategic importance of delivering exceptional brand experiences to enhance customer loyalty. This study aligns with the insights of (Hardcastle et al., 2025; Irshad et al., 2024; Sang & Cuong, 2025).

Self-Efficacy and Intentions

The article findings of hypothesis **H₂**, which propose a substantial association between self-efficacy and intention, did not receive empirical backing. The statistical analysis revealed that the path coefficient between self-efficacy and Intention did not reach statistical significance ($t = .57, p > .1$). Consequently, **H₂** was rejected. Nurhikmah et al. (2023) highlight that students with higher self-efficacy in computer skills consistently achieve better learning outcomes compared to those with lower self-efficacy and that blended learning significantly enhances academic performance in higher education. Similarly, Cooper-larsen (2020) emphasizes that using AI technology effectively boosts students' self-efficacy in sales presentations while also improving key vocal delivery skills such as pitch, pace, volume, and pauses. This study is contrary to studies (Dwi Lestari et al., 2022; Latip et al., 2022; Ndiango et al., 2024; Pérez-Fuentes et al., 2020) which underscore self-efficacy as a significant predictor of motivation, effort, performance, perseverance, retention, and enrollment.

The interplay between self-efficacy and intentions emerges through the competencies and determination of local students. With robust self-efficacy, these students navigate academic, social, and financial challenges effectively, deriving greater satisfaction from their university experience. Their prior academic achievements further bolster loyalty to their institutions. Ramuthivheli, (2022) supports the idea that satisfaction with institutional services influences students' enrollment intentions. While self-efficacy is important, universities must also address students' diverse needs by offering guidance on regulations, codes of behavior, and exam protocols. This approach helps create a supportive environment that nurtures self-efficacy, fostering a more empowered and committed student community. The study underscores the significant impact of self-efficacy on students' goals and long-term dedication, highlighting the essential role of universities in supporting students' intellectual development.

Self-Efficacy and Brand Loyalty

The present journal article aims to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and brand loyalty, focusing on the unexplored aspects of this association. During the investigation of hypothesis **H₃**,

the results of the study deviated from anticipated findings, as they failed to reveal a statistically significant association between self-efficacy and brand loyalty. **H₃**, which proposed a substantial association between self-efficacy and brand loyalty, encountered a comparable outcome. The statistical analysis revealed that the path coefficient between self-efficacy and brand loyalty did not reach statistical significance ($t = .76, p > 0.1$). Consequently, **H₃** was rejected. The present finding, which is somewhat surprising, seems to contradict previous studies (Campbell & Batista, 2023; Efendi et al., 2021; Omoro & Possi, 2022; Rosli & Saleh, 2022; Samuel & Warner, 2021; Shone et al., 2024). These earlier studies had established associations between self-efficacy and loyalty or behavior. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that previous studies have predominantly concentrated on the perception of self-efficacy, which includes motivation and problem-solving ability, as significant determinants of behavioral intention. However, this study could not provide direct validation of the correlation between self-efficacy and loyalty or conduct.

An analysis of descriptive data reveals that Tanzanian public university students, primarily aged 18 to 25, face challenges like academic pressures, financial stress, and time management while being separated from family support. Emotional support from universities, along with social and familial connections, is key to fostering student loyalty. While self-efficacy does not directly correlate with brand loyalty, emotional attachment mediates this relationship. Students with low self-confidence may struggle but targeted university initiatives can help build essential skills. Addressing academic challenges through interventions like time management training can empower students. These findings highlight the importance of emotional bonds and institutional support in enhancing student loyalty, challenging traditional assumptions about self-efficacy and brand loyalty.

Perceived Teaching Quality and Intentions

This study examines the relationship between perceived teaching quality and student intentions. On the other hand, **H₄**, which posits a substantial correlation between perceived teaching quality and intention, received robust empirical backing. The overall impact of perceived teaching quality on intention was shown to be statistically significant ($t = 3.03, p < 0.001$), indicating a substantial relationship between these two variables. Consequently, **H₄** was unequivocally confirmed. These findings align with prior research by Feng (2024). A key factor in fostering a strong emotional connection between students and their universities is their favorable perception of teaching quality and learning experiences. Notably, the ability of educators to make courses engaging by incorporating innovative methods, effective use of technology, and captivating instructional resources emerged as critical. Strategies such as the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and creative pedagogy enhanced students' learning experiences and deepened their emotional ties to their institutions. These practices also allowed international students to derive genuine satisfaction from their educational journeys. The study was contrary to the current findings (Dalik, 2024)

This study highlights the crucial role of perceived teaching quality in shaping students' perceptions and fostering emotional connections with their institutions. Beyond meeting academic standards, universities must enhance teaching quality to improve alumni employability. Factors

like lectures, assessment methods, and academic support significantly influence teaching excellence and emotional attachment. Perceived teaching quality is a key predictor of emotional brand attachment in higher education, aligning with Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). Theory of Planned Behavior. High-quality instruction and enriching experiences shape students' attitudes and intentions, with exceptional teaching fostering strong ties to universities. The research underscores the transformative impact of exemplary teaching on student intentions and emotional loyalty.

University Image and Intentions

This study explored the relationship between university image and individual intention, revealing the empirical evidence strongly supports H_5 , indicating a substantial correlation between University Image and intention. The overall impact of University Image on Intention was found to be highly significant ($t = 24.79, p < .001$), providing strong evidence of a significant association between university image and intention. Thus, it may be concluded that H_5 has been conclusively confirmed. Aligned to prior researchers (Elansari & Alzubi, 2024; Khan, 2024; Nguyen & Saleem, 2024; Shegia & Facultad, 2024) which affirmed the significant influence of image on intention, the current results did support this hypothesis. While respondents generally viewed public universities positively, as indicated by favorable mean scores, this perception did strongly predict their intentions. Notably, factors such as future employment opportunities, degree recognition, and university rankings had minimal impact on loyalty. Instead, safety, tranquility, and financial considerations, including tuition fees and living costs, emerged as key influences on student commitment. These findings challenge established notions, offering new insights into the complexities of student loyalty in Tanzanian higher education and addressing a gap in marketing literature related to nonprofit organizations. The current findings are contrary to Liang et al (2024) findings.

Conclusion

This article explores the complex relationship between local students' perceptions of university services, focusing on brand loyalty and student retention in Tanzanian public higher education institutions. The study examines how university image, perceived teaching quality, and self-efficacy influence students' intentions and loyalty. The findings highlight the significant impact of university image and teaching quality, with self-efficacy found to be insignificant. Intention is identified as a key predictor of brand loyalty. The study emphasizes the importance of universities enhancing their image, improving teaching quality, and strengthening connections with local students to foster brand loyalty. It suggests that universities should adopt strategies to build lasting emotional ties, ensuring sustained student allegiance and long-term institutional success.

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