

# Toward Synthesis Model of College Students Motivation and Social and Cultural Capital: A Theoretical Perspective

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## Abstract

This article proposes to provide an integrative model of push and pull motivation theory, Bourdieu's works on social and cultural capital of students in the higher education institutions (HEIs). This study examines how the social and cultural capital such as, social relationship, habits, socioeconomic status and student abilities, as well as the social and cultural capital of HEIs i.e., corporate social responsibility (CSR), faculty-student interaction, leadership for institution and institutional support influence students' motivation, satisfaction and loyalty. The theory of push and pull is one of the motivation theories that explain why students pursue higher education and choose a specific HEI. The college students come from diverse social and cultural background; therefore, they carry their own social and cultural capitals which influence their choices, motivation, and satisfaction. There is much less knowledge about the correlation between social and cultural capital and higher education, in literature, where ethnicity, race, and sex are the focus of a great deal of study in higher education. Moreover, there is lack of studies targeted in developing countries, which is clear from the intensive work on marketing and higher education service. For that, the study aims to improve the lack of experimental investigations, by developing a model that investigate and understand students' behaviors, with a focus on social and cultural capital of student and HEI.

*Keywords:* Higher education; social capital; cultural capital; push and pull motivation; satisfaction, loyalty

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Official statistics indicated that large number of students enrolls in private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) annually. Having them choosing specific colleges were led by many factors; one of which is social and cultural capital of students (Horvat, 1997; Nora, 2004) and social and cultural capital of institution (Hayes, 1989). In HEIs, students are from different social and cultural backgrounds; therefore, they are holding with them some social, cultural, and educational capitals, which eventually impact their college choices, motivation, and overall satisfaction levels.

There is much less knowledge about the correlation between social and cultural capital and higher education, where ethnicity, race, and sex are the focus of a great deal of study in higher education (Walpole, 2003). Moreover, there is lack of studies targeted in developing countries, which is clear from the intensive work on marketing and higher education service. For that, the study aims to improve the lack of the experimental investigations, by developing a model that understands students' behavior's with a focus on social and cultural capital of student and HEI.

Overseas higher education, push and pull motivation has been investigated by many studies (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; Altbach, 1998; Lee & Tan, 1984; Li, 2006; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2001; Mazzarol, Soutar, & Thein, 2001; McMahon, 1992) to analyze the international students' flow that hosts countries in the global context. While the domestic application needs more experimental studies, the study will attempt to determine the student's push and HEI pull motivations that encouraged students to choose the private institutions.

As an association, we are faced with many challenges related with diversity. Our colleges and universities aren't isolated from these challenges, thus, it is primarily HEIs responsibility to build an accommodating environment for all students, as its consideration also should be given to comprehend student's areas of satisfaction of a diver social and cultural capital. Due to providing a contextual foundation to serve students persistence and success in HEI, it is essential to students to understand the motivation and satisfaction. Moreover, to comprehend areas that are of high priority and domains that require improvements within the diver students' social and cultural capital the classifications of researchers should include in-depth studies for institution administration and staff. Therefore, this study aims to provide an integrative model

describing the relationship between push and pull motivation, social and cultural capital of students, and social and cultural capital of HEI as well as the effect of these variables on students satisfaction and institution loyalty.

## ■2.0 PUSH AND PULL MOTIVATION

It can be quite complicated to find out the real reasons to why students attend higher education. To approach these reasons simply experiment the motivational aspects of student, since they are the sparks of the decision-making process. In psychology and sociology, the motivation is sustained by intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) motives (E. Deci, 1972). An intrinsic motive is related to feelings, instinct, and drives while an extrinsic motive involves mental representation such as beliefs or knowledge (Boggiano & Pittman, 1992). Motivation is known as the basic force that creates behavior (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2006). Behavior is a process of intrinsic psychological variables such as desires and goals, which can, to some extent, produce tension in various forms (Beh & Bruyere, 2007).

Motivation theories are restrained on a set of presumptions about the nature of human and the force that causes them to take actions. It has often been said that the study of motivation is a question into the why of behavior (Landry, 2003). Based on this, people have internal needs and psychological motives, and these motives provide the energy for the person to act in the environment and to manage their drives and emotions.

Comprehension education motivation has been covered by fundamental studies, which revealed a route for different education motivation theories, for instance, Maslow's hierarchy of need's theory, intrinsic and extrinsic theory, and flow theory, etc. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; E. Deci, 1972; E. L. Deci & Ryan, 1991; Maslow, 1943). Although there are many theories that try to explain education motivation, which is not an easy task, there is no single theory of education motivation that can totally explain students' behavior. In this study, the theory of interest, which the writer thinks may help the objective of the study, is well known with the theory of push and pull motivation by Tolman (1959).

Push and pull theory have been used in the field of international higher education to explain widely the global flow of students from home countries to host countries (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; Altbach, 1998; Lee & Tan, 1984; Li, 2006; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2001; Mazzarol, *et al.*, 2001; McMahan, 1992). This theory tries to illustrate the variables affecting foreign students' flow from the conditions of both the home country and destination country (Altbach, 1998). The push variables in the home country may be the low quality of education facilities, lack of opportunities in higher education, chance of scholarships for abroad study, and enhanced value in the marketplace of the global degree whereas the pull variables of destination countries include the advanced quality education, availability of scholarships for foreign students, availability of good research services, and homogeneous socioeconomic and political environment. The push forces spark a general desire for international education but don't give particular direction to students', while the pull forces are specific to the potential destination countries (Davis, 1995).

McMahan (1992) experimented the flow of foreign students from 18 developing countries to industrialized countries during the 1960s and 1970s, examining their push and pull factors. Mei Li (2006) investigated the characteristics and determinants of cross-border flows of mainland Chinese's

students in Hong Kong and Macao. The writer presented the two-way push-pull model and the interplay of internal and external factors, which help to explain why some students study abroad while others remain at home. Li's study (2006) highlighted the push-positive forces at home countries which include: (1) desire to stay with the family, (2) awareness of the appropriateness of national education, (3) and rising internationalization of domestic HEIs. On the other hand, the pull-negative forces at host countries which repel foreign students include: (1) increasing fees and other costs, (2) restrictive policies on foreign students, (3) uncertainties in visa approvals, (4) and tightening of immigration policies.

This article will study push and pull model from domestic students' perceptions but not foreign students. Moreover, it will try to determine the possible student push motivations and HEI pull motivations that drive students to choose a specific institution.

## ■3.0 BOURDIEU'S SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

Knowing Pierre Bourdieu's work on social and cultural capital, this study tries to explore the role of student's social and cultural capital that can be understood through his/her satisfaction and loyalty of college. Bourdieu (1973, 1986), a French philosopher and sociologist accredited the terms social and cultural capital.

According to Bourdieu, there are three basic forms of capital: (1) social capital - group membership and networks of support; (2) Cultural capital - combination of knowledge, attitudes and preferences not taught in school but passed from parents; and (3) economic capital - usually money and/or property (Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital is defined by Bourdieu (1986) as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (p.248). On the other hand, he defined cultural capital as "certain kinds of prior knowledge, abilities, and language forms" inherited or taught from family and environment (Apple, 1990, p. 33). In addition, he supposed it as a set of linguistics and cultural competencies persons may transmitted or learn (Bourdieu, 1986). Many other sociologists and educators have developed his concept of social and cultural capital (Coleman, 1988; Dika & Singh, 2002; Lin & John, 2001; Putnam, 1995).

In context of education, social capital is defined in terms of "relationships a student has with key figures that may provide them access to resources and knowledge pertinent to college enrolment and degree attainment" (Cerna, Perez, & Saenz, 2007, p. 2). Most notable components may include immediate or extended families, teachers, peers, counselors or other school staff (Choy, Horn, Nufiez, & Xianglei, 2000; González, Stoner, & Jovel, 2003), and other adult's outside schools and relatives (Dyk & Wilson, 1999; Smith, Beaulieu, & Seraphine, 1995). In addition, social and cultural capital constructs have been widely used in educational studies (Coleman, 1988; Dika & Singh, 2002) and help explain how person's activities and networks develop a mode of social reproduction that inherits across generations (Bourdieu, 1973). Bourdieu uses these constructs to clarify "how race and class influence the transmission of educational inequality" (Lareau & Horvat, 1999, p. 37). Scott and Leonhardt (2005) argue that higher education is not a guarantee of economic and social capital. It is the cultural skills, and the social networks that develop students in HEI and its experience impacts the access to economic capital. Students who enter HEI with social and cultural capital and integrate

these with the academic knowledge will gain most from the experience.

#### ■4.0 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL OF STUDENTS

In literature, the scholars addressed many social and cultural capitals of students, but the current study will focus on social relationship, habits, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), family support, and student abilities as aspects of social and cultural capital in higher education context.

For Coleman (1988), social relationships are considered basic figures of individual's social capital, and he measures social capital by the strength of a person's social relationships within his family and community. Later, many educational researchers have used family, school, and community involvements to value social capital (Dika & Singh, 2002; Isreal, Beaulieu, & Hartless, 2001; Pribesh & Downey, 1999). McDonough *et al.* (1997a) assumed habits as components of social capital included common sense, the way that people understand and act in the world. The primary generator of habits is the family and it is through habits and a person's behavior that an individual's interactions in society is shaped. In addition, McDonough *et al.* (1997a) pointed out that people employed habits to define reasonable objectives by looking at persons who surround them, observing what is valued, and deciding their objectives from the social context.

In relation to gender, women outnumbered men in the enrolment at HEIs in the recent decade (Astin, 1998; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989). In addition, female students thought more about pursuing college but received less parents support than male did. Women also talked significantly more to their family, teachers, counselor, and friends than men did (Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999; Hossler & Stage, 1987). The statistics appeared an increase in numbers of female students enrolled at HEI despite receiving less encouragement (MOHE, 2009). All these results show the influence of gender and cultural capital.

Individual's socioeconomic status (SES) determines the amount of his/her cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999). SES is connected to cultural capital on account of the role it plays in shaping an individual's aspirations and academic achievements. For Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999), it is important to include parents background, especially SES, when trying to understand academic achievement. Additionally, SES impacts the amount of educational resources available to the student and the quality of the school a student attends.

Family support, as a cultural capital component, influences student's college enrolment (Hossler, *et al.*, 1999; Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Nora and Cabrera (1996) reported that strong parents encouragement impacted student's commitment to attain a degree and enhanced their persistence decisions. Moreover, students ability appears in contributing a great amount of effects upon their college persistence (Manski & Wise, 1983; Tuttle, 1981). Manski and Wise (1983) found that high school GPA and SAT scores were the best predictors of who enrolled in HEI.

#### ■5.0 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CAPITAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

This article concentrates on four social components as well as four cultural components of HEIs. The social factors are:

corporate social responsibility (CSR), college experiences, out-of-class experiences, and faculty-student interaction. HEIs contributed in the enlightenment of knowledge and welfare of the society, as well as got involved in the CSR which was announced to the community as scholarships, public trainings, and sustainability. Several studies show that HEIs can cause "significant environmental impact" (Jabbour, 2010). Many marketing researchers found that CSR behaviors can positively impact customers attitudes towards the organization and its offerings (Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004; Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006).

College experiences are crucial aspects of social capital at HEI. According to Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) the more time and energy learners spend in educationally meaningful activities, both academic and non-academic activities, inside and outside the classroom, the more they benefit and satisfy. HEI have to make classroom activities more productive and encourage learners to allocate more of their time outside the classroom to educationally meaningful activities (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Andreas, 1991). In addition, Kuh and his colleagues (1994) emphasized that college experiences develop students' cognitive complexity, which will positively develop tolerance and opening to diversity.

Out-of-class experiences are other important components of institutional social capital. Kuh, *et al.* (1991) stated that "the only factor predictive of adults success – however defined, and include post – college income – is participation in out-of-class activities" (p.9). There are two kinds of out-of-class activities cultivate positive student improvement outcomes related to satisfaction and loyalty, personal experience and campus organizations and recreational activities (Hood, 1984; Vogt, 1997). Personal experiences is a process of self-discovery and self-actualization which has important affect on the development learners' social and cultural capital (Vogt, 1997). While the participation in the campus's organizations and recreational activities provide opportunities for students to communicate with their peers who are different in many social and cultural capital. Hood (1984) reported that the ability of students to create intimate interpersonal relationships is positively correlated to participate in campus clubs and recreational activities.

Faculty-student interaction, as a social aspect, is considered one of the strongest predictors of students' achievement and satisfaction with HEI (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & associates, 2005; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). Faculty-student interaction can help students in many levels. Interaction both in and out the classroom, through academic and social interaction has reported positive influence on student satisfaction (Caboni, Mundy, & Duesterhaus, 2002; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). Kuh, *et al.* (2005) argue that educationally effective institutions are those which encourage and maintain opportunities for faculty-student interaction through both academic and career counseling.

This study also concentrates on four components of HEI's cultural capital: campus climate, leadership for institution, institutional support, and even campus visit. According to Harris and Nettles (1996) "the attitudes, behaviors, and pre-college characteristics of students combine with the norms, ideologies, and values of their institutions to create a campus climate. Therefore, interactions between students' characteristics and the institutions characteristics are consisted in the campus's climate" (p.331). Kuh (1993) clarified the importance of HEI mission and philosophy to campus climate; the importance of harmony between what is written and the daily performance of the university as experience by all is crucial to overall satisfaction. Additionally, Hurtado *et al.* (1999) categorized three main

contexts of campus environment including: external government/policy context, external socio-historical context, and internal institutional context.

The second aspect of cultural capital is institutional leadership. In literature, studies assume that effective leadership is based on authentic, moral, ethical, servant, and communicative attributes (Cashman, 1998; Fullan, 2001; Gardner, 1990; George, 2007; Maxwell, 1999; Shelton, 2008; Zhu, May, & Avolio, 2004). Leaders in higher education, who show authenticity in their relationship with learners will be able to be more functional transmitters to the importance of persistence, and a strong influence in motivating learners to complete their programs (George, 2007; Shelton, 2008). Zhu, *et al.* (2004) pointed out that the relationship between leaders in higher education, and the stakeholders in an institution must be based upon trust and confidence, as the leader always looks to the benefit of the student, and not just seeks to progress the position of the institution. Another key attribute of institution leadership is that of servant leadership. Maxwell (1999) emphasizes that servant leadership is not about position or skill, it is about attitude. In HEI, applying this attribute is critical, because the needs of students, faculty, and staff must be prior. Further, servant leadership can help students of all ethnicities and cultures recognize the advantage of assuming each individual as equal contributors to the richness of diverse climate. In addition, to enhance minority students satisfaction, leaders in institution have to be able to communicate effectively with students in order to establish trust and create a campus environment free from favoritism (Fullan, 2001).

Institutional support also considers critical aspect of HEI's cultural capital. Support presented by institutions may affect students' enrolment decisions (McDonough, Antonio, & Trent, 1997b). Allen (1992) reports that institutions play a basic role of student participation, involved, and accepted in campus community. McDonough and Antonio (1996) pointed out that religion and financial assistance were crucial factors for students in making decisions of college choice, as well as some students enroll in a less prestigious institution for the way in which it mirrors their social status. Furthermore, Nora and Cabrera (1993) found that financial assistance and scholarships reduce the stress on both students and their families.

Campus visit, as a cultural component, is counted as one of the most remarkable variables that led students to enroll at HEI (Maguire & Lay, 1981; Walters, 1997). Walters (1997) who studied the campus visit, found that characteristics like housing and entertaining options have almost the same influence as academic concerns, e.g. availability of academic programs. Therefore, the physical facilities simply help learners to connect with the entire college. Hayes (1989) reported that students look for personal attention, friendliness, and enthusiasm from faculty and staff. So, the institution must create suitable cultural capital to get students all they need.

## ■6.0 STUDENT SATISFACTION

Most researches in higher education, found out that students' satisfaction was widely used as a critical dependent variable to measure the success of the HEIs and/or other program(s). The studies showed the success of the institution in gaining students' satisfaction depending on numerous variables such as: teaching ability of faculty (Douglas, Douglas, & Barnes, 2006), perception of course work quality (Browne, Kaldenberg, Browne, & Brown, 1998), Grade-Point Average (GPA) (Walker-Marshall & Hudson, 1999), flexible syllabus, university status and prestige, faculty and staff care and

interaction, degree leading to professional success, independence, growth and development (Franklin & Knight, 1995; Kuh & Hu, 2001) and general university experiences and learning quality (Baird, 1988; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Other studies also have indicated the impact of social factors on the satisfaction of students. Prominent among these factors, campus public life (Nasser, Houry, & Abouchdid, 2008) interaction with people, (Paswan & Ganesh, 2009), students' behaviour demonstrated increased relationship continuity and positive word of mouth (Al-Alak, 2007).

It is widely agreed upon that students' positive satisfaction produces a lot of outcomes and advantages for students, HEI and others. HEIs often show students' satisfaction as a basic outcome of the educational process (Stumpf, 1979) and may be integrated in the improvement of policies and process of service quality (Osoian, Nistor, Zaharie, & Flueraș, 2010). Students consider high satisfaction an indicator that their expectations of the institution were met in terms of both individual growth and the transformation of marketplace skills. Their satisfaction proves to be an indicator for student's intention to remain at the institution (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Siblings of satisfied students are more likely to enroll in the same institution (Kotler, 1976).

## ■7.0 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION LOYALTY

In literature, customer satisfaction is known to be the key factor of customer loyalty (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Taylor & Baker, 1994). Customers satisfied by the quality of products or services are more willing to purchase. From higher education context, Hennig-Thurau *et al.* (2001) argue that HEI gain from loyal students not only when they are official attendees, but also when they are former students. Hence, students' loyalty refers to loyalty during and after students' study session at HEIs. Students' satisfaction with education services plays a significant role in creating the feeling of loyalty toward the HEI (Lovelock, 1996; Rust & Oliver, 2000; Szymanski & Henard, 2001).

In the context of higher education, the willingness to promote orally, recommending the institution to others, and discouraging students to obtain more than one degree from the same college or university were all well-known in the theoretical context of the institutions' loyalty (Bourke, 2000; Paswan & Ganesh, 2009; Tomkovic, Al-Khatib, Baradwaj, & Jones, 1996).

Helgesen and Nettet (2007) argue that student's perception of the college's reputation impacts highly on student's loyalty in remaining at college until graduation. In addition, they found that it's much more than twice certain that students' satisfaction influence on students' loyalty than that of the college's reputation. Moreover, Helgesen (2008) found a correlation where a 1% increase in satisfaction would lead to approximately 0.83% increase in loyalty, but a 1% increase in reputation led only to a 0.23% increase in loyalty. He also confirmed the facts from his previous research with Nettet (2007) that service quality was the most important root for consumer loyalty to service supplier.

## ■8.0 GAPS IN THE EXISTING LITERATURE

Throughout the previous studies, that have been conducted to investigate the push and pull motivations which affected students in the choice of specific host countries or colleges (Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; Altbach, 1998; Lee & Tan, 1984;

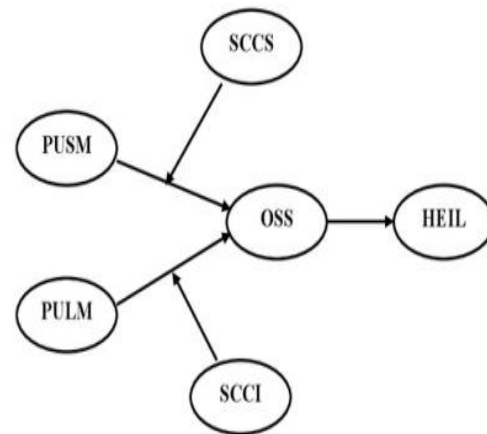
Li, 2006; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2001; Mazzarol, *et al.*, 2001; McMahon, 1992), none of the other studies examined the effect of social and cultural capital of students, i.e., social relationship, habits, socioeconomic status and student abilities as well as social and cultural capital of HEI, specifically, corporate social responsibility (CSR), faculty-student interaction, leadership for institution and institutional support on motivation, satisfaction and loyalty, especially, in developed countries. Researchers have not yet examined push and pull theory in the local higher education context, although these studies have applied this motivation theory in the international higher education context and the flow of students from home to host countries.

## 9.0 THE SYNTHESIS MODEL

Push and pull motivation theory, by the noted American psychologist Tolman (1959), is considered one of the famous theories in persons' motivation. This theory supposes that people are pushed by their internal drives and pulled by their external factors. Many researches address various push factors such as self-satisfaction, achieving personal goals and developing social skills (Knutsen, 2011; Timarong, Temaungil, & Sukrad, 2002). Other studies also point out several pull drives like availability of scholarship, availability of good research services, good quality education and availability of education facilities (Altbach, 1998; Davis, 1995; McMahon, 1992).

Pierre Bourdieu's works on social and cultural capital assume a better ground to conceptualize social and cultural capital of a person. According to him, the social capital is a group membership and network's support, and cultural capital is like combining of knowledge, attitude and preferences that aren't taught in schools but passed from parents (Bourdieu, 1986). The concept of social and cultural capital has been further developed by many other sociologists and educators such as Coleman (1988), Putnam (1995), Lin and John (2001) and Dika and Singh (2002), who added more characteristic's to it, which has been mentioned during the literature review of this article.

The development by integrating the push and pull motivation theory and the works of Bourdieu on social and cultural capital of students was the subject to this study. Furthermore, adding the social and cultural capital of HEI such as, corporate social responsibility (CSR), college experience, out-of-class experience, faculty-student interaction, campus climate, leadership for institution, institutional support and campus visit. In addition to, the synthesis model that contains the satisfaction and loyalty as dependent variables. The purposed model of this study supposes that there is a direct relationship between push motivations (PUSM) and overall student satisfaction (OSS). Thus, the framework claimed that pull motivations (PULM) would have a clear relationship with overall student satisfaction (OSS). This framework too indicates a direct link of OSS and higher education institution loyalty (HEIL) and a moderate effect that has been assumed between PUSM and OSS by social and cultural capital of student (SCCS) and also between PULM and OSS by social and cultural capital of institution (SCCI). Figure 1 shows the research model. This figure represented two independent variables; PUSM and PULM, two dependent variables; OSS and HEIL, two moderating variables; SCCS as well as SCCI.



Key: PUSM – Push motivations; PULM – Pull motivations; SCCS – Social and cultural capital of student; SCCI – Social and cultural capital of institution; OSS – Overall student satisfaction; HEIL – Higher education institution loyalty

Figure 1 The proposed conceptual model of the current study

## 10.0 CONCLUSION

Though many researches discussed the motivation of higher education students, social and cultural capital of students and HEIs and satisfaction, but it's rare to find the study that examined the influence of social and cultural capital of students and the social and cultural capital of HEI on students' motivation, satisfaction and loyalty at the same time. Therefore, this study tried to fulfill this gap by providing an integrative model describing the impact of social and cultural capital of students and HEIs on students' motivation, satisfaction and loyalty.

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