Interrelationship between Perceived Instructor Power, Student Dissatisfaction, and Complaint Behaviors in the Context of Higher Education

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Abstract

Instructor is granted with some basic forms of power to influence student behaviors. Students tend to perceive themselves in an inferior position due to the power imbalance between instructors and students. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the interrelationships between perceived instructor power, student dissatisfaction and complaint behaviors in the context of higher education. The present study employed quantitative research methodology using survey questionnaire to collect data. Results from structural equation modeling indicated that students are more likely to engage in private complaining behavior and third party complaining behavior when instructor exhibited legitimate power, while perceived referent power is more associated with voice and third party complaining behavior. It was also noticeable that the student dissatisfaction can mediate the power-complaining behavior link. This research can be practically applied in the higher education institutions on how certain power bases can lead to student dissatisfaction and modes of complaining.

Keywords: power perception, student dissatisfaction, complaint behavior, higher education

1. Introduction

Nowadays, higher education has become increasingly competitive with the diverse array of higher learning institutions (Lai, Lau, Mohamad, & Chew, 2015; Leland & Moore, 2007). In Malaysia, there was a substantially increase in the number of students enrolment in public and private higher learning institutions. Between 2004 and 2014, there has been approximately 1.2 million student access to higher education (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Hence, institutions need to ensure positive educational learning experience is provided to students (Ginns, Prosser, & Barrie, 2007; Lizzio, Wilson, & Simons, 2002) in order to foster student engagement with the institution.

In the context of higher education, students always perceived themselves as customers (Kuh & Hu, 2001; Lala & Priluck, 2011; Mukherjee, Pinto, & Malhotra, 2009; Sultan & Wong, 2013; Webb & Jagun, 1997). For this reason, when students experiencing unfavorable classroom learning conditions, they are likely to engage in service dissatisfaction (Gremler & McCollough, 2002; Iyer & Muncy, 2008). Student's perception on the classroom learning environment is largely depends on the teacher-student relationships (Fraser, 1986; Fraser, 1998; Fraser & Walberg, 2005) and such positive interpersonal relationships are important for instructors to accomplish their classroom goals (Frymier & Houser, 2000). However, due to the nature of the job as an instructor, academic freedom within higher education has granted more power to instructor (Spees, 1989; Su, 1998). For example, instructor has the right to determine contents of a subject taught and identify effective reward and punishment practices to influence students' behavior. Consequently, students may feel powerless and perceived imbalance power which can lead to dysfunctional consequences (Su, 1998), and express their dissatisfaction to a variety of channels.

Students' behavioral response to dissatisfaction is known as complaint behavior (Singh & Widing, 1991) and it is a critical issue in higher education. For the past few years, several studies on student complaint behavior have been conducted by researchers (Goh & Tan, 2010; Hart & Coates, 2010; Hart & Coates, 2011; Lala & Priluck, 2011; Mukherjee et al., 2009; Patrick, Davey, & Dai, 2012; Su & Bao, 2001). All these studies were designed to provide

the foundation for understanding and handling student complaints effectively. However, most of the existing researches on complaint behavior were carried out within western countries. That is, scholars have lack focused on the Asian context especially in higher education (Hart & Coates, 2010; Wright et. al., 1996). Given that complaint attitude and behavior might differ across culture (Liu & McClure, 2001; Ndubisi & Tam, 2006; Swanson, Huang, & Wang, 2014), situations, services and individuals (Mukherjee et. al., 2009), it is expected that this study will find some differences in the Malaysian student complaint behavior and reduce the issue of external validity of the previous findings.

2. Purpose of the Present Study

Majority of previous work on complaint behavior research has been conducted in the marketing literature. However, empirical efforts to understand students' complaint behavior in the higher education context are still under-researched and remain scare. In an attempt to better explain student engage in complaint behavior, the present paper was designed to seek the understanding on student complaint behavior through an examination of instructor power and student dissatisfaction. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to (a) investigate the link between perceived instructor power and modes of complaining and (b) examine the mediating effect of student dissatisfaction on the relationship between perceived instructor power and modes of complaining. Currently, there is limited of research devoted to examining the mechanism involved in explain the relationship between instructor power and complaint behavior. From the social psychological perspectives, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) regards individual behavior is driven by attitudes. If students perceived that their instructor misused the power bases, they are more likely to experience classroom dissatisfaction which can lead to different modes of complaining behavior. Thus, it was believed that the present findings will help institutions to gain a better insight on how instructor power bases can give impact on student learning experience and behavioral responses.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1 Power

McCroskey and Richmond (1983) define power as "the capacity to influence another person to do something he/she would not have done had he/she not been influenced" (p.176). In the classroom, instructor exercises five bases of power (reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert) which was originally developed by French and Raven (1959). French and Raven's classification of the sources of power is broadly accepted in educational studies (Erchul, Raven, & Ray, 2001; Mehra, 2001; Tauber, 1985; Wilson, Erchul, & Raven, 2008). The instructor power, however, do depend on the existence of a student perception. In other words, if students do not accept or consent instructor to have power, instructor has no power to influence the students. Therefore, perceived power refers to "the degree to which the student perceives the teacher as having the ability to influence the student's existence'' (Hurt, Scott, & McCroskey, 1978, p. 125). Student perceives that instructor possess reward power with the ability to offer positive reinforcement if student complies; student perceives that instructor possess coercive power with the ability to punish; student perceives that instructor has a legitimate power to influence due to the position held by an instructor; student perceives that instructor has expert power because of the instructor's knowledge or expertise; and student perceives instructor with referent power when student identify themselves with the instructor.

3.2 Student Dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction is the result of disconfirmation on one's person expectation (Bearden & Oliver, 1985; Cornwell, Bligh, & Babakus, 1991; East, 1997; Michel, 2001; Steward, 1998). This definition is built on the base of Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 1977, 1980). The theory measure the difference between prior expectation and perceived experience. Students form a set of expectation toward instructor, and when the actual experience with the instructor fail to meet students' expectation, dissatisfaction may occur. Student dissatisfaction is the shortfall in educational experience (Sapri, Kaka, & Finch, 2009) and it is usually related to instructor (Dolinsky, 1994; Elliot, 2003; Michalos & Orlando, 2006). Likewise, instructor that can enhance student learning experience may contribute to student satisfaction (Moore & Kearsley, 1996; Yukselturk & Yildirim, 2008). Given that student's unsatisfactory experience with the instructor can lead to negative consequences for both the higher education institution and student (Astin, 2001), managing student dissatisfaction is one of the greatest concern in higher education.

3.3 Student Complaining Behavior

Teaching across the higher educational sectors is highly variable. Unlike physical products, students' learning experience cannot be standardized and it always resulting in inconsistency. In addition, students equate the tuition fees charged by higher education institutions with teaching quality. When students do not perceive value creations

or learning experience does not match their expectations, they are more likely to engage in complaint behavior (Dolinsky, 1994; Nyer & Gopinath, 2005). Complaint behavior is a complex emotional phenomenon (Tronvoll, 2011). Singh (1988) defines complaint behavior as "a set of multiple (behavioral and non-behavioral) responses, some or all of which are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode" (p.94). According to Day and Landon (1977), complaint behavior is categorized into private and public action. Private action is an attempt to share dissatisfied experience with friends and family members through word of mouth. Whereas, public action is voice out dissatisfaction directly towards the seller or a third party. Singh (1988) further developed the work of Day and Landon (1977) by classified mode of complaining behavior into three distinct categories: voice response (e.g. complaint directly to the organization), negative word of mouth (e.g. complaint privately to families and friends), and third party action (e.g. complaint to external third parties or pursuing legal actions). Each complaint responses that students adopt have its own impact on instructor and higher education institution. When student voicing the complaints, instructor can better deal with the incident and may be able to resolve the issue. However, communicating the unsatisfactory event to third party and speak unfavorably to outsiders could risk an institution's reputation. Such complaint responses are often unheard and not acknowledgment by the instructor and difficult for them to rectify the mistakes. Research suggested that dissatisfied individuals often utilize variety modes of complaining behavior simultaneously (Mousavi & Esfidani, 2013; Mukherjee et al., 2009; Singh & Pandya, 1991). Therefore, understanding the influencing factors on all modes of complaining behavior is a critical task. Subsequently, this may help the instructor to solve problem encountered and prevent unfavorable classroom experience.

4. Hypotheses Development

4.1 Direct Effect of Perceived Instructor Power on Modes of Complaining

Researchers suggested that perception of power is an antecedent of complaining behavior (Huang, Huang, & Wu, 1996; Mukherjee et al., 2009; Ngai, Heung, Wong, & Chan, 2007; Su & Bao, 2001). Most often, instructor is granted with some basic forms of power to influence student behaviors. Different forms of power can create different effects on student. Likewise, student's modes of complaining behavior may vary depending on how they perceived instructor workout their powers. For example, students always aware that it is hardly for them to exercise equal power sharing with instructor and this has leads to the feeling of powerless. Hence, the stronger perception on instructor's power, the less likely of a student will use the direct mode of complaining behavior due to the fear of punishments (Su & Bao, 2001). Conversely, from the viewpoint of culture, consumers with high power distance value orientation such as Malaysia, China, and Singapore are more likely to communicate their dissatisfaction towards a higher status employee in the organization when experiencing service failures (Patterson, Cowley, & Prasongsukarn, 2006). This is consistent with the idea of Hart and Coates (2010) that East Asian students are more willingly to engage in public complaints. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: Perceived instructor power will be positively related to modes of complaining.

    H1a: Perceived instructor power will be positively related to voice response.

    H1b: Perceived instructor power will be positively related to private complaining.

    H1c: Perceived instructor power will be positively related to third party action.

4.2 Direct Effect of Student Dissatisfaction on Modes of Complaining

Recent empirical studies have found that dissatisfaction is related to complaining behavior (Chylinks & Chu, 2010; Heung & Lam, 2003; Mittal, Huppertz, & Khare, 2008; Santos & Boote, 2003; Volkov, Harker, & Harker, 2002; Voorhees & Brady, 2005; Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004). Dissatisfaction signifies the existence of negative emotional state. Complaining behavior is a multidimensional construct (Singh 1988). Therefore, consumers response to dissatisfaction with different modes of complaining behavior such as complaint directly to the organization, complaint to the third parties, or express displeasure among friends and relatives. According to Singh and Pandya (1991), there are only some consumers willing to voice out and complaint openly when experiencing greater dissatisfaction. This suggested that not all the consumers decide to express their dissatisfaction openly. Some researchers identified that dissatisfied students may use word of mouth to inform family members and friends about their negative educational experiences (Alves & Rapoo, 2007; Su & Bao, 2001). In other words, dissatisfied consumers will employ multiple modes of complaining (Funches, Markley, & Davis, 2009). Hence, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H2: Student dissatisfaction will be positively related to modes of complaining.

    H2a: Student dissatisfaction will be positively related to voice response.

H2b: Student dissatisfaction will be positively related to private complaining.

H2c: Student dissatisfaction will be positively related to third party action.

4.3 Direct Effect of Perceived Instructor Power on Student Dissatisfaction

According to Lee (2010), the occurrence of power imbalance between service providers and customers in service sectors would produce high level of dissatisfaction among customers. Given the dynamic nature of the job in higher education institutions, it is inevitable for instructor to exercise powers in the teaching process to enhance student learning (Richmond & Roach, 1992) and to achieve their classroom teaching goals (Mottet, Frymier, & Beebe, 2006). When instructor is granting more superior status or power, the instructor-student relationship is clearly defined as superior-subordinate relationship. For example, students are highly dependent on the instructors' expertise, knowledge and coursework grading. Such power asymmetry frequently positions the students as a low power consumer. Menon and Bansal (2007) pointed out that low power consumers are more likely to engender negative emotions and dissatisfaction. Likewise, student in subordinate roles may experience dissatisfaction because students tend to perceive themselves in an inferior position. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H3: Perceived instructor power will be positively related to student dissatisfaction.

H3a: Instructor reward power will be positively related to student dissatisfaction.

H3b: Instructor coercive power will be positively related to student dissatisfaction.

H3c: Instructor legitimate power will be positively related to student dissatisfaction.

H3d: Instructor expert power will be positively related to student dissatisfaction.

H3e: Instructor referent power will be positively related to student dissatisfaction.

4.4 Mediating Effect of Student Dissatisfaction

Prior research has provided the insights that power perception directly impact on complaining behavior. This study proposes that beyond this immediate effect, there may be an indirect effect whereby the relationship between power perception and complaining is mediated by dissatisfaction. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) noted that social psychological perspective has to do with an individual's basic motivation to perform an action. Dissatisfaction is a psychological reinforce that has motivational force. In this regards, when students are not satisfied with the classroom learning experience, negative thoughts may arise and they tend to put greater effort in complaining. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H4: Student dissatisfaction will mediate the relationship between perceived instructor power and modes of complaining.

4.5 Research Framework

To better understand the interrelationship between perceived instructor power, student dissatisfaction and modes of complaining, the proposed model based on the hypotheses was presented in Figure 1. The hypothesized model illustrated the direct and indirect influence among the variables.
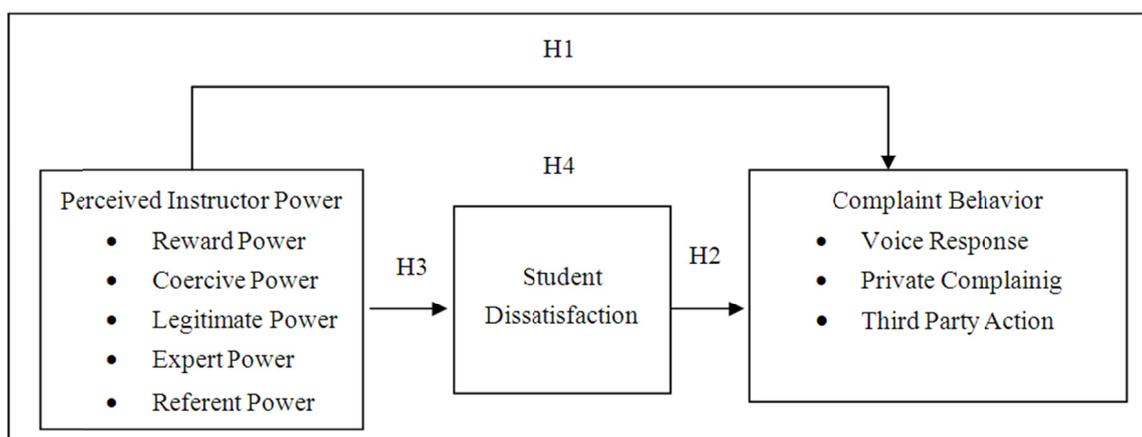

Figure 1. Hypothesize Conceptual Model

5. Research Method

5.1 Participants and Procedures

The present study employed a focus group and survey questionnaire to collect data. A total of six students from the Faculty of Engineering in one of the public universities in Malaysia were chosen to participate in the focus group. The purpose of focus group is to gain insights on student dissatisfying experience confronting with an instructor. In the second stage of the data collection, survey data were collected from 400 students from the same faculty. Participation in this study was voluntary and anonymous. Questionnaire in this study was developed from the adaption of past researches.

5.2 Research Instruments

5.2.1 Perceived Instructor Power

Respondents' perceptions of the instructor's power were measured from a modified version of the Instructor Power Use (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). This measure is based on French and Raven's (1959) five power bases: reward, coercive, legitimate, expert, and referent. Respondents were asked to identify the frequency with which the instructor use these types of power on a 7-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 ("Never") to 7 ("always").

5.2.2 Student Dissatisfaction

A dissatisfactory scenario questioning technique developed through focus group was presented to the respondents. Respondents were then asked to measure their satisfaction using a 5-point Likert Scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" (Spreng, MacKenzie, & Olshavsky, 1996). This technique has been employed by some researchers (Fernandes, 2008; Hart & Coates, 2011; Mukherjee et al., 2009) to identify the common dissatisfactory incidents. The scenario description is read as below:

"You had an instructor that consistently holding short session for the lecture and ended class early. More often than not, the instructor would cancel class due to personal reasons without any arrangements on the missed class (e.g. substitute instructor, class replacement, extend the duration of the remaining lectures). During lecture, the instructor lectured about topics nothing related with the subject and kept talking about him/her personal stories. At the end of the semester, the instructor had said that we were running out of time and couldn't finish the syllabus and wanted the whole class to learn by their own for the final examination. The class knew that it was unfair, but no one had a say in the matter."

5.2.3 Modes of Complaining

In the final part of the questionnaire, a modified version of Singh's (1988) complaining behavior scale was utilized. This measure contained three different modes of complaining behavior (i.e. voice, private, and third party) and respondents was expected to indicate how likely they will make a complaint response in a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from "very unlikely" to "very likely.

6. Data Analysis

A total of 400 sets of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents. The returned questionnaires were 321, which represented an 80.25% rate of return. Once the collected data gone through the process of data screening, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS to evaluate the overall measurement model (perceived instructor power, student dissatisfaction, and modes of complaining) was conducted. To determine the psychometric properties on the model, reliability and validity test were carried out. This was assessed through Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity. Results of all these analyses were summarized in Table 1. Both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability showed good reliability by exceeded the recommended value of 0.7 (Nunnaly & Berstein, 1994) while AVE exceeded the value of 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). To measure the discriminant validity, the shared variance was compared with the AVE between the variables. The present study indicated that all AVE were larger than the shared variance and therefore the CFA model demonstrated discriminant validity.

After confirming a good fit for the measurement model, a hypothetical structural equation model was developed and all possible hypothesized relationship were tested. In the model testing process, a series of goodness-of-fit-statistics were employed to evaluate the model fitness (Gerbing & Anderson, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1995). The structural model exhibited a satisfactory model fit (χ^2 = 842.114, df = 556, χ^2/df = 1.515, GFI = 0.876, TLI = 0.935, CFI = 0.942, RMSEA = 0.04), and all the observed items have the standardized factor loadings greater than 0.60 (p <0.01).

Table 1. Reliability and validity of the CFA model

Latent Variables	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
RewP	0.65-0.70	0.803	0.798	0.441
CoeP	0.60-0.81	0.869	0.861	0.512
LegP	0.70-0.82	0.803	0.809	0.586
ExpP	0.68-0.84	0.885	0.882	0.557
RefP	0.63-0.75	0.817	0.819	0.475
StuD	0.77-0.89	0.871	0.876	0.702
VoiCB	0.64-0.77	0.662	0.668	0.504
PriCB	0.68-0.72	0.748	0.747	0.496
ThiCB	0.64-0.82	0.763	0.775	0.537

Note. RewP: Reward Power, CoeP: Coercive Power, LegP: Legitimate Power, ExpP: Expert Power, RefP: Referent Power, StuD: Student Dissatisfaction, VoiCB: Voice Complaining Behavior; PriCB: Private Complaining Behavior, ThiCB: Third Party Complaining Behavior.

7. Results and Findings

Table 2 displayed the descriptive statistics and correlation analysis for the present study. Focusing on the instructor power, it was found that student perceived their instructors have more expert power (M = 4.739, SD = 0.906), followed by legitimate power (M = 4.167, SD = 1.038), referent power (M = 4.117, SD = 0.881), reward power (M = 4.116, SD = 0.868) and coercive power (M = 3.575, SD = 1.148). As for the modes of complaining, student complaint intention is most commonly on private complaining behavior (Mean = 3.831, SD = 0.759) and least commonly on third party complaining behavior (Mean = 3.129, SD = 0.819). The results of correlation analysis indicated that dissatisfied students tend to engage in voice (r = 0.193, p < 0.01) and private complaining (r = 0.594, p < 0.01) supported that complaint behavior is a multiple responses (Funches et al., 2009; Mukherjee et al., 2009; Su & Bao, 2001).

Table 2. Descriptive measures and correlation matrix

Construct	Mean	S.D	RewP	CoeP	LegP	ExpP	RefP	StuD	VoiCB	PriCB	ThiCB
RewP	4.116	0.868	1								
CoeP	3.575	1.148	0.306**	1							
LegP	4.167	1.038	0.325**	0.426**	1						
ExpP	4.739	0.906	0.341**	0.030	0.414**	1					
Ref	4.117	0.881	0.411**	0.347**	0.341**	0.466**	1				
StuD	3.873	0.794	0.083	-0.075	0.167**	0.150**	-0.032	1			
VoiCB	3.341	0.764	0.082	0.126*	0.149**	0.163**	0.238**	0.193**	1		
PriCB	3.831	0.759	0.032	-0.010	0.129*	-0.012	-0.073	0.594**	0.129*	1	
ThiCB	3.129	0.819	0.132*	0.209**	0.203**	0.022	0.213**	0.099	0.371**	0.098	1

Note. RewP: Reward Power, CoeP: Coercive Power, LegP: Legitimate Power, ExpP: Expert Power, RefP: Referent Power, StuD: Student Dissatisfaction, VoiCB: Voice Complaining Behavior; PriCB: Private Complaining Behavior, ThiCB: Third Party Complaining Behavior; N = 321, *p < 0.05, **p ≤ 0.01.

To test the research hypothesis in this study, structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was used. A summary of all hypotheses was provided in Table 3 and Table 4. Hypothesis 1 predicted that student perceptions of instructor power are positively related to modes of complaining. Student tends to use private complaining behavior (β = 0.321, p < 0.01) and third party complaining behavior (β = 0.247, p < 0.05) when instructor exhibited legitimate power. Similarly, findings also showed that referent power has a significant positive relationship with both the voice (β = 0.285, p < 0.05) and third party complaining behavior (β = 0.279, p < 0.05). For expert power, a significant negative relationship was obtained with the third party complaining behavior (β = 0.261, p < 0.05). However, reward power and coercive power are not significantly related with modes of complaining.

Hypothesis 2 predicted a direct positive effect between student dissatisfaction and modes of complaining. Result of the study indicated that dissatisfied students tend to take complaint actions such as voice (β = 0.231, p < 0.01) and private complaining (β = 0.739, p < 0.01) but not the third party complaining behavior (β = 0.113, p > 0.05).

Hypothesis 3 predicted that student perceptions of instructor power are positively related to student dissatisfaction. This hypothesis supported that both legitimate power (β =0.246, p < 0.01) and coercive power (β = -0.183, p < 0.05) can lead to student dissatisfaction.

Finally, hypothesis 4 predicted that student dissatisfaction mediated the relationship between perceived instructor power and modes of complaining. To test the mediation effect, bootstrapping approach using 1000 samples were conducted. The mediation analysis results revealed that instructor's legitimate power exerted an indirect effect on voice complaining behavior (β = 0.06, 95% CI: 0.003 to 0.158, p < 0.05) and private complaining behavior (β = 0.187, 95% CI: 0.022 to 0.367, p < 0.05) through student dissatisfaction.

Table 3. Result summary

Hypothesis	Structural Path	β	C.R.	Result
H1a	RewP -----VoiCB	-0.104	-1.087	Rejected
	CoeP ------VoiCB	-0.011	-0.108	Rejected
	LegP ------VoiCB	0.147	1.359	Rejected
	ExpP ------VoiCB	-0.023	-0.200	Rejected
	RefP -------VoiCB	0.285*	2.402	Accepted
H1b	RewP ------PriCB	0.083	0.897	Rejected
	CoeP -------PriCB	-0.149	-1.445	Rejected
	LegP -------PriCB	0.321**	2.945	Accepted
	ExpP -------PriCB	-0.136	-1.231	Rejected
	RefP --------PriCB	-0.127	-1.122	Rejected
H1c	RewP ------ThiCB	0.023	0.259	Rejected
	CoeP -------ThiCB	0.014	0.140	Rejected
	LegP -------ThiCB	0.247*	2.417	Accepted
	ExpP -------ThiCB	-0.261*	-2.433	Accepted
	RefP --------ThiCB	0.279*	2.516	Accepted
H2a	StuD --------VoiCB	0.231**	3.064	Accepted
H2b	StuD --------PriCB	0.739**	9.759	Accepted
H2c	StuD -------ThiCB	0.113	1.696	Rejected
H3a	RewP -------StuD	0.121	1.452	Rejected
H3b	CoeP --------StuD	-0.183*	-1.975	Accepted
H3c	LegP ------- StuD	0.246**	2.577	Accepted
H3d	ExpP --------StuD	0.113	1.136	Rejected
H3e	RefP --------StuD	-0.199	-1.932	Rejected

Note. RewP: Reward Power, CoeP: Coercive Power, LegP: Legitimate Power, ExpP: Expert Power, RefP: Referent Power, StuD: Student Dissatisfaction, VoiCB: Voice Complaining Behavior; PriCB: Private Complaining Behavior, ThiCB: Third Party Complaining Behavior; N = 321, *p < 0.05, **p $\leq$ 0.01.

Table 4. Result summary of mediation analysis

Hypothesis	Structural Path	St. Direct Effect	St. Indirect Effect	Mediation
H4a	RewP ---StuD---VoiCB	-0.093	0.031 CI: -0.016 to 0.091	No
	CoeP --- StuD---VoiCB	0.064	-0.048 CI: -0.126 to 0.009	No
	LegP --- StuD----VoiCB	-0.055	0.064* CI: 0.003 to 0.158	Yes
	ExpP ---StuD----VoiCB	0.038	0.029 CI: -0.026 to 0.116	No
	RefP ----StuD---VoiCB	0.368**	-0.051 CI: -0.142 to 0.005	No
H4b	RewP ----StuD---PriCB	-0.001	0.091 CI: -0.052 to 0.225	No
	CoeP ----StuD----PriCB	0.014	-0.144 CI: -0.324 to 0.023	No

	LegP ----StuD---PriCB	0.121	0.187* CI: 0.022 to 0.367	Yes
	ExpP ----StuD---PriCB	-0.190*	0.087 CI: -0.079 to 0.271	No
	RefP ----StuD----PriCB	-0.017	-0.147 CI: -0.320 to 0.016	No
H4c	RewP ---StuD---ThiCB	-0.005	0.017 CI: -0.010 to 0.055	No
	CoeP ----StuD---ThiCB	0.051	-0.025 CI: -0.076 to 0.007	No
	LegP ----StuD---ThiCB	0.201	0.034 CI: -0.002 to 0.093	No
	ExpP ----StuD---ThiCB	-0.260*	0.015 CI: -0.012 to 0.071	No
	RefP ----StuD----ThiCB	0.297**	-0.027 CI: -0.088 to 0.005	No

Note. RewP: Reward Power, CoeP: Coercive Power, LegP: Legitimate Power, ExpP: Expert Power, RefP: Referent Power, StuD: Student Dissatisfaction, VoiCB: Voice Complaining Behavior; PriCB: Private Complaining Behavior, ThiCB: Third Party Complaining Behavior; N = 321, *$p < 0.05$, **$p \leq 0.01$.

8. Discussion

An examination on the direct effect of perceived instructor power on modes of complaining did not fully support the hypothesis 1. The current findings of this study showed that reward, coercive and expert power did not have any impact on complaining behavior. In other words, students are more likely to take no complaining action when they perceived instructor possess these three types of power. One possible explanation for this unexpected finding is perhaps students believe that these powers are uncontrollable and there are little chances for instructor not to exhibit the power. Yet despite having the intention to engage in complaining behavior, students are more inclined to be silent.

In consistent with earlier findings, the present study supports the direct positive effect between student dissatisfaction and modes of complaining. It was interesting to know that unsatisfied students were more favor to engage in voice and private complaining behavior simultaneously. Student's decision to direct voicing a complaint to the higher education institutions is hope that the issue can be recognized and redress quickly. Numerous studies have examined that Asian consumers are inclined to express their dissatisfaction in private complaining (Liu & McClure, 2001; Liu, Watkins, & Yi, 1997; Ngai et al., 2007; Zourrig, Chebat, & Toffoli, 2009). This may be particularly relevant for some students because the cultural values that concern on face-saving and harmony. However, third party mode is absence in hypothesis 2. This response is well supported by other academic researches (Hart & Coates, 2010; Patrick, et al., 2012). There are several possible explanations for this phenomenon. Firstly, students are not motivated to file a complaint with third party as they own the interest in the institution's image. Higher education institution that receives public records of complaints will become vulnerable and gained bad reputation. Secondly, the dissatisfaction case scenario that presented to the students in this study is not sufficiently serious to involve external sources in response to service failure.

The current findings revealed that both legitimate and coercive power was significantly related to student dissatisfaction. Whereas, reward, expert and referent power were found no evidence in the present findings to support hypothesis 3. These results are well explained by some researchers who posited that prosocial forms of power (reward, expert, and referent) are more likely to against negative affective response (Golish & Olson, 2000; McCroskey, Richmond, Plax, & Kearney, 1985; Turman & Schrodt, 2006).

One of the main concern of this study is to examine the mediating role of student dissatisfaction in predicting the instructor power on different types of complaining behavior. The mediation result seems to suggest that student dissatisfaction was a mediator in the relationship between legitimate power and both voice and private complaining behavior. According to Tauber (2007), legitimate power has a large potential to influence student behavior. Legitimate power allows instructors to exert formal authority over the students to maintain appropriate classroom behavior. However, students may feel powerless if they perceived instructors are high degree in the use of legitimate power or overstep the limits of their legitimate power. As a consequence, the low power students will articulate their dissatisfaction by directly voicing to the parties concerned and/or involves themselves in private

complaining actions.

9. Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The present study has provided several theoretical insights. First, current research contributed to the understanding of student perceived instructor's legitimate and referent power can directly influence modes of complaining. Accordingly, this study contributed to a growing body of literature that relates to the concept of power and demonstrated how certain power bases can lead to different complaining behaviors. Second, given the relationship found between power bases and modes of complaining, this study extended the line of research by included student dissatisfaction as a mediation role in these relationships. Results suggested that student dissatisfaction mediated the effects from legitimate power to voice and private complaining behavior. Third, most of the complaint behavior researches and theories have been developed in western countries. However, little empirical research was tested in Asian countries. The results of this study had provided some preliminary evidence that can be generalized to other cultures where social norms and student behaviors are quite different from the western.

In addition to the theoretical implications, findings in this research can be practically applied in the higher education institutions. Evidence in this research suggested that instructors should be aware with the use of their classroom power. Students expect instructor as an effective educator and they respond negatively when perceived instructor abusing their power. In order to foster the right type of power, courses and training programs related to the topic of classroom power can be developed. These training programs are expected to facilitate instructor to learn how to use their power in a healthy way and reduce the power imbalance between student and instructor so that students' learning satisfaction may be strengthen.

In view of the fact that students are more likely to exhibit voice complaining behavior when they experienced a feeling of dissatisfaction towards their instructor power, faculties and administrators should develop suitable complaint channel within the institution or university. For example, open door policy, technology facilities (website, email, SMS, and mobile application), students forum, hotline phone number are some of the platforms that can be made available for students to support open communication. Encourage dissatisfied students to use voice behavior provide institution an opportunity to rectify the problem and a chance for service recovery. In fact, some researches highlighted that consumers voice their complaints because they are confident that company will act responsively to remedy the situation (Lala & Priluck, 2011; Singh & Wikes, 1996). On the other hand, there are students prefer to manifest their dissatisfaction privately to friends and family members. In this case, students' private complaining behavior may adversely affect the institutions' reputation. To minimize the actions of private complaining, institution may take a proactive approach to prevent problems from occurring. Instructor can builds respectful relationships with students to create a strong personal connection, which may increase the students' trust towards an instructor, while at the same time students can feel comfortable addressing their grievances.

10. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this study have provided a new insight on the interrelationship between perceived instructor power, student dissatisfaction, and modes of complaining. However, this study is not without limitations. First, the instructor power was evaluated based on the student perceptions and not the actual power possessed by the instructor. As such, a gap between perception and actual instructor power could exist. Second, the sample of the present study was obtained from engineering students in one public university which may not be large enough to generalize the findings. Future research may recruit more participants from a diverse population. Third, the results of this study were relied on a specific hypothetical situation. Therefore, caution should be exercised in applying the findings of this study as not all the respondents could relate themselves in the situation and future research may replicate this study by considering other hypothetical dissatisfactory situation. Finally, the present study was conducted in a cross-sectional nature. Student complaining behavior is not static and may change over time. Thus, it is difficult to capture the changing nature of the relationships amongst the variables that examined in this study. Future longitudinal or experimental research could be carried out to improve our understanding on the tested model.

11. Conclusion

To conclude, this empirical study has demonstrated the interrelationship between perceived instructor power, student dissatisfaction and modes of complaining. Results obtained in this study showed that students perceived instructor legitimate power as a main source that lead to dissatisfaction and complaining behavior. By virtue of the fact that instructor plays vital roles in the classroom, they require power and authority to influence student behavior. Nonetheless, inappropriate use of power in the classroom can results in negative impact on the students' satisfaction and ultimately lead to different modes of complaining behaviors. Given the importance of students' perception of the use of power in the classroom, instructor should be more aware on this issue and have a closer

examination on educational communication in the future.

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