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## **The Impact of Central Asian Innovation University Staff on Institutional Image Formation**

### **Abstract**

**Object:** This study aims to reveal the corporate image of Central Asia Innovation University by measuring the perceptions of its employees. We revealed the current panorama through the surveys with the university employees, identified problem areas, and provided recommendations for a healthier future.

**Methods:** A questionnaire is used to collect data as a quantitative research tool. The 5-point Likert scale is used in the questions in the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics are used in the analysis of the data. The reliability and validity of the scale and sub-dimensions are tested with Cronbach's alpha scale, ANOVA test, and Pearson Correlation analysis. The research sample is the academic staff of the Central Asian Innovation University. The questionnaire was applied to a total of 156 employees. In the questionnaire, each statement is rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) according to a 5-point Likert scale, and the participants are asked to rate the statements according to this scale.

**Findings:** There is a statistically linear relationship between corporate image dimensions. From results, we see that the employees observe the following problems: Problems with being recognized as a good university; not be at an equal or better level than people in similar positions at similar universities; problems working collaboratively and in harmony with colleagues in their department; the conditions offered by the university to its employees and the lack of career opportunities.

**Conclusions:** We think that by following our suggestions the corporate image of Central Asian Innovation University can be more positive, and strong feelings such as belonging and trust can be created in employees.

**Keywords:** corporate image, perception, university staff, university, quality, performance, survey.

### **Introduction**

The thoughts, perceptions, and judgments of employees about an institution constitute the corporate image. Corporate image is how people see the organization. The image formed in people's minds is the result of a subconscious elimination of what they expect or do not expect from an institution, its products, or services. Creating a good corporate image is only possible if the target audience knows the institution well and has correct, positive impressions about it. A good image increases prestige and enables the survival of an institution. Since the image is created by impressions, it can change positively or negatively depending on the person, and institutions can have more than one image.

While the equipment, attitude, and communication style of an organization affect the image of an organization, the individual image is determined by the external appearance, body language, behavior, and physical environment. The things that make up a product's image are product packaging, sales activities, and advertisements. Organizations often fall into the misconception that they have a positive image. Although there is no objective measure for the effectiveness of the existing or created image, there are various research methods used in this regard.

The public has general judgments about how an institution and organization are known, recognized, or perceived. These judgments form the corporate image. The corporate image provides important advantages to institutions and organizations as it gives the impression that they are superior to or different from the other institutions and organizations. For example, there is a higher demand for the goods or services of institutions and organizations with a strong corporate image. Corporate image not only provides a competitive edge but also contributes to its harmony with the internal and external environment by enriching collaboration opportunities.

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### ***Literature Review***

In the literature, corporate image is generally defined as the perceptions and beliefs of internal and external stakeholders of an institution (Barich and Kotler, 1991; Karakaş and Çiçek, 2020; Rafiq et al. 2020).

Many researchers have proposed various definitions for the corporate image. For example, Kassim et al. (2010) defined corporate image as the way the institution is seen from inside and outside. Küçük and Bayuk (2007) defined the corporate image as the institutional ideal self. Corporate image is a mental construct and affects the future of businesses. Adjectives such as strong, weak, modern, reliable, high quality, used to describe a company, show the impression that the company leaves on its stakeholders. This image affects the interest of people towards the company and the frequency of their purchases.

According to another definition, corporate image results from people's experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge, and impressions about an institution, and it is the features that distinguish an institution or business from its counterparts (Worcester, 2009). Based on these definitions, the corporate image can be defined as the images formed in the minds of stakeholders of an institution. This perception can be positive or negative. While a positive image can benefit the organization, a negative one can cause great harm. Although it differs according to its structure, having good products or services, being well managed, being a part of society, responding to consumer needs, and being an institution that people want to work for are the main determinants of corporate image (Javalgi et al. 1994). Corporate image is related to various physical and behavioral attributes of an institution, such as its name, architecture, variety of products or services, traditions, ideology, and the perception of quality conveyed by each person interacting with its customers. As it can be understood from here, it has two main components, namely functional and emotional components (Nguyen et al. 2002). While the functional component is about the tangible characteristics that can be easily measured, the emotional component is about the psychological dimensions that are manifested by feelings and attitudes towards a company. According to Keller et al. (2015), the factors affecting the corporate image include the business itself, its employees, product quality, pricing policy, distribution channels, after-sales services, social assistance provided by the business, and communication style. In addition, Arendt and Brettel (2010) argued that the financial strength of an enterprise and its ability to follow innovations can be included among the factors affecting the perception of corporate image, together with the corporate social responsibility campaigns. Corporate image is formed by the interactions of values between the institution and society (Sherman, 1999). In this respect, to have a good image, an institution must be honest, reliable, responsible, accountable, and quality conscious (Ettenson et al. 2008). Having a good image can help recruit and retain staff (Marconi, 2002) and attract customers and investors (Fombrun et al. 2004). For this reason, businesses need to allocate resources not only to their products/services, management processes, marketing activities, and similar functions, but also to create a good corporate image. Thus, they can benefit from the advantages of having a good image.

### ***Methodology***

A questionnaire is used to collect data as a quantitative research tool. The 5-point Likert scale is used in the questions in the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics are used in the analysis of the data. The reliability and validity of the scale and sub-dimensions are tested with Cronbach's alpha scale, ANOVA test, and Pearson Correlation analysis. The research sample is the academic staff of the Central Asian Innovation University. The questionnaire was applied to a total of 156 employees.

In the survey, each statement is rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) according to a 5-point Likert scale, and the participants are asked to rate the statements according to this scale.

The collected data are analyzed and these analyzes are interpreted in detail in the conclusion and recommendations section.

The research tests the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a difference in corporate image dimensions in terms of age groups.

H2: There is a difference in corporate image dimensions in terms of gender.

H3: There is a difference in corporate image dimensions in terms of education level.

H4: There is a difference in corporate image dimensions in terms of marital status.

H5: There is a difference in corporate image dimensions in terms of working time.

### Results and Discussion

In this section, the results obtained by examining the collected data and their interpretation are given.

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients according to the Scales

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Scale	27	0.817
Quality	4	0.752
Work Environment	5	0.656
Social Perception	5	0.634
Communication	7	0.725
Career	6	0.752

*Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research*

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is calculated for the reliability and validity of the scales and their sub-dimensions. According to Table 1, all dimensions and scales have a high level of reliability.

Table 2. Demographics of the Respondents

Age Groups	Number	Percentage (%)
17-24	4	2.9
25-32	39	25.0
33-40	52	33.1
41 and over	61	39.0
Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Female	104	66.3
Male	52	33.7
Education Level	Number	Percentage (%)
Graduate	71	45.3
Postgraduate	85	54.7
Marital Status	Number	Percentage (%)
Married	130	83.7
Single	26	16.3
Period of Employment	Number	Percentage (%)
0-3 years	19	12.2
4-6 years	30	19.2
7-9 years	15	9.9
10-12 years	27	17.4
More than 13 years	65	41.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>100</b>

*Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research*

The demographic information of the participants is given in Table 2. 2.9% of the employees are in the age group of 17-24, 25% are in the age group of 25-32, 33.1% are in the age group of 33-40 and 39% are in the age group of 41 and over. In terms of gender, 66.3% are female, 33.7% are male. In terms of education level, 45.3% are graduates and 54.7% are postgraduates. Therefore, most of them are postgraduates and their education level is high.

In terms of marital status, 83.7% of the employees are married and 16.3% are single. Most of the respondents are married.

In terms of the period of work, 41.3% of the respondents have worked at the university for over 11 years. Therefore, most of the respondents have been working there for a long time.

ANOVA test is used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between age groups in the dimensions examined. The results showed no statistically significant difference between the age groups in any of the dimensions.

The H1 hypothesis is rejected for all dimensions.

Table 3. Corporate Image Dimensions by Age Groups

	Age Group	N	Average	Standard Deviation	F Statistics	P Value
<b>Quality</b>	25-32	39	3.35	0.868	1.328	0.325
	33-40	54	3.06	0.861		
	41+	63	3.15	0.952		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>0.903</b>		
<b>Work Environment</b>	25-32	39	3.12	0.611	1.785	0.214
	33-40	54	3.04	0.842		
	41+	63	3.28	0.684		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>0.729</b>		
<b>Social Perception</b>	25-32	39	3.52	0.571	0.632	0.546
	33-40	54	3.40	0.707		
	41+	63	3.38	0.738		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.686</b>		
<b>Communication</b>	25-32	39	3.42	0.753	0.856	0.315
	33-40	54	3.23	0.716		
	41+	63	3.32	0.624		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>0.690</b>		
<b>Career</b>	25-32	39	3.59	0.650	2.680	0.083
	33-40	54	3.26	0.750		
	41+	63	3.36	0.743		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>0.730</b>		

Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research

Table 4. Distribution of Corporate Image Dimensions by Gender

	Gender	N	Average	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P value
<b>Quality</b>	Female	104	3.20	0.886	0.337	0.785
	Male	52	3.15	0.913		
<b>Work Environment</b>	Female	104	3.14	0.771	-0.496	0.625
	Male	52	3.20	0.616		
<b>Social Perception</b>	Female	104	3.38	0.697	-1.375	0.271
	Male	52	3.53	0.662		
<b>Communication</b>	Female	104	3.30	0.697	-0.263	0.685
	Male	52	3.33	0.672		
<b>Career</b>	Female	104	3.37	0.764	-0.620	0.548
	Male	52	3.44	0.655		

Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research

The distribution of corporate image dimensions by gender is given in Table 4. The Student t-test is used to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in terms of gender in the dimensions examined. The results showed no statistically significant difference between genders in any of the dimensions.

The H2 hypothesis is rejected for all dimensions.

Table 5. Distribution of Corporate Image Dimensions by Education Level

	Gender	N	Average	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P value
<b>Quality</b>	Graduate	71	3.43	0.773	3.396	0.000
	Postgraduate	85	2.98	0.937		
<b>Work Environment</b>	Graduate	71	3.34	0.548	3.042	0.001
	Postgraduate	85	3.01	0.812		
<b>Social Perception</b>	Graduate	71	3.49	0.640	0.929	0.258
	Postgraduate	85	3.39	0.724		
<b>Communication</b>	Graduate	71	3.41	0.692	1.665	0.095
	Postgraduate	85	3.23	0.677		
<b>Career</b>	Graduate	71	3.56	0.637	2.777	0.005
	Postgraduate	85	3.26	0.772		

Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research

The distribution of corporate image dimensions by education level is given in Table 5. The Student t-test is used to determine whether there are statistically significant differences between education levels in the dimensions examined. The results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between education levels in terms of quality, work environment, and career dimensions. The averages are higher in all three dimensions at the graduate level. In terms of social perception and communication, there is no statistically significant difference between education levels.

The H3 hypothesis is accepted for quality, work environment, and career dimensions and rejected for social perception and communication dimensions.

Table 6. Distribution of Institutional Image Dimensions by Marital Status

	Gender	N	Average	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P value
Quality	Married	130	3.16	0.900	-0.605	0.678
	Single	26	3.28	0.864		
Work Environment	Married	130	3.22	0.732	2.477	0.016
	Single	26	2.86	0.588		
Social Perception	Married	130	3.45	0.708	0.643	0.681
	Single	26	3.36	0.569		
Communication	Married	130	3.33	0.683	0.659	0.513
	Single	26	3.23	0.718		
Career	Married	130	3.38	0.747	-0.471	0.641
	Single	26	3.45	0.627		

*Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research*

The distribution of corporate image dimensions between marital status is given in Table 6. The Student t-test is used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between marital status in the dimensions examined. The results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between marital status only in terms of the work environment. When the averages are examined, it is seen that the average of married workers is higher. In other dimensions, there is no statistically significant difference between marital status.

The H4 hypothesis is accepted for the working environment variable and rejected for the other dimensions.

Table 7. Distribution of Institutional Image Dimensions by the Period of Employment

	Period of Employment	N	Average	Standard Deviation	F Statistics	P Value
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Quality Work Environment	0-3 years	19	2.98	0.836	0.885	0.487
	4-6 years	30	3.14	0.827		
	7-9 years	15	3.21	0.762		
	10-12 years	27	3.04	0.949		
	12+ years	65	3.32	0.943		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>0.893</b>		
Social Perception	0-3 years	19	3.13	0.570	0.760	0.567
	4-6 years	30	3.09	0.737		
	7-9 years	15	2.93	0.745		
	10-12 years	27	3.25	0.788		
	12+ years	65	3.22	0.724		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>0.721</b>		
Communication Career	0-3 years	19	3.47	0.667	0.265	0.901
	4-6 years	30	3.48	0.570		
	7-9 years	15	3.28	0.678		
	10-12 years	27	3.42	0.736		
	12+ years	65	3.44	0.735		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>0.687</b>		
Quality	0-3 years	19	3.13	0.667	0.970	0.432
	4-6 years	30	3.32	0.570		
	7-9 years	15	3.50	0.678		

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	10-12 years	27	3.43	0.736		
	12+ years	65	3.27	0.735		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>0.687</b>		
<b>Work Environment</b>	0-3 years	19	3.47	0.700	0.641	0.657
	4-6 years	30	3.47	0.606		
	7-9 years	15	3.25	0.840		
	10-12 years	27	3.51	0.790		
	12+ years	65	3.32	0.740		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>0.728</b>		

Note – Compiled by authors on the basis of research

The distribution of corporate image dimensions between the periods of work is given in Table 7. ANOVA test is used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the study durations in the dimensions examined. The results showed that there is no statistically significant difference in terms of working time variable in any of the dimensions.

The H5 hypothesis is rejected for all dimensions.

### Conclusions

Descriptive statistics are used in the analysis of the data. The reliability and validity of the scale and sub-dimensions are tested with Cronbach's alpha scale, ANOVA test, and Pearson Correlation analysis. The results show that there is a statistically linear relationship between corporate image dimensions.

From results, we see that the employees observe the following problems:

- problems with being recognized as a good university,
- not be at an equal or better level than people in similar positions at similar universities,
- problems working collaboratively and in harmony with colleagues in their department,
- the conditions offered by the university to its employees and the lack of career opportunities.

Based on the result we believe that the following suggestions can help the Central Asian Innovation University to create a better corporate image.

1. Although the internationalization of higher education has been a trend throughout history, this phenomenon was rather limited to student and academic mobility until the 1980s. However, with the effect of globalization, programs and institutions have also gained mobility. Thus, beside in-country higher education, the concept of cross-border higher education has come to the fore.

2. Internationalization strategies differ according to the development of the country, the importance, and the justification attributed to internationalization. For example, developed countries open branch campuses in developing countries for economic reasons. Similarly, the rationale for jointly developed programs seems to be academic development and quality. Developing countries, on the other hand, invited developed countries to their countries to open schools and establish partnerships. Internationalization in higher education is still predominantly unidirectional. Developed countries are producers and developing countries are consumers.

3. The working environment is very important for the university to have a positive corporate image.

4. Public relations and promotional activities should be emphasized to raise and announce the institutional image of the university. Visits should be made to schools, fairs, academic competitions, and congresses should be attended both as hosts and guests, and joint workshops should be held with graduates to strengthen the corporate culture.

5. The university should reduce the quotas a little more. The increase in the number of students can hinder education. One of the reasons for the lack of infrastructure is the high number of students.

In conclusion, we think that by following our suggestions, the corporate image of Central Asian Innovation University can be more positive, and strong feelings such as belonging and trust can be created among employees.

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#### **Қ. Мырзабекқызы, А.Д. Болғанбаев, Д.Н. Келесбаев, С.Т. Баймағанбетов**

#### **Орталық Азия инновациялық университеті қызметкерлерінің институционалдық имиджі қалыптастыруға әсері**

##### **Аңдатпа**

**Мақсаты:** Зерттеу жұмысының мақсаты – Орталық Азия инновациялық университетінің институционалдық имиджін қалыптастыруға және осы институционалдық имиджді аталған университеттің қызметкерлерінің қалай қабылдайтындығын анықтау. Осы зерттеу аясында университет қызметкерлері жүргізген сауалнама университеттің қазіргі жағдайының панорамасын ұсынады, екінші жағынан, кемшіліктерді анықтауға және ағымдағы жағдайға байланысты болашаққа нақты қадамдар жасауға көмектеседі.

**Әдісі:** Бұл зерттеуде сандық зерттеу құралы ретінде деректерді жинау үшін сауалнама қолданылды. Сауалнамадағы сұрақтар үшін 5 балдық Likert шкаласы, ал мәліметтерді талдау кезінде сипаттамалық статистика қолданылды. Шкала мен қосалқы өлшемдердің сенімділігі мен негізділігі Cronbach's alpha шкаласы, ANOVA тесті және Pearson Correlation талдауы арқылы тексерілді. Зерттеу моделі – Орталық Азия инновациялық университетінің профессорлық–оқытушылық құрамы болып табылады. Сауалнама барлығы 156 қызметкерге жіберілді. Сауалнамада әрбір пікір 5 балдық Likert шкаласы бойынша 1–ден (толық келіспеймін) 5–ке (толық келіспеймін) дейін аралығында бағаланды және респонденттерден осы тұжырымдармен келісе ме, жоқ па, соны көрсету сұралды.

**Қорытынды:** Қорытындылар институционалдық имидж өлшемдері арасында статистикалық оң байланыс бар екенін көрсетті. Зерттеу нәтижелері бойынша қызметкерлердің институционалдық имиджді қалай қабылдайтыны анықталды: қоршаған ортадағы сапалы жоғары оқу орны ретінде танылу мәселелері; ұқсас университеттердегі ұқсас салалар бойынша олармен тең немесе жақсы деңгейде болмауы; өз бөлімдеріндегі әріптестерімен бірлесе және үйлесімді жұмыс істей алмау мәселелері; университеттің өз қызметкерлеріне жақсы жағдай және мансаптық мүмкіндіктерін ұсынбауы сияқты келеңсіздіктер.

**Тұжырымдама:** Қорытындылай келе, зерттеудің нәтижелері мен ұсыныстарына сүйене отырып, Орталық Азия инновациялық университетінің институционалдық имиджі оң екенін және қызметкерлерде ынтымақтастық және сенім сияқты күшті сезімдерді қалыптастыруға болады.

**Кілт сөздер:** институционалдық имидж, қабылдау, қызметкерлер, университет, сапа, өнімділік, сауалнама.

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**Влияние сотрудников Центрально-Азиатского инновационного университета на формирование институционального имиджа**

**Аннотация**

*Цель:* Исследование направлено на создание институционального имиджа Центрально-Азиатского инновационного университета и измерения того, как Центрально-Азиатский инновационный университет воспринимает такой институциональный образ. Опрос, проведенный сотрудниками университета в рамках данного исследования, предоставляет панораму текущего состояния университета, с другой стороны, помогает выявить недостатки и сделать конкретные шаги в будущее в зависимости от текущей ситуации.

*Методы:* Авторами использовалась анкета для сбора данных в качестве инструмента количественного исследования. Опрос оценивался по 5-балльной шкале Лайкерта, а анализ данных — описательной статистикой. Надежность и достоверность шкалы и подизмерений были проверены с помощью альфа-шкалы Кронбаха, теста ANOVA и корреляционного анализа Пирсона. Модель исследования — профессорско-преподавательский состав Центрально-Азиатского инновационного университета. Вопросы были разосланы 156 сотрудникам, оценивались от 1 (Полностью не согласен) до 5 баллов (Полностью согласен), и респондентам предлагалось указать, согласны ли они с этими выводами.

*Результаты:* Результаты показали, что существует статистически положительная связь между критериями институционального имиджа. Из результатов исследования видно, как сотрудники воспринимают имидж учреждения: вопросы признания как качественного вуза в окружающей среде; отсутствие равного или хорошего уровня в аналогичных областях в аналогичных университетах; неумение работать вместе и слаженно с коллегами по своим отделам; недостатки, в частности, университетом своим сотрудникам не предоставляются лучшие условия и возможности карьерного роста.

*Выводы:* В заключение, следуя результатам и рекомендациям исследования, институциональный имидж Центрально-Азиатского инновационного университета будет положительным, а у сотрудников сформируются сильные чувства сопричастности и доверия.

*Ключевые слова:* институциональный имидж, восприятие, сотрудники, университет, качество, производительность, опрос.