

**FACTORS INFLUENCING FOREIGN STUDENTS'
CHOICE OF INSTITUTION (UUM) -
INTERNET MARKETING
AND
WEB SEARCH BEHAVIOUR**

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CHOICE OF INSTITUTION (UUM) - INTERNET AND WEB SEARCH
BEHAVIOUR

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Business Management in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Masters of Science (Management), UUM

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ABSTRAK

Ianya adalah penting bagi Institusi Pengajian Tinggi memenuhi permintaan pihak yang memerlukan dengan menganggap sumbangannya sebahagian dari industri perkhidmatan. Institusi Pengajian Tinggi di Malaysia adalah destinasi baru yang kian mendapat tempat di pasaran global. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk membuktikan secara empirikal hubungan di antara pemasaran internet dan perilaku pencarian jalur lebar terhadap pemilihan institusi pengajian tinggi oleh pelajar luar negara. Kajian ini melibatkan responden daripada kalangan pelajar luar negara yang sedang mengikuti pengajian di Universiti Utara Malaysia. Sebanyak 288 borang soalselidik yang diterima pakai mewakili 96.97 peratus nilai menjawab keseluruhan telah diperolehi melalui metodologi kajian soal selidik secara rawak. Penggunaan kaedah ujian hipotesis dengan skala Likert lima titik telah digunakan untuk mengutip data. Data juga telah dianalisa dengan menggunakan analisa korelasi dan regresi berganda. Hasil penemuan menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan positif di antara pemasaran internet dan perilaku pencarian jalur lebar terhadap pemilihan institusi pengajian tinggi yang membawa maksud hipotesis diterima pakai. Analisa regresi menunjukkan bahawa perilaku pencarian jalur lebar mempengaruhi pemilihan institusi pengajian tinggi bagi pelajar luar negara dengan menyumbang sebanyak $r=0.477$, $p<0.01$ varian berbanding pemasaran internet. Implikasi secara praktikal, penambahbaikan dan kajian masa hadapan juga disertakan dalam kajian ini.

ABSTRACT

It is important that Higher Education Institutions recognized themselves as contributing in the service industry to meet with the increasing demand of their stakeholders. In competing globally, Malaysian institutions are becoming popular destination for overseas studies. This study attempted to empirically identify the relationship between internet marketing and foreign students' web search behaviour towards their choice of institution. The study involved foreign students who were studying at Universiti Utara Malaysia (Northern Malaysian University). A total number of 288 valid responses were collected through questionnaire-based survey method representing a total of 96.97 per cent response rate. Hypotheses testing method were employed, and self-administered questionnaire with five-point Likert scale was used to collect the data. Data were analyzed through Pearson correlation and multiple regressions analysis. The results were there is a positive relationship between internet marketing and web search behaviour with foreign students' choice of institution (UUM), hence hypotheses are accepted. Regression analysis indicated that web search behaviour explained more variance in foreign students' choice of institution at $r=0.477$, $p<0.01$ in comparison to internet marketing. Practical implications, recommendations and future research were offered in this study.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Of The Study

In recent times, Higher Education face substantial changes as demands for generated outcomes and knowledge-creation have increase tremendously. Institutions contribute to the population, economy and country that evolve in the terms as being in a 'service industry'. Higher education institutions as many service industry are competing in a consumer environment where 'economic rationalism, or neo-liberalism, assumes that the market delivers the best outcomes because consumers purchase rationally; they know their interests better than any regulating body' (Gomes and Murphy, 2003). Mazzarol (1998) earlier on examined the nature of services and highlighted that international education execute the same service capability as any other to market their contributions.

In the past decade, according to Verbik and Lasanowski (2007) there are 1.2 out of the 2.7 million students (45% total amount of all foreign students) who are studying abroad with major players like United States, United Kingdom and Australia ranked first amongst the most popular destination countries for overseas studies. The reason was clear, they were able to attract students from different countries, establish a diversified market and generated their countries' economic landscape. For instance Australia first introduced a full-fee system in 1986 and opened its market for public

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