Assessing the Factors behind Choosing Universities for Higher Education: A Case of Bangladesh

Abu Naser Mohammad Saif[1], Nymatul Jannat Nipa[2] and Mohammed Ali Siddique[3]

[1] University of Dhaka

Abstract

Choosing the right university for higher education is a crucial issue in Bangladesh. There are some factors that play vital role in choosing the right university for higher study. Students like to evaluate those factors prior to choosing their universities. Such factors which are mostly evaluated by the students are reputation, tuition fees, location, permanent campus, teachers? quality, online service, IT facility, advertisement, and environment. Current exploratory study has identified reputation and online service as the most vital factors that play the most significant role in choosing university for higher education. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were collected from 60 students of public and private universities in Dhaka city. Multiple regression equation is used to identify dependent and independent variables, their relationship and impact on this research. Based on research questions, hypotheses were developed and tested accordingly.

Index terms— higher education; university; students; multiple regression equation; exploratory.

1 Introduction

he population of Bangladesh is increasing very rapidly. Compare to the number of universities available, number of students is huge. So to get an admission in reputed university is getting tougher day by day. The public universities in Bangladesh can accommodate a very scanty number of students. So a good number of students have to choose private university as their center for higher education. This particular study will help to find out which are the factors that students consider or evaluate for choosing a university for higher education in Bangladesh.

2 II.

3 Objectives of the Study

? To find out the factors that students evaluate before admitting for higher education in university level ? To identify the most significant factor(s) that attract students for choosing university III.

4 Methodology of the Study

Once the research objectives are set the next logical step to achieve those objectives is to decide the methodology to be followed. This study has been done based on primary and secondary sources of data and information. Structured questionnaire and interview method were used to collect the primary data. Secondary data were collected from different local and international articles and journals, books, and websites.

5 a) Research Design

The study has made an endeavor to find out the factors contributing towards the choice of universities by the students in Bangladesh. A specifically designed questionnaire was used as a tool and the survey covered a sample

of 60 participants who were the students of various universities in Bangladesh. The fivepoint Likert scale ranging from 1 -strongly disagree to 5 -strongly agree was used for the questions to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement with each of a series of statements related to the stimulus objects of the study. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 was used as a statistical analysis tool.

The questionnaire was self-administered and distributed among the sixty respondents. Before giving the questionnaires, all the questions were explained to the participants so that they can easily complete the whole questionnaire. It was difficult to distribute the questionnaire to a large number of respondents due to time constraints, lack of resources, and budget. Therefore, convenient sampling method was used.

6   b) Research Questions

The research questions that were used to construct investigative questions in order to satisfactorily arrive at a conclusion about the study are: ? What are the factors that students consider for choosing university? Based on the research questions, the following hypotheses have been articulated. H1: Reputation is the most important factor for choosing a university. H2: Tuition Fees is the most important factor for choosing a university. H3: Location is the most important factor for choosing a university. H4: Permanent Campus is the most important factor for choosing a university. H5: Teachers' Quality is the most important factor for choosing a university. H6: Online Service is the most important factor for choosing a university. H7: IT Facility is the most important factor for choosing a university. H8: Advertisement is the most important factor for choosing a university. H9: Environment is the most important factor for choosing a university.

7   Literature Review

Choosing a higher education institute is very important decision for a student because higher study has the potential to change a person's life (Kusumawati, Yanamandram and Perera, 2010). Choosing a particular university is important factor by respondents for higher education (Shahid, Shafique and Bodla, 2012). Several researchers developed many models in this respect. Most studies that have tried to understand the university choice process could be included in one of the following categories: economic models, status-attainment models and combined models (Hossler, Schmidt and Vesper, 1999). The economic model can also refer as the human capital investment model. It assumes that students will choose a particular institute because of greater benefits compared to others. The sociological model covers various individual and social factors (Calhoun, 1982). In the combined model, the factors in both economic and sociological factors are taken into considerations when explaining students' choice of higher education institution.

A lot of criteria can work in choosing higher education institutions. Some researches show the importance of parents' decision on students' choice (Moogan and Baron, 2003;Domino, Libraire, Lutwiller et al., 2006;Yamamoto, 2006;Raposo and Alves, 2007;Al-Yousef, 2009). It is also found that a student's choice can be affected by their siblings, friends, peers, relatives, teachers and other influential people (Ceja, 2004;Ceja, 2006;Yamamoto, 2006;Pimpa and Suwannapirom, 2008;Wagner and Fard, 2009). Some researchers consider geographic location as an important factor as well as institutional characteristics include teaching quality, prestige, infrastructure, library, computer facilities, location, quality of the curricula, scientific research quality, administrative support, extracurricular factors (sports, leisure, canteens etc.) and the availability of exchanging programs with foreign universities **?? ??** 2006). Financial aid or packages that include scholarships and grants increase the acceptability of a higher education institution (Kim, 2004; **??**ovan et al., 2006;Hoyt and Brown, 2003). Future studies should take the limitations of this research paper into consideration at the design stage, so that research can be improved and accuracy further increased.

V. a. The value is negative due to a negative average covariance among items. This violates reliability model assumptions. Interpretation 4 items were selected for measuring the dependent variable and after conducting the reliability analysis for these items, the Alpha value was found -.185, which means that, there is an internal inconsistency of -18.5% among the 4 items. But after deleting the weak two factors, internal consistency was found 31.7% among the 4 items.

8   Data Analysis and Findings a) Reliability Test

9   b) Reliability Test for Measuring Independent Variable

To measure the dependent and independent variable, 22 items were used. Among those, 4 items were developed for measuring the dependent variable and rest of the 18 items were developed for measuring independent variable. 9 independent variables were used in the research. The number of independent variables and the respective items to measure them is given below- After conducting the reliability test for the independent variables, the alpha values that were found for each of the independent variable is provided below in another table- Alpha value of lower than 0.50 is not good but there are some variables that have higher alpha values which are good. So, there is mixed variables.

10 c) Regression Analysis

Before conducting the regression analysis, mean values for the consistent items of the dependent and independent variables were identified. Then, the regression analysis was conducted by taking the mean values of the dependent variable and 9 independent variables. The result of regression analysis is placed below.

11 Global Journal of Management and Business Research

Volume XVI Issue XI Version I Year ( ) From the table, it is seen that Reputation has a positive effect on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is positive (.215) and the effect of Reputation is significant as the P value is .206, the null hypothesis is rejected.A

2. H0: Tuition Fees is not the most important factor for choosing a university. H1: Tuition Fees is the most important factor for choosing a university.

It is seen that Tuition Fees has a positive impact on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is positive (.022) and the effect of Tuition Fees doesn't have significance as the P value is .324, the null hypothesis is accepted. Assessing the Factors behind Choosing Universities for Higher Education: A Case of Bangladesh Table **??** Table **??** 3. H0: Location is not the most important factor for choosing a university.

12 Coefficients(a)

Unstandardized

H1: Location is the most important factor for choosing a university.

From the above table, it is seen that Permanent campus has a negative effect on Factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is negative (-.141) and P value is .520, the null hypothesis is accepted. So, Permanent campus is not the most important factor for choosing a university. 5. H0: Teachers' Quality is not the most important factor for choosing a university. H1: Teachers' Quality is the most important factor for choosing a university.

It is seen that Teachers' Quality has a positive effect on Factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is positive (.098) the P value is .564, null hypothesis is accepted. It means Teachers' Quality is not the most important factor for choosing a university.

6. H0: Online service is not the most important factor for choosing a university. H1: Online service is the most important factor for choosing a university.

It is seen that online service has a positive effect on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. As the beta value is positive (.309) and P value is .095, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means online service is the most important factor for choosing a university. 7. H0: IT facility is not the most important factor for choosing a university. H1: IT facility is the most important factor for choosing a university.

It is seen that IT facility has a negative effect on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is negative (-.197) and P value is .403, the null hypothesis is accepted. It means IT facility is not the most important factor for choosing a university. From the table, it is revealed that Location has a negative effect on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is negative (-.072) and the effect of Location doesn't have significant impact as the P value is .669, the null hypothesis is accepted. It means Location is not the most important factor for choosing a university. 4. H0: Permanent campus is not the most important factor for choosing a university. H1: Permanent campus is the most important factor for choosing a university.

Table **??** Table 10 Table 11 Table 12 Table 13 Table 14 It is seen that Advertisement has a positive impact on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. As the beta value is positive (.055) and P value is .728, the null hypothesis is accepted. It means Advertisement is not the most important factor for choosing a university. 9. H0: Environment is not the most important factor for choosing a university. H1: Environment is the most important factor for choosing a university.

It is seen that Environment has a negative effect on factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. Since the beta value is negative (-.197) and P value is .403, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, Environment is not the most important factor for choosing a university.

13 VI.

14 Results and Discussion

The R 2 value is 76.1% which states that the independent variables explain the dependent variable in a high manner. After conducting the regression analysis, it is found that Reputation and Online Service are the most important factors behind choosing universities for higher education in Bangladesh. There are also some extraneous factors which affect the students' choice of universities for higher education in Bangladesh.

15 VII. Conclusion and Recommendation

Universities are playing a pivotal role in the educational process of Bangladesh. The university selection criteria may vary among the students. But reputation of the university and available online service are the two main influencing factors that play the most vital role in choosing universities for higher education.

It is recommended that universities should focus more on their reputation and online service to enhance students' preference.

16 VIII. Limitations and Future Research

It is acknowledged that the work here is exploratory study because previously no study was done in this context in Bangladesh. The present study is conducted among the students at various universities in Dhaka city. So, the sample size was small. The survey took some time due to personal visits. Time constraints and costs are also the limitations of this study. The current study directs future researchers to increase sample size and conduct longitudinal study that could provide a better insight by identifying and testing the significance of extraneous factors. [1] [2] [3]

1

Cronbach's Alpha (a)	No. of Items
-.185	4

Figure 1: Table 1 :

2

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.317	2

Figure 2: Table 2 :

3

Independent Variables	No. of Items
Reputation	2
Tuition Fees	2
Location	2
Permanent campus	2
Teachers Quality	2
Online service	2
IT facility	2
Advertisement	2
Environment	2

Figure 3: Table 3

[1]© 2016 Global Journals Inc. (US) 1

[2]© 2016 Global Journals Inc. (US)

[3]Assessing the Factors behind Choosing Universities for Higher Education: A Case of Bangladesh

4

Independent Variables	Alpha Values
Reputation	.516
Tuition Fees	.096
Location	.919
Permanent campus	.663
Teachers Quality	.656
Online service	.755
IT facility	.744
Advertisement	.210
Environment	.628

Figure 4: Table 4

5

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Model	0.881 a	0.761	0.755	3.5339

a. Predictors: (Constant), env, pc, ad, os, tf, tq, loca, rep, it

The value of R 2 indicates 76.1% of variation can be explained by these studied factors. Remaining 23.9% of variance is explained by the variables othe studied variables.

Figure 5: Table 5 :

6

a. Dependent Variable: depvar

$Y = 2.630 + .164x1 + .010x2 + (-.022x3) + (-.082x4) + .056x5 + .129x6 + (-.093x7) + .034x8 + (-.061x9)$

Here,

Y= Assessing the Factors behind Choosing Universities

for Higher Education X1=Reputation X2=Tuition Fees X3=Location

X4=Permanent campus

X5=Teachers' Quality

X6=Online service

X7=IT facility

X8=Advertisement

X9=Environment

d) Hypothesis Testing 1. H0: Reputation is not the most important factor for choosing a university.

H1: Reputation is the most important factor for choosing a university.

Figure 6: Table 6 :

[Wiese et al. ()] 'A marketing perspective on choice factors considered by South African first-year students in selecting a higher education institution'. M Wiese , N Van Heerden , Y Jordaan , E North . *Southern African Business Review* 2009. 13 (1) p. .

[Raposo and Alves ()] 'A model of university choice: an exploratory approach'. M Raposo , H Alves . *MPRA Paper* 2007. 1 (5523) p. .

[Moogan and Baron ()] 'An analysis of student characteristics within the student decision making process'. Y J Moogan , S Baron . *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 2003. 27 (3) p. .

[Briggs ()] 'An exploratory study of the factors influencing undergraduate student choice: the case of higher education in Scotland'. S Briggs . *Studies in Higher Education* 2006. (6) p. .

[Ceja ()] 'Chicana College Aspirations and the Role of Parents: Developing Educational Resiliency'. M Ceja . *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* 2004. 3 (4) p. .

[Paulsen ()] 'College Choice: Understanding Student Enrollment Behavior'. M B Paulsen . *ASHEERIC Higher Education Report* 1990. (6) . The George Washington University

[Ancheh et al. ()] 'Evaluative criteria for selection of private universities and colleges in Malaysia'. K S B Ancheh , A Krishnan , O Nurtjahja . *Journal of International Management Studies* 2007. 2 (1) p. .

[Kusumawati et al. ()] 'Exploring Student Choice Criteria for Selecting an Indonesian Public University: A Preliminary Finding'. A Kusumawati , V K Yanamandram , N Perera . *ANZMAC 2010 Doctoral Colloquium*, (Christchurch, New Zealand) 2010.

[Wagner and Fard ()] *Factors influencing Malaysian students' intention to study at a higher educational institution. Chinese American Scholars Association*, K Wagner , P Y Fard . 2009. New York.

[Afful-Broni and Noi-Okwei ()] 'Factors influencing the choice of tertiary education in a'. A Afful-Broni , C Noi-Okwei . *Subsaharan African University. Academic Leadership* 2010. 8 (2) p. .

[Hossler et al. ()] *Going to college: How social, economic, and educational factors influence the decisions students make*, D Hossler , J Schmidt , N Vesper . 1999. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

[Domino et al. ()] 'Higher education marketing concerns: factors influence students' choice of colleges'. S Domino , T Libraire , D Lutwiller , S Superczynski , R Tian . *The Business Review* 2006. 6 (2) p. .

[Hoyt and Brown ()] *Identifying college choice factors to successfully market your institution*, J E Hoyt , A B Brown . 2003. 78 p. . College and University

[Independent Variables Standardized Regression Coefficient (?) P] *Independent Variables Standardized Regression Coefficient (?) P*,

[Dorel and Alexandra-Maria ()] 'Marketing research regarding faculty-choice criteria and information sources utilised'. P M Dorel , T Alexandra-Maria . *Management and Marketing* 2006. 4 (1) p. .

[Strategies for Choosing Colleges] *Strategies for Choosing Colleges*, 81 p. . College and University

[Beneke and Human ()] 'Student recruitment marketing in South Africa-An exploratory study into the adoption of a relationship orientation'. J Beneke , G Human . *African Journal of Business Management* 2010. 4 (4) p. .

[Tavares et al. ()] 'Students' preferences and needs in Portuguese higher education'. D Tavares , O Tavares , E Justino , A Amaral . *European Journal of Education* 2008. 43 (1) p. .

[Pimpa and Suwannapirom ()] 'Thai students' choices of vocational education: marketing factors and reference groups'. N Pimpa , S Suwannapirom . *Educational Research for Policy and Practice* 2008. 7 (2) p. .

[Dawes and Brown ()] 'The Composition of Consideration and Choice Sets in Undergraduate University Choice: An Exploratory Study'. P L Dawes , J Brown . *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 2005. 14 (2) p. .

[Kim ()] *The effect of financial aid on students' college choice: Differences by racial groups*, D Kim . 2004. 45 p. . (Research in Higher Education)

[Calhoun ()] *The question of class struggle: social foundations of popular radicalism during the industrial revolution*, J Calhoun . 1982. The University of Chicago Press.

[Al-Yousef ()] 'They Know Nothing about University-Neither of Them Went: The Effect of Parents' Level of Education on Their Involvement in Their Daughters' Higher Education Choices'. H Al-Yousef . *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 2009. 39 (6) p. .

[Ceja ()] 'Understanding the role of parents and siblings as information sources in the college choice process of Chicana students'. M Ceja . *Journal of College Student Development* 2006. 47 (1) p. .

[Yamamoto ()] 'University evaluationselection: A Turkish case'. G T Yamamoto . *International Journal of Educational Management* 2006. 20 (7) p. .

[Veloutsou et al. ()] 'University selection: information requirements and importance'. C Veloutsou , J W Lewis , R A Paton . *The International Journal of Educational Management* 2004. 18 (3) p. .

[Shahid et al. ()] 'What Factors Affect a Student's Choice of a University for Higher Education'. H Shahid , O Shafique , O H Bodla . *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 2012. 2 (10) p. .