The influence of marketing mix, on the student’s choice of University – Two State Universities in Sweden.

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of the study is to determine if the traditional services marketing mix influence the students, when selecting a university.

Methodology: The work adopts a case study approach using qualitative method in the collection of data via the use of structural interviews. The sampled populations were the university’s administrations and the students. An inductive approach is applied in the data analysis.

Result & Conclusion: Findings from the study show that, the HE uses different marketing mix strategies in the recruitment of students. The study also found out that the marketing mix elements have a positive impact in the student’s choice of a university. The programme, Promotional mix, place, price, people and Physical Evidence are directly related to the student’s choice of the HE.

Implication of the studies

There are two implication of the studies, one for the university and the other for the students. It is essential for the universities to understand the needs, motive of the students, the current and future job market demands. Also, the students need to be informed about the different universities offerings coupling with the current and future job demands.

Limitations of the study: Time factor, the non-probability sampling method are some of the limitation of this study.

Suggestion for future Research: The effects of University choice to the student’s satisfactions.

Contribution of the Research: The research provides know-how on the HE marketing in Sweden and the student’s choice of the University.

Keywords: Marketing mix, Choice, Programme, Place People, Promotional mix, and Physical Evidence
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes the background, the aims of the study, problem formulation, research question, delimitation and the structure of the work.

1.1 Background

Chen (2008) opined that in the recent years, the educational market has become dynamic and complex. This is so because there are many marketing forces that are trying to shape the educational environment, coupling with the lower birth rate in Western Europe. Therefore, the competition between universities is increasing, and it shall continue as long as the number of student’s decreases in primary, and secondary school enrolment, also due to newer institutions of higher learning are setting up and the birth rates are decreasing. The components of the marketing mix (Product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence), can change a firm’s competitive position (Grönroos, 1994). It has been suggested that marketing in the service sector (such as in the universities) is relatively challenging, due to the unique characteristics of services and the dominance of experience and credence qualities (Maha, 2011). Higher education (HE) provides an interesting and important context for research, since the HE across the world have become increasingly marketing oriented and students increasingly become consumers (Chen, 2008).

For decays, universities have become much more marketing focused in the competition to reach their goals (Farr, 2003). According to Drummond (2004), the expansion and commercialization of higher education have seen a wide scale adoption of marketing techniques within the sector.

In this study, I am interested in investigating two phenomena: Marketing mix, and choice. Marketing mix is an essential concept, the most visible elements of a company or an institution, and it is considered by non-marketing professionals as the very foundation of marketing (Kotler, 1997). Kotler hold that the use of marketing mix is the means, by which the firm attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers – directly or indirectly – about the products or services and the brands they offer. Elements of the marketing mix represents the voice of the company and its brands; they are means, by which the firm can dialogue and build relationships with consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2012:476). To certain extend, if well-crafted and implemented, the marketing mix can have inspired loyalty in the students, who are the main consumers of higher education services.
The marketing mix concept originated with the 4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. Marketing for the higher education is not the same as the marketing of traditional products. The importance and value of higher education is unquestionable. Leslie & Brinkman (1988) and Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) hold that increased education leads to higher salaries, longer working lives, more career mobility, and a higher quality of life. Carlson & Fleisher (2002) agree and added that higher education is a career preparation, students consider carefully the important choice of which HE institution to attend and which program to follow.

Choice is another key phenomenon that is going to be study in this work. That is what motivates students to select a particular university; can it be because of the marketing mix? This is an important decision life changing for a student, with a decision process becoming longer with increasing offerings from competing university (Ivy, 2008). The field of student choice is what Kotler & Fox (1995) call ‘consumer buying behavior’, studies on how individuals, groups, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods or services to satisfy their needs, desires and the factors influence this buying behavior (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). This study does not deal with customers’ behavior from a behaviorism approach, but from a marketing perspective. Researching in consumer buying behavior can answer key questions such as, what do student want to buy. How do they buy? Lastly, why do they select (chose) a specific HE provider? Investigating the answers to these questions can give HE marketers effective approaches taken into consideration, that the aimed of marketing is to meet and satisfy what the student wants.

In summary, how and why students choose a particular university will be better explained by using the understanding of the consumer decision-making process and this can aid the universities in targeting the most appropriate markets. Kotler & Armstrong (1994) describe the stages through which buyers supposedly pass to reach a buying decision. Need recognition is trigger when the buyer recognizes a need or problem, then information search starts. Then follows an evaluation of alternatives and a purchase decision. According to Kotler & Armstrong (1994), the purchase decision derives from the consumer ranking the alternatives to formulate a purchase intention.

When one looks at the higher education as a process, it is apparent that by given the above parameters, the customers in this process are the students. The providers on the contrary, the HE institutions, are like any other industries with a purpose of satisfying their customers. Relying on fundamental marketing concepts, it becomes apparent that once the institutions
identify the needs and the want of their customers, the task of satisfying these needs and wants is becoming more feasible (Eagle & Brennan, 2005).

1.2 The Role of HE

According to Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (2017), higher education is the education, training and research guidance that takes place after at the postsecondary level. In other words, HE comprises all post-secondary education, training, and research guidance at educational institutions, such as: universities, college, and polytechnic education that is authorized as an institution of higher learning by state authorities. JICA (2017) further states that, higher education institutions, most prominently universities, have three major roles: education, research, and contributing to the society. The research and education functions are two sides of the coin; research makes a higher level of education possible and education, in turn develops the human resources to do research or specialized job. It has increasingly been demanded for the HE institutions that they make contributions to the society. This means the HE institutions need to ensure that the accumulated knowledge is circulated directly back to the society and do not become proprietary to the state or the private sector.

The role of the HE institution is to prepare graduates for work. HE institutions prepare professionals to understand new situations, recognize the area of knowledge that is relevant to a particular situation, and the capacity to transform previously acquired explicit knowledge, when solving relevant problems (Eraut, 2006). The Credential theory (Collins, 1979) advocates that the main role of the HE lies in regulating access to the labor market. The impact of the HE on student’s life has never been limited to the production of what is required by the labor market. The consensus in economically advanced countries about the key functions of the HE also relates to students’ abilities to “…understand and master the academic theories, methods and knowledge domains; contribution to cultural enhancement, personality development and enhancement of the ability to challenge the prevailing practices,” (Pavlin, 2014).

1.3 Motivation

The study focuses the investigation on the relationship between, marketing mix, and choice by the students within the higher education milieu. The complex nature of HE institutions as a service makes it even more difficult for a student like me to fully understand what the universities offer, and how to utilize these services. The student and universities sometimes try to limit or gauge satisfaction on the teaching/learning process. There are more services offered
by universities greater than the teaching and learning process, which many students are unconscious of. I am motivated to carry out this research because I see myself as a future consultant in higher education marketing. The knowledge gained from the study will be beneficial in formulating marketing strategies to Higher Education sector.

1.3 Problematization

Higher education institutions are increasingly recognizing that the HE is a service industry and is placing greater emphasis using the marketing mix (7Ps) on meeting the expectations and needs of their participating customers; the students. The rapid expansion of colleges and universities and the significant increase in college education costs combined with demographic shifts in the population, forced universities to rethink the role of student satisfaction for their survival (Kotler & Fox, 1995). Intense competition in today's competitive educational market forces universities to adopt a market orientation strategy, to differentiate their offerings from those of their competitors.

Although the successful completion and enhancement of the student education are reasons for the existence of the HE institutions, university administrators tend to focus disproportionately more time on programs for attracting and admitting students, rather than managing enrolment (Zemke, 2000). Similar to the importance of managing customers to retain them for profit-making institutions, satisfying admitted student is important for student retention.

It has been suggested that, the marketing in the service sector is relatively challenging, due to the unique characteristics of services and the dominance of experience and credence quality. One particular consequence is the perceived risk that is higher in selection of a service, because consumers find services more difficult to evaluate in advance of purchase (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985). In this situation, the higher education institution can play an important role as risk reliever, given the consumers greater confidence in their decision-making (choice) and increasing trust, hence satisfaction (Erdem & Swait, 1998).

Marketing in the higher education sector is not new. Many authors have recognized the increasingly important role that marketing plays in the student recruitment (Cubillo, Sanchez & Cervino, 2006; Ivy, 2001; Maringe & Foskett, 2002). When universities offer qualifications that satisfy student needs, offer affordable tuition that match student expectations, provide much-needed data about the university, course personnel (people) and programs, so the students
can make informed selections of university and program (choice). The tool used is the 7P marketing mix elements, including product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. It is important to note that, the marketing of HE is not the same as the marketing of McDonald’s or Nike. Nike uses product marketing whereas education is essentially a service.

This study is important for university authorities to understand how students make their choice of university. A student decision to acquire advanced knowledge is, therefore, the culmination of a process of weighing costs and benefits, which may be similar to the process applied when a customer selects a product or service.

It is important to shed light on the commercialization of education in general, and the way writers perceive the marketing of education. There is a considerable debate over whether educational institutions should get involved in the marketing of their services (Bartlett, Frederick, Gulbrandsen & Murillo, 2002). The argument center on whether or not the students should be considered as customers (Sharrock, 2000:22). These arguments are more valid in countries where educational institutions are not experiencing the market forces and do not have to compete, such as in the case in many developing countries, where the number of potential students is larger than the capacity of the universities. This in contrast to developed countries like USA, UK, and other European countries (Agasisti & Catalano, 2006), where state intervention is at a lower level and the idea of marketing has been normalized, especially as universities have to compete for funding and more students (Pugsley, 2004). Despite free tuition fees, the Universities in Sweden are competing for enrolment of students according to their capacities. This raises another important objection as to the introduction of marketing, marketing forces, and ‘business-style’ in HE institutions as it contrary to its social justice objective (Kenway, Bigum & Fitzclarence, 1993). Where the educational system is regard as a business, the universities are interested mainly in candidates who can afford to pay fees rather than students in general. Therefore, business style institutions would put more emphasis on organizational efficiency, rather than societal equity (Ngok, 2007).

1.5 Research Gaps and Aim

Previous research has studied the relationship between higher education, and marketing mix in the following domains: student choice in higher education (Wilkins, Balakrishnan & Huisman, 2012); the impacts of marketing mix on students’ choice of university (Soedjati & Pratmingsih,
2011; Ho & Hung, 2008); marketing higher education using the 7Ps framework (Enache, 2011); emotional connection in higher education (Durkin, Mckenna & Commins, 2012). These studies failed to link marketing mix, and student’s choice, simultaneously. That is where and how these studied phenomena is connecting to each other. Studies in HE institutions marketing tend to focus on the 7P’s framework and those for student’s choice focuses factors influencing students’ choice of a HE. A university’s choice is a complex issue, the HE institution needs to be responsive and proactive in communicating the institution's identity and values to potential students (Anctil, 2008). The research referred to above have based their models on grounded in respondents in the UK, Canada, UK and Asian countries. This study focuses to some of the universities located in Sweden. Furthermore, earlier studies are quantitative, asking respondents to reflect and select key variables that appear to be important to them rather than their comparative significance (Moogan, 2011). This implies that no exploration is made of how the student’s decision to enter the university and starting the HE programme have no influence on their decision-making. Another observation is that the models do not reflect the importance of the elements of the marketing mix in the student decision-making process. This paper will explore to what extent the studied marketing mix elements might influence student’s choice of the HE.

The aim of the study is to determine whether the marketing mix influence the students, when selecting a university.

1.5 Research Questions

Question 1. What marketing mix strategy is used by universities to recruit new students?
Question 2. How does the Marketing Mix influences student’s choice of a university?

1.6 Delimitation

In this study, graduate students are excluded. The literature also delimits the post purchase evaluation by the student. In the discussion of the 7Ps, process and place has been excluded from this study.

1.7 Structure of the work

The work is structure in a way that is to address the specificity of the topic. The study is composed of six Chapters: Chapter 1. Introduction, it is a brief background of the work, it identifies the aim and the importance of the study, problematizes the phenomenon and outline
the preliminary research questions. Chapter 2. Review of the marketing mix, and consumer’s choice. It the State-of-art, and the model of study, and narrows down the preliminary research questions. Chapter 3. Presents the methodology of the study. Chapter 4. includes the empirical findings of the interviews. In Chapter 5, the findings are analyzed, and Chapter 6. Includes the limitations, conclusions of the study, and recommendations where appropriate. The thesis structure as outlined in figure 1, below:

Figure 1, Structure of the study, own.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This Chapter presents the literature related to the higher education marketing mix, student’s choice of the university. It also includes the state of art and reflections, and a chosen model.

2.0. The benefit of HE to the student
There is no doubt that HE provides a considerable value to the individual’s personal economy and to the economies of the countries, where the educated individuals reside. Hill, Hoffman & Rex (2005), distinguish two ways in which higher education influences the economic well-being of the individuals. First, HE provides financial and non-financial benefits to students who pursue advanced education. The students’ earnings after graduation are related to their education attainment. People who have completed high school earn more than those who have not; people with a bachelor’s degree earn more than those with only a high school diploma, and those with graduate education earn more than those with only undergraduate degree and so on. Although HEs give short-term benefits, there are also long-term benefits for students if they attend and complete HE studies. According to Baum & Payea (2004) and Bowen (1997), the long-term investment benefits for a student attending and completing a HE studies include: higher earnings, more fulfilling work environment, better health, longer life, more informed purchases, and lower probability of unemployment.

2.1 The marketing mix
In the field of education in general and HE institutions in particular, different researchers have discussed services marketing. Services have four dimensions: they are perishable, heterogenic, inseparable, and intangible. A service is described as perishable because it cannot be saved for later use. The heterogeneity of services come from the fact that it is hard to standardize service performance, which affect the quality. The service delivery is inseparable from its consumption, since the seller and the buyer (student) are involved at the same time in the production and consumption of the services offered. The services of the HE are different from the marketing of normal consumer goods; which requires the adjustment of the marketing mix (Soedijati & Pratminingsih, 2011). Classical product marketing consists of the four Ps: product, price, place, and promotion (Kotler & Fox, 1995). In the service sector, the marketing mix can be adapted and is relevant to a certain degree. Additional Ps have been added to give better performance for services: people, processes, and physical evidence (Nicholls, Harris, Morgan, Clarke & Sims, 1995).
2.1.1 Product
Kotler & Fox (1995) developed a version of the marketing mix designed specifically for the educational institutions, addressing the limitation of the marketing mix of products. In the marketing mix of Kotler & Fox (1995), programmes replace the products. Programmes are the first basic elements of the marketing mix of HE institutions. The most basic decision that the higher education institutions have to make are to develop programmes that satisfy the students’ wants and needs. It is a critical marketing activity for the educational institutions (Hoyer & McInnis, 2001). Another aspect of the higher education that can trigger students is the perceived quality of the institution; for without good services, any marketing efforts are either futile or deceitful (Roberts, 1998). Mamta (2013) suggests that the values derived from a programme can greatly influenced the student’s behavior. That is when the students understand what they will achieve in studying the programme and the quality of the teaching staff they will likely choose the HE institution. Barnes (1993) laments that although the HE service is the most powerful marketing tool, most universities offer similar services to their customers, and more than 85% of all educational offerings are indistinguishable from another. This implies that an innovative curriculum can be an excellent selling point, when engaging in the HE marketing.

Hollensen (2003:16) held that an appropriately implemented marketing strategy results in programmes being design cooperatively, developed, tested, piloted, installed, and refined. The word cooperatively means that the HE does not just produce programmes, but are researching this with the potential consumers. The challenges of marketing of education stems from the fact that the educational institution offers professional services that customers cannot inspect before purchasing (White, Martin, Stimson & Hodge, 1991:196; Nicolescu, 2009). Thus, an educational program is an experience, since its relevant characteristics is only effectively assessed by consumption (Amaral & Magalhaes, 2007). It is only when a student gets into the program after purchase that they can assess the service quality. In his 7Ps framework, Mamata (2013) outline the product that the HE is selling includes curriculum, quality teachers, spiritual values, good students, safe environment, courses/programs offered, and values (moral, social, ethical, and practical).

2.1.2 Price
The second element to be discussed in the marketing mix is price. Price here refers to tuition fees to be paid by prospective students. For the HE institution, price is important, as an important source of revenue. Tang, Tang & Tang (2004) held that the number of universities
relying on tuition as a basic source of revenue is increasing. Price has a major influence on marketing strategies, because most students and parents are concerned about the financial implications of attending the university (Pugsley 2004:125; Pennell & West 2005; Hemelt & Marcotte, 2011). An increase in tuition fees has a significant negative effect for student enrolment (Dearden, Fitzsimons & Wyness, 2011). This implies that the opposite is true; a deduction of tuition can increase the enrolment fees-paying students (Barr, 2012). As the customers (students) are relatively cost conscious, they will tend to maximise the investment of their tuition fees, while maximizing returns or value (Eckel, 2007). Potential student will normally judge the price, when comparing universities, as more expensive or affordably priced (Kotler & Fox, 1995). The main reason the HE institutions are charging tuition is the decline in public spending on education. Governmental reforms have forced universities to look at tuition as an alternative form of revenue generation (Rothschild & White, 1993).

2.1.3 Promotion
Higher education needs to communicate its services to the targeted market through promotional strategies. Lamb, Hair, McDaniels, Boshoff & Terbalance (2004) argue that the promotional strategies of a HE are planned for optimal use of the promotional elements. The HE needs to constantly analyse, plan, and manage their promotional activities (Brassington, 2006:13). Palmer (2011:11) and Kitchen, Kim & Schultz (2008) break down promotion into four elements: advertising, sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling. Various tools are available for each of these elements to be used to communicate with potential students, including: web advertising, social media, search engine optimizations, direct mailing, educational show exhibits, open days, partnership with other HE institutions, or conferences (Blumenstyk, 2006). Off-campus visits to high schools are an important recruiting grounds for universities, which can yield results. It provides an opportunity to show what the university has to offer directly to potential students. Hayes (2012) suggests that universities should visit higher schools with the goal to give students a better understanding of what the HE provides socially and culturally. The potential applicant can come and hear about the HE and its program and courses. Jobber (2004:813) and Habiba & Monika (2016) distinguished various challenges in the marketing of education service. They suggested that the intangible element of the services could be difficult to communicate. Unlike advertising and promotion of tangible products, where a product can be shown to the customers, it is difficult to represent quality education in an advertisement. However, an institution may use tangible cues to help students understand and judge a service: it can show it facilities (image), courses/ programs, friendly staff, and
happy students. In addition, how the courses and programmes will be delivered, and an assurance of quality (Habiba & Monika, 2016). Promotional elements can enhance name recognition and provide exposure for the HE institutions to its’ potential students (Rudd & Mill, 2008).

2.1.4 People
The firth element of marketing mix is people. People refer in this context to faculty and staff, with whose service delivery a customer relationship is, build (Kotler & Fox, 1995). HE institutions include current and former students as refrences for prospective students to ask about their views of the university. People are an important element of the marketing mix that can help influence a prospective student (Brassington, 2006; Hollensen, 2003). Those in support of the impact of the people factor based their arguments on that education, like many other services, depends on people to deliver the services to the customers. The people factor is related to promotion, and thus considered an important factor, influencing students’ choice of HE institution (Enache, 2011). Staff members are an important part of the educational marketing, as education is a high contact service operation, based on personal contact with staff, and faculty members. The image of the staff is associated with the way in which they interact and respond to student’s needs and questions. The number of Ph.D.’s and professorship titles may influence students (Ivy, 2008). Ivy (2008) states that other people that could influence student enrolment are public figures and well-known profiles, who frequently attend television program or other media. When students seek information, the first impression can be based on the initial contact with people of a particular university (Soedijati & Pratminingsih, 2011). A marketing mix, which includes people, can greatly improve with well-trained personnel. Eanche (2011) and Soedijati & Pratminingsih (2011) argue that, people are the single most important factor in service marketing that can influence a potential customer, in this case the student. In this regard, people who interact with students from before admission, to when they are admitted, and upon completion of studies, must be careful and choose their words well, when communicating with students.

2.1.5 Physical Evidence
The higher education services are intangibles and the physical evidence provided in the enrolment phase is a major proof of the quality of the services to be delivered (Enache, 2011). Physical facilities, or evidence, refer to all of the physical tangible items an institution makes
available to its customers, ranging from infrastructures, pictures in the brochures, or the university home page. Physical facilities are important, because the intangible nature of the services offered by the HE institution. Ivy & Fattal (2010) argue that the environment, in which services are delivered, both tangible and intangible, help to communicate, perform, and relay customer satisfaction to the students. Kotler & Armstrong (2010) proposes that the physical evidence gives the first impression of the university and usually they see the buildings and other facilities. More so, Gibbs & Knapp (2002) contended that the condition of the physical location contributes to the image of the institution in the eyes of the students. This may be, e.g. technologies used, cleanliness of rooms, library, furniture used, and the built environment. Marketers need to collaborate with graphic designers to send information concerning the physical evidence either, in electronic form or in printed copies, to present the attractive and effectively functioning facilities. Price, Matzdorf, Smith & Agahi (2003) found out that a high standard of HE facilitie is perceive as having an important influence on students’ choice of the HE. It is therefore recommended for the HE to include facilities in the marketing strategies. Some institutions have a theme or a prefer colours, e.g. the green colour is the preferred colour for the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom (Gibbs & Knapp, 2002).

2.2 Choice of HE

The students’ choice is a complex series of activities, in which individuals are participating or acting differently (Litten, 1982). Five steps of the students’ choice process are: needs & motives, information gathering, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post evaluation (Kotler, Wong, Saunders & Armstrong, 2005:279). A need or motive is usually trigger in the student when a student realizes that he/she wants to pursue higher education, and searches for information about potential HE providers. The summary of the consumer decision making process is in figure 2.

![Figure 2. Consumer Decision making process, Kotler et al. (2005), modified.](image)

2.2.1 Needs

Consumer’s needs arise from a perceived lack of something on the part of the customer, in this case the students (Van Dam, 1997). The student’s need to attend a university can be trigger
through internal or external stimuli. The student might realize that they need to have a university qualification as they start to consider future professional life. On the contrary, this might contradict the suggestion of Paulsen (1990:8) that before there is need there is an aspiration that starts in the early years of education, which can last through secondary school. The student’s needs and motives could vary in nature. Some students might want to attend a university for instrumental reasons (Brown & Scase, 1994), others might get motivated for personal intrinsic reasons, i.e. enjoying the degree programme (Collier, Gilchrist & Phillips 2003). Yet, others might want to attend a university for simple reason, as to be with friends (Mullen, 2009). When the university marketers fully understand the student’s needs motives and aspirations, they try to establish the student’s unmet or unsatisfied needs, to find ways to fulfil these needs and aspiration, to attract student to their institution. Kotler & Fox (1995) highlight that a considerable number of the HE institution make the mistakes of designing programmes that do not match those needs or aspiration. Marketers cannot create needs, but they can activate needs through awareness.

2.2.2 Information search

A student usually starts searching information on how to satisfy his or hers needs and motives. The student starts by searching their memory of known alternative HE institutions that might provide satisfaction of the needs or motives. Palmer (2001:92) refers to this level of search as the internal search, based on the student’s own experience and knowledge. The amount of information gathered depends on the student’s own level of need of information and involvement (Menon, Saiti & Socrates, 2007). Some students have little information and may do their information search at external sources. Kotler & Armstrong (2008) classify information sources that prospective customers usually use: (a) personal non-marketing controlled, e.g. from friends, family, and acquaintances, (b) personal marketer controlled, sales representative, (c) Non-personal, non-markets controlled, e.g. mass media, internet, and (d) non-personal market controlled advertisement, prospectus. Enache (2011) argues that a website is a great source of where the students start to search for information of the HE institutions. Evans (1995) believes that that a major source of information that influences choice is the institution’s staff, through direct phone call, direct mail etc. Taylor (1992) believes that friends’ advice is the major source Foskett (2009) pinpoint the role of career advisers in the information provision. Pimpa (2005) hold that the student prefers their family as the source of information. Most often, institutions overload students with too much information, some of which may be irrelevant, this
could cause what Drummond (2004) refers to as “consumer confusion” which makes it more difficult for student to make decisions.

2.2.3 Establishing alternatives
Once students have gathered enough information, they will set a list of universities to attend (Kotler & Fox, 1995). In evaluating the alternatives, it narrows the number of choices until only one or two remain. Two factors may intervene with the purchase intention and the purchase decision: attitudes of others and unanticipated situational factors. The evaluation of alternative is a critical step in the decision making as the student are about to make a lifetime decision on what university to choose.

![Figure 3. Steps between evaluation of alternatives and a purchase decision, modified after Kotler (2003:207).](image)

As seen in figure 3 above, there are factors that might interrupt the decision-making process. Other people’s attitudes effect the purchase decision to an extend that determined by the intensity of the other person’s attitude and the consumer’s judgement or motivation to comply with the other person’s wishes (Kotler, 2003:207). The purchase intention is sometime interrupted by unanticipated situational factors. In that case, the student or family member may play a key role for the potential student to choose a particular university to study

Students are not buying degrees, but the benefit that a degree can provide in terms of employment, status, or lifestyle (Binsardi & Ewulogo, 2003). Personal reasons and aspirations play a key role in their selection of Higher Education. The students’ career prospects are identified as factors that affect their decision-making process (Soutar & Turner, 2002). Advice from people, such as family members, friends, guidance counselors, and alumni, may persuade the student to choose a particular university before others (Burke, 2000; Chapman 1981; Binsardi & Ekwulugo, 2003).
An institution’s image can have strong influence for a student decision to attend a particular university (Qureshi, 1995; Mazzarol, 1998). The institution’s image is the sum of the beliefs, ideas, and impressions that the prospective students have of the institution. The information can be accurate or inaccurate. Grewal, Dearden & Lilien, (2008) hold that HE-ranking also influences students´ decisions to select a university. The present image of a university is based on its past record and can therefore not be changed through quick fixes in the public relationship strategy (Kotler & Fox, 1995:231). The evaluation of an institution contains attributes, such as academic reputation, facilities, and teachers´ and researcher’s reputation (Burke, 2000).

2.2.4 Evaluation
Programme evaluation is essentially the attitude that the prospective students hold toward their targeted programmes (Peng, Lawley & Perry 2000). Previous studies show that the suitability of the programme is of overwhelming importance in the selection of university (Hooley & Lynch, 1981). Maringe (2006) and Cubillo et al. (2006) found that other aspects within the study program, such as international recognition, cost, and availability of scholarships or financial aid, might influence a student to choose a program at the university.

It is after the student evaluate alternatives, using of the above attributes they make a decision to apply to their chosen university.

2.3 Model
The figure below shows show the studied marketing mix elements and the students’s choice of the university. The propose model shows how the marketing elements can influence the student’s choice of a university, as indicated with the arrows pointing from marketing mix strategies to Student’s choice of university.
Figure 4. Theoretical framework on the relationship between marketing mix and student’s choice, own.
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter is to motivate the choice of methods used. It presents the research design, the case study methods with interviews, the population and sample, the operationalization, choice of analysis method and a qualitative evaluation of the consequence of these choices; hence the resultant validity and reliability of the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study uses a case study design with interviews, providing qualitative data. The case study strategy is commonly used in social science. It helps the author to study and understand social phenomena that are difficult to quantify. Yin (1994) argues that the case study method can be used to research questions that are exploratory and confirmatory in nature. The case study method is a means for social scientist to investigate and understand social phenomena in the real-life events of individuals, small groups, and organizations. Data collection techniques could be observations, documents, artifacts, and interviews (Yin, 2013). A case study means receiving information through multiple modalities (Yin, 2013:70). This implies that data or information can be collect without bias from the interviewees. Case study research consist of detailed investigation and attempts to provide an analysis of the context of a given phenomenon. Case studies should be an acceptable form of business research, particularly useful when the phenomenon cannot be easily studied outside the natural setting (Bonoma, 1985).

I adopted the use of multiple case study to understand how market mix influence students’ choice of two Swedish state universities. I decided to use this design, because the intention is to investigate the framework in detail. The case study is used in many situations with the aim of contributing to the knowledge of the phenomenon. The researcher should be able to identify situation, in which a specific method is relevant and advantageous in comparison to other available methods (Yin, 2013).

This studies adopt the case studies about Malmö and Lund universities, within the interviews are also multiple cases.

A case study can be either a single or multiple case study. Yin (2013) noted that the case study is effective when questions are being ask about “why” and “how” concerning contemporary events. The use of a multiple-case study is to ensure that the issue to be investigated is not
explored through one lens, but rather in a variety of “lenses”, which allow for multiple facets of the phenomena to be revealed and understood (Baxter, 2008). Yin (2013) stressed that the bases for qualitative research is analytical generalization. This mean that the goal of the research is to expand and generalize theories, but not to establish the frequency by which a phenomenon occurs in the population (Hyde, 2006).

3.2 Primary and Secondary data

Qualitative data collection involves the collection of data on a rather small purposive sample, using an in-depth interviewing of the participants (Hox & Boeije, 2005). The primary source of data is through interviews. The interview is an appropriate way to collect data when the aim is to get a deeper insight of the organizational experience (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). Primary data will be gathered through interviews, using audio recorder. The interview is probably the most employed method in qualitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2017). Denscombe (2007) define interviews as a method of data collection. This study adopt semi-structured interviews. A semi-structural interview means that the researcher has a list of questions on specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The choice of semi-structural interviews gives flexible terms in following the order of the questions. They also permit the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher’s questions. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewees to elaborate their point of interest and for the researcher to ask follow-up questions, where clarification is needed (Denscombe, 2007). Bryman & Bell (2007) emphasized that follow-up questions might be asked to the interviewee for more clarification.

Primary data earlier collected by researchers or official statistics, administrative report; which is archived and made available through official sources is secondary data for other researchers, who may locate the data sources that might be useful to their own research problem. (Hox & Boeije, 2005). Such data now becomes a secondary source of data. The studies gathered secondary data from statistics on the university website.

3.4 Population and Sample

In this case study Lund and Malmö University are studied. The Lund University, one of the oldest in Europe and a mid-sized university are selected. The primary data is gathered through structured interviews from the case studies with eight students and two administrators, with an
equal number from each university. The respondents are classified as illustrated in the sample table.

Cooper (1988) suggested that there are two types of population for investigation. The target and the accessible population. An accessible population is the one concerned by the studied phenomena. The target population involves all groups or individuals who meet the criteria for the study. An accessible population on the other hand is what researchers can access. The accessible population may be limited by city or country. (ibid)

In this study, the accessible population are undergraduate students enrolled at the Universities of Lund and Malmö and two administrators in charge of Marketing/communication at the university. Greener (2008:47) stated that “…the world is large and filled of people. To find out things about people, we need to ask (research) them.” Considering that the chosen universities have a large number of undergraduate students, it would be impossible, with respect to time and cost to interview the whole undergraduate student population at the universities. For the sample student population, a non-probability sampling is used. Greener (2008) argue that the results of convenience samples cannot be generalized. Greener (2008) define none-probability sampling as a technique in which the researcher selects samples based on subjective judgement of the researcher rather than random selection. The researcher’s first priority, in including an interviewee for the study, is to find out if the student is a registered undergraduate student at the particular institution. Creswell (2013) stated that there is no specific answer to the number of sites and participants to be involved in the research. This implies that there is no set of general roles which applies to how many cases and participants to be involved in a study. In qualitative case studies, the number of participants could be from three to ten, and in multiple case studies three to five for each case Cresswell (2013). Bryman & Bell (2003) suggest that it may be costly and time consuming to use a larger sample size. Yin (2013) proposed that case studies might result in massive and unreadable documents. That is why this researcher decided to have eight students as participants as interviewees, four from each university. Miles & Huberman (1994) identified four aspects, which might be included in the data collection procedures;

- The setting where the research take place,
- The actors who are interviewed,
- The events what the interviewed actors will be doing and,
- The process of how the interview will be processed.
The table below shows the sample population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample No.</th>
<th>Sample Participants (SP)</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>University of</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Student type</th>
<th>Length of time (Mins)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>SP1</td>
<td>BSc. Software Programming</td>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>free mover</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>SP2</td>
<td>BSc. Nursing</td>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>home base</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>SP3</td>
<td>BSc. Interaction Design</td>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>home base</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>SP4</td>
<td>international migration and ethnic relation</td>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>home base</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>SP5</td>
<td>BA. Law</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>home base</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>SP6</td>
<td>BA. political science</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>home base</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>SP7</td>
<td>BSc. Food Processing</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>homebase</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>SP8</td>
<td>BA Law</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Free mover</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Administrators</th>
<th>Post of responsibility</th>
<th>University of</th>
<th>gender</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>Length of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SP9</td>
<td>Communication officer</td>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>SP10</td>
<td>Communication officer</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4. Sample, own.*

### 3.5 Operationalization

Cooper (1984) points out the importance of the formulation of questions. One way is to review the theoretical variables, because the literature review helps the researcher to determine the theoretical concepts for the investigation.
The interview questions are divided into two main groups of interviewees. The questions one to five are for the university staff in charge of the marketing unit in the two universities, and the rest of the questions are for the sample of students, as shown in Table 4 below. It is from these answered questions that this writer will deduct if there exists any relationship between the marketing mix of the HE and students’ choices. To get the information, an operationalization table below is created to give the overall view of the questions, theories used, and their respective motivations. [space formatting problem, did not manage to correct]

3.7 Choice of method for data analysis

Due to the nature of this study, a deductive method to analyze data is chosen. Deduction presupposes the existence of truth and falsity. Truth is the understanding of reality through a self-corrective inquiry process by the whole intellectual community across time. Reality is “what is” and truth is “what would be” (Yu, 2006). Yu (2006) laments that deduction involves drawing logical consequences from premises. [space formatting problem, corrected]

The data analysis will follow the below guidelines and principles. The author of this study started with the general analytic strategy, with an intent to create a system where one can have an order on the study theme. Yin (1994) opined that, research studies should start with the general analytic strategy which can enable the researchers with a system by which they can set an order for what to study and why. This encompass examining, categorizing, tabulating or recombine that data used for the study. Below, are the two general analytical strategies that are available when performing a case study according to Yin (1994), they are:

1. Relying on theoretical propositions: Here he explains that the results from previous study should be compared to the researcher’s finding.
2. Developing a case description: Here, Yin explains that, a descriptive framework is developed for organizing the case study. This method should be used when there are little previous research on the subject.

Yin (1994) further explains and specifies some techniques which can be used to analyze the data collected in two forms.

1. Within-case analysis: To compare the collected data with the used theory,
2. Cross-case analysis: To compare data from one case to another.
I used within-case analysis and cross-case and compare the collected data with the theories in chapter two to cross-check with each case.

Miles & Huberman (1994) proposes that in a qualitative data analysis comprises of three existing flow of activities such as:

1. Data reduction: the data analysis selected, abstracts, simplify, focuses and transformed the collected data, with the aim of organizing data in order to draw and verified conclusion.
2. Data display: when done, by reducing that data, it should be displayed in an organized and put together in a way to enable conclusion drawing.
3. Conclusion drawing and verification: At this stage, the researcher should decide the meaning of the facts, noting regularities, explanations, possible configuration, causal flows, and proposition. (ibid)

The collected data are transformed in-line using Philipson's (2017) method. Then, the data is structured and in a reasonable way that will enable to draw a conclusion.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Philipson (2018) summarized reliability and validity as ‘quality measures’. In other words, it is the total quality effects of the research design, the sampled population, the operationalization and the analysis method.

Yin (1994) discusses the quality of a research work and the achieved result to be measured in four ways, and recommended that in a case study, researcher should exploit four aspects of the quality of the design, which are the construct validity, internal validity, external validity, external validity and reliability. While the construct validity is setting up correct operationalization measure of the study concepts, internal validity is by establishing informal relationship, external validity is by establishing the premises which study findings may be generalized. (ibid)

In this study, there is concerned in the difficulty to check the reliability of the data collected from the respondents given the fact that the responses are based on person experiences of the interviewees. To increase the quality measures, more than one interviewee with similar experiences were sampled the same questions for their consistency responses.
I also ensured the quality of the data gotten from the respondents by noting if they are commenting on the topic or are speaking as one who has little knowledge on the subject matter. This was done by rephrasing each question with respondent answer on each topic raised with any of them to reconfirms the first answer they provided. I also make sure to ask the question clearly and in a natural voice. The author makes sure not to ask leading question in order to limit bias in the answers.

To achieve reliability is challenging since every interview differs in a certain way. The body language, and how to connect oneself can influence the attitude answers from the respondents. This might lead to interviewee bias; because they can answer in the way they think it is appropriate for the questioner. The author avoids this by establishing a good rapport with the interviewees and then gain confidence and trust with them. (Yin, 1994)

In ensuring high validity of this study, I developed a suitable conceptual framework, which has been gauged using the operationalization, with a well-defined concept of what is to be measured.
CHAPTER 4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This chapter contains a brief about the universities and the empirical findings.

4.1 Presentation about the universities

Here, one can find the information about the universities in which the study is based. As it can be seen below there are; Malmö University, and University of Lund.

Malmö University was founded in 1998 and it is located in Malmö city. The University have more than 24000 students and about 1600 employees Malmö university have five main faculties. The university has about 240 active PhD students.

The University of Lund traces its root as from 1425 and it is one of the oldest universities in Europe and it is located in the cities of Lund, Malmö and Helsingborg with a total of 42000 students in 302 programmes. The University offer 2046 freestanding courses. There are many PhD students and research centers hosted by the university. The universities of Lund and Malmö were selected for this studies base on the convenience of the thesis author residence.

4.2 HE Marketing mix Strategies

The HE institutions agree that their university is offering courses and programmes for would-be students. However, there are differences in opinion on what their challenges are, for SP9 and SP10 they see ‘noise’ from advertisement from other competitive Universities as their main challenge in presenting their services offering. SP10 see how to physically present the offerings to the students as a major challenge. SP10 also market Lund as a great place to live, work and study.

“It is really hard to say we are selling something especially as most of our courses and programmes are free for Sweden and EU students. However, I can say we offer freestanding courses and programmes. Some are online while others are campus base to the students. The students are free to choose which one they want depending on their convenient. The challenges we face are many, but one of the important one is how to physically present to the perspectives student what we offer” (SP9, 2018).
Only SP9 identified tuition fee as a source of income for the HE institution. The other view their programme as a giveaway or some form of charity to Sweden and EU students. On about the impact of tuition fees to a prospective student, SP9 and SP10 sees it as a hindrance for the international students’ enrolment.

“We really charge school fees, an exception is for non-Swedish and EU Students. Our tuition for international students is very high and I am sure that is why we don’t have many international students to our undergraduate programmes.” (SP10, 2018).

Both respondents answered ‘yes’ that they inform their students about how the service shall be delivered. When it comes to why, they have divergent views for SP10 it is important to inform the students if the course or the programme will be delivered online or on the campus her reason is that it could be suitable for different applicant depending on their schedule. As for SP9, it is good to treat students as regular customers and to inform them if the courses or the programme is to be delivered online or campus-based.

On how the HE institutions target prospective students, SP9 says they partner with an advertising agency. All respondents agree they visit the high schools for face to face meetings as part of their Public Relation initiatives, to have personal meetings with the students. The social media is also a great place where all respondents use to communicate their messages to the target. There is also the use of billboard and TV as channels of communication. The university website and the programme catalog are also one of communication medium, which all the respondents agree they are using to communicate to their target audience.

All the respondents agree “yes” that they are facing challenges on how to communicate their information to the targeted students. The respondent SP9 communication noise from other competitive Universities is their prime challenge, while for SP10 it is how to physically present the services to the students.

“….. The problem is to physically show our services to the students” (SP10, 2018).

About the importance of the used of people to overcome communication challenges, the respondent implores people, such as staff, current and former students in communicating to their target audience about their service offerings. They do this by making humor short movie or pictures which they transmit in their chosen communication medium.
SP9 and SP10 agree that, they usually show their facilities to prospective students. There are various ways in which the respondents provide evidence to prospective students. The evidence can either be a visit by the students themselves or showing their building in photos or video or using former students testifying positively during their time of study.

4.3 Choice
Choice is one of the concept that has been investigated to understand the process or role, on which the respondents based their decision to apply at a university programme. The information gathered from the interviewees are stated below.

All respondents advanced one or more reasons to attend a university. The reasons outline by respondents is equated as their ‘needs’ that is why they chose to pursue higher education. Their motivation ranges from for future careers, to fulfilling the job market demand, to obtain a university degree;

“...one of the first things I did was to check what programs the University offer and then I looked at the possibility of the demand of the profession now and in the future in the job market... again. I also have the desire to obtain a University degree” (SP3, 2018).

A respondent said that,

“I think that the reason I chose this program is because of the shortage of nursing staff in the hospitals. That said, with that in mind I feel there is some hope for job opportunity after my graduation” (SP1, 2018).

Career and the job market as explain by SP8 is seen as important motives to enroll at the university. SP8 lamented,

“My motives to attend this university programme is to develop my skills as a computer programmer, this will gives me an added advantage to fill the gap in the IT labor market” (SP8, 2018).

Information finding is one of the steps in the consumer decision making process, as such, the interviewees were asked about where they found the information of their chosen university programs. All the respondents agree to have used the university website for information
gathering before they engage with application. Some interviewees got the information from either their friends, or family members.

On where the information is obtained, SP2 put it this way;

“I think I saw an ads from Facebook then I also search from the university website” (SP2, 2018).

SP6 responded

“I thought about studying, but I never knew which university to choose. I called my best friend in the high school to asked where she wish to study. I wanted to study to the same university with her. I went to the university website and apply to the same program like her” (SP6, 2018).

SP5 got the information from a family member and from the university website. SP5 recounted

“I spoke with my mum about going to the university; she recommended me her alma mater. However, much information was gotten from the university webpage” (SP5, 2018).

Some students also accepted the fact that they got vital information about the university and the programs from the university’s career advisor. Such is the case of SP2, SP3 and SP8 who all answered ‘yes’ that they had received information from a career advisor. SP8 explained

“Yes, I got important information from a career advisor concerning the programme I wanted to study. I also received information about the University. After listening from the career advisor, I realize that I am short of some high school points to enable me to apply for the programme. I quickly enrolled to earn some additional high school points” (SP8, 2018).

The respondents advance different views about the role play by the chosen programme in the selection of university. Some respondents like the programs, while others see the programme as well arrange and having clear goals. SP4 explained

“I like the programme that is the reason I chose this University. The University is also close to my home.” (SP4, 2018).

For Some respondents, the city or country were taken into consideration before making the decision on where to study. Some of these respondents have said
“Yes, the city influenced me, when I considered to apply to the University. I read about Lund, I found that it is an old academic city” (SP1, 2018).

SP2 said

“I think the city may have play a role on my chosen university. I was born and grew up here... I have live here all through my life, all my friends are here... it is also economically for me than to move to a faraway city or another country.” (SP2, 2018).

SP8 and SP2 view Sweden as a cheaper country to study compared to universities in other Western countries, like UK or USA.

The interviewees also have some other personal reasons on why they chose to study at a particular university. The reasons upheld are; Sweden is a better country, family ties to where they live and the probability to be admitted.

“I cannot relocate to another because I have my wife and kids here, I also knew it will be easier for me to get admission into a smaller University than a big one like Stockholm” (SP6, 2018).

That notwithstanding, interviewee such as SP7 said

“I tried applying for an admission last year at Lund University I was place on a waiting list. I used this time as an opportunity to apply in a mid-size University” (SP7, 2018).

Fewer respondents acknowledge that other people had influenced them in their choice of a University. This is echoed by one interviewee

“Yes, by a family member. A family member encouraged me.” (SP4, 2018).

For some respondents, it was their friends that influenced them to apply to a particular university such as in the case of SP6.

Some of the interviewees accepted the fact that the Institution image has influenced them by applying to the University. The image of the institution image here means the brand image. Here are some of the responses
“Yes, the institutional image had attracted me to apply the programme in this University. It is a very big university and one of the oldest in Sweden, this University is ranked top 100 amongst world Universities” (SP1, 2018).

Some interviewees think that the university has made it name and thus the name aided the interviewee choice of University.

“Yes, the name influenced me in making a choice, everyone will be happy to be admitted here, it is an old University with International recognition.” (SP4, 2018).

“Yes, I am glad to be admitted in this university, I think the University have made a name of itself over the years as one of the top universities around the world. It is a privilege to enroll here.” (SP1, 2018).

The table show the choice summary for the student interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>SP2</th>
<th>SP4</th>
<th>SP7</th>
<th>SP3</th>
<th>SP6</th>
<th>SP5</th>
<th>SP1</th>
<th>SP8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>Career</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To fulfill Market Demand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To obtain a University Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>From Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From Family members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From the University Website</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From Social Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>Like the programme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The courses are well arranged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Marketing Mix

The second part of the student’s questionnaire focuses on the marketing mix. Here, the author tried to understand how the marketing mix influence students’ choices. Five marketing mix concepts are examined to investigate the theory of marketing mix.

**Offering** (Product): The interviewees were asked whether the study program was important for their choice of University. All interviewees applied to the university because of the study
program, but with divergent views on the importance of the programme for their choice of university.

The respondents answered:

“My study program is something I like that is why I applied to this University” (SP4, 2018).
“I was motivated to apply at this university because of my program of choice” (SP5, 2018).
“I needed to study this program that’s why I considered applying to this University” (SP6, 2018).

Most of the interviewees says that they view their study program to be the same as those in other universities, while a few respondents held that the program had some small difference in course name and structure from those of other universities.

The question of whether the students should design the courses jointly with faculty, only a few respondents agree that the courses should be designed jointly by student and faculty. The reasons that these gave was that it will attract more students, and it will reflect the current job market. A respondent had this to say:

“Yes, it might be a good thing if the students and the faculty jointly design the program. For example, it will aid both the school and the students to align the courses to satisfy the current job market” (SP3, 2018).

Price is the second item investigated under the marketing mix. Part of the questionnaires concerning price were aimed to target fee-paying students, while another part was for students not paying fees.

Some non-paying students responded that if they were asked to pay fees, they would still consider to apply for the university programs, as echoed by SP2, SP4, and SP7. For the respondents who said they would have not enrolled to the university if they were to pay tuition, view the fees as very expensive.

Fee-paying students said that their fees were some seventy thousand SEK per semester. One of the respondents believes she is getting value for money. Fee-paying student, such as SP1, considered the tuition to be higher, while SP8 considered the fee to be lower than universities offering similar programs.
The third aspect investigated of the marketing mix elements is *Promotion*. SP2, SP4, and SP7 saw promotion from the university before their application. The media, in which the information were seen, varies. These respondents affirm to have seen the university’s its webpage and communication through social media, audio-visual printed media, or by personal relations.

SP2 and SP4 answered that the university had visited their high school. Only SP3 and SP6 agreed that the university facilities influenced them in their judgement of the quality of the program.

The fourth factor investigated under the marketing mix were *people*. People are an important factor, especially as they perform the services that the HE offers.

SP5 and SP8 acknowledged that they were influenced by a friend or university staff. Only two interviewees SP7 and SP3 were influenced by the higher number of PhD lecturers at the University. However, the reasons why the higher number of PhD staff influenced the interviewees were as follow. For SP7, a higher number of PhD’s lecturers was a sign of providing quality teaching, while SP3 viewed them to have much experience; while for SP8 accepted to have been influenced by a public figure.

The question whether the interviewees were in regular contact with the university staff was raised. Three of the respondents SP3 SP6, and SP4, answered they had regular contact with some persons with duty posts at the university. The interviewees responded that the communication with the university staff was very helpful and provided much needed information.

The last part under marketing mix in the questionnaire focused on how *physical evidence* might have influenced the student in applying to the university, by impression of the features of the university that they saw. Only two interviewees, SP8 and SP1, agreed that they were influenced by the university buildings in their application. The question of whether the university locations influenced the student’s choice, was echoed by SP1 and SP8 as an important factor in considering the choice of university. The majority of the interviewees accepted that they consider the university buildings to be of standard. They regard the buildings as very nice and
beautiful. Again, only SP1 and SP8 accepted that the standard of the university buildings played an important part in their choice.

The table 6 below shows the summary of the student’s responses on how marketing mix elements influenced their choice of university.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
<th>SP2</th>
<th>SP4</th>
<th>SP7</th>
<th>SP3</th>
<th>SP6</th>
<th>SP5</th>
<th>SP1</th>
<th>SP8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Something I needed</td>
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<td>Something I like</td>
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<td>Motivate my application</td>
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<tr>
<td>13b</td>
<td>Jointly outline the courses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To attract more students</td>
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<td>14b</td>
<td>Value for the education</td>
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<td>To achieve my goals</td>
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<td>14c</td>
<td>fees are expensive</td>
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<td>15a</td>
<td>Yes, I am a fee paying student</td>
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<td>Not a fee-paying student</td>
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<td>17 Via Website</td>
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<td>17 Social media</td>
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<td>21b Quality teaching</td>
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<td>21b Experience</td>
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</table>
4.5 Similarities and differences amongst Groups

The global patterns is represented by G1, G2 and G2 with the G’s being for Group one, Group two and Group three respectively. The principal similarities observed is in the Table 8, while the principal dissimilarities as seen in Table 9.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview patterns</th>
<th>Observed similarities amongst interview patterns</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>G1 &amp; G2</strong></td>
<td>Considered the University closer to their home (Q9a).</td>
<td>SP2, SP4 &amp; SP5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family ties and higher probability to be admitted at the University (Q7b).</td>
<td>SP2, SP4, SP3, SP6 &amp; SP5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G2 &amp; G3</strong></td>
<td>The interviewees motive why studying is to fulfill market demand of labour (Q7a).</td>
<td>SP3, SP1 &amp; SP8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accept to enrolled at the university even if it meant to pay fee (Q14a)</td>
<td>SP3 &amp; SP5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The university did not communicate to the respondents (Q16).</td>
<td>SP6, SP5, SP1 &amp; SP8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty member/staff/enrolled student influenced interviewees on which university to study (Q20).</td>
<td>SP3, SP6, SP5, SP1 &amp; SP8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>G1 &amp; G3</strong></td>
<td>Found information of the university on Social media (Q7b).</td>
<td>SP2, SP4 &amp; SP1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acknowledge the university building as very beautiful (Q27a).</td>
<td>SP2, SP4 &amp; SP8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Motivated to undertake higher education studies as a means of feature career booster (Q7a).

Found information from the university website (Q7b).

Career advisor did not contact the respondents (8a).

The interviewees consider the city or country to be lesser cost for study (Q9a).

The interviewee’s university choice was influenced by the institution image (Q10b).

Don’t think programme would be better if design together with the faculty (Q13a).

University information was access via their website (Q17)

Facilities or course descriptions does not guarantee the quality of the programme (Q19).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Interview patterns</strong></th>
<th><strong>Differences between patterns</strong></th>
<th><strong>Respondents</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1, G2 &amp; G3</td>
<td></td>
<td>SP2, SP4, SP7, SP3, SP6, SP5 SP1 &amp; SP8 SP2, SP4, SP7, SP3, SP6, SP5 SP1 &amp; SP8 SP4, SP7, SP6, SP5 &amp; SP8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Observed similarities amongst the interview patterns, own.
| G2 | Information about the university was received from a family member (Q7b). | SP3 & SP5 |
|    | Access university information via Social media (Q17) | SP3 & SP6 |
|    | Image/ facilities and course description assured the interviews about the quality of the programme (Q19). | SP3, SP6 & SP5 |
|    | The interviewees were in regular contact with the university staff prior to admission (Q23a). | SP3, SP6 & SP5 |
|    | Rated university building as not really good (Q27a). | SP3, SP6 & SP5 |
| G3 | View the programme as something they like (Q11). | SP1 & SP8 |
|    | Yes, there are fee paying Student (Q15a). | SP1 & SP8 |
|    | Felt they got value for the money (Q15b). | SP1 & SP8 |
|    | University building have some influence the interviewees’ choice (Q25). | SP1 & SP8 |
|    | Were influenced by the university location (Q216) | SP1 & SP8 |
|    | The university building standard and location was taken into consideration before an application was made. (Q27b) | SP1 & SP8 |

*Table 9. Observed dis-similarities amongst the interview patterns, own.*
CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS

This chapter analyze the findings. After each section in this chapter, a table is provided to gives the reader with an overview of the relationship between the empirical findings and the theory discussed earlier.

5.1 Choice

The finding from the study indicates that the students as consumers of HE services, have their needs or motives on why they enroll to the university. Van Dam (1997) elaborates that students perceive a lack of something, which they want to obtain. The findings are that it is either a job, a degree, or both. From the data gathered, the student's aspiration is originated through personal or family influence, as held by MacDermott et al. (1987). The motivational reasons centered on the advancement of future career, i.e. they enjoyed it for some intrinsic reason (Collier et al., 2003). The perceived needs and motives are understood by the universities that viewed as a market needs and thereby offering degree programmes and courses. The findings are consistent with Mamata (2013) that held that universities offer programmes and courses. To sell programmes and courses to the students is challenging (Nicolescu, 2009). Nicolescu (2009) held that that the programme experience is only experienced after purchasing, because of the nature of services.

The findings show that the students search for information about the university from different sources; also from friends and family members (Kotler & Amstrong, 2008; Pimpa (2005). The result shows that the students use websites and social media (Enache, 2011) to access the information about the university. Information search is one of the processes in the consumer decision making journey. Consumers search information because they have little or no knowledge of what they are looking for. Information came from sources such as university websites. Enache (2011), Pimpa (2005) and Taylor (1992) stated that the information sometimes can be gotten from friends or family members. It was found in the study that career advisors also play a role in providing students with information (Foskett, 2009). The findings are that universities are using many channels to send information, such as websites, social media, billboards, television, student ambassadors, and career advisors. It was shown that universities also gives firsthand information during students’ visits. Given that the first impression count, the Universities show visiting students their facilities, as proposed by Price et al. (2003). The HEs also relies on short video testimonies by former students, saying nice
words about the university’s programmes. Staff and former students have knowledge of how the programmes are run, and therefore act as information storehouses, according to Soedjati & Praminingsih (2011) and are important sources of information.

The chosen programme plays a role in the student’s choice of university, including their perceived need of obtaining a degree for a future career. This is also suggested by Peng et al. (2000), saying that programme evaluation depends on the attitudes, which prospective students hold about the programme.

The data gathered demonstrate that the cost of moving and family ties are some of the main factors in choosing a university as alternative to other university offering the same programme. This is in conformity with Maringe (2006) and Cubillo et al. (2006), who proposed that the cost influence students’ choice of university.

The result shows that the respondents also have personal reasons why for choosing a particular university. The reasons are attributed to future employment, as also expressed by Binsardi & Ewulogo (2003). The student’s career prospect has played an important role in the selection of the university (cf. Soutar & Turner, 2002). As their future employment is a priority, the universities provided detailed information on their websites and in their handbooks on the programme content and possible career paths after completion of their studies, conforming to Namata (2013).

The data shows that the city image is one of the attributes the students use to select a particular university (cf. Harvey & Busher, 1996). The data shows that a positive side of the city or the country image plays a vital role in their selection of the university as was stated by Cubillo et al. (2006), proposing that the city image is an important factor considered by the students when choosing university. This may explain why universities sell the city image as a good place to study, work, and live, when marketing the programmes. The administrative respondent told that they informed students on where and how the services would be delivered (Nicolescu, 2009; Namata, 2013).
### 5.1.1 Summary of Choice Analysis

The table below show the summary analysis of the student’s choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Category</th>
<th>Empirical Findings</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHOICE</td>
<td>The needs and motives for the students in attending HE is to fulfill market demand, have a career or obtain a university degree</td>
<td>Van Dam (1997); Collier et al (2003); Brown &amp; Scase (1994)</td>
<td>Literature shows that needs and motives is derived from perceive lack of something. The findings from the study illustrate that because of the above justification, the students are triggered to pursue further studies by applying to the university programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To understand the services offer by the Universities the respondents engage to information search by obtaining information from handbook, university home page, friends and relatives</td>
<td>Kotler &amp; Armstrong (2008); Pimpa (2005); Enache (2011)</td>
<td>Information search were carried out by the respondents in conformity on what the theory stipulate. Information search is the second stage in the consumer decision making journey. Interviewee agrees that they searched information in one or more medium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Career advisor provided the students with useful information about the HE and the programmes.</td>
<td>Tylor (1992), Evans(1995), Forkets(2009).</td>
<td>The information given by Career advisor to the students is very helpful for them to make their decision. The career advisors are seen as the key contact point between the university and the students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The likeness of the programmes is an important motivational factor for the interviewees to choose the HE.</td>
<td>Peng et al. (2000).</td>
<td>From the data, the study programmes were evaluated by the interviewees, before they made their decision. This is in conformity with the theory which held that students pose different attitudes towards the programme. A positive attitude will encourage the interviewee to choose a programme at the HE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some interviewees see the city or country as being cheaper or lesser cost to stay</td>
<td>Cubillio et al. (2006)</td>
<td>The theory holds that aspects within the study programme such as scholarship, cost and international recognition might influence a student choice of a programme.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The probability for the student to be admitted in order to pursue their dream career at the HE is one of their main personal reason to apply at the HE.</td>
<td>Soutar &amp; Turner (2002)</td>
<td>The literature identify the student career prospects as a factor that can affect the decision making process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The respondents receive advice from career advisor, friends and family members, which were vital for them to make their decision.</td>
<td>Burke (2000); Chapman (1981); Binasard &amp; Ekwulugo (2003)</td>
<td>The literatures held that, advice from people, such as family members, friends, guidance counselors and alumni, may persuade the student to choose a particular university over others.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Some student respondents regard the University Ranking, size and the as some of the factors that have influence their choice of the HE. Qureshi (1995); Mazzarol (1998) The literature findings shows that, an institution image can have strong influence for a student decision to attend a particular university

Table 10. Choice analysis, own

5.2 Marketing Mix

The student’s responses indicate that the programme is very important marketing mix element, i.e. it is from the programme that the students derive the value (cf. Mamta, 2013) of consuming the HE services. Hence, it is an important motivational factor for the interviewees in choosing university. The respondents held that their chosen programmes were the same or similar to those of other HEs (Barnes, 1995). Some interviewees belief that the programme can be best designed by faculty and students together, as proposed by Hollensen (2013), who held that if faculty and students design the programme together it can boost the HEs marketing strategy.

Price or tuition affect the choice of university. Some students were of the view that if they had to pay fees, they wouldn’t enrolled in the university (Pugsley, 2004). These students were relatively tuition cost conscious (cf. Eckel, 2007).

Some respondents attest that the university communicated to them before their application was made. Lamb et al. (2011) suggested the HE use different communication channels, such as websites and social media (cf. Eckel, 2017; Kotler et al. 2008) to reach the students. The data shows the university visited some high school students, in agreement with Hayes (2012), who hold that HEs should visit high schools as part of their marketing strategy to increase student enrollment. This is in accordance with Habiba & Monika, (2016), who propose that showing facilities and course content might help the students to make a judgement about the programme or institution.

Some Respondent agreed to have been influenced by faculty staff or current students in their decision making, as proposed Ivy & Naunde (2014). They stipulate that staff and current students influence the decision-making of would-be students. A respondent belief that, the higher number of Ph.Ds. at the faculty is a sign of quality teaching. In line with Ivy & Naunde
(2004) that the presence of more Ph.D.-lecturers will motivate students to choose university. The reasons given by the respondent is that with more PhD lecturers, the HE might have quality teaching and more experienced teachers. Thus, it might influence their choices. Some interviewees are of the view that public figures that are former students at the university, play a part in their decision to apply to the university. This is in conformity with view held by Ivy (2008). Some respondents agreed that people, such as staff, at the HE where very helpful in providing them with very useful information about the university and the study programme. The information provided by the staff according to the data had a direct impact in their decision-making before and after the admission (Enache, 2011; Soedijati & Pramingsih, 2011).

Physical evidence, such as university buildings, pictures, and video also had some influence on an interviewee on where to study, in line with Ivy & Fattal (2010), Gibbs & Knapp (2002), and Price et al. (2003), who view HE buildings, pictures, and video as a means to show what the HE offers to the student and to influence the student enrollment.

5.2.1 Summary of the Marketing mix Analysis
The table below show the summary of the marketing mix analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing mix Subcategory</th>
<th>Empirical Findings</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme/Product</td>
<td>The respondents expresses their needs for the study programme</td>
<td>Mamta (2013)</td>
<td>The literature shows that there is a value derived from the programme which can greatly influence the student's choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some student’s respondents are of the opinion that the same university programmes looks alike as those of the other universities.</td>
<td>Barnes (1993)</td>
<td>The theory holds that the HE are offering very similar services to their customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The empirical findings shows that some respondents are of</td>
<td>Hollensen (2013)</td>
<td>It’s appropriately to implement programmes that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Price</strong></td>
<td>Most interviewees agree they are willing to pay fees if they ask to pay tuition in order for them to archive their study objectives. However there is an amount limit of which must of them will be willing to pay.</td>
<td>Pugsley (2004); Pennell &amp; West (2005); Hemelt &amp; Marcotte (2011); Eckel(2007)</td>
<td>Price or tuition fee has major influence in the marketing strategies because must parents and students are concern about the financial implication of attending a university. As the primary customers of HE, the students are relatively cost conscious, they will tend to maximize the investment of tuition fees while maximizing the returns or values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotion</strong></td>
<td>The empirical data shows that the HE communicated to some students using different medium of communication</td>
<td>Lamb et al.(2014) Palmer (2011); Kitchen et al. (2008).</td>
<td>Promotion is an institution ability to communicate to its target audience using different tools and methods. They include; advertising, public relations, personal and selling. There are various tools for the above elements which are implemented by HE, such as Web advertising, social media, search engine optimization, direct mailing, education show exhibits open days etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>Some student respondents agree to have been influenced by people such as staff, the higher number of PhD holders at the HE and also by public figures who at one time were students at the same university.</td>
<td>Ivy (2008)</td>
<td>The literature shows that the image of the institution can be boosted by the way staff interact and faculty member’s response to the students. Also, a higher number of PhDs holders or public figures appearing constantly on TV who are alumni at the institution can influence a student choice.</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of the students agree the HE visited their high school</td>
<td>Hayes (2012); Blumenstyk (2006)</td>
<td>Off-campus visits to high school are important recruiting grounds for the universities. For this reason, university are advice to visit high schools with a goal to give students a better understand of what the HE offers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The facilities images and course description aid the respondents to make positive judgement of the programme.</td>
<td>Jobber (2004); Habbika &amp; Monika (2016)</td>
<td>It is difficult to represent the quality of education in an advertising. As such, institution may use tangible cues to help students understand and judge their services by showing pictures of the HE facilities, course descriptions and how the services shall be delivered on campus or online.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
interviewees were in a regular contact with the institution prior to the admission and the held positive views about those they communicate with at the universities. Soedjati & Pratmingsih (2011) important factor in the service marketing that can influence a potential customers (student).when the students seek information, the first impression count base on their initial contact.

| Physical Evidence | Most of the interviewee accept that fact the image or video they saw provides them with the information on how in reality that facilities of the university are. Ivy & Fattal (2010); Enache (2011) | The service for HE can been show as evidence or prove by using the pictures/video of the HE infrastructure in the brochures or on the university home page |
| The information gathered from the findings showed that some of the students were influenced by the university buildings and or location Kotler & Armstrong (2010); Gibbs & Knapp (2002) | Physical evidence for HE gives first impression usually they are buildings or other facilities. The condition of the physical location contributes greatly to the image of the institution in the eyes of the students. |
| Some students took the standard of buildings into account as an influential factor in making their choice Price et al. (2003) | High standard of the facilities is perceived to have an important influence on the students’ choice of the HE. |

| 5.2.2 Adopted Model | The universities rely on marketing mix elements in their communication plan which they use to attract new students in their institutions. At the same time the students in their student | 47 |
decision making process, they use marketing elements in making their final choice of the university to study.

Figure 5. Adopted Model, own.
CHAPTER 6 LIMITATION & CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study by providing the answers for the research questions. It is also present the limitation of the study and a suggestion for future research is also included.

6.1 Answers to the Research Questions

This section gives the answers in the research questions as seen in chapter 2. The conclusion of each question is drawn to give an understanding of the result.

6.1.1 What marketing mix strategy is used by universities to recruit new students?

The study confirms that the universities are imploring the marketing mix strategies which this study is based on in the recruitment of students. The university are selling programmes and courses (Product) to would be students. This programme/courses for Sweden and EU students it is tuition free while non EU students have to pay tuition fees (Price). The university view tuition fee as an alternative source of income generation to the HE institutions in Sweden. While marketing the programme/ courses, the HE institutions are faced with some Challenges such ‘marketing forces’ from rival Universities and a way to physically present the service to the students due to the intangible nature of service characteristics.

The universities are also marketing the city (place) in which they operate as a great place to live, work and study. Service distribution or channels for the HE institutions is done in two ways, either by online or campus based. These methods are used for the conveniences for perspectives students.

The HE institutions are targeting prospective students using all three methods of the promotional mix. They do this by using different advertising channels (TV, social media, Billboard Ads etc.), Public relations (visiting of high schools) and sales promotion in the form of scholarships for international students.

The People factor is an important marketing mix element for the universities. People such as staff, current and former students are the main originator of communication or contact points between the universities and the students.
Lastly, the HE institution use people, facilities and descriptive programme contents with images and testimony video of former/current happy students as their evidences.

6.1.3 How does the Marketing Mix influences student’s choice of a university?

The Students needs the services offer by the universities which are the programme and courses. This implies good programmes with suitability of the current job market will attract the students.

The student undergoes the process in the decision-making process before attempting to decide/choose a university. Firstly, they have a needs or motives for a given programme either for a future career or for further studies. Secondly, the students search for information, the information is gotten from the university website, magazine, from people such as friends or relatives and the HE contact person.

The students also preferred a university not too far away from the region or city in which they live. The promotional mix of the universities are very important elements where the students got information. University facilities, people such as current and former students are part of evidence shown by the university to the students, and as such awareness is created.

Students from outside of EU are more concerns about the tuition than home base students. The foreign students prioritize price as a major factor when selecting a University.

People are the primary sources of information. It can be concluded from this study that marketing mix strategies have a positive impact to the student’s choice.

6.2 Theoretical implication

The study’s aim was to determine if the traditional marketing mix elements influence the students when selecting a University. The study of marketing mix for higher education and/or student’s decision-making process for a University have been studied by many researchers. However, previous studies did not relate the marketing mix elements with the student’s choice. For this reason, there are differences with earlier studies. It has been shown that motivating factors to choose the HE is being influence by marketing mix. However, the gap in the literature, to investigate the influence of the marketing mix to student’s choice of the university in Sweden, has not been covered.
Hence, the presented marketing mix strategies were the first attempt to cover the gap in the literature. More so, the empirical findings are based on interviews with undergraduate students in the Lund and Malmö Universities in Sweden. Thus, new knowledge in this area has contributed to the literature by presenting elements in marketing mix that influence the student’s choice of a University. For this reason, it is believed that the study is based on a valid and reliable results and thus open new view for research and contribution in the literature.

6.3 Implication for Universities Authority

Considering that the Universities are acting as the suppliers for the degree programme to fulfill the needs and motives of the students. It is imperative for universities to constantly study

- What is the current and future job market demands?
- What are the student’s needs and motives?

With the above steps if taken into consideration it will have a feedback effect for the Universities to offer programmes that are needed in today’s and future job market and at the same time satisfying the students demand.

6.4 Implication for the students

The students’ need to widen their scope in the information search to view what different universities are offering. In light of the fact that the students are the primary consumers of the services being offered by the university, coupling with the current and the future job markets. Armed with the right information they can make better decision while selecting a programme at the university. The value derived of the programme and the economic cost of relocation should also be bear in the minds of the students.

6.5 Personal Reflections

In carrying out this study, I have got the understanding of the concepts in marketing mix strategies used by the HE institutions, as well as on how the students do make their decision to choose a University. By looking at the study results of, there is no denial that the HE marketing mix strategy has a positive impact in the student’s choice of a university. The study results have empowered me with the tactics and strategy to design a marketing/communication plan if one day I work at a university communication unit or Marketing unit. It has also provided me with knowledge on what channels to use in targeting the students. The study has made me to understand what the students’ needs and motives are and what attributes they use in marking
their decisions. The result findings are interested to me especially as I have seen the relationship that exist between the marketing mix and the student’s choice of a university.

6.6 Limitation and suggestion for future research

Despite the findings of the importance of this study, there are limitations that could be recognized. These limitations are:

- Time factor and cost, due to the time factor and cost the study could not include many universities and students in the study.
- Method of sampling, the non-probability method use in convenience sampling is also a limitation for this study as it cannot represent the students’ population.
- Not all the marketing mix elements were investigated in this study.
- Due to the in-depth nature of the case study method, it is not possible to collect data on a very large scale and as such, the results cannot be generalized.

In the future, I will like a research to be conducted on the effects of University choice to the student’s satisfactions.
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Philipson, S. (2017-11-03). State of the art: a crash course to understanding the’ frontiers of science’, retrieved from:


Rovai, A.P. (2003). In search of higher persistence rates in distance education online programs. The Internet and Higher Education, 6(1), 1-16.


Zemke, R. (2000). The best customer have is the one you have already got, *Journal for Quality and Participation*, 58(4), 33-35.

### Appendix 1, Table (5) Table of Operationalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the universities Administrators</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>What is your position at the university?</td>
<td>To understand the role of the interviewee in the HE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Mix</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>What is the university ‘selling’, and what are the challenges to present the service offerings?</td>
<td>Soedijati &amp; Praptiningsih (2011); Nicolescu (2009); Mamata (2013)</td>
<td>To understand what HE sells and the challenges they encounter.</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>What impact does tuition fee have on prospective students according to your opinion?</td>
<td>Soedijati &amp; Praptiningsih (2011); Nicolescu (2009); Mamata (2013)</td>
<td>To understand how tuition can affect the rate of enrolment of students to the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Do you promise to students on how the service shall be delivered (on campus and/or online)? Why?</td>
<td>Nicolescu (2009); Mamata (2013)</td>
<td>To understand how the HE distributes its services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3a</td>
<td>In what ways does the HE targets prospective students?</td>
<td>Blumenstück (2006); Hayes (2012); Van Den Poel &amp; Leunis (1999)</td>
<td>To understand integrating marketing communication for the HE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Are there any challenges to communicate what the institution sells to the students? If yes, what are they?</td>
<td>Habiba &amp; Monika (2016)</td>
<td>Service offerings due to its intangibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4a</td>
<td>If yes on 3b: How can the marketing mix elements be used in the promotional mix to overcome the challenges?</td>
<td>Habiba &amp; Monika (2016); Rudd &amp; Mill (2008)</td>
<td>To understand how to overcome the intangibility of service in promotional mix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4b</td>
<td>What is the importance of people (such as faculty, staff, and current and former students) in the marketing of HE institution?</td>
<td>Ivy &amp; Naude (2004); Brassington (2006); Hollesen (2003); Enache (2011); Ivy (2008); Soedijati &amp; Pratmingsih (2011)</td>
<td>To understand the use of people in marketing of HE institution</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>In your advertisement, do you show your facilities, such as buildings, to prospective students if yes, how and why?</td>
<td>Gibbs &amp; Knapp (2002); Price et al. (2003)</td>
<td>To understand how to provide evidence Prospective students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### For Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6a</th>
<th>What is your name?</th>
<th>To get background information from the students.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Are you a free-mover or home-based student?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6c</td>
<td>If you are a home-based student, in which region in Sweden were you residing, before you enrolled at this university?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7a</td>
<td>What are your needs or motives for attending the chosen programme at this university?</td>
<td>Van Dam (1997); Brown &amp; Scase (1994); Collier et al. (2003); Mullen (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7b</td>
<td>Where did you find the information about the university before the application</td>
<td>Enache (2011); Pimpa (2005); Evans (1995); Taylor (1992); Evans (1995); Forsket (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Did a career adviser give you any information?</td>
<td></td>
<td>To understand if program affect the choice of university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>What role does the programme that you have chosen play in the selection of your current university?</td>
<td>Peng et al. (2000); Hooley &amp; Lynch (1981); Maringe &amp; Cubillo (2006)</td>
<td>To understand if program affect the choice of university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9a</td>
<td>Did something special about the city or country of this university influence your choice of university?</td>
<td>Harvey &amp; Busher (1996); Maringe &amp; Cubillo (2006)</td>
<td>To understand the influence of place in evaluation of alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b</td>
<td>What are your personal reasons to choose this university over others?</td>
<td>Binsardi &amp; Ekwulugo (2003); Souter &amp; Turner (2002)</td>
<td>To understand what other personal reasons to evaluation of choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10a</td>
<td>Did others influence your choice of university? If so, which person(s) and how?</td>
<td>Burker (2000); Chapman (1981); Binsardi &amp; Ekwulugo (2003)</td>
<td>To understand if other people factors influence the decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10b</td>
<td>Does the image of the institution influence your choice of the university? If yes, how?</td>
<td>Qureshi (1995); Mazzarol (1998); Grewal et al. (2008); Burke (2000)</td>
<td>To understand if the institution image influences the choice of HE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**For the students**

**Marketing Mix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>In what way was the programme important in your choice of this university?</td>
<td>(Mamta 2013)</td>
<td>To understand the value derives from the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Do you consider this same programme at other universities to be similar in content with the one here? If yes, please explain.</td>
<td>Barnes (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13a</td>
<td>Do you think that a programme would be better if it was design together by students and faculty? If yes, how? If yes, why?</td>
<td>Hollensen (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>14a</td>
<td>Are you a tuition free student?</td>
<td>Pugsley (2004); Pennell &amp; West (2005); Hemelt &amp; Marcotte, (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14b</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14c</td>
<td>Why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15a</td>
<td>Are you a fee-paying student?</td>
<td>Eckel (2007); Kotler &amp; Fox (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15b</td>
<td>If yes, how much are you paying?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15c</td>
<td>Do you think that you get good value for the money?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15d</td>
<td>Is the fee to your knowledge higher or lower than the fees for equivalent programmes at other universities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Did the university communicate with you before you chose where to study?</td>
<td>Lamb et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>By what means were you able to access the university information?</td>
<td>Palmer (2011); Kitchen et al. (2008)</td>
<td>To understand communication elements the prospective student gain access to the university info.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Did the university visit your high school?</td>
<td>Hayes (2012)</td>
<td>To understand if the university visited the high school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Did images/facilities/course descriptions assure you of the quality of the programme?</td>
<td>Jobber (2004); Habbika &amp; Monika (2016)</td>
<td>To understand tangible cues that might help to student to judge the programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Did a faculty member, staff, or an enrolled student influence your decision to choose this university?</td>
<td>Ivy (2008)</td>
<td>To understand if faculty, staff, and current students influence the choice of prospective student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21a</td>
<td>Was a higher number of lecturers by faculty with a Ph.D. a factor that you considered when choosing to study at the university?</td>
<td>Ivy (2008)</td>
<td>To understand if lecturers with Ph.D.’s are a motivating factor to choose a university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21b</td>
<td>If yes, why do you think so?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Did any public figure(s) from this university influence your choice to attend the university?</td>
<td>Ivy (2008)</td>
<td>To understand if public figures are a motivation to choose a university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Citation</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23a</td>
<td>Were you in regular contact with a staff at the university prior to your admission? If yes, how was your impression of the communication?</td>
<td>Enache (2011); Soedijati &amp; Pratmingsih (2011)</td>
<td>To understand the people factor in communication before and after admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23b</td>
<td>Were those who you were communicating with from application to enrolment helpful to you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Did the pictures/videos and other content you saw and read about the university provide you with an image of how the university actually was after you came?</td>
<td>Ivy &amp; Fattal (2010)</td>
<td>To understand the tangible and intangible element.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Did the university buildings influence you to enrolment in the programme?</td>
<td>Kotler &amp; Armstrong (2010)</td>
<td>To understand the students first impression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Were you attracted to the university location (its environment, other facilities and its accessibility)?</td>
<td>Gibbs &amp; Knapp (2002)</td>
<td>To understand the role played by physical location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a</td>
<td>What is your view of the standard of your university buildings?</td>
<td>Price et al. (2003)</td>
<td>To understand if high standard of the university buildings influence students’ choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b</td>
<td>Did you take that into account when you decided to apply to the university?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5. Operationalizing, own.*
Appendix 2- Interview guide for the Staff and Students

A- Staff:

1a. What is your position at the university?
1b. What is the university ‘selling’, and what are the challenges to present the service offerings?
2a. What impact does tuition fee have on prospective students according to your opinion?
2b. Do you promise to students on how the service shall be delivered (on campus and/or online)? Why?
3a. In what ways does the HE targets prospective students?
3b. Are there any challenges to communicate what the institution sells to the students? If yes, what are they?
4a. If yes on 3b: How can the marketing mix elements be used in the promotional mix to overcome the challenges?
4b. What is the importance of people (such as faculty, staff, and current and former students) in the marketing of HE institution?
5. In your advertisement, do you show your facilities, such as buildings, to prospective?

B- Student

6a. What is your name?
6b. Are you a free-mover or home-based student?
6c. If you are a home-based student, in which region in Sweden were you residing, before you enrolled at this university?
7a. What are your needs or motives for attending the chosen programme at this university?
7b. Where did you find the information about the university before the application?
8a. Did a career adviser give you any information?
8b. What role does the programme that you have chosen play in the selection of your current university?
9a. Did something special about the city or country of this university influence your choice of university?
9b. What are your personal reasons to choose this university over others?
10a. Did others influence your choice of university? If so, which person(s) and how?
10b. Does the image of the institution influence your choice of the university? If yes, how?
11. In what way was the programme important in your choice of this university?
12. Do you consider this same programme at other universities to be similar in content with the one here? If yes, please explain.
13a. Do you think that a programme would be better if it was design together by students and faculty?
13b. If yes, how?
13c. If yes, why?
14a. Are you a tuition free student?
14b. Why?
14c. Why not?
15a. Are you a fee-paying student?
15b. If yes, how much are you paying?
15c. Do you think that you get good value for the money?
15d. Is the fee to your knowledge higher or lower than the fees for equivalent programmes at other universities?
16. Did the university communicate with you before you chose where to study?
17. By what means were you able to access the university information?
18. Did the university visit your high school?
19. Did images/facilities/course descriptions assure you of the quality of the programme?
20. Did a faculty member, staff, or an enrolled student influence your decision to choose this university?
21a. Was a higher number of lecturers by faculty with a Ph.D. a factor that you considered when choosing to study at the university?
21b. If yes, why do you think so?
22. Did any public figure(s) from this university influence your choice to attend the university?
23a. Were you in regular contact with a staff at the university prior to your admission?
   If yes, how was your impression of the communication?
23b. Were those who you were communicating with from application to enrolment helpful to you?
24. Did the pictures/videos and other content you saw and read about the university provide you with an image of how the university actually was after you came?
25. Did the university buildings influence you to enrolment in the programme?
26. Were you attracted to the university location (its environment, other facilities and its accessibility)?

27a. What is your view of the standard of your university buildings?

27b. Did you take that into account when you decided to apply to the university?
Appendix 3 Letter of Cooperation

To whom it may concern,

I am Martin Soen Young, a Master student at the University of Guelph. My thesis concerns Higher Education Marketing.

I want to investigate how your university uses marketing and management in recruiting new students by interviewing students and examining your institution. I guarantee your anonymity if you want and I will not publish any details or names of you.

I shall be glad if you can grant me an interview any time which is convenient for you.

If you agree and you will receive a copy of the thesis. I need your help and any useful information to the thesis is appreciated. It would help me and I thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Martin Soen Young

[Signature]

Email: [Email Address]

[Address]

[Date]
Appendix 4. Pattern formation

Based on Philipson (2013), the steps below are used in the formation of patterns amongst the interviewees:

Step 1. The interview questions are structured in an Excel file as rows and the interviewees are placed on the column axes. The answers for each interview are given in respective cell.

Step 2. In every answer, keywords are marked in bold. The selection of keywords is based on important points within the sentence. However, it still reflects the differences between the respondents. Non-bold text is excluded only, the key parts of the answer remains.

Step 3. A question with a ‘set of answers’ are divided in different row. Each row containing more than one filled cell gets its own header that represent the answer given. The header is based on the words used by the interviewees, rather than by theoretical definition.

Step 4. All filled cells are highlighted with a yellow background colour, this a visual identifier created. The rows are rearranged for each question so that rows with most yellow coloured cells come first. Interviewee’s columns are also rearranged so that interviews with similar patterns are placed next to each other.

Step 5. Finally, local and global patterns in line with the theoretical framework are identified and findings are analyzed in comparison with theoretical discussion. Patterns that cannot be explained by extant theories are identified and discussed.
Appendix 5, State of Art and reflections

The theories used in the literature review can be evaluated using the measurement tool suggested by Philipson (2017-11-03):

1. The amount of citations will be observed.
2. Abstracts of a sample of articles citing the article in question or using a sub theory will be examined regarding the empirical validation of the main article to evaluate validation of the theory.
3. As a combined result of the level of citation, and the validation make a judgment of the strength of the theory.

Validation can be limited, some, or well validated, see table 1. Philipson (2017-11-03) refers to the state-of-the-art as a scale from 0 to something under 100 percent. Dominating theories have value between 50 and 70 percent, while conflicting emerging theories values ranges from 20 to 30 percent, proposal theories are those where sciences don not have any good explanation to the phenomenon and are between 5 and 10 percent. (Philipson, 2017-11-03). The thesis author obtained citation number using google scholar under the heading "cited by" with the help of other referrer's article as explained above about the strength in theory has been found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citations</th>
<th>Share of validations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low &lt; 200</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium 201 &lt; 499</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High &gt; 500</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emerging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Tool measurement of State-of-the-Art, Philipson (2017)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomenon</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Validity</th>
<th>Strength in theories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing mix</td>
<td>Amaral &amp; Magahaes (2007); Nicolescu (2009)</td>
<td>20, 97</td>
<td>Limited Validation</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE programme as a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>service</td>
<td>HE offers</td>
<td>Mamata (2013)</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>Some Validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role of Tuition fee for the HE</td>
<td>Tang et al. (2004); Rothschild &amp; White (1993)</td>
<td>33, 130</td>
<td>Limited validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impact of Tuition fee to a prospective student</td>
<td>Pennell &amp; West (2005); Hemelt &amp; Marcotte (2011); Eckel (2007).</td>
<td>33, 101, 117, 43</td>
<td>Limited validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Targeting Students</td>
<td>Blumenstück (2006)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Limited Validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenges in the Marketing of service</td>
<td>Habiba &amp; Monika (2016)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Limited Validation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflection on the theories on marketing mix (see table 1): The Marketing mix elements are important factors to be integrated into promotional strategies for the higher education and a key in building Higher Education marketing strategies. Therefore, market mix elements may act as factors that can convince a potential student to choose a particular university. Most of the articles used in the study of marketing mix are either evaluated as emerging or proposal. The most cited article is that of Kotler & Armstrong (2010) with 31121 citations. The least cited article is that of Habiba & Monika (2016) with only one citation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elevated as: Emerging</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Challenges in HE marketing</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluated as: Emerging</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of promotional elements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluated as: Proposal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of people in Marketing strategy</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evaluated as: Emerging</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities as evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluated as: Dominating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 2. Evaluation of theories of Marketing Mix, own.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomenon Choice</th>
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<th>Citation</th>
<th>Validity</th>
<th>Strength in Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Needs and motives</td>
<td>Brown &amp; Scase (1994)</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>Some validation</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MacDormott et al. (1987); Collier et al. (2009); Mullen (2009)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Limited validation</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluated as: Emerging**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Validity</th>
<th>Strength in Theory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evans (1995)</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>Some validation</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pimpa (2005); Taylor (1992); Enache (2011)</td>
<td>74 71 39</td>
<td>Limited validation</td>
<td>Proposal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluated as: Emerging**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Validity</th>
<th>Strength in Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapman (1981)</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>Well validated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Binsardi &amp; Ewulogo (2003); Soutar &amp; Turner (2002)</td>
<td>409 489</td>
<td>Some validation</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluated as: Dominating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Citation</th>
<th>Validity</th>
<th>Strength in Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maringe &amp; Carter (2007); Cubillo et al. (2006)</td>
<td>227 375</td>
<td>Some validation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Citations</td>
<td>Validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harvey &amp; Busher</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burker (2000)</td>
<td></td>
<td>759</td>
<td>Well validated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazzarol (1998)</td>
<td></td>
<td>427</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qureshi (1995);</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grewal et al. (2008)</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>validation</td>
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<td>Hooley &amp; Lynch</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Limited</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluated as: Emerging**

**Evaluated as: Dominating**

**Evaluated as: Proposal**

Table 3. Evaluation of theories of choice, own.

Reflection on the theories on Choice (see table 2): Choice is regarded as a process that the student use as a basis for their decision on which university to attend. The evaluation of the sub-theories used under the heading choice are either emerging or proposals. Burker (2000), Palmer (2001), and Mazzarol (1998) are amongst the highest citations by other authors with citations of 759, and 427 respectively. Collier et al. (2006) is of the least cited articles with only eleven citations.