

Models and Factors Influencing on Students' Enrolment Decision: A Review Paper

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ABSTRACT: Recently, many researchers have found that education systems in many nations are very comprehensive and competitive. They revealed that the primary goal of many universities is to increase the number of students' enrolment as much as possible. In students' perspective, they also consider different factors when they make their higher education decision. Therefore, this article aims to investigate the models and factors affecting for students' enrolment decision. Relevant literature reviews explained in terms of four models which link to students' university choice process. The decision to enrol in a university is a critical one for students as it can have a significant impact on their future academic and career prospects. The purpose of this literature review is to examine the factors that influence students' enrolment decisions, with a focus on academic services, career prospects, and campus facilities.

KEYWORDS: Private University, Students' Enrolment Decision, Academic Services, Career Prospects, Campus Facilities

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the service sectors that are the systematic process of gaining knowledge and skills through study and instructions. In a knowledge society, education is the capacity to be creative in an environment of particular uncertainty, the capacity to properly management the cognitive dissonance that gives rises to our failure to comprehend reality (Innerarity, 2010).

Education enables a person to become literate that is important not only for children but also for adults.

Education development and economic development are directly related. In addition, human capital theorist agreed on that education promote the capability of economic demand even though the investment for the education development is significant and there are many proven outcome benefits (Win, 2015). Private education has increasingly played an important role in the education market in consonance with the adoption of market mechanisms in the country's economy. Private universities can provide the very best education to students so that they are positioned for success in later life.

Today, there is a large market in Myanmar as Myanmar parents are willing to make investments in their children's training to get high quality education, while staying at their domestic country. The Ministry of Education is implementing short and long-term education development plans and is aimed to bring about the enhancement of the quality of the higher education (Win, 2015). So, the market for private universities is expanding rapidly, especially in the financial capital of Yangon.

Now in Yangon, there is growing number of international schools, academic companies and establishments that collaborate with foreign universities. Private university as a service industry has undergone significant changes worldwide. Yangon offers lower's Myanmar best private and

public education organizations. Increasing private universities helps students develop their abilities so that they can be successful educators in Myanmar. Nowadays, there are many private universities in Yangon. There are still many chances for those private universities to gain competitive advantage.

Decision making phase of university is very crucial in a student's life since the whole career of the students depends on it. Students do not make university or undergraduate choice randomly as it determines the whole career and future of the students. Poor choice can negatively impact on motivation and career path. While making the university choice, students consider some factors such as personal preferences, courses, job opportunities, workload, quality of teachers, university reputation, tuition fee, academic facilities, location, parents' influence, parents' knowledge, parents education status, family socialization, university ranking, learning environments, graduate success, financial aids etc.

The key objective of this study is to review literature on students' enrolment decision. Right academic qualifications are the key to improve productivity and competitiveness of (Mudunkotuwa and Edirisinghe, 2017). This article basically produces a summary of higher education and an empirical survey as well as theoretical approaches. Further, it provides overview on what are the factors influencing students' enrolment decision.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Student choice is a basic and integral part of theory and research in regard to the demand for higher education. Over the years various theories and models have been synthesized to study this complicated decision-making process (Vrontis et al., 2007).

Service Quality (SERVQUAL) Model

Service quality theory plays a significant role in choosing a private university. It essentially refers to how well a service meets or exceeds customer expectations. In the context of private universities, students are customers seeking educational services, and their satisfaction with the quality of these services can greatly influence their decision-making process. Here's how service quality theory relates to choosing a private university:

1. Tangible Elements: Service quality theory emphasizes tangible elements like facilities, resources, and infrastructure. When choosing a private university, students may consider factors

such as campus facilities, library resources, laboratories, and technology infrastructure. A university with modern, well-equipped facilities is likely to be perceived as providing higher service quality.

2. Reliability: Reliability is another key dimension of service quality theory, referring to the university's ability to deliver its services consistently and accurately. In the context of education, this might include factors like the reliability of course schedules, availability of professors, and consistency in the quality of teaching. A private university known for its reliable academic programs and services is likely to attract more students.

3. Responsiveness: Responsiveness refers to the willingness and ability of the university staff to provide prompt assistance and support to students. In the context of private universities, this could involve factors like the availability of academic advisors, responsiveness to student inquiries, and the effectiveness of student support services such as counseling and career guidance. A university that demonstrates high responsiveness is likely to be perceived as more student-centric and thus of higher quality.

4. Assurance: Assurance relates to the competence, credibility, and trustworthiness of the university staff and faculty. Students seeking a private university may look for indicators of faculty qualifications, academic reputation, accreditation status, and success rates of alumni. A university that can provide assurances of academic excellence and career prospects is more likely to be considered favourably.

5. Empathy: Empathy refers to the university's ability to understand and cater to the individual needs of its students. This could involve factors like personalized academic advising, support for students with disabilities, and a welcoming campus environment. A private university that demonstrates empathy and a commitment to student well-being is likely to be preferred by prospective students.

In summary, service quality theory provides a framework for understanding how various aspects of the university experience contribute to students' perceptions of quality. By considering dimensions such as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, students can make more informed decisions when

choosing a private university that best meets their needs and expectations.

Academic Services

Academic services can have a significant impact on students' enrolment decisions. Students want to attend universities that offer high-quality academic services that can help them succeed academically. Here are some previous articles that have researched the effects of academic services on students' enrolment decisions: A study by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) found that academic advising was the most important academic service for students. The study found that students who received regular academic advising were more likely to graduate on time and have a higher GPA. (NACUBO, 2017). A study by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) found that tutoring services had a positive impact on student retention rates and academic performance. The study found that students who participated in tutoring services were more likely to stay enrolled in their courses and earn higher grades. (UCLA, 2019). A study by the University of Michigan found that library resources were an important factor in students' enrolment decisions. The study found that students who had access to high-quality library resources were more likely to have a positive overall college experience and be satisfied with their academic program. (University of Michigan, 2018).

Overall, these studies suggest that academic services can have a significant impact on students' enrolment decisions. Universities that offer high-quality academic services, such as academic advising, tutoring, library resources, and career services, are more likely to attract and retain students.

Prospect Theory

Prospect Theory, developed by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, is a psychological theory that describes how individuals make decisions under uncertainty and risk. It suggests that people evaluate potential gains and losses relative to a reference point and that they tend to be risk-averse when facing gains but risk-seeking when facing losses. In the context of considering university choice for job prospects, Prospect Theory can offer insights into how students weigh potential gains and losses associated with different options:

1. Gains and Losses in Education Investment:

Prospect Theory suggests that individuals may

perceive the decision to invest in education (attending a private university) as a potential gain, in terms of acquiring valuable skills, knowledge, and credentials that can enhance their job prospects. However, they also recognize the costs involved, such as tuition fees, living expenses, and the opportunity cost of foregoing immediate employment.

2. Risk Aversion in Job Prospects: When evaluating job prospects, students may exhibit risk-averse behaviour, particularly when faced with uncertain or unfavourable outcomes. Prospect Theory suggests that individuals are more sensitive to potential losses than gains. Therefore, students may prioritize factors that mitigate potential job market risks, such as choosing a private university with a strong reputation, high job placement rates, and robust career services.

3. Reference Point for Job Prospects: Prospect Theory highlights the importance of a reference point, which serves as a baseline for evaluating outcomes. For students considering university choice for job prospects, their reference point may include factors such as their career aspirations, expectations based on family or peer experiences, or industry standards. Academic services can help students identify and evaluate their reference points to make more informed decisions about which private university aligns best with their job prospects goals.

4. Framing Effects: Prospect Theory also emphasizes the influence of how choices are framed on decision-making. Academic services can utilize framing techniques to present information about private universities in ways that emphasize potential gains in job prospects (e.g., highlighting successful alumni, career placement statistics) while minimizing perceived losses (e.g., addressing concerns about tuition costs or student debt). By framing the decision in a positive light, students may be more motivated to pursue opportunities that enhance their job prospects.

In summary, Prospect Theory provides a framework for understanding how students consider potential gains and losses in job prospects when making decisions about private university choice. By acknowledging students' risk attitudes, reference points, and framing effects, academic services can offer guidance and support to help students navigate the decision-making process effectively.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

One theoretical model that can support career prospects in choosing private universities is the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) developed by Robert Lent, Steven Brown, and Gail Hackett. According to SCCT, career development is influenced by three factors: personal factors, environmental factors, and behavioural factors. Personal factors include self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals. Environmental factors include social support, barriers and opportunities, and contextual constraints. Behavioural factors include career-related actions, such as job search behaviours and career exploration.

In the context of choosing a private university, SCCT suggests that personal factors such as self-efficacy and outcome expectations can influence an individual's decision-making process. For example, if an individual has high self-efficacy in their academic abilities, they may be more likely to consider attending a more competitive private university. Additionally, if an individual has high outcome expectations for attending a private university, such as the potential for higher salaries or better job prospects, they may be more motivated to attend one.

Environmental factors such as social support and contextual constraints can also play a role in an individual's decision-making process. For example, if an individual has a strong social network of family and friends who attended private universities and had successful careers, they may be more likely to consider attending one themselves. Conversely, if an individual is facing financial constraints or other barriers, they may be less likely to consider attending a private university.

Finally, behavioural factors such as career exploration and job search behaviours can also influence an individual's decision-making process. For example, if an individual has conducted extensive research on private universities and their career outcomes, they may be more likely to consider attending one.

Overall, SCCT provides a useful theoretical model for understanding the complex factors that influence an individual's decision to attend a private university and how it may impact their career prospects.

Service Environment Theory

Service environment theory is highly relevant when considering campus facilities in the context of choosing a private university. This theory suggests that the physical environment

where a service is delivered plays a crucial role in shaping customers' perceptions, emotions, and behaviours. In the case of private universities, students are the customers, and the campus facilities represent the service environment where they receive their educational services. Here's how service environment theory relates to choosing a private university:

1. Impact on Perceptions: The quality and appearance of campus facilities directly influence students' perceptions of the university. A well-maintained, aesthetically pleasing campus with modern facilities can create a positive impression and signal to prospective students that the institution values excellence and invests in providing a conducive learning environment.

2. Emotional Response: According to service environment theory, the physical environment can evoke emotions in individuals. When students visit a private university campus and encounter inviting, comfortable, and attractive facilities such as modern classrooms, well-equipped libraries, and state-of-the-art laboratories, they are likely to feel positive emotions such as excitement, comfort, and confidence. These positive emotions can contribute to a favourable perception of the university and increase the likelihood of enrolment.

3. Influence on Behaviour: The layout and design of campus facilities can influence students' behaviour and engagement with academic and social activities. For example, collaborative learning spaces, study lounges, and student recreation centres can encourage interaction, collaboration, and participation among students. When students perceive that the campus facilities support their academic and social needs, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged, leading to a higher likelihood of choosing the university.

4. Differentiation and Competitive Advantage: Service environment theory suggests that the physical environment can serve as a source of competitive advantage by differentiating the organization from its competitors. In the context of private universities, investing in superior campus facilities can distinguish the institution from other universities and attract students seeking a high-quality educational experience. Unique or specialized facilities, such as cutting-edge research centres or specialized training facilities, can be particularly attractive to students with specific academic interests or career goals.

5. Overall Satisfaction: Ultimately, the quality of campus facilities contributes to students' overall satisfaction with their university experience. When students perceive that the campus facilities meet or exceed their expectations, they are more likely to feel satisfied with their choice of university. Positive experiences with campus facilities can enhance students' sense of belonging, academic success, and well-being, leading to greater retention and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

In summary, service environment theory underscores the importance of campus facilities in shaping students' perceptions, emotions, behaviours, and satisfaction when choosing a private university. By investing in high-quality, attractive, and functional campus facilities, private universities can enhance their appeal to prospective students and gain a competitive edge in the higher education market.

Kano Model

The Kano Model was developed by Dr. Noriaki Kano, a Japanese professor and expert in quality management, in the 1980s. Dr. Kano originally introduced the model in a paper titled "Attractive Quality and Must-Be Quality" published in 1984 in the Japanese Journal of Quality. Since then, the Kano Model has become widely used in various industries as a framework for understanding customer preferences and prioritizing product or service enhancements.

Dr. Kano's research aimed to address the complexity of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction by categorizing product or service attributes based on their impact on customer perceptions. The Kano Model provides a structured approach for businesses to identify and prioritize features that are essential for meeting customer needs, as well as those that can delight customers and differentiate the product or service in the market.

Over the years, the Kano Model has been refined and adapted by practitioners and researchers in the fields of quality management, marketing, and product development. It remains a valuable tool for businesses seeking to understand and meet customer expectations effectively.

The Kano Model is a theory of product development and customer satisfaction that categorizes features or attributes of a product or service based on how they are perceived by customers. It distinguishes between different types of customer requirements and helps prioritize product or service enhancements based on their impact on customer satisfaction. In the context of

private universities and campus facilities, the Kano Model can be applied to understand students' preferences and prioritize investments in facility improvements. The Kano Model categorizes features into the following three categories:

1. Must-Have (Threshold) Attributes: Must-have attributes are essential features that customers expect as a basic requirement. These attributes do not necessarily increase customer satisfaction when present, but their absence can lead to dissatisfaction. In the context of campus facilities, examples of must-have attributes may include basic amenities such as clean restrooms, adequate lighting, functional classrooms, and reliable internet connectivity. Private universities must ensure that these essential facilities meet students' minimum expectations to avoid dissatisfaction.

2. Performance Attributes: Performance attributes are features that directly correlate with customer satisfaction and can be improved to enhance satisfaction levels. In the context of campus facilities, performance attributes may include factors such as modern technology infrastructure, well-equipped laboratories and libraries, comfortable study spaces, and recreational facilities. These features contribute positively to students' overall satisfaction with the university and its facilities. Private universities can prioritize investments in enhancing performance attributes to differentiate themselves and attract students seeking high-quality educational environments.

3. Delight (Excitement) Attributes: Delight attributes are unexpected features or amenities that exceed customers' expectations and evoke a positive emotional response. While not essential for basic satisfaction, these attributes can significantly enhance customer loyalty and advocacy. In the context of campus facilities, delight attributes may include unique amenities or experiences that go beyond students' expectations, such as state-of-the-art research facilities, specialized equipment, innovative learning spaces, or sustainability initiatives. Private universities can differentiate themselves and create a competitive advantage by offering delight attributes that surprise and delight students, fostering a strong emotional connection and loyalty to the institution.

By applying the Kano Model, private universities can prioritize investments in campus facilities based on their impact on student satisfaction and loyalty. By ensuring that must-have attributes meet minimum expectations, improving performance

attributes to enhance satisfaction levels, and introducing delight attributes to exceed expectations, universities can create a compelling and competitive campus environment that attracts and retains students.

Place Attachment Theory

Place Attachment Theory, studied by environmental psychologists such as Irwin Altman and Setha Low, explores the emotional bonds and connections individuals form with places. In the context of university choice, this theory suggests that students may develop attachment to universities with appealing campus facilities that meet their needs and preferences. Aesthetic campus environments, functional facilities, and opportunities for social interaction can contribute to students' sense of belonging and attachment to the university, influencing their decision to enrol.

Resource Dependence Theory

Resource Dependence Theory, as mentioned earlier, examines how organizations depend on external resources to survive and thrive. In the context of university choice, students may consider the availability and quality of campus facilities as important resources that contribute to their educational experience and overall satisfaction. Universities with state-of-the-art facilities and resources may attract students seeking a supportive and enriching learning environment, thereby influencing their decision to enroll.

III. CONCLUSION

Although the existing literature extensively explores the factors which are influencing students' enrolment decision on private universities, a noticeable gap remains in the context of private universities in Yangon, Myanmar. Most studies on this topic originate from western higher education settings, and there is a need for research that addresses the unique challenges and dynamic present in Myanmar education landscape. The existing body of literature primarily focuses on the outcomes of advising and mentoring relationships, offering insights into increased academic performance, higher retention rates, and enhanced student satisfaction (Kramer, 2003; Robb et al., 2012). However, there is a limited understanding of how cultural, institutional, and regional factors influence the effectiveness of students' enrolment decision practices in private universities in Yangon, Myanmar.

Private universities in Myanmar operate within a distinct function characterized by specific educational practices, student demographics, and

career development. The influence of these contextual factors is very important and remains understudied to understand the implementation and outcomes of students' enrolment decision. Therefore, this research aims to bridge this gap by investigating the specific challenges and opportunities faced by private universities in Yangon, Myanmar, in understanding students' enrolment decision through academic services, career prospects and campus facilities. As proposed by Kotler and Fox (1985), institutions of higher education need to understand how students select colleges and universities in order to attract the best students. Moreover, as Plank and Chiagouris (1997) posited, understanding the choice process of a university is an instrument that facilitates the development of university strategies. The findings of this study will provide ideas for the universities to understand the key issues involved in the university choice process by clarifying what is important for students' enrolment decision. The results can be used to develop an effective recruitment plan. This study also encourages other researchers to discuss and explore this topic to understand how students decide criteria their private universities' enrolment.

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