

Decision Making for Studying in Master's Degree in the ASEAN Community: Comparative Study between Thailand Student and Cambodia Student

Prapaipit Liubsuethagun^{1*}

^{1*} Faculty of Business Administration and Management, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Thailand

Mean Sothy²

² University of South-East Asia, Cambodia

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the decision-making behavior for continuing an education graduate degree in 10 countries of the ASEAN region, comparative between Thailand students and Cambodia students. This paper separates the factors that influence decision-making behavior into two categories, individual needs (self-development needs, social needs, stability in life needs) and marketing mix (education programs, cost of education, location, and public relations). The results indicate that the opinions of Thailand students and Cambodian students identified both individual needs and marketing mix factors is critical to decision-making for studying in master degree.

Keywords: Foreign Student, Decision Making, ASEAN Community

Faculty of Business Administration and Management, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University
2 Ratchathani Road, Mueang District, Ubon Ratchathani Province, 34000, Thailand
Tel. +66 81-547-1916 E-mail: prapaipit.l@ubru.ac.th

Introduction

The ASEAN Economic Community is a combination of 10 countries in the ASEAN region, including Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, and Brunei. The combination of the member countries takes effect in 2015, to encourage ASEAN about a free flow of goods and services and free movement of investment. The integration of ASEAN member countries, Thailand and the nine other countries must be prepared and adjustment for changing conditions of the economy and society, because trade and investment between the countries are increasing it makes the organization demand quality workers.

The Ministry of Education of Thailand support educational development and encourages teacher development, education personnel, media teaching, and international programs for Thailand to become a hub for international education or education hub for ASEAN. The Education Ministry preparing Thais for the change are ready to understand about different cultures of neighbors in ASEAN to extend opportunities to international students who wish to study in Thailand.

Currently competing business educations are intense and able to generate income into the country. Undergraduate students interested in studying in master degree both study in the countries and go to study at foreign countries. The recent evidence finds that Thailand was not successful with their management education side for foreign students, because Thailand has weaknesses in developing international programs due to a lack of cooperation between the institutions. Moreover, it was found that problems with competition of public university and private university and the lack of a proactive strategic plan (Kanitha, 2006).

This paper purpose is to investigate decision-making behavior for studying a master's degree in 10 countries of the ASEAN region, including Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, and Brunei. This paper separates the factors influencing the decision to study a master's degree into two categories, individual needs (self-development needs, social needs, stability in lifeneeds) and marketing mix (education programs, cost of education, location, and public relations) by comparing between undergraduate students in Thailand and undergraduate students in Cambodia. The results of this paper help to understand general information of Thailand students and Cambodia students and relative importance of factors that influence on decision-making for studying in master 's degree the organizations are involved will have information to develop education programs to generate the country's income.

Relevant Literature

In the past, many researchers were interested in factors that influenced the

decision to study (Garet, Butler-Nalin, and Bassage, 1982; Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989; Kotler, 1976; Kuh et al., 1983; Malaney, 1988; Paulsen, 1990). The demography is the key factor that researchers use to study behavior of individuals. Moreover, the decision of the consumer in certain cases is complicated (Armstrong and Kotler, 2009), thus necessary to classify the decisions of consumers into segments in order to understand decision making behavior better. The university is an organization that provides educational services to students consistent with Kotler (1997) suggestion that marketing mix is concept important to modern marketing especially in service businesses, because the concept of marketing mix has an important role due to a combination of all marketing decisions, for applied in the operations accordance with the requirements of the target market. In addition, Kotler (1994) suggestion that family members have most influence on attitudes, opinions, and values of the person which is influences on the decision making behavior.

A review of literature has brought development and enhanced factors that likely affect student decision-making for study in master degree. This paper is based on two categories, first individual needs (self-development needs, social needs, stability in life needs) and second marketing mix (education programs, cost of education, location, and public relations).

Research Design and Methodology

The population of this paper is under graduate senior students studying in the fields of accounting at their faculty of Business Administration from Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University Thailand, numbering 182 people and undergraduate senior students studying in the financial field at University of South-East Asia, Cambodia, numbering 180 people. Calculate the appropriate sample size using Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Accordingly, an appropriate sample size is 123 people for Thailand students and 123 people for Cambodia students, data collection using questionnaire survey by accidental selection. In this research, a questionnaire is used as the instrument for collection data. The variables are obtained from the survey and measured with a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (5) to “strongly disagree” (1). This paper questionnaire as the instrument for collection data, employs internal consistency for evaluating the reliability of the measurement, and measuring internal consistency reliability by using Cronbach’s Alpha, and the coefficients should have value greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). The result ensures that the questionnaires used appropriate wording and all constructs are sufficient to cover the content of the variables.

Results and Discussion

The findings of 123 people for Thailand students the demographics present that most respondents are female (95.1%) and age greater than 21 years (56.1%). In addition, most of students are domiciled in Thailand (97.6%) and were studying in the accounting program (86.2%), and business administration (11.4%). Most students lived in a dormitory (75.6%) and used private equity in study (66.7%), and government capital (30.9%). Moreover, students want to study at Singapore (39.8%), and Thailand (36.6%). The data from 123 Cambodian students most of the students are female (65.9%) and age more than 21 years (34.1%). Most of the students are resident in Cambodia (99.2%) and studying in financial program (43.9%), and accounting program (26.8%). It was found that most students will live at home with families (52.0%). The students use private equity mostly (94.3%) and want to study in master's degree at Thailand (42.3%) and Singapore (36.6%).

The results indicate mean score of individual needs influencing on decision to study in master degree, self-development needs Thailand students (4.37) and Cambodian students (4.37), social needs Thailand students (4.33) and Cambodian students (4.39), stability in life needs Thailand students (4.50) and Cambodian students (4.56). Furthermore, results demonstrate that marketing mix factors mean score as follows; education programs Thailand students (4.06) and Cambodian students (4.41), cost of education Thailand students (3.98) and Cambodian students (4.19), location Thailand students (4.42) and Cambodian students (4.52), and public relations Thailand students (4.08) and Cambodian students (4.25).

Contributions and Future Research

This paper helps those University administrators identify and justify key components to support the decision to study in master's degree in 10 countries of an ASEAN region, the results being helpful to know the opinions of Thailand students and Cambodian students. Both individual needs and marketing mix factors that are critical to decision-making for study, this information support to management education programs and development the University to meet the requirement of students. Future research should explore new factors such as in-depth interview of the students. Additionally, may development hypothesis and using statistics for hypothesis testing.

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