INFORMATION SOURCES USED TO SELECT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: EVIDENCE FROM SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the information sources used by South African students when selecting a Higher Education Institution and further to establish whether statistical significant differences occur between the perceptions of high and medium performing students from two Universities of Technologies. This paper provides an explanation of students' decision making process and the utilisation of sources of information when selecting a Higher Education Institution. Three hundred and ninety self-administrated questionnaires were completed and analyzed. The findings indicated that students in South Africa prefer to be informed about Higher Education Institutions by web sites. A high premium is also placed on campus visits and open days followed by high school teachers to obtain information. This implies that although impersonal methods (web site) are the most preferred method, a great premium is placed on personal interaction to obtain information In terms of the perceived performance of the information sources, the same sequence was measured. However significant differences were measured between the expectations of the students and the perceived performance of the information sources which applies that their expectations were not met. Consequently it needs clear planning from the authorities. Some practical implications for Higher Education Institutions, limitations and suggestions for future studies were articulated.

JEL: I2, M3

KEYWORDS: Higher education, information sources, marketing

INTRODUCTION

Higher Education Institutions will have to become more market-oriented to face all the current challenges. Furthermore, in order to communicate effectively with prospective students, they need to identify what the information needs and preferred sources of information of their target market are. They have to understand students 'decision-making processes when selecting Higher Education Institutions or courses to ensure that students make the right decision. These days the choice of higher educational institutions and courses is more complex and critical for students than it was in the past. Students are being bombarded with commercial messages promoting educational institutions and courses. On the other hand information is more widely available, easier to access and likely to be presented in a manner that will assist prospective students to make informed choices. Although this has broadened the sphere of students' choice, the variety also has complicated their decision-making processes (Brown, Varley, & Pal, 2009:311). Studies reveal multiple factors, stages and influences that impinge on students' selection process of Higher Education Institutions. Several international studies on the factors influencing this multifaceted decision-making process have been conducted and published, including Britain (Moogan, Baron, & Bainbridge, 2001), Australia (James, 2000), Belguim (Germeijs, & Verschueren, 2007), Malaysia (Ariffina, Ahmada, Ahmada & Ibrahimb, 2008). Some studies have even focused on the decision making procedures of specific groups of prospective students such as international students *(*Chen & Zimitat, 2006:91), students from lower social classes (Connor & Dewson, 2001) or students from rural areas (Chenoweth, & Galliher, 2004). However, limited research exists on

the perceived value of the information sources utilised by students when selecting a Higher Education Institution.

Problem Statement: higher education is facing increasingly more challenges on the global arena. As Higher Education Institutions in South Africa are very competitive they often take a business stance in order to compete for human and financial capital. This, consequently, gave rise to higher institutions greater emphasis on marketing communication to recruit quality students and to influence students' decisions positively towards their choice of a Higher Education Institution. This is even more so as universities increasingly seek to develop an international presence to attract international students. A critical issue is the lack of information on the source preferences of prospective students to enable Higher Education Institutions to communicate effectively through appropriate sources of information to attract quality students.

Objective of The Study: the primary objective of this study is to determine whether students' expectations are met with regards to information sources when selecting a Higher Education Institutionin South-Africa.

Five secondary objectives were formulated. Firstly, to evaluate the levels of importance of information sources of South-African students when selecting a Higher Education Institution. Secondly, to determine whether there exist significant differences between high and medium performers in terms of the importance of information sources. Thirdly, to evaluate the levels of performance of information sources when selecting a Higher Education Institution. Fourthly, to determine the existence of significant differences between high and medium performers in terms of their perceived performance of information sources. Lastly, to determine the existence of significant differences between the importance of information sources and the perceived performance thereof when selecting a Higher Education Institution.

The article is structured as follows. The literature is reviewed on the sources of information consulted by prospective students when selecting higher education institutions with specific reference to relevant international studies The research methodology are then described, followed by the finding of the study. Finally the limitations of the study and future research possibilities are presented

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customers have to choose how many and which information sources to consult when making decisions. This study focuses on the utilisation of sources of information when selecting a Higher Education Institution, while the rest of the discussion deals with the information-search phase. The two major types of information sources are internal and external. Internal sources are stored in a consumer's memory. This can be information obtained from previous searches or personal experience and is typically the only source consulted when making routine or low-involvement purchase decisions. External sources entail acquiring information from environmental sources outside the consumers' own experience and comprise personal and independent sources (Du Plessis & Rossouw, 1998:87). In the case of students who have to make career decisions, various types of personal sources might be consulted. These can include friends, family, career-counsellors, teachers, reference groups and opinion leaders. The higher education sector also increasingly makes use of advertisements in the media and on the internet, as well as promotional material and other marketing elements such as websites and visits or open days (Brown *et al.*, 2009:320).

Veloutsou, Paton and Lewis (2005:281-283) classify these sources of information into three major categories. Controllable sources of information sources originate from and are controlled by the educational institutions. These can be such as promotional material brochures, booklets promotional CDs that are supplied to schools or collected from institutions, or one open days and then increasingly institutions' websites. Non-controllable sources of information are provide by external sources such as friends and family, news in the national or international media and benchmarking league tables

(especially popular in the Britain market). Partly controllable and partly non-controllable sources of information represent a combination of sources including regional and national newspaper publications, popular magazine articles and a range of web-based sources from specialized providers or even social networks.

The role of the various information sources when selecting a Higher Education Institution have been discussed in the previous section. A review of previous international studies will be reviewed next. A recent study on university applicants' choice processes identifies four main information needs of students, namely course and entrance requirements, reputation, location and a range of financial considerations (Brown *et al*., 2009:317). Galoti and Mark (in Domino; Libraire; Lutwiller; Superczynski & Tian, 2006:102) found that parents, guardians, friends and career counsellors were rated as the most important influences when selecting colleges. Hu and Hossler (2000:685) provide evidence that the opinions of parents and other family members have a strong influence on students' considering private institutions. When Domino *et al*., (2006:102) investigated the impact of economic factors on the selection of colleges it was found that the financial capability of the household, the occupation of the parents, the responsibility of paying for studies and ethnic group of parents played an important role. Chenoweth and Galliher (2004) focused on the decision-making process of scholars at high school that are at particular risk of economic, social and cultural influences that could hamper educational success. They identified some major family factors that could influence the decision to enrol for higher education. The family often provides the financial resources to study. Family members can act as role models and are the main source of encouragement in what to study for and during studies.

The important influence of personal information sources on the intentions and attitudes of internal students to study abroad was confirmed by the recent study by Chen and Zimitat (2006:91-100). The purpose of this study was to investigate the motives of Taiwanese students who intended to study abroad at HEIs in the western world. Each student's decision-making behavior that was analyzed using the theory of planned behavior (TPB). This theory suggests that it is imperative to examine and understand the attitudes that influence a consumer's purchase intentions specifically: attitudes towards behavior (AB); subjective norms (SN); and perceived behavioral control (PB). Attitudes towards behavior refer to the strength of positive or negative beliefs that a student harbor about higher education abroad. These include issues such as perceptions of the country of intended study, its economic power, perceived quality of its HEIs, as well as the advantages that accrue from education overseas. Subjective norms (SN) are the perceived social pressures from influential people in the student's life that might influence career and study decisions such as influences of parents, family members, friends, teachers and other students. These influential groups are word-of-mouth sources that can impact on the intention of prospective students to study abroad (Brown *et al*., 2009:321). Perceived behavioral control (PB) is the extent to which a student believes that he/she has control over factors influencing the ability to study. The study demonstrates that the subjective norms or influence of significant others is a significant predictor of a student's intention to study abroad. Thus personal sources might even be more even more important to these students considering studying, abroad due to the high level of risk and cost involved in this type of decision.

Previous studies have identified other major influences on prospective students' choices. James (2000:82) investigated what influenced prospective students to choose specific courses at a university. The findings of the studies indicated that the advice from personal sources was viewed as far less important than other considerations, such as the perceived quality of the course or attaining career success. Thus the extent to which friends and family continue to influence the decision-making process is at issue. Some other studies also showed that external sources were more popular than personal sources when prospective students needed reliable information about an educational institution and its courses. Veloutsou *et al*., (2005:281-283) reported that prospective students used mainly communication originating from the university itself. The university prospectus and open days were the most popular

sources although the use of institutions' web sites to find information was growing steadily. Visits to high school, advice career advisers and news in the media were not used as frequently used students.

In a study Moogan, Baron, and Harris (1999:215) found that prospective students relied mostly on word of mouth from parents and friends, as well as the information in prospectuses to find out about educational and social benefits offered by universities. Open days was also perceived as being valuable in both the information search and decision-making process. In the information available they would consider the quality and content of courses offered, location of the institution, reputation and entrance requirements. A more recent study by Moogan and Baron (2003:271) found that prospectuses were the most important source of information. In spite of this study Maringe (2006:474) found that prospectuses were of limited value to students. Institutions which spent huge sums in advertisements and promotional activities to lure students to their institutions were condemned. Several other literature sources also seemed to disagree on the importance of the information sources that were consulted by prospective students. The conflicting findings of these studies revealed that there seems to be a difference in the degree to which prospective students use and perceive the value of information sources in particular in the South African context. The need for this current study becomes imperative.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Conceptualising the purpose of the investigation: in order to achieve the primary objective of the research, the information sources related to selecting a Higher Education Institutions investigated.

With regards to the objectives the researchers formulated the following research hypotheses:

Ho: There exist no significant differences with regard to the importance of information sources and the perceived performance thereof when selecting a Higher Education Institution.

Ha: There exist significant differences with regard to the importance of information sources and the perceived performance thereof when selecting a Higher Education Institution.

The Sample Framework

A sample of 410 students at the management faculties of two Universities of Technology in South-Africa were selected at random after permission was granted to include pre-determined classes/courses for the purpose of the survey. All respondents agreed to participate in the survey and were supplied with a self administrative questionnaire after the instructions were explained. Only 20 questionnaires or part thereof were discarded that resulted in 390 useful questionnaires. A summary of the composition of the sample is provided in table 1. The sample comprised of 40.5% male and 59.5% female students. The attitudes of the student sample were tested regarding the importance of pre-identified sources of information when selecting a specific Higher Education Institution.

Table 1: Summary of Sample Characteristics

		No	%
Age	16-17 years	2	0.5
	18-19 years	96	25
	20-21 years	122	31.5
	22+	170	43.5
Gender	Male	158	40.5
	Female	232	59.5
Performance of student	High performers	202	51.8
	Medium performers	188	48.2
University Technology	A	230	59
	B	160	41
Total		390	100

This table shows a summary of the sample characteristics.

The Measuring Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed to measure the importance and performance of information sources when deciding on a specific Higher Education Institution (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire consisted of two sections. In the first section the biographical information of the students was obtained, while the last section measured the level of importance and perceived performance of information sources when selecting a university of technology.

Section A utilised nominal scales whilst a five-point Likert-type scale was used for Section B to measure the levels of importance and the perceived performance with regards to various information sources used to select an Higher Education Institution. The importance scale was categorised as 1=very important, 2=important, 3=not important nor unimportant, 4=not important and 5=not important at all. The perceived performance scale was categorised in 1=excellent, 2=good, 3=neither good nor bad, 4=not good and 5=not good at all. The number 6 was assigned when to variables which the respondents had no experience with and was thus not applicable. The inputs for section B was gathered through an intensive literature study on the topic as well as focus group discussions with students enrolled at Higher Education Institutions.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was gathered and captured by trained field workers over a period of six months. The SPSS version 17.0 statistical package was utilised to analyse the data. For this analysis the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was employed based on the assumption that if the significant values exceeded 0.05, normality could not be assumed and the researchers had to rely on employing non-parametric analysis techniques. As normality could be assumed after applying the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test the researchers employed the ANOVA test to test the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis.

An item analysis was carried out to test the reliability of the questionnaire and an overall Cronbach's alpha of a 0,91 and 0.94 were obtained for both the importance of and the perceived performance of information sources.

FINDINGS

Table 2: Rank Order of Information Sources Used When Choosing a Higher Education Institution

Rank		Mean	SD
1	University web site	1.51	.839
2	Campus visits & Open days	1.55	.793
3	High school teachers	1.65	.936
4	University publications (newsletters & brochures)	1.75	.908
5	Parents	1.85	.984
6	Word-of-mouth (friends & other people)	1.89	.919
7	Events on campus (music festivals, Rag, sports events)	1.94	1.035
8	Advertisement in magazines / newspapers	1.95	.913
9	Other students (alumni)	2.01	.963
10	Advertisements on the radio	2.08	1.035
11	Advertisements on TV	2.09	1.114
12	Other	2.32	1.020

Table 2 indicates the rank order of information sources used when choosing a higher education institution.

From table 2 it is clear that there is a huge difference in the level of importance to which university of technology students rate the different sources of information related to Higher Education Institutions in order to assist them with their decision making process. According to the sample, the most important information source to enable them to make a decision is the universities web site, followed by Campus

visits and open days. It could be argued that due to the increasing importance of technology, web sites as a mean to disseminate information, is regarded as one of the most frequently used information sources. The importance of the traditional methods to disseminate information about Higher Education Institutions, Campus visits and open days, also proved to be top options when in need for information. On the contrary, advertisements on TV and radio have not been pointed out as important sources of information to disseminate information.

Table 3: Importance of Information Sources Used When Choosing a Higher Education Institution and Students Performance

	High performers		Medium performers		T-value
	Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**	
High school teachers	1.72 3	0.99	1.6 3	0.89	0.79
Word-of-mouth (friends & other people)	1.88 5	0.90	1.92 6	0.95	-1.87*
Advertisements on the radio	2.08 10	1.04	2.08 11	1.04	-0.58
Events on campus (music festivals, Rag, sports events)	1.93 7	1.04	1.95 7	1.04	-0.92
Advertisement in magazines / newspapers	1.96 8	0.9	1.96 8	0.94	-0.69
University publications (newsletters & brochures)	1.76 4	0.96	1.74 4	0.87	0.28
Advertisements on TV	2.12 11	1.17	2.07 10	1.07	-0.55
University web site	1.47 1	0.82	1.55 1	0.87	-1.134
Campus visits & Open days	1.55 2	0.82	1.57 2	0.77	-0.9
Other students (alumni)	2.06 9	0.96	1.97 9	0.97	0.68
Parents	1.89 6	1.0	1.84 5	0.98	-1.6
Other	2.42 12	1.0	2.11 12	1.1	0.74

Table 3 indicates the level of importance of information sources used when choosing a higher education institution. A distinction is made between high performers and medium performers. ***, **, and *indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.

Table 3 indicates that there are no significant differences between the two different levels of performers regarding the level of importance that they attach to the different information sources. In terms of the mean it is clear that there is a direct resemblance between the rank orders that the two groups attach to level of importance of the various variables. The web site; campus visits and open days and high school teachers were rated unanimously as the most important three sources of information to make informed decisions regarding a Higher Education Institution.

On the lower side it is clear that advertisements on both TV and radio have been regarded as less appealing. In terms of the mean, no fixed pattern could be traced in terms of which one of the two groups generally attached a higher level of importance to the various variables. A pattern of diverse levels of importance thus resulted between the different levels of performers.

Table 4 indicates that the university web site is clearly perceived as the best performer in terms of disseminating information for decision making regarding a Higher Education Institution. Campus visits and open days as well as word of mouth are regarded as 2nd and 3rd most powerful sources to disseminate information for the purpose of decision making. On the lower end, advertisements in magazines and on

TV and radio are perceived weakest in terms of performance of information sources for an informed decision.

Table 4: Perceived Performance of Information Sources Used When Choosing a Higher Education Institution

Rank		Mean	SD
1	University web site	2.00	1.05
2	Campus visits & Open days	2.10	1.01
3	Word-of-mouth (friends & other people)	2.18	.93
4	High school teachers	2.24	1.02
5	Parents	2.28	1.00
6	University publications (newsletters & brochures)	2.46	1.20
7	Other students (alumni)	2.50	0.99
8	Events on campus (music festivals, Rag, sports events)	2.65	1.21
9	Other	2.70	1.17
10	Advertisement in magazines / newspapers	2.74	1.09
11	Advertisements on the radio	2.78	1.09
12	Advertisements on TV	3.06	1.23

Table 4 shows the perceived performance of information sources used when choosing a higher education institution.

Table 5: Perceived Performance of Information Sources Used When Choosing a Higher Education Institution and Students Performance

	Good performers		Average performers		T-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
High school teachers	2.274	0.98	2.233	1.0	-0.85
Word-of-mouth (friends & other people)	2.113	0.9	2.254	1.0	-2.47*
Advertisements on the radio	2.8111	1.1	2.7310	1.1	-0.93
Events on campus (music festivals, Rag, sports events)	2.588	1.2	2.699	1.2	-1.2
Advertisement in magazines / newspapers	2.739	1.1	2.7511	1.1	-0.72
University publications (newsletters & brochures)	2.487	1.2	2.426	1.2	-1.1
Advertisements on TV	3.0512	1.3	3.0612	1.3	-1.6
University web site	2.011	1.1	1.971	1.0	-0.1
Campus visits & Open days	2.082	1.0	2.092	1.0	-0.17
Other students (alumni)	2.436	1.0	2.558	1.0	0.69
Parents	2.285	1.0	2.265	1.0	-0.03
Other	2.810	1.1	2.437	1.4	0.72

*Table 5 shows the perceived performance of information sources used when choosing a higher education institution. A distinction is made between good and average performers. ***, **, and *indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.*

Table 5 indicates that except for word of mouth as information source, no significant differences are measured between the two groups of performers in terms of the perceived performance of each of the information sources. The university web sites as well as visits to campuses and open days are regarded as

best perceived information sources by both samples. Average performers perceived the first mentioned source better than good performers while the latter was perceived slightly better by the good performers. Advertisements on TV, radio and magazines are regarded by both samples as weakest in terms of performance.

Table 6: Importance versus Perceived Performance of Information Sources

	Importance		Perceived performance		T-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
High school teachers	1.653	.936	2.244	1.023	-11.03***
Word-of-mouth (friends & other people)	1.896	.919	2.183	.931	-5.794***
Advertisements on the radio	2.0810	1.035	2.7811	1.093	-11.62***
Events on campus (music festivals, Rag, sports events)	1.947	1.035	2.658	1.218	-10.26***
Advertisement in magazines / newspapers	1.958	.913	2.7410	1.097	-11.95***
University publications (newsletters & brochures)	1.754	.908	2.466	1.204	-11.05***
Advertisements on TV	2.0911	1.114	3.0612	1.299	-12.68***
University web site	1.511	.839	2.001	1.052	-8.684***
Campus visits & Open days	1.552	.793	2.102	1.015	-10.30***
Other students (alumni)	2.019	.963	2.57	0.99	-8.640***
Parents	1.855	.984	2.285	1.0	-7.677***
Other	2.3212	1.020	2.79	1.17	-1.908***

Table 6 shows the importance versus the perceived performance of information sources when choosing a higher education institution.
***, **, and *indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 percent levels respectively.

Table 6 clearly indicates that there are significant differences between the means of importance and perceived performance. Yet the ranking of importance and perceived performance of the information source appears to be the similar. The universities web site and campus visits/ open days were rated as the two most important sources of information, as wells as the two best perceived information sources. Still statistical significant differences were found between the importance and perceived performance of these variables. This means that students' expectations are not met. This is also the case with all the other variables. It appears that the institutions realize which the most valuable sources are, although they seem not to meet the students' expectation in this regard.

The performance of advertisements on TV and radio were perceived amongst the last in the list of information sources but also rated amongst the least preferred sources.

CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this study is to identify the most important information sources that are available for potential students when in a process of selecting a tertiary institution in South-Africa as well as the perceived performance of the mentioned information sources. In an environment of intense competition amongst universities to attract the most promising students and retaining them, the most effective

methods to accomplish these goals should be implemented. This implies that the most effective information sources should be utilised to disseminate information that will enable students to make an informed decision regarding their preferred Higher Education Institution. Students are well served by a wide array of information sources that may disseminate relevant information. However, it should be determined which available sources of information will serve the purpose best. In this regard and with in mind the diverse nature of Higher Education Institutions, universities of technology should in collaboration with their students, determine the most efficient sources of information before embarking on a recruitment campaign. This process is important regardless of the positioning attempts that might already be in place by universities. Students will as part of their decision making process at one stage or the other, have a desire to acquaint themselves with the specific characteristics of a particular Higher Education Institution. In order to create and benefit from a competitive advantage, Higher Education Institutions should concentrate on the most appealing sources to disseminate information. The study performed in South Africa, revealed that students prefer to be informed about Higher Education Institutions by the web sites. A high premium is also placed on campus visits and open days follow by high school teachers to obtain information. This implies that although impersonal methods (web site) are the most preferred method, a great premium is placed on personal interaction to obtain information. This is probably due to the important nature of the outcome that will determine the decision makers' future career. Similarly, UK students put a higher premium on university prospectus, university open days and the web site. The first and the last implies that students also prefer to investigate the prospects on an indirect way but also see the universities open days, where interaction can take place, as an important source of information to choose between universities (Veloutsou et al., 2004).

With regards to high and average performers, no significant differences were measured between them in terms of their three most preferred information sources. The three most preferred information sources were also in the same rank order as the entire sample. Similar to the total sample, the least preferred information sources to consult for decision making purposes were advertisements by various kinds of media that includes the radio, television and the printed media. This outcome is debateable as no evidence is available that they regard these methods of obtaining information as unimportant purely because they know it is available.

Regarding the perceived performance of the information sources, the total sample as well as high and average performance distinctively, indicated that the web site was the best perceived information source followed by campus visits and open days. No significant differences were measure between the two groups in this regard. While good performers perceived word of mouth (friends and other people) as the third best performer, average performers perceived high school teachers as third best perceived source of information.

Although significant differences were measured between the expectations and the perceived performance of all information sources to disseminate information, it appears as if both web sites and campus visits (including open days) as most preferred sources met the needs of the sample in terms of the ranking thereof. However in both cases expectations were strictly spoken not met. The study clearly indicates the merit for engaging and concentrating on identified information sources. Regarding the web site, that is impersonal, it should be with in mind to make it accessible over a wide geographic and social spectrum and be welcoming and reassuring to prospective students. Finally from a marketing perspective, recruitment of the most promising students should keep in mind the outcome of the study in order to position itself with the aid of the most appropriate information sources.

This study is not without limitations. The findings of this study cannot be generalised to the South African population, as the composition of the sample only included students of the management faculties of two Universities of Technology in South-Africa. Therefore it can also be extended to other faculties as well as other types of tertiary institutions such as public universities and private tertiary institutions. It

would also be constructive to determine whether there are differences between the sources of information for prospective students from other faculties such as arts or humanities. Since the majority of students at the selected universities of technology are Black African students, there might be differences when compared to universities where the majority of students are non-Non Black African students.

The research approach followed in this study was quantitative in nature, so a more in-depth qualitative investigation on the specific findings would be relevant. For example, this research highlighted the importance of the web sites, campus visits and open days as information source for prospective students. Future studies could focus on in depth studies on exactly what prospective students want to hear and see when using the information sources to make informed decisions about their future career.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Questionnaire number:

This study investigates the factors that have influenced your choice with regard to higher education. Please fill in the questionnaire as completely as possible. All answers are confidential. No names are required.

Please tick the appropriate box(es) with an X

1	How old are you?	Bin	
	16-17 years	1	[4]
	18-19 years	2	
	20 – 21	3	
	21- 22	4	
	Older than 22	5	

2	What is your home language?		
	Afrikaans	1	[5]
	English	2	
	Zulu	3	
	Xhosa	4	
	Tswana	5	
	Venda	6	
	Tsonga	7	
	Swazi	8	
	Pedi	9	
	Ndebele	10	
	Sotho	11	
	Other	12	
2.1	If other please specify.		[6]

3	What is your gender?		
	Male	1	[7]
	Female	2	

4	Indicate your current academic study year (e.g. First year or Second year)		
	If you are a pre-degree student, please go to question 6		
	If you are a first to fourth year student, please answer question 5		
	Pre-degree (bridging course/short course)	1	[8]
	First year	2	
	Second year	3	
	Third year	4	
	Fourth year	5	

5	Please indicate the numbers of years you have already enrolled for this course?		
	1 year	1	[9]
	2 years	2	
	3 years	3	
	4 years	4	
	5 years and more	5	

6	How did you become aware of the Educational Institution?		
	You may choose more than one option		
	Friend	1	[10]
	Media, press, radio, TV	2	[11]
	Family member	3	[12]
	The institution it self	4	[13]
	Teachers	5	[14]
	Other	6	[15]
6.1	If other please specify.		[16]

7	Indicate who of the following people (familiar to you) have enrolled at a Higher Education Institution?	7	
	You may choose more than one option		
	No one	1	[17]
	Parent / Guardian	2	[18]
	Brothers or sisters	3	[19]
	Close friend	4	[20]
	Other	5	[21]
7.1	If other please specify.		[22]

8   Please indicate the subjects you wrote for your Grade 12 / matric examination in Column A. Mark the symbol you achieved in the subjects in Column B. Mark the grade at which you wrote them in Column C (H - higer grade S - Standard grade L - Lower grade)

	Subject	Symbol	Grade	[23- 25]
1		A B C D E F	H S L	[26- 28]
2		A B C D E F	H S L	[29- 31]
3		A B C D E F	H S L	[32- 34]
4		A B C D E F	H S L	[35- 37]
5		A B C D E F	H S L	[38- 40]
6		A B C D E F	H S L	[41- 43]
7		A B C D E F	H S L	[44- 46]
8		A B C D E F	H S L	[47- 49]
9		A B C D E F	H S L	[50- 52]
10		A B C D E F	H S L	[53- 55]
11		A B C D E F	H S L	[56- 58]
12		A B C D E F	H S L	[59- 61]

9	What was the main reason for your studies?		
	Higher income	1	[62]
	Better Job opportunities	2	
	Status	3	
	Personal development	4	
	Other	5	
9.1	If other please specify.		

10	**Who is paying for your tuition?**		
	You may choose more than one option		
	Self	1	[64]
	Parents/Family	2	[65]
	Loan	3	[66]
	Bursaries	4	[67]
	Other	5	[68]
10.1	If other please specify.		[69]

11	What is your usual living arrangement during your studies?		
	Own house/flat	1	[70]
	Parents' home	2	
	Relatives	3	
	Rented flat	4	
	Rented room	5	
	University residence	6	
	With friends in Communal home	7	

12	What means of transport(s) are you usually using to travel to the university.	

You may choose more than one option

Private

Car	1	[71]
Walk	2	[72]
Bicycle	3	[73]
Motorcycle	4	[74]

"None-Private"

Taxi	5	[75]
Train	6	[76]
University bus	7	[77]
Other Busses	8	[78]

13	Overall, to what extent are you satisfied with the **"none private"** transport you are currently using to travel to the institution?	

Answer this question if you are using "none-private"

Very satisfied	1	
Satisfied	2	
Not Satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	(79)
Dissatisfied	4	
Very dissatisfied	5	
Not applicable	6	

14	Please indicate the level of **IMPORTANCE (**left column**)** and the level of **EXPERIENCE** (right column**)** with regard to the following variable related to Higher Education.

IMPORTANCE					EXPERIENCE				
Very important	Important	Neither important, nor unimportant	Not important	Not important at all	Excellent	Good	Neither good nor bad	Not good	Not good at all	Not applicable
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

	IMPORTANCE					EXPERIENCE							
	Very important (1)				Not important at all (5)	Excellent(1)				Not good at all (5)	N/A		
Location of the Institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[80]	[13
Size of student population	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[81]	[13
Distance to institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[82]	[13
Availability of public transport	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[83]	[13
Parking facilities on campus	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[84]	[13
Security/Safety conditions on campus	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[85]	[13
Hostel accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[86]	[13
Private accommodation near institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[87]	[13
Academic reputation of institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[88]	[14
Sport reputation of institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[89]	[14
Sport facilities of institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[90]	[14
Academic reputation of faculty	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[91]	[14
Reputation of lecturers at institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[92]	[14
Availability of information about faculty	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[93]	[14
Marketing activities of Institution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[94]	[14
Scholarships available	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[95]	[14
Well equipped Computer facilities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[96]	[14
Well equipped Library facilities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[97]	[14
Recreation facilities	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[98]	[15
Small classes for better learning	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[99]	[15
Reasonable class fees	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[100]	[15
Admission requirements	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[101]	[15

	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5			
Attractive campus	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[102]	[15
Reputation of study program	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[103]	[15
Comprehensive educational program	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[104]	[15
Spacious well equipped classes	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[105]	[15
Tuck shops on campus	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[106]	[15
Dining halls on campus	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[107]	[15
Bookstores conveniently located / stocked	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[108]	[16
Hassle free registration process	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[109]	[16
Academic staff approachable/informed	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[110]	[16
Administrative staff approachable/informed	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[111]	[16
Career Advisors (of institution)are accessible and informed	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[112]	[16 4
Offer wide range of degrees/majors	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[113]	(16
Social activities/night life	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[114]	(16
Provide variety of internship/practicum programs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[115]	(16 7
Industry/community oriented	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[116]	[16
Student focussed	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[117]	[16
Competitive through put reputation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[118]	[17
Effective induction program	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[119]	[17
Attracts high quality students	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[120]	[17
Priority of attracting foreign students	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[121]	[17
Offers courses of international standard	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[122]	[17
Well known for attracting foreign students	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[123]	[17
Has international acclaimed faculty/staff	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[124]	[17
Has international student culture	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[125)	[17
International accepted qualifications	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[126]	[17
Participates in student and staff exchanges	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[127]	[17
International postgraduate reputation	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[128]	[18
International competitive research outputs	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[129]	[18
Aggressive international positioning	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[130]	[18
Reputation for easy access	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[131]	[18

15 Please indicate the level of **IMPORTANCE (**left column**)** and the level of **EXPERIENCE** (right column**)** with regard to the following variable related to information sources of Higher Education.

	IMPORTANCE					EXPERIENCE							
	Very important (1)			Not important at all (5)		Excellent(1)		Not good at all (5)			N/a		
High school teachers	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[184]	[196
Word-of-mouth (friends & other people)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[185]	[197
Advertisements on the radio	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[186]	[198
Events on campus (music festivals, Rag, sports	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[187]	[199
Advertisement in magazines / newspapers	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[188]	[200
University publications (newsletters & brochures)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[189]	[201
Advertisements on TV	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[190]	[202
University web site	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[191]	[203
Campus visits & Open days	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[192]	[204
Other students (alumni)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[193]	[205
Parents	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		[194]	[206
Other												(195)	(207

If other please specify (208

16	What is your overall level of satisfaction with the university where you are currently enrolled?					
	EXPERIENCE					
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied nor unsatisfied	Not satisfied	Not satisfied at all	(209)
	1	2	3	4	5	

Question 17 : Any additional comments you would like to raise with regards to the Institute of Higher Education where you are enrolled?

Thank you for completing the questionnaire!

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