STUDY THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHOICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS FROM CANDIDATE'S VIEW (CASE STUDY: PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN QAEMSHAHR)

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to investigate the factors affecting the choice of higher educationnon-profit institutions by pre-university students in Qaemshahr.From the population of the study 3176 people is randomly selected and a questionnaire was used to collect data that its reliability is 91/0 and its validity was approved by using the same external research and opinions of experts and university professors, finally, data from 320 students were analyzed by using SPSS software. Toanalyze the data t-test and Friedman test was used. The results show that among the studied variables, including economic factors, factors related to the university, personal factors and social factors, economic factors are most important to students and social factors are the least important.

Key words: economic factors, factors related to the university, personal factors, social factors, higher education non-profit institutions

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, followed by environmental changes, particularly changes in the economic system and the development of science and technology, higher education has faced with increased social demand for universities. Therefore, higher education institutions are competing to gain more share from market. So the higher education environment has become increasingly competitive and institutions have forced to compete to attract students (Jeames et al, 1999; Maringe, 2006). Along with Competitiveness of universities in attracting both national and international students, many universities have attempted to identify their volunteers and they are planning based on them for university. The issue has considerable importance as the development of universities in the world. Universities to attract more students are using from tools such as utilizationof knowledge management, advertising and the use of modern methods of marketing and researches to attract more students is going on in the accelerated racquet across the world. In Iran universities still has not seriously pay attention to this issue because Iranian universities still have contacts that behinddoor of universities preparing themselves for the exam. This is the most important problem of present research and it is filled the knowledge gap between university's systems of Iran compared with the systems of other countries are composed the necessity of research with this title. Therefore, as the necessity of this study should be noted that the main beneficiaries of the present research results are universities that study results are important for them to use it to deal with external threats and weaknesses in order to turn them into opportunities and strong points. The aim of this study was to determine the factors related to the university, economic factors, social and personal in choosing higher education non-profit institutions by volunteers.

2. Theoretical foundations of research Ki Ming (2010) in his research titled "Conceptual Framework of academic factors effect on the decision of students about selection of university in Malaysia" is examining Factors Affecting over ten factors and reports that Malaysia has experienced increased competition in universities and higher education institutions for attraction of students, both in local and international levels. In this study, he is examining the relationship between the location of the university, university programs, the reputation of the university, educational facilities, costs of universities, access to university financial aid, employment opportunities, University advertisement, the influence of University on students and beautiful environment of university with decision for selection of the volunteers and he is confirmed all

ten factors in the form of ten hypothesis. The reputation of the university, and compare it with the financial condition, Whitehead (2006) is evaluated student's access to financial resources of university and its impact on enrollment. The study seeks to identify factors that encourage England's pre-university students to register in Cambridge or hinder register them. Findings show that the most important deciding factors for people to register in Cambridge are three dimensions; the nature of academic disciplines, prestige of university and excitement of acceptance at Cambridge, which has always been associated with the fear of failure. Further analysis showed that there are complex interactions between these three dimensions that govern the decision to register in Cambridge. The findings of this research can be generalized to other prestigious and valid universities. Access to financial resources of university affected the decision of qualified persons to register, but this effect was not significant in the face of other factors (Whitehead, 2006).

Bradford (2008) conducted a study in six universities in Finland, in which he concluded that the cause of prosperity, proximity of University to home and family, the presence of volunteer friends in a particular university, take it easy to accept students at the time of entry and during the study, cost factors, and timely notification are factors that influence the university selection of the Finnish volunteers.

Hesuan and Qi Hong (2008) in a research about the types of people who choose their university in a way that it is called the analytical classification suggest that the results of analytical classification process confirmed volunteer students of the National University strongly care about thelower fees, fewer subjects for the entrance exam, the lower acceptance score and easier graduation.

Kahlo (2007) sees a part of the welfare in achieving communications technology and writes in his article: "Choosing a college or university has always been a complicated decision, but for students in the 21st century, this task has become more difficult. Not students only have to search for an appropriate period and decide on a good place, but they are required to pay attention to what resources as information and communications technology for choosing available training environments. "

However, other results suggest that fees for higher education in the UK is more important factor in student orientationthatcare about it more than factors such as employment opportunities to earn money, student loans and proximity to the family for going home in autumn holiday time

and midterms and costing problems (Foskett et al, 2006). It can change the prioritization of factors influencing the selection of university in a way that financial considerations are most important for students.

Marin (2006) has detected two main factors in finding factors that students pay attention to them as important factors in their decision to choose the university and the field. The first, customer-oriented approach and relationship with the labor market for employment and second, programs and the cost of each of the fields as more important than other factors are considered indicators of academic marketing.

Montilla (2004) were examined the relation of effective factors on choices and decisions that affect students' perception with students'demographic factors such as gender and university situation. Thequestionnaire of this research is formulated by questions based on three dimensions, including university selection process, the effectiveness of university professors and academic reputation of university and these factorshas been recognized as effective factors in university selection.

Price, mozdof, smith and Agahi (2003) from the Sydney University of Australia and Hallamof Great Britain have conducted a research with this title "Effects of welfare on students' university selection". According to them contradictory claims of welfare management to the place ofadded value on the one hand and practical knowledge on the other hand has been extremely important (Grimshaw, 1999) in recent years. The cause for emergence of welfare was that so much evidence indicating that welfare has an important contribution in trade (Duffy, 2000). Welfare impact on the profitability of a university is related to the development strategies of university in the areas of research and teaching ranging from the status quo or the ideal situation (Matzdorfetet al, 1997). For example, welfare factors could be very important to attract key research, attract or provision of an environment for fast creation of knowledge. This research aims to achieve a quorum for welfare factors that affect student decisions on when choosing a place to study or examines in detail the welfare impact on distinct group of customers. Price and colleagues from their research in which had examined factors such as "university", " City / Location reputation", "environmental requirements", "learning facilities", "campus security", "travel", "community facilities", " sports facilities "and" university environment" presented a report. This research was conducted once in 2000 and once in 2001. In both surveys, out of the 12 studied four cases were "particular welfare factors" and the other two under the influence of "welfare and facilities".

Hayes (2002) in his study of marketing strategies for registration of students in undergraduate nursing program wasexamined registration activities in three Ontario University that all runs undergraduate nursing training. The results of his study is referred to the importance of the registration process, the process of planning and administrative cooperation, contributing to the cooperation of every sector in registration and on the other hand by participating in programs of nursing, registration nursing program targets and other several prospects in the university selection of the students. Gary and others (2003) argue that advertising in traditional written media and the Internet are important in student's registration. However, Russell (2005) believes that spoken words are used on the website has the key influence and in contrast, written media has less important on student's registration, but as Gatfield and Hidzsaid (2005) this case has been largely ignored. Russell In this study, istesting two hypothesis and concluded that: 1. There is a relationship between cultural values and resources that students prefer to get their information for the university selection and (2) there is a positive correlation between the cultural values and preferred information sources by the students foruniversity selection.

In Avay research (2002) pre-university students were asked to rating 30 effective factors on their decisions in university selection from 1 to 10. These 30 factors were classified and weighted in 7 class. Data has been shown that program, price, space and highlighting factors are more important than other factors in determination of university selection. Totally, Avay emphasize that numerous factors are involved in determination of these indicators that each of them located in a range of various indicators. The viewpoints that could be referred in Avay study are advertisement indicators, goals perspective and administrators haven't significant effect on selection of education place. Of course, it does not mean that this kind of advertisement should be cut, but as a rejection of the strategies that are based on real tastes of volunteers. According to Avay, these issues will help institutions to change their position in the market. The findings show that among the elements that are exist in program factors, fields of study and period details, has the greatest effect on the university selection. Valuable elements that have the greatest effect on the university, including students' concerns about the acquisition of a local job opportunities and the cost of public access to part-time work life. Avoid studying in London and prefers higher education institutions in the northern cities would suggest that cost factor had the highest effect on students' decision-making framework. The issues that the university has reputation about them on the one hand and timely support of students on the other hand shows the critical

importance in their decisions that reputation credentials of their employees is crucial. However it appears, review the information on the website of the Institute affects students' decisions about the university selection.

Issues such as urban conditions that the university is located, is one of the factors influencing the university selection of the students (Rietveld, Frorax, Sa, 2004).

3. Research questions

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, has no theory and it is conducted based on research questions.

The research questions were formulated as follows:

1) what are the factors affecting choosing higher education non-profit institutions by volunteers?

2) how much the effect of each factor in choosing a higher education non-profit institution by students?

4. Research Method

The aim of the present study is functional; because the model that is presented at the end of the study can be used to attract more students to apply for university. Implementation of the study is survey and data analysis is descriptive. Also,it was exploratory and hypothesis-free and only looking for answer ofresearch questions. The study population is consisted of city pre-university students of Qaemshahr who are studying in the academic year 1393-94. By referring to the Education Department of Qaemshahr the numbers of boys and girls pre-university students studying in the academic year were reported 3176 individuals. Based on the Kokaran formulation,the sample size was 384 individuals. Finally 320 questionnaires were received in full. The data collection tool was questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was contained 24 questions. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to calculate reliability and reliability with 91/0 r = confirmed. The apparentreliability method was used to check the reliability of the content thatprepared questionnaire was given to a group of professors and academic experts and after necessary reforms and changes in the test questions, the validity was confirmed. Also in this study SPSS software was used for data analysis.

5. Findings

This research has been looking for answers to these three questions: 1) what are the factors affecting choosing higher education non-profit institutions by volunteers? 2) How much the

effect of each factor in choosing a higher education non-profit institution by students? 3) What are the ways you can notify volunteer about the university that they want to choose in the future?

The first question of research: what are the factors affecting choosing higher education non-profit institutions by volunteers? In order to answer the first question factor affecting the niversity selection by pre-university students through the study of literature, distributing questionnaires among academic experts and professors of universities and interviews with students, four factors were determined as follows: 1) economic factors 2) factors related to the University 3) personal factors, and 4) social factors. For each of these factors, some sub-factors were determined as follows:

Economic factors: the relation of university with labor-market, tuition, the opportunities to work outside the university and employment opportunities within the university;

Factors related to the University: Student Welfare, academic reputation of university, academic reputation of professors, customer-oriented, depleted fields, access to higher education, laboratories and workshops, extracurricular activities and the quality of student life;

Personal factors: a guide for teachers and school counselors, personal interest in the university, proximity to the living location, the emphasis of university on religious behavior;

Social factors: moral reputation of the university, urban security that the university is located, amenities in the area around the university, amenitiesinside the university.

The second question of research: how much the effect of each factor in choosing a higher education non-profit institution by students?

In order to answer the second question of research, by analyzing distributed questionnaire among the students, the results obtained that is in accordance with the following table:

Table1. Economic factors via single sample t test

priorities	Results of single sample t test	Economic factors
1	90..602	The university relation with labor-market
2	68.462	Tuition
3	68.181	Work opportunities inside of university
4	11.524	Work opportunities outside of university

Table2. Factors related to the university via single sample t test

priorities	Results of single sample t test	Factors related to the university
1	97.656	Student welfare
2	81.119	Academic reputation of professors
3	70.094	Academic reputation of university
4	69.869	Costumer-oriented
5	62.975	depleted fields
6	57.212	Quality of students life
7	53.287	Access to higher education
8	50.8	Workshop and laboratory
9	43.66	extracurricular activities

Table3. Personal factors via single sample t test

priorities	Results of single sample t test	Personal factors
1	72.119	Guide to teacher and counselors of schools
2	42.025	Proximity to living place
3	24.88	Personal interest in university
4	11.5	University emphasize on religious behavior

Table 4. Social factors via single sample t test

priorities	Results of single sample t test	Social factors
1	71.289	urban security that the university is located
2	45/325	amenities inside the university
3	42.812	amenities in the area around the university
4	12.937	moral reputation of the university

Table 5 is about the result of statistical calculations on the four major categories. according to this table among the total ranking obtained from the analysis of four factors, economic factors with 93.2 rate is in highest priority, the factors related to the University with 67.2 rate is in the second priority, personal factors with 22.2 rte is in third priority finally, social factors with 18.2 rate is in the last priority.

Table 5. Prioritize each factor based on the Friedman test

priorities	Results of Friedman test	factors
1	2.93	economic factors
2	2.67	factors related to the University
3	2.22	Personal factors
4	2.18	Social factors

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study is conducted to investigate the factors affecting the selection ofhigher education non-profit institutions by pre-university students in Qaemshahr. The results of the statistical analysis show the status of university selection by Iranian volunteers is consistent with what is referred in the previous researches. In cases where the result of this study wasn'tsupport previous research, mainly domestic factors were involved. Because conclusion as part of the article requires further explanation, the first and second research questions is evaluating that are considered complementary.

discussion and Conclusion about the first question: What are the factors affecting the university selection by volunteers?As a result of the same investigation and survey of professors and academic experts in the world in general, studied factors is evaluated in four areas: economic factors, factors related to the university, personal factors and social factors that each one of these factors included 4 to 9 sub-factors andreferring to research about each of them will be postponed to discuss and conclude on the second question.

Discussion and conclusion about the second question of research: how much the effect of each factor in choosing a higher education non-profit institution by students?

Interpretation of results about the economic factors: the highest ranking in the factors affecting university selectionabout the field of economic factors. This factor has the highest overall ranking among the factors affecting university selection. Economic factors are related to the financial condition of individuals during the period of study and after that. The factors that have been studied in this area include: university relation to the labor market, the possibility of future employment, the opportunity to work part-time and earn money while studying. Thus, university

relation to labor market in terms of students with 602.90 effectsis in the first place (see Table 1).Economic factor is in the first place that is consistent with Maring research (2006) that referred in his findings about the relationship between university and labor marketand he believes that the importance of university relation with labor market and future employment perspective of students has more weight thatattraction and love to education. Tuition for students in second place with an average of 462/68.in comparison with the other factors stated above is consistent.Tuition for students with an average of 462.68 is in the second place. About job opportunities inside and outside the university among economic factors has demonstrated a high effect, present research is consistent with Rigert research (2006) that the cost of students from 1989 to 2002 has been examined and its importance in comparison with the other factors was higher.

Interpretation of results about factors related to the university: In this study, factors related to the university are located in the second ranking. The factors that have been studied in this area include: the welfare of the student, the academic reputation of professors, academic reputation of university, customer-oriented, access to higher education, library and internet, workshops and laboratories, communication with universities abroad, extracurricular activities and quality of students life and access to the fields that does not exist in other universities and sometimes students have faced with these fields in foreign universities that have been examined as depleted fields.Factors related to the university in present research ranked 2 with overall 67.2 effect size. In this research,Student Welfare among factors related to the University with 656.97 has highest rankingamong other factors. Price et al. (2003) in their study have come to the importance of student welfare as a factor in attracting students that isconfirmed findings of this research. The academic reputation of professors that related to quality of teaching in universities has been ranked by average 119.81among the factors relatedto the University. In this case, the findings of present research is consistent with findings of Ham Su An andChi Hong (2008). In this study, the reputation of universityhas won rank 3among students. In general,academic reputation f professors and academic reputation of university showed a high correlation that put them in high ranking. Blackman (2006), which believes that selection could be the relationship between the organization (university) and individual (volunteer) where human factors influence the decision of volunteer, and Hu Su An and Chi Hang (2008) that put University and faculty members reputation among 5 factors in 3 and 4 ranking have also come to the same conclusion. Customer-

orientation of staff and administrative structure of the university has acquired rank 4among students. Customer-orientation is one of two factors that Maring in his research (2006)is mentioned as aneffective factor. So respect the rights of students and respect that staff should be made to students is important. In this study, access to higher education is also gained very important position. The amenities that enhance the quality of student life and extra-curricular activities and entertainment were studied. The results showed that students' extracurricular activities in students' responses has very lowest rating with 66.43 effect size compared to other factors has not been much success. In this case we can only refer to Talki and Estonia research (1999).

Interpretation of results about personal factors: personal factors in this study were in third place with an effect size of 2.22. Opinion of teachers and consultants in the study with an average of 119/72 earned first place. The impact of these factors results Conant et al (1985) confirms the belief that the marketing activities of universities can organize professional conferences to penetrate the shop schools. Also in close proximity to the location of individual students in second place with effect size was 025/42, which shows its importance among other factors. Research that has been widely talked about include Steven study (2003) that the impact force on the far and near to the development and research Price et al (2003) that proximity is a way to use the holidays to go home with the family and found to be effective. Of personal interest with effect size was 88/24 in third place and could be due to parental decisions on the choice of the students. This finding of Fvskt and Hmsly- Brown (2001), which had an impact on the decisions of parents of school students grow older they are contrary to decline. However, considering the emotional factors that govern family relations in the society of this mismatch between current research findings and research Hmsly- Brown is justified. Since the nature of relations with the West, Iran is different relationships and the influence of parents on the children until the operations are to be seen alive. But the influence of parents on their children's decision about the choice of what Kotler and Armstrong (1994) as external factors intervene on the customer's attitude towards other people speak in a direction. The focus of the coverage of religious behavior in students at the university is concerned the answer is not so high among the priorities. Students answer these factors into fourth place. The literature on this subject is not mentioned and this was quite predictable, as in other countries having or not having the usual veil not emphasized.

Interpretation of results about social factors: In this study, the city where the university is located security for students is the first priority. Taki research and Aston (1999) of 10 factors in a large survey categorized, placed fifth at the level of security. Another factor not mentioned in any research. At the University of amenities such as banks, bookstores, travel agencies, food and self-service in the present study has provided students with 325/45 rating 2. Also, another factor that has been discussed in this research facilities around campus. This is a phenomenon that external research does not mention it.Note that because the probability of going around campus that are part of the residents in these areas have been established with major universities in the cities, but the opposite is less true.Due to the competitive advantage of these universities have a student migration to these areas. In the present study, such as housing and traffic facilities around campus among students with an average rating of 3 has won 812/42. Taki research and Aston (1999) refers to factors such as the reputation of the city and the place with position 2, 3 and environmental requirements with the highest traffic rank of 5 out of 10 studied the two studies are very close together.

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