



The Key Egyptian Preference Factors for Increasing Students' Satisfaction Applied Study on Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport

Amal Moustafa Asfour¹

ABSTRACT

Education is currently considered as a global product with institutions worldwide competing for students and finding ever more creative ways to satisfy the student's needs and preferences. In the past, education was the responsibility of government. In particular, after the 1990s, private universities, academies and institutions with a commercial focus have mushroomed. This study aims at investigating the effect of studying and meeting students' preferences on influencing the Egyptian students' choice; it also examines how overall student's satisfaction can be broken down into dimensions. For the fulfillment of these objectives, the researcher uses a self-administered questionnaire with a randomly selected cohort of respondents at a selected educational institution in Egypt, which is acting as a private entity in essence but it is not one of profit educational institution. A total of 375 students take part in the study. Results reveal that Egyptian students select the educational university or institution according to five factors, personal factor is the first important criteria and subsequently financial aid and procedures, academic quality and facilities, then campus specification and finally socialization needs. This study also shows that demographic factors and background of parents and families are affected students' preferences and satisfaction in Egypt.

Keywords: Educational services, consumer satisfaction, competitive advantages.

JEL Codes: I230, I250, M300, M310.

Available Online: May 31, 2015.

This is an open access article under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License, 2015.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Various studies in different countries investigate factors influencing students' selection and choices, but so far there have not been any such studies done in Egypt. This study is exploring and determining the importance and the order of preferences' factors that influence Egyptian students in their selection of private universities and institutions. It is also focusing on how the Egyptian environment is affecting students' preferences, how social, economic and cultural variables are directing preference factors. This

¹ Arab Academy for science, technology and maritime transport, Egypt, Cairo. Email: amll_asfour@yahoo.com

study also is examining the impact of demographic variables like gender, age, income, and parents' occupation on selecting a certain private university or institute. With the liberalization of Egyptian government policies in higher education services after the 1990s, student enrollment has increased substantially. However, private universities and institutions that are working in Egypt are faced with a difficult situation of trying to understand how students select universities and what are the main factors that affect their choices.

Ministry of higher education (2013) mentions that before the year of 1990, there was no Private University in Egypt. At present there are 23 public (state-funded) universities (with about two million students), They are 22 universities and Al Azhar University. Egyptians pay only registration fees, while non-Egyptians pay full tuition fees. In addition to public universities, there are 23 private universities (with 60000 students) where students pay tuition fees. Those private universities are not funded by the state, but administered and funded by private organizations. In addition to the universities, there are about 51 public and 109 private, non-university institutions in Egypt. Open universities also available for older people.

The number of students in the private universities and institutions is increasing rapidly and recorded a phenomenal growth after the enactment of the private University in 1990. The private universities and institutions have potentials in case of development of the overall educational quality. Like any business, private educational institutions need to better understand the Egyptian students' needs and wants, and also their preferences in order to remain competitive and fully benefit from the increasing demand for private education.

Manzoor (2013) mentions that private universities and institutions should consider their students as customers and treat this service as a genuine business service. Satisfying the needs of ultimate customers, which are here students, should be the basic goal of these universities and institutions; these entities should also work hard to meet the increasing number of expectations and trying to meet the high quality of the students' demands at this higher level of education.

The success of these private educational institutions depends upon the satisfaction of their students, which is used by these institutions to reveal their strengths and weaknesses. Private educational institutions have become relational services; these services are in which service provider, i.e. education institutions and service receiver, i.e. students, interact for improving and designing the outputs which satisfy the both parties. These institutions face high national as well as international competition in the field of education so they choose the same strategies which the mostly genuine business firms do.

Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) is a regional university operated by the Arab League, whose member-states are participants in the AASTMT. Since its establishment in 1972, the Academy has been involved in the various fields of education, training, scientific research and community service. The Academy undertakes teaching, training designed to qualify students in the all fields of knowledge, including sciences, technology and humanities.

AASTMT has made several educational, training and research achievements in the spheres of maritime transport, engineering and management sciences through adopting methodological applications of cutting edge technology. In 2007, the Academy was granted the award offered by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), thus securing a position among the world's top six institutions in applying standardized levels in higher education.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

A significant proportion of the literature is comprised of country-specific studies on factors that influence the students' selection, Jurkowitsch (2006), and Al Jamil et al., (2012) mention that students with different cultural background have different factors to be considered when choosing a higher education

to study. In the case of the USA and New Zealand, Ford (1999) concludes that the order of relative importance is the academic reputation, cost/time issues and program issues. In Bangladesh Al Jamil et al., (2012) concludes that the order of the relative importance of preference factors is academic reputation, career opportunities, and program issues.

In the case of Malaysian private universities, Keling (2006) concludes that there were six (6) main institutional factors that attract students to study. These factors are the reputation of the institution, future graduates' job prospects, and nature of the institutions, lower costs, and affiliation of the institutions, entry flexibility and institutions' campus environment. He argues that it is essential for institutions to have the capabilities to offer these factors to be attractive to the prospective students.

In the case of Thailand, Kitsawad (2013) concludes that reputation of the university, environment and atmosphere of the university, good teaching facilities, good services, convenient location, and provision of financial aids are the main factors which influence students' choice of university, he adds that students themselves then their parents and families, then their friends are persons influence students decision making concerning choosing universities, he states that demographic factors – gender, age, income, and parents' occupation and education- played important role in shaping and directing students' choices.

As for studies that investigate the choices and preference factors, they discover more than 30 preference factors; all these studies take these factors as the mandatory model to guide universities to cope with their students' preferences, Mamun (2000) argues that the quality of teaching, method used for teaching, teachers' support to the students in their studies and the facilities provided to the students are considered as the basic factors of satisfaction. Ahmed (2000) also mentions that the curriculum which adds skills to the students and the quality of teaching are the two main factors that should be considered in measuring student satisfaction. While Zahid et al., (2000) mention different variables for studying the satisfaction of students in higher education institutions. These variables include the system of examination and course, the quality of teachers and their delivery of knowledge to the students, where the campus is located and its size, accommodating facilities for the students, and the facilities which are provided to the students in the campus such as auditorium, parking facilities, canteen etc. They consider these variables as key factors for measuring students' satisfaction.

According to Bahrain (2002) students' selection of a university is mainly determined by types of academic programs available, quality of education, administration standards, faculty qualification, and convenient and accessible location. Based on the preliminary study of final year management students, he argues that these selection factors should guide university administrators in developing the preferred image of their universities. Hussin et al., (2003) confirms that student selection of colleges actually depends on several criteria, including academic quality, facilities, campus surroundings, and personal characteristics. It also validates the contention that income affects the choice of students along the public-private education.

Yusof et al., (2008) examines the expectations of higher education institutions among prospective students. Prospective students are those who are about to complete secondary school education and who were at the crossroads in choosing the place to further their studies. His study concludes that the availability of required program at the university/college, the academic reputation of the university/college, the quality of the faculty/lecturers and financial assistance offered by the university/college are the four most important factors that prospective students expect before they enroll in university/college. Also Arrifin (2008) state that Factors influence student's choices of universities and educational institutions are student characteristics, external influences, college attributes. Also, information satisfaction as a mediating variable is discussed.

Student's satisfaction is a complex construct with various antecedents and these are not the same as in the actual customer satisfaction models; student's satisfaction is a continually changing construct in the Higher Education environment due to repeated interactions. Borden (1995), Kotler (1995), and Krentler (2006) mention that educational services are characterized as intangible, complex in nature,

heterogeneous, and perishable and consume on the spot when produced. Every participant in the educational services has its own definition of service quality. Elliott & Shin (2002), conclude that based on competition, which entered into education sector, students can be and should be seen as customers and key stakeholders. In universities, the university increasingly recognizes that it is a service industry and is placing greater emphasis on meeting the expectations and needs of students". Furthermore, Helfert et al., (2002) argue that relationships between universities and their students are important and that the overall market orientation of universities and educational organizations needs to be translated to a relationship level in order to be effective. The marketing aim should be the development of long-term "customer" relationships because they are a university's most valuable resource.

It is not the matter of relationship marketing only, but also integrating activities which are conducted internally and externally to exceed students` expectations. Luigi (2012) state that satisfaction has developed extensively as a basic construct for monitoring and controlling activities and is therefore often viewed as a central determinant of customer retention. Piercy (1995) illustrates that the basic understanding of what the students want is vital.

Although, many universities routinely measure satisfaction, most of those measurements are not used for marketing planning, evaluation and controlling. According to Elliott & Shin (2002), focusing on student satisfaction is not only enables universities to re-engineer their organizations to adapt to student needs, but also allows them to develop a system for continuous monitoring of how effectively they meet or exceed student needs. So, the student's satisfaction approach is the first step to develop a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Wiers-Jenssen et al., (2002) points out that a university product is more than its academic program; the product is the sum of the academic programs, social, physical and spiritual experiences. In other words, students require experience with the product to determine how far it satisfies them. It is based not only on their current experiences, but also on all their past experiences, as well as on future or anticipated experiences.

Wiers-Jenssen et al., (2002), also define expectations as beliefs about a product's attribute or performance at some time in the future. To grasp the complexity of the learning experience, it is important to understand the factors that contribute to the student's satisfaction. For many students, the process of studying not only represents the acquisition of certain skills and theoretical knowledge; it is also related to personal growth and social development.

There are many factors affecting the students' choices and satisfaction, so the researcher chooses a model of different factors based on a pilot survey, the researcher conducts a pilot survey to test these factors on the Egyptian students. The goal of this pilot survey is to explain the highest preference factors for Egyptian students, so the researcher asks 30 students from the Arab academy different colleges. The researcher choice of 30 students is based on the same demographic factors which is examined in the main sample, I ask them to illustrate the importance of all factors mentioned in the literature review to find the preference factors that Egyptian students demand from their universities, their answers explain the most important students' preferences that affect the choice of appropriate university or institution, and based on that the researcher chooses preference model applied by Hussin et al., (2003) as a model that I will be tested in the field study.

Preference factors that affect students` choices are five main factors and each one of these factors has many variables which explain the students' perception about the choice of the factor:

1. **Personal factors** – factors that are leading students personally to choose a certain university or institution, and this factor consists of many variables that are directing university choice decision, these variables are : job opportunity, availability of courses, time required for completion, tuition fees and cost-time issues, entry requirements and entry flexibility, marketability of degree, career opportunities and future graduates 'job prospects, and students diversity (gender, nationality, hobbies and characteristics).

2. **Academic quality & facilities**, and the variables of this factor are : faculties or colleges qualification, university academic reputation, the method used for teaching, quality of teachers and their delivery of knowledge to the students, teachers support to the students in their studies, quality of education, the system of examination and courses, qualifications of administrative staff and quality of serving students, program issues and availability of required program at the university/college, and administration standards and procedures.
3. **Campus specifications**, and the variables of this factor are : campus size and layout, facilities which are provided to the students in the campus, such as auditorium, parking facilities, canteen etc, Where the campus is located and its size, Campus attractiveness, and accommodating facilities for the students.
4. **Socialization needs**, and the variables of this factor are : extra-curricular activities, opportunity to meet friends, family preferences and opinions, and belong to a certain social class.
5. **Financial aid and procedures** and the variables of this factor are :financial assistance offered by the university,scholarship qualifications and policies,financial procedures and policies, and medical and social aids.

So the hypotheses of this research will be:

H1: There is a positive relationship between students` demographic factors and their preferences

H1.1: there is a positive relationship between students` gender and their preferences.

H1.2: there is a positive relationship between students` age and their preferences.

H1.3: there is a positive relationship between the parents` level of education and students` preferences.

H1.4: there is a positive relationship between students` social class and their preferences.

H2: There is a significant relationship between meeting students` preferences and increasing students` satisfaction.

H_{2.1}: there is a significant relationship between responding to students` personal factors and increasing students` satisfaction.

H_{2.2}: there is a significant relationship between meeting students` preferences toward academic quality & facilities and increasing students` satisfaction.

H_{2.3}: there is a significant relationship between responding to students' preferences toward campus specifications and increasing students` satisfaction.

H_{2.4} : there is a significant relationship between meeting students `socialization needs and increasing students` satisfaction.

H_{2.5}: there is a significant relationship between putting different kinds of financial aid and procedures and increasing students` preferences.

3.0 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In the current study, the researcher investigates the preference factors of the Egyptian students in one of the top ranked specialized educational institution in Egypt. This study asks the sample about these preference factors before joining the academy assuming that these factors are what led students to choose the AASTMT colleges and institutions, then it asks them about if they found these factors after joining the academy. This study assumes that once students don't find these expected factors, they will be dissatisfied. This study is trying to find a relationship between establishing and delivering educational services according to students' needs and expectations from one side and affecting their satisfaction from the other side. So, the researcher firstly conducts an exploratory research to gain a primary understanding about the persuading factors, then the researcher conducts a descriptive research. Finally, The study will find a relationship between these factors and the way universities choose to satisfy them.

The Type of Information that is required for this research is mainly primary in nature and all data have been collected from primary sources by the questionnaire method. The data are quantitative in nature. On the other hand, from the secondary sources, we have developed literature review that gives us insight about the stated objectives.

The researcher divided the questionnaire into three parts. As for the first part, the researcher chooses gender, age high school background, parents' education, parents' occupation, annual household income, location, and high school cumulative GPA as demographic factors that are affecting students' preferences and choices in the Egyptian environment, the second part of the questionnaire consists of 34 sentences that investigate preference factors which are affecting students' choices, and these sentences present all factors included in the preferences model, and the third part is using the same sentences to find if these factors are already existing in AASTMT colleges and institutes. The main goal of analyzing respondents' responses is to test the second hypothesis, the researcher hypothesized that if these factors exist and the academy is looking for responding to students' preferences, that will lead the university to meet their customers' needs which will lead students to choose AASTMT and in return that will increase students' satisfaction.

The existence of all variables in the research area is measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from, strongly disagree to Strongly Agree. Ranging from 1 to 5; (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4) Agree (5) Strongly Agree. The respondents are asked to mark the point that best indicates how they would describe the object being rated.

3.01 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

The researcher collects the primary data from a population of 17000 students (admission and registration department, AAST, 2014) distributed in four main locations in Egypt, and the researcher selects the sample randomly and then collects the information from the sample through the personal interview method.

The total sample size is 370 respondents based on the sample size table. The sample represents all demographic factors of students. The researcher distributes 500 questionnaires, receives 420 questionnaires, and rejects 50 questionnaires because of the errors of their responses.

Participants include male and female students from the public and private high schools and are classified in three different age groups, less than 17 years old, from 17 to 18 years old and above 18 years old. It is important to note that the majority of the students are males, which comprise 273 students or 72.03% of the total surveyed.

The average age of the students surveyed was from 17 to 18 years old; the majority of students surveyed, 306 or 80.74% indicate that they are from 17 to 18 years old. The students less than 17 years old are the smallest number surveyed, being 17 students or 4.49% of students surveyed. Participants are asked to illustrate their campus location, 211 students or 55.67% is learning in Cairo campus, 118 students or 31.13% is learning in Alexandria campus (the headquarter of the academy), 36 of students or 9.50% is learning in Port-said campus, and the reminder 14 students or 3.69% is learning in South Valley campus.

370 participants are from 27 schools in total, there are 235 students or 62.01% from 17 private schools and 144 students or 37.99% from 10 public schools participated in this study.

In the survey students are required to indicate their high school grade point average (G.P.A), more than 193 or 50.92% of the students who participate in this study indicate that they have a grade point average of 75% to 90%. 173 students or 45.65% indicates that they have a grade point average of 60% to 70%, while 13 students or 3.43% indicate that they have a grade point average above 90%, they are smaller in number. The survey requires the participants to indicate their father's or mother's level of education. Respondents can choose from pre- university degree, university degree or post graduate degree. It appears from the data collected that the majority of participants, their parents' level of education is a university degree, 76.78% of participants indicate that their parents' level of education is university degree, while 11.87% of participants indicate that their parents are holding pre- university degree, and the

smallest in number, are parents with post graduate degree and they represent 11.35% of the students surveyed.

The survey requires the participants to indicate their father's and mother's type of occupation. Respondents can choose from employee, businessmen, professional or self employed. It appears from the data gathered that the majority of students surveyed – about 63.59 % of parents are employees, and 29.55% of parents are businessmen, 6.01% of participants, their parents are self- employed and finally 1.6% of parents are professionals like consultants and governmental top positions.

The survey asks students to report their possible household income. The household income for the majority of students appears to be between 75000-100000 LE, with 205 students or 54.09% indicating this amount. 107 students or 28.23% of participants indicated that their annual household income is between 100000- 125000 LE, and 42 students or 11.08% indicate that their annual household income less than 75000 and most of this category are granted scholarships. The reminder is 25 students or 6.60% indicate that their annual household income is more than 125000 LE.

The survey asks students to report their studying language, participants can choose from Arabic or English language. 202 participants or 53.30 of the students surveyed are studying with the English language, while 177 participants or 46.70% of the students surveyed are studying with the Arabic language.

3.02 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF TOTAL ITEMS

Reliability of the questionnaire according to Cronbach Alpha Coefficient is 0.893, while the validity is .944 in Table 1 which shows its significance:

Table 1: Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Validity	N of Items
.893	.944	43

3.03 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF PREFERENCES` FACTORS

Reliability and validity of preferences` factors are shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Reliability and validity of preferences` factors

FACTORS	Cronbach's Alpha	Validity
Personal factors	.9231	.960
Academic quality and facilities	.8527	.923
Campus specifications	.9012	.949
Socialization needs	.8987	.947
Financial aid and procedures	.9253	.961

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics represent the calculated means and standard deviations for the preference factors. The researcher asks the respondents to choose one of their responses on each sentence, the researcher asks the respondents to choose their preference before and after joining the academy, this study finds the following: table 3 shows the order of preference factors based on the weighted means calculated from respondents' answers:

Table 3: The order of preferences` factors based on the weighted mean

Factors	Before students joined the Academy	After students joined the Academy
---------	------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personal factors	3.7797	.60225	3.8797	.50225
Academic quality and facilities	3.7709	.46989	3.9709	.56989
Campus specifications	3.7617	.51555	3.7786	.52105
Socialization needs	3.7551	.53944	3.7717	.41555
Financial aid and procedures	3.7776	.52605	3.8676	.51605

Table 3 shows that respondents' answers explain that the order of preference factors before entering the academy are personal factors, which means that the Egyptian students prefer the university that offers them a future job opportunities. The importance, followed by personal factors is to which extent the university offers financial aids -for example, discounts and grants- where the economic condition plays an important role in shaping students' preferences, while is considered the third preference is the quality of the educational process in all its aspects, students assume that environment of the work will provide them practical skills that will cover the gap between theoretical and practical aspects.

Respondents put campus facilities in the fourth rank considering that the main concern of any university is the educational issue, and finally they considered social activities as well as campus facilities where Egyptian students don't put social activities offered by the university as a part of the educational process and therefore is not affecting their satisfaction.

Respondents' preferences have been changed after joining and participating in the academy, the order of preference factors were changed to be academic quality and facilities, personal factors, financial aids and procedures, campus facilities, then social life where students give importance to the quality of the educational process, considering that when they have a high level of educational quality that will enable them to have a profitable job, while their ranking of preference factors did not differ before and after entering the academy. Economic and social conditions and the culture of learning play an important role in shaping the Egyptian student Preferences.

Table 4 shows that each preference factor has a set of its constituent, each sentence of the questionnaire sentences refers to one of the variables that affect students' choices, the researcher asks the respondents to determine the importance of each of these variables before and after joining the Academy, the goal of this comparison is to determine the order of student preferences and determine the presence of these preferences. Differences in order of importance are referring to which extent the academy is responding to students' preferences by establishing these factors and variables after studying students' preferences.

Table 4: Importance and the order of personal factor variables

Personal factors	Variables of the factor	Before joining the Academy		After joining the Academy	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
There are foreign students and faculty members, making the university a truly international community.	Students diversity	3.6871	.87126	3.9101	.96229
The university admission system is highly competitive.	Entry requirements, entry flexibility	3.7722	.95816	3.8231	.97634
The university has a good reputation for quality graduates.	Marketability of degree	3.9736	.99168	3.8745	.89436
The tuition fees are average compared to other institutions of the same type.	Tuition fees, and cost/time issues	3.7851	.98946	3.6214	.89436
It is possible to join an exchange program or study abroad.	Availability of course	3.7521	.98148	3.9281	.87126
The university provides career guidance and job placement counseling.	Career opportunities, future graduates' job prospects	3.8100	.97634	3.7894	.96816

It is possible to complete your courses at a time that you wish	Time required for completion	3.7931	.95632	3.7561	.97946
Knowing that after graduation I will get the job	Job opportunity	3.8010	.95329	3.8512	.98268

Table 4 shows that the order of variables of personal factors that led respondents to choose the academy are related to the flexibility of finding jobs based on the university's reputation, then they searched for the flexibility of internal factors that will lead them to complete their courses within the time. The order of preference factors has been changed after joining the academy and they are searching for accumulating their skills and experiences as a practical way to find jobs, also they are searching for how to increase their job opportunities in markets and finally they can search for the effectiveness of internal factors to complete their courses within the time. Respondents explain that the Academy should concentrate on building extended relationships with its stakeholders to increase their students' opportunities to find jobs.

Table 5: Importance and the order of financial aid and procedures variables

Financial aid and procedures	Variables of the factor	Before joining the academy		After joining the academy	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
There are possibilities to apply for a scholarship.	Scholarship qualifications and policies	3.7599	1.01984	3.8354	.87230
It is possible to apply for a loan for tuition	Financial assistance offered by the university	3.8945	.85415	3.8759	1.10850
It is possible to apply for a loan for accommodation expenses.	Financial assistance offered by the university	3.8259	1.00857	3.9845	.86415
The university provides a flexible financial system to help their students to solve their financial problems	Financial procedures and policies	3.7546	.92893	3.7876	.90140
The university provides different medical services	Medical aids	3.6412	.99894	3.6213	.8721
The university provides different social activities and events	Social aids	3.6939	.87362	3.7012	.9002

The respondents mention that it is important for them the university that offers different types of financial aids to solve their financial problems. The respondents choose to which extent the university helps its students in their second choice. The researcher found that Egyptian students consider all these kinds of aids as financial discounts that will reduce the cost of entering the university. Table 5 shows that students' preferences didn't change after joining the AAST, the researcher concludes that the importance of financial assistance offered should be considered by the university when designing their marketing strategies to attract customers and increase its market share.

Table 6: Importance and the order of Academic quality and facilities variables

Academic quality and facilities	Variables of the factor	Before joining the academy		After joining the academy	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
The university is comprehensive, offering a variety of academic programs in humanities and science.	Faculties qualification	3.9423	.87159	3.9221	.95155
The university provides the environments and atmosphere which are conducive to learning.	Program issues, availability of required program at the university/college	3.9551	.92893	3.9512	.96793
The university has clear rules and regulations.	Quality of education	3.8001	.99894	3.7559	.96294

It required preparation and personal efforts to pass the exam and get accepted to the university.	The system of examination and course	3.8112	.96897	3.9065	.90097
The university has a good reputation for academic excellence.	University's academic reputation,	3.7912	.82421	3.8251	.92432
The university has a good reputation for qualified lecturers.	Quality of teachers and their delivery of knowledge to the students,	3.8714	1.06831	3.8002	.93831
The university has a good reputation for high technology in all its infrastructure and teaching & learning facilities.	The method used for teaching,	3.7012	.96011	3.7013	.90001
The university has its own qualified and adequate administrative human resources	Qualifications of administrative staff, and quality of serving students	3.6220	.99534	3.6591	.92532
The university has its own admission examination and selection procedures.	Administration standards and procedures	3.7554	.98120	3.8771	.88150
The university has the academic advising system.	Qualifications of administrative staff, and quality of serving students	3.6453	.85749	3.6988	.96749
Lecturers are ready to support students and guide them how to improve their performance	Teachers support to the students in their studies	3.9100	.88393	3.7856	.98493

Table 6 shows that the importance and the order of academic quality and facilities are program issues and availability of required program at the university/college, Faculties qualification, teachers support to the students in their studies, quality of teachers and their delivery of knowledge to the students, the system of examination and course, quality of education, University's academic reputation, administration standards and procedures, methods used for teaching, and quality of serving students then qualifications of administrative staff. The order of academic quality and facilities before entering the academy is related to their tendency of thinking about their future career and to which extent the academy will help them to improve their knowledge. While variables which are related to university academic reputation, quality of education and qualifications of administrative staff and how they serve students play a smaller role in choosing the university.

After students joined the academy their preferences somehow changed and they think about the quality of educational system and its impact on their future career, that is obvious as they arranged variables as program issues and availability of required program at the university/college, then faculties qualification, the system of examination and course, administration standards and procedures, University academic reputation, quality of teachers and their delivery of knowledge to the students, teachers support to the students in their studies, quality of education, methods used for teaching, qualifications of administrative staff, and quality of serving students which shows that students give great importance to those factors that are enhancing their knowledge and skills. So the researcher concludes that when the university designs and implements its academic programs it is forced to put these factors into consideration to increase their students' satisfaction.

Table 7: Importance and the order of campus specifications variables

Campus specifications	Variables of the factor	Before joining the Academy		After joining the Academy	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
The university provides the environments and atmosphere which are conducive to learning.	Campus size and layout	3.7985	.92893	3.9001	.82193
The university is in a convenient location	Where the campus is located and its size,	3.8971	.91869	3.9221	.91759

The university is not far from your residence.	Campus attractiveness	3.7012	1.00121	3.6521	.90111
There are student dormitories and apartments near the university.	Accommodating facilities for the students	3.6981	.90399	3.5210	.91499
The living expenses (food, transport, accommodation etc.) on campus are reasonable	Facilities which are provided to the students in the campus, such as auditorium, parking facilities, canteen etc.	3.8521		3.8225	
			.94195		.95175

Table 7 shows that the importance and then order of variables are where the campus is located and its size, Facilities which are provided to the students in the campus, such as auditorium, parking facilities and canteen etc., Campus size and layout, Campus attractiveness, then accommodating facilities for the students , the respondents`answers explain that students prefer campuses that are in an attractive location, also students prefer the university with a well and full established facilities to help them to spend their days practicing in different kinds of activities- not only educational activities- but also social, sportive, and spiritual activities. Meanwhile, they prefer the campus, which helps students from different governorates to stay in dormitory buildings using all presented activities which let their stay easier and safer. There is no big difference between students' preferences before and after joining the academy, so the researcher concludes that the academy should establish its campus to lead its students to participate in different kinds of activities to influence students' choices

Table 8: Importance and the order of the socialization needs variables

Socializations needs	Variables of the factor	Before joining the academy		After joining the academy	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
The university offers various extracurricular activities on a regular basis.	Extracurricular activities	3.8179	.90038	3.7129	.91038
you listen to your friends and follow their advice or choice	Opportunity to meet friends	3.6517	.96229	3.6215	.92129
You get the advice and approval from your parent(s) before making any decision	Family preferences and opinions	3.8259	1.00857	3.9059	.90857
It is important to choose a university with students they belong to a higher class	Belong to a certain social class	3.8232	.87159	3.8431	.81159

Table 8 shows that the order of variables is family preferences and opinions, belong to a certain social class, extracurricular activities, then opportunity to meet friends. The researcher finds that the Egyptian culture plays an important role in shaping students' preferences where parents' opinions and choices have a higher weighted mean followed by characteristic and social class of student colleagues. Students mention that they can communicate with and belong to colleagues from the same social class and that will be better than a university with different social classes, they explain that when the university offers creative and unique social activities, that will attract them to choose this university. The researcher found that respondents arrange variables with the same order after they joined the academy except they are given the opportunity to meet friends a more weight than extracurricular activities, they explain that they can exchange their experiences and skills with their colleagues better than getting extracurricular activities.

4.01 CORRELATION BETWEEN FACTORS

The researcher measured the correlation between five main factors by using Spearman Correlation Coefficient parameters to measure the kind of relationships between these factors, and the researcher founds the following:

- In the Egyptian environment economic and social variables are very important of directing students preferences and satisfaction, that is obvious when the researcher notice that there is a strong relationship between personal factors and financial aids and procedures, and there is a strong relationship between personal factor and socialization needs, that is strengthening the role of future career and the opportunity to find jobs, also financial aid will help students to participate in different kinds of extra activities that can enhance students capabilities and skills.
- There is a strong relationship between financial aids and procedures and socialization needs, and there is a strong relationship between financial aids and procedures and academic quality and facilities, when the university offers different kinds of financial aids, it will help students to be more involved in educational and social activities. Finally, there is a strong relationship between financial factors and academic quality and facilities, respondents mention that if they are secured financially, they will think about the quality of the educational process.
- There is a medium relationship between personal factor and the quality of education, respondents give weight to the quality of educational process because they think that if the reputation of the university is good that will affect directly their opportunities to capture a profitable job with the accurate salaries, and there is a medium relationship between personal factors and the university campus specifications, the researcher finds that respondents don't give an adequate weight to campus facilities especially these facilities which complete the educational process and also they don't give weight to the importance of social and sportive activities, assuming that all these activities are not important except the educational process itself and all procedures related to it.
- There is a medium relationship between financial aids and procedures and campus specifications because respondents mention that financial aids is more important, and they choose the university that will give them future vacancies in a well distinguished companies and institutions. There is also a medium relationship between academic quality and facilities, campus specifications, and socialization needs. And there is a medium relationship between campus specifications and socialization needs, these two factors are not with the same significant degree of importance like other factors, students consider these two factors as catalysts which likely motivate students to choose the university than other universities.

4.02 THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON PREFERENCE FACTORS

The researcher used T-Test to measure demographic impact – gender, high school background and educational language on respondents' responses and answers, the results shows that gender plays a major role in arranging and preferring certain factors, male emphasize more on personal factors, academic quality, campus specifications and finally socializations, while female responses highly to personal factors, academic quality, socializations, campus facilities and financial aids, researchers conclude that culture is a vital variable that affect students classified by gender. Egypt is a masculinity society where the family is relying mainly on males' jobs and income, although the role of working women increased in the Egyptian society but families ask males to get profitable job. Women concentrate on social events and activities and specifications on campus more than males because they consider these factors more important than financial aids and procedures. Universities should put into their consideration these differences of needs when designing their educational programs and when putting their activities.

Respondents from private school and English language are responding positively to private and specialized universities, they are searching for personal factors and academic quality more than financial aids and procedures, they also consider campus specifications and socializations are less important than other factors but they ask about them as assistant factors which let them prefer one university than others, but once they joined the academy they gave more weights to socializations and campus specifications referring to the fact that the education is an integrated system.

The study uses Anova Test to measure the demographic impact –on respondents' responses and answers, the results show that all demographic factors are positive and statistically significant,

suggesting all factors have significant impact on students' preferences before and after joining the academy, these demographic factors didn't change after respondents joined the academy except they put additional weight to academic quality and facilities, that is proving the second hypothesis

4.03 THE IMPACT OF EACH DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR OF PREFERENCE FACTORS:

Age : Table 9 illustrates the impact of age on preferences` factors:

Table 9: The impact of age on preferences` factors

Age	Before joining the academy			After joining the academy		
	Less than 17	17:18	More than 18	Less than 17	17:18	More than 18
Personal factors	28%	32%	40%	20%	35%	45%
Academic quality and facilities	22%	30%	48%	15%	30%	55%
Campus specifications	60%	30%	10%	55%	25%	20%
Socialization needs	58%	22%	20%	60%	30%	10%
Financial aid and procedures	68%	22%	10%	63%	27%	10%

Table 9 illustrates that before respondents joined the academy, young ages were searching for financial aids and procedures more than any other factors, the impact of parents was presented in the tendency of students whose related to this age, older students search for academic quality and facilities because they are matured to understand the relationship between the quality of academic and their future career.

After respondents joined the academy the weight of financial aids and procedures became less important and the weight of academic quality raised higher, so the academy should design their services, focusing on a package of educational and social activities, meanwhile, when the academy communicates its students it must focus on direct marketing to improve its social and educational activities based on its customers' needs.

Parents` education: Table 10 shows the impact of parents' education on selecting and preferring a certain university:

Table 10: The impact of parents` education on preferences` factors

Parents` education	Before Joining the Academy			After joining the academy		
	Pre-university degree	University graduate	Postgraduate degree	Pre-university degree	University graduate	Postgraduate degree
Personal factors	54%	36%	10%	53%	27%	20%
Academic quality and facilities	20%	29%	51%	10%	30%	60%
Campus specifications	20%	28%	52%	10%	31%	59%
Socialization needs	12%	35%	53%	10%	33%	57%
Financial aid and procedures	59%	32%	9%	61%	30%	9%

Table 10 shows that the level of parents' education has influenced their preference toward the university, they choose the university which improves their sons and daughters skills and they gave smaller weight to financial aids and procedures because they think that investing in education will improve future career for their students.

Parents occupation : Table 11 shows the impact of parents' occupation on preference factor

Table 11: The impact of parents` occupation on preferences` factors

Parents Occupation	Before joining the Academy				After joining the Academy			
	Employee	Businessman	Professional	Self Employed	Employee	Businessman	Professional	Self Employed
Personal factors	50%	3%	20%	27%	48%	10%	13%	29%

Academic quality and facilities	12%	22%	53%	13%	9%	21%	60%	10%
Campus Socialization	10%	59%	20%	11%	10%	52%	22%	11%
Financial aid and procedures	8%	48%	32%	12%	5%	55%	25%	15%
	60%	8%	12%	20%	57%	7%	13%	23%

Table 11 explains that parents that have their own business or belonging to top management level (professionals) are tending to prefer academic quality after their sons and daughters entered the academy, then they preferred other integrated activities like socializations and campus facilities, while parents who are employed in a public sector or are belonging to middle management level are preferring personal factors and financial aids and procedures than other preferences' factors, so social and economic variables in any market also shape families' preferences toward universities and their preferences differ from one occupation to another.

High school accumulative GPA : Table 12 shows the impact of students GPAs in their high schools on their preferences' factors:

Table 12: The impact of students GPAs on their preferences` factors

High school cumulative GPA	Before joining the Academy			After joining the Academy		
	60%-75%	75%-90%	More than 90%	60%-75%	75%-90%	More than 90%
Personal factors	60%	30%	10%	55%	25%	20%
Academic quality and facilities	20%	28%	52%	10%	31%	59%
Campus specifications	20%	29%	51%	10%	30%	60%
Socialization needs	20%	28%	52%	10%	31%	59%
Financial aid and procedures	59%	32%	9%	61%	30%	9%

Table 12 shows that higher the cumulative GPA accomplished by respondents, greater their preferences on quality of academic and educational processes. Respondents with high GPA give higher weights to all integral parts which form the educational process and they give less weight to financial aids and procedures. The academy should consider that there are many segments of potential and actual customers, so it must design its educational services to satisfy all these segments.

Location: Table 13 shows the impact of campus location on students` preferences:

Table 13: The impact of campus location on preferences` factors

Location	Before joining the Academy				After joining the Academy			
	Cairo	Alex	Port Said	South Valley	Cairo	Alex	Port Said	South Valley
Personal factors	12%	28%	30%	30%	11%	29%	30%	30%
Academic quality and facilities	40%	30%	15%	15%	39%	31%	15%	15%
Campus specifications	45%	30%	15%	10%	58%	20%	12%	10%
Socialization needs	50%	30%	15%	5%	27%	10%	68%	22%
Financial aid and procedures	10%	18%	20%	52%	5%	20%	25%	50%

Table 13 shows that those respondents who choose to join Cairo or Alex campuses concentrate on campus specification more than any other preferences' factors, the researcher concludes that in a competitive market, if the academic quality for all those competitors are somehow similar, students are searching for other integrated activities that distinguish one university from others. In port-said, and south-valley campuses respondents are searching for personal factors and financial aids and procedures more than other preferences' factors, people in these cities have less income and less job opportunities than big cities, so students` preferences have been changed from region to another, so the academy has

to divide its markets into segments based on geographic factors and conduct marketing researches to conduct its educational services for each geographic segment.

Annual household income: Table 14 shows the impact of annual household income on respondents' preferences:

Table 14: The impact of annual household income on respondents' preferences

Annual household income	Before joining the Academy				After joining the Academy			
	Less than 75000 LE	75000:100000 LE	100000:125000 LE	More than 125000 LE	Less than 75000 LE	75000:100000 LE	100000:125000 LE	More than 125000 LE
Personal factors	50%	30%	15%	5%	58%	20%	12%	10%
Academic quality and facilities	8%	48%	32%	12%	10%	52%	22%	11%
Campus Socialization	5%	20%	25%	50%	4%	7%	23%	66%
Financial aid and procedures	10%	18%	20%	52%	4%	9%	28%	59%
	39%	31%	20%	10%	55%	25%	14%	6%

Table 14 shows that the greater the income of the respondents' family is, the more tendency to prefer sophisticated activities and services. While less income families are searching for personal factors and financial aids and procedures.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATION

Considering the university as a dynamic, multi-system, which elements have some properties that influence and interact with each other and with the environment strive to achieve a leading position. This study explores that the increase in efficiency of the university system is possible only when it responds positively to its customers' needs. So in order to react positively to the competition for attracting new students, Egyptian private universities and institutions have to become more attractive by exploring and studying the needs and desires of their students. Many studies investigate preference factors in many countries but none of these studies were conducted in the Egyptian context, this study discovers that culture has an important role in shaping students preferences and choice, also economic and social variables are affecting preferences of Egyptian students and they are playing a vital role in determining the selection process.

This paper concludes that preference factors are not stable and rigid, they are changeable; differ from one culture to another. Demographic and geographic variables are important for considering and measuring these preferences, for instance Age, gender, income, parents' educational level, parents' occupation, high school background, language of education and the location are formulating and directing students' choices and preferences and that prove the first hypothesis.

In Egypt, students are searching for universities that build their future career and providing them profitable job opportunities, economic variables lead students to choose universities that offer different types of financial aids, students are considering the quality of education and specifications of the educational process is in the third priority hoping to increase their skills through their practical life, finally students put campus specifications, qualifications and socialization needs as their last priority, these extra activities and facilities are not in the range of interest for The Egyptian students.

This study recommends that students should be divided into different segments according to their different needs, so universities have to put focus strategies and tailored differential strategies that respond to students' needs. Within the paradigm of marketing, Universities and educational institutions should invest significant time and money to create strong institutional brands, they should employ a range of tools to connect, engage, advertise, and advocate their services to gain more competitive advantages. Educational institutions have to apply this market success, recognizing the importance of incorporating social media into their strategic planning and looking ahead to the potential of mobile

social commerce. The main limitation of this study is that it focuses on just one case. The next level of this study would compare the marketing of education services in the public and private institutions in Egypt.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, M. & Anwar, S. F. (2000): Bridging the gap between expectations of the business community and delivery of the business schools in Bangladesh, *Journal of Business Administration*, vol. 26, pp. 47-66.
- Al Jamil, Abdullah, Moniruzzaman, Sarker & Abdullah, M., (2012) Students' choice criteria to select a private university for their higher education in Bangladesh, *European Journal of Business and Management* Vol 4, No.17, pp:177-179.
- Ariffin, A. A., Ahmad, A. H., Ahmad, M. S. & Ibrahim, M. A. (2008) "Determining decision-making styles and demographic differences in Selecting higher education services among Malaysian "International Journal of Business and Society, 9(1), pp.1-18
- Baharun, R., (2002) A study of market segmentation in tertiary education for local public higher learning institutes," *Malaysian Management Review*, Vol 37 (1), pp: 120-135.
- Borden, V. M. (1995) Segmenting student markets with a student satisfaction and priorities survey, *Research in Higher Education*, 36(1), pp. 73-88.
- Elliott, K.M. & Shin D., (2002) "Student Satisfaction: an alternative approach to assessing this important concept, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, volume 24, number 2, pp. 199-209.
- Ford, J. B, Joseph, M. & Joseph, B., (1999) "Importance-performance analysis as a strategic tool for service marketers: The case of service quality perceptions of business students in New Zealand and the USA, *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 13(2), pp. 171-186.
- Helfert, Gabriele, Ritter,Thomas and Walter, Achim (2002) Redefining market orientation from a relationship perspective: Theoretical considerations and empirical results", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 36 Iss: 9/10, pp.1119 – 1139.
- Henning-Thurau, T., Langer, M.F and Hansen, U. (2001) Modeling and managing student loyalty facilities have a significant effect on the satisfaction of the students in universities, while the accommodation facilities don't have any significant effect on the satisfaction of the students. Review of the literature on higher education marketing, *International journal of Public sector Management*. Vol. 19 No. pp.316-38.
- Hussin, Siti Rahayu and others (2003) An exploratory study of factors influencing the college choice decision of undergraduate students in Malaysia, *Asia Pacific Management Review*, Vol. 8 (3), pp: 259-280
- Jurkowitsch, Silke, Vignali. Claudio, & Kaufmann, Hans-Rüdiger (2006) A student satisfaction model for Austrian higher education providers considering aspects of marketing, *Journal of Innovative Marketing*, -Volume 2, Issue 3, pp:18-20
- Keling, S. B. A., (2006) Institutional factors attracting students to Malaysian institutions of higher learning," *International Review of Business Research Papers*, 2 (1), pp. 46-64.
- Kitsawad, Kamol (2013) An investigation of factors affecting high school student's choice of university in Thailand, PHD dissertation, university of Wollongong, pp: 180- 182.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2012) *Marketing Management*, 14 Ed, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Kotler, Philip, Dipak Jain & Suvit Maesince (2002) *Formulating a Market Renewal Strategy*", Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Kotler, P. & Fox, K.F.M (1995) *Strategic marketing for educational institutions*, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice Hall,.
- Krentler, K.A. & Appleton- Knapp, S.L (2006) Measuring student expectations and their effect on satisfaction: the importance of managing student expectations", *Journal of Marketing Education*, Vol.28 No.3, pp. 254-64.

- Luigi, Dumitrescu, Stanciu Oana and others (2012) Researching the students` cognitive space-A relevant phase in the holistic approach of the higher education institutions` management, Far East Journal of Psychology and Business, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp: 26-36.
- Majid A. K. M. S., Mamun, M. Z. & Siddique, S. R. (2000): Practices of Teaching Methods, Aids and Students' Performance Evaluation, International Journal, p54.
- Mamun, M. Z. & Das, S. (1999) "Total Quality Management for Non-Government, Universities of Bangladesh", Proceedings of Annual Convention of Bangladesh Society for Total Quality Management in Association with Department of Industrial and Production Engineering, BUET, Dhaka, December 3-4, pp. 23-29.
- Manzoor, Hasnain (2013) Measuring student satisfaction in public and private universities in Pakistan, Global Journal of Management and Business Research Interdisciplinary, Volume 13 Issue 3 Version 1.0 Year 2013,P:1.
- Ming, Joseph Sia Kee (2010): A model of higher education institutions choice in Malaysia – A Conceptual Approach International Conference on Business and Economics Research Vol.1 IACSIT Press, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, pp: 142-146.
- Ministry of Higher Education, (2013) list of Egyptian public, private universities and Egyptian research institutes, <http://www.db.in.tum.de/teaching/ws1112/hsufg/Egypt/Egypt/EducationSystem.html>
- Piercy, N.F. (1995) Customer satisfaction and the internal market, marketing our customers to our employees", Journal of Marketing Practice: Applied Marketing Science, volume 1, number 1, pp. 22-44.
- Wiers-Jenssen, J., Stensaker, B. & Groggaard, J.B. (2002) "Student Satisfaction: towards an empirical deconstruction of the concept", Quality in Higher Education, volume 8, number 2,pp. 183-195.
- Yusof, M., and others. (2008) A study of factors influencing the selection of a higher education institution,"UNITAR e-journal, 4(2), pp. 27-40.
- Zahid, Chowdhry & Sogra (2000) Present status and future direction of business education in Bangladesh", Journal of Business Administration, Vol. 26, pp. 11-24.