The Decision making and Experiences of Thai Postgraduate Students in the UK: implications for marketing strategies

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Signature..........................................................................................
Abstract

The increased numbers of players in international higher education means that international students have more choices. This makes universities compete harder in the global market. Institutions in many countries, including the UK, have to adjust themselves in response to students' needs. Although there has been increasing research in relation to higher education institutes, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the in-depth details of which factors influence students' decision-making and how they experience university services.

This thesis aims to analyze UK higher education from Thai perspectives, including both outsiders involved with higher education in Thailand and Thai students' study experiences. To achieve this, the study uses mixed methods research. In particular, elite interviews, nationwide questionnaires and longitudinal interviews are the main research tools used in this study. The research finds that UK higher education has a positive reputation among Thai executives. In terms of marketing UK institutes in Thailand, factor analysis indicates that three appropriate marketing strategies are 'Product and People', 'Promotion' and 'Place'. In terms of students' decision making, the findings show that Thai students often choose to study in the UK because the duration of master's degree course is shorter than those of competitors, thus saving on budgets. A variety of other internal and external factors are also incorporated in the selection of a university. Regarding university service quality, the gap between students' expectations and their nine-month experiences highlights a lack of university performance in factors related to academic service factors, especially library services which show the biggest discrepancy. Drawing together these findings presents implication for higher education marketeers and policy makers in relation to understanding its market position, strategies and improving the services it offers.
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<td>Australian Education International</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>IDP Education Australia</td>
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<td>NAFSA</td>
<td>Association of International Educators (Formed as: the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors)</td>
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