Spring 2016
MSc. International Marketing
Aalborg University

Master thesis:

Global recruitment: the case of Aalborg University

Prepared by: Migle Narbutaite

Characters with spaces: 89,148
Total number of pages: 38
Supervisor: Olav Jull Sørensen

Date: 08.06.2016

Executive summary

The main challenges for the high education institution in the global world is to meet the growing expectations of the students in order to recruit and retain them in the university. High education is recognized as service industry, so the emerging issue for universities is to create a global competitive advantage to attract student. What is more, authors recognize the need of higher satisfaction rates because it is one of the factors influencing the retention.

This article focus on the attraction criteria, satisfaction and retention. The main purpose of the paper is to provide a holistic view on the journey of the student from the decision making process for studies abroad until the decision for the retention. The research can be divided into two parts. The first part consist of theoretical research. The author analyses the existing knowledge about the relevant topics (recruitment, student attraction, student satisfaction and retention) and concludes by providing a reader with the conceptual framework that illustrates the previously mentioned journey. The second part is the primary data analysis that test the conceptual model.

Based on the literature review, the three categories of criteria were identified – Academic, Social and Economic. Each category included number of different factors that allows students to better evaluate the importance. The importance of selected factors was checked by statistical analysis of the data received from the case study. The chosen statistical method is Mean analysis.

For the case study, Aalborg University in Denmark was selected. The students in the Bachelor and Master degrees were asked to fill in the questionnaire about they experience. The results of the study shows that the most important criteria for attraction and retention are the same and can be listed based on importance as following 'Future relevance for my career', 'Good career preparation' and 'High quality of education'. Hence, the least important criteria are 'Size of Campus' and 'Short distance from home'.

The conclusion of the paper includes the recommendations for the university how to improve their recruitment and student satisfaction that is closely related to retention. The main recommendation for Aalborg University is to keep the Problem Based Learning model as it is one of the most influential factors selecting this university over other high education institutions in Denmark. Another very satisfactory point that can be promoted for attracting students is

learning environment. On the other hand, students are not satisfied with the curriculum and the high focus on the theoretical knowledge.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The rapid globalization of the world opens more possibilities for young people to travel and explore possibilities worldwide. Because of this reason, more and more people choose to study abroad in this way increasing challenges for higher education institutions. Universities are perceived as service industry where they need to meet growing expectations and needs from their customers, students (Cheng and Tam, 1997).

The first challenge for universities is to attract the global consumers by creating the right set of educational, economic and social attributes. Institutions need to differentiate and create the unique selling point to draw attention of the growing market. The most common choice of destination are countries that has a stable economic and high level of security such as The US, The UK, Germany and Australia. What is more, English speaking countries has an advantage.

Denmark has an advantage of stable economic situation because it attracts a lot of students who believes that degree in the country increases their chances of employment in the country of education. What is more, Denmark is known for the high level of integration based on the high immigrant population.

As it is mentioned above, higher education is perceived as service industry where recruitment of the customers is as important as retention of them. According to Patterson, Johnson and Spreng (1997), retention of the students cost less for universities than attraction of the new pupils. Moreover, they acknowledge the satisfaction importance for retention rates.

The case study of Aalborg University was selected because of the popularity of the university in Denmark and an access to primary data. The unique selling point of Aalborg University is the Problem Based Learning where students are encouraged to work on the real life cases. University does not face the problem attracting new customers because of the good reputation worldwide and friendly learning environment. The problem that university staff can see emerging is the retention of the students. A very small part of Master students actually comes from the Bachelor studies.

The aim of the project is to combine the knowledge about student attraction/recruitment and retention in order to provide a holistic view how to analyze and adopt it for the universities to manage the processes in the most efficient way. Paper provides the literature review on the recruitment and retention and adopts the knowledge for the case study of Aalborg University.

2. Problem formulation

Globalization of the world rapidly increases the competition between higher education institutions. Internet environment enabled people to use an international informational sources without limits of country borders or social status. What is more, with increasing internet penetration higher education institutions are enabled not only to promote their services internationally but also provide online courses accessing more and more students around the globe. A lot of studies looked at these challenges from threats and opportunities perspective (Drucker, 1997).

Recruitment of students always were important part of the higher universities operations. In this globalized world higher education institutions are facing a complex competition from both, global and national environment. In order to attract and retain students universities are forced to understand the needs of potentials students and fit them to their own image (Williams, 1986; Smith and Cauvsgill, 1984; Kotler and Murphy, 1981; Litten, 1980).

This paper will not discuss the complexity of the competitive environment but looks into attraction and satisfaction of the students. Several studies looked into student mobility (Elliot and Healy, 2001; Wilkins and Huisman, 2011; Verbik and Lasanowski, 2007) and retention of the students in higher education (Tinto, 2006; Berge and Huang, 2001; Crosling, Heagney and Thomas, 2009). This research will look at relationship between attraction of the students and retention in case of Aalborg University.

As a result, the research is based on the following problem statement:

Global recruitment: the case of Aalborg University.

In order to provide a researched based solution for Aalborg university recruitment, author chose to investigate following topics:

- What are the attraction parameters for students?
- Which are the key determinants for retention?
- Are factors that attracts students to Aalborg university are the same that keeps them engaged into Master program?
- How satisfied students are with the study quality at Aalborg university?

3. Methodology

Methodology chapter aims to guide the reader through the reasons behind the methodological view that was selected to investigate the research topic. Chapter includes research design and data collection methods overview.

3.1. Research design

The research design part will give a reader an overall understanding of methods chosen to for this research. According to Kuada (2012), research design is a right place to argue the assumptions that leads of particular paradigm selection. The research design will be divided into four steps: Theoretical viewpoint, Epistemological choice, Methodological decision and Methods and techniques.

3.1.1. Theoretical/Philosophical viewpoints

First level of research design deals with ontology, which is philosophical concern about the object's existence or the nature of research way to seek to gain knowledge. The purpose of this research is to understand the nature of student mobility and how it is linked to student retention. According to Kuada (2009) ontology refers to researcher's perception of reality that is considered as truth and is divided into two approaches: objective and subjective. Objective approach deals with realism that refers to a world being composed of hard, tangible and relatively immutable structures (Kuada, 2012). Contrarily to objectivism, subjectivism believes that reality is created by individuals interacting with each other. The basis of reality in subjectivism are labels, names and concepts so social science can have more than one "truth". (Kuada, 2012)

In order to be able to provide the best solution to a problem statement in an easy to understand manner, the research employs both, objective and subjective, ontological approaches. The objective approach is used to make an extensive literature review where the author only presents the results and discussion from the researchers' perspective in order to understand what is already known. On the other hand, the conceptualization are based on author's understanding and trying to fulfill the gap in the existing knowledge that reflects the use of the subjective approach.

3.1.2. Epistemological choice

The first step in research design was to understand what knowledge needs to be obtained in order to research the desired area, epistemology refers to a second step – the means to obtain the knowledge or in other words "how we know what we know".

Similarly to Ontology, Epistemology is also divided into objectivism and subjectivism. The objective approach is positivism that refers to possibility of getting knowledge through understanding regularities and causal relationship between constituent's elements. Subjectivism is named anti-positivism and it refers to a world being socially constructed and knowledge can be obtained only by individuals being constantly involved into investigation. (Kuada, 2009).

Within the context of the thesis, author chose to employ both approaches. First of all, author acts as external observer to be able to build the general knowledge from empirical research that would allow to understand main concepts relevant for the research. The relevant social constructs for the research were: student mobility patterns, student recruitment and satisfaction, student retention. Literature review creates only a pre-understanding of the investigated student recruitment case. In order to solve the problem of the thesis, researcher creates a framework based on her own understanding which reflect the use of subjective view point.

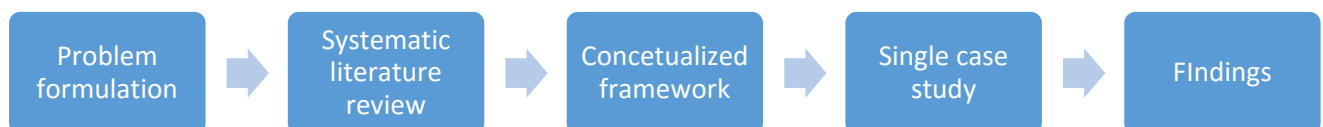The process of obtaining the knowledge can be visualized as following:

| Problem formulation | → | Systematic literature review | → | Concetualized framework | → | Single case study | → | FIndings |

Figure 1
Source Own creation

3.1.3. Methodological decisions

This part refers to methods that were used to obtain necessary knowledge and the methodological approach for the problem solution. This chapter is built on Abnor and Bjerke's (2009) methodological approaches to gain business knowledge: the analytical approach, the systems approach and the actor's approach. Three research approaches are the foundation for six paradigms.

The analytical approach deals with facts and considers the truth objective or subjective while actors' approach looks at the truth as part of the experience of social context. The system approach analyzes the relationship between components that reflects of behavior and social patterns. (Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009).
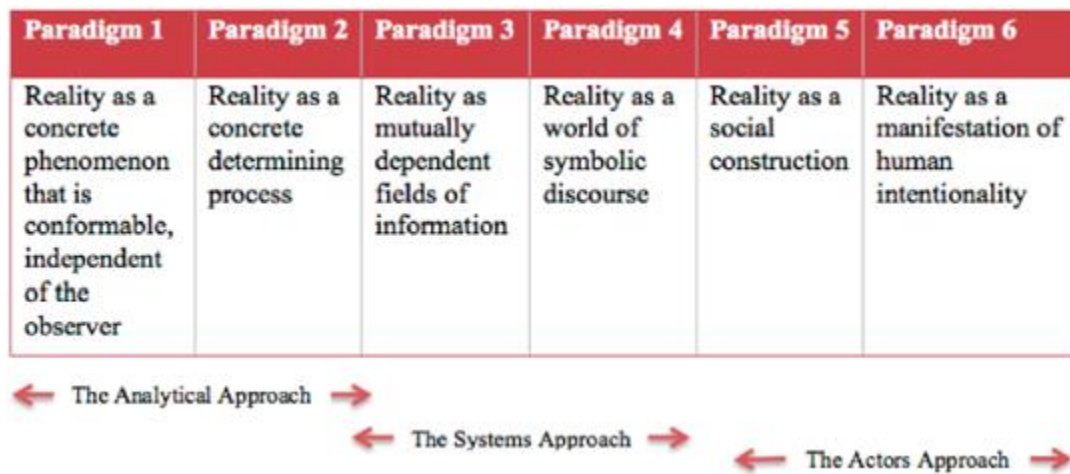
Paradigm 1	Paradigm 2	Paradigm 3	Paradigm 4	Paradigm 5	Paradigm 6
Reality as a concrete phenomenon that is conformable, independent of the observer	Reality as a concrete determining process	Reality as mutually dependent fields of information	Reality as a world of symbolic discourse	Reality as a social construction	Reality as a manifestation of human intentionality

← The Analytical Approach →

← The Systems Approach →

← The Actors Approach →

Figure 2 Arbnor and Bjerke's Paradigms and methodological approaches
Source: Adapted from Arbnor and Bjerke (1997: 45-46) and Kuada (2010: 47-50)

The purpose of the paper is to use a literature review to understand and provide a theoretical overview of student recruitment and retention that will be a foundation to analyze the Aalborg University recruitment case. To be able to solve the research problem, theories and constructs such as push and pull model of student mobility, student satisfaction and retention, were taken identified. The concepts are interrelated and the relationship between different aspects can contribute to the end results of the study. The author strives to narrow down and conceptualize the knowledge gained from literature review in order to create a framework that could be used for the case study.

As it is mentioned before, the author of the research gains the knowledge from extensive literature review without creating new knowledge based on the primary data research. Because of this reason, actor approach is not suitable for the paper. The primary data will be analyzed using statistical tools and conceptual framework, hence it can not be said that author acts as an external observed that is one of the requirements for using the actor approach. On the other hand the analytical approach can be used for the research purpose. The research is limited on the literature and the selected constructs so does not reflect the exact picture of reality.

The system approach considers the possibility of combining one or two issues in order to find a relationship between individual parts of the system. In this paper, author connects models and concepts in order to create a conceptual framework that reflect the usage of system approach. According to Arbnor and Bjerke (2009), systematical approach analyses the systems that are composed of specific patters and characteristics and are interacting between each other and the environment they are situated in to create a synergy. The components of the systems are evaluated and analyzed individually so that reality could reflect objective image of the system itself. Based on the flexibility and adaptability of the elements, systems can be classified into open and closed. It can be visualized as following:
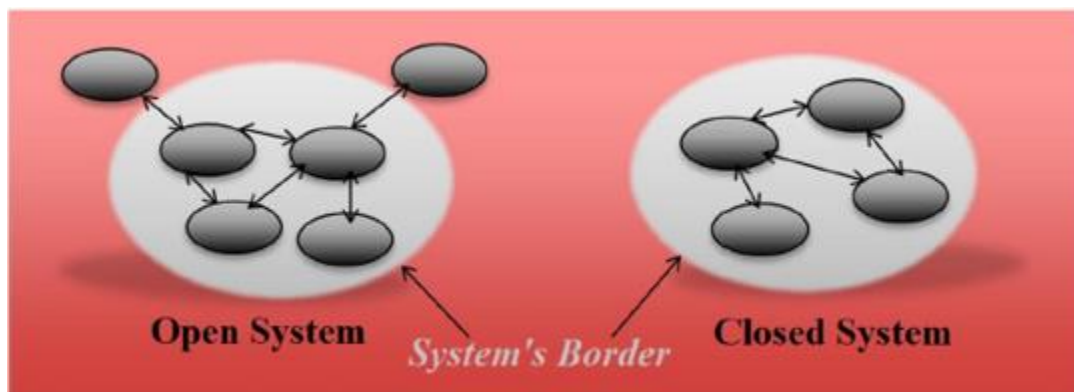
Figure 3 Open and closed system's interaction
Source: Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009

For the purpose of this project, the closed system view will be used. Student recruitment and retention is widely researched but author had to select the most relevant models and concepts to be able to conceptualized it and use it for the case study.

3.1.4. The choice of Methods and Techniques

The last stage in the process refers to data collection that is necessary to solve the problem of the project. As it is mentioned earlier in the paper, in order to successfully research a problem area the secondary data is used while the case study analyses will utilize a primary data.

The secondary data for theoretical standpoint is collected by using a method of systematical literature review. The study cannot be strictly classified as deductive or inductive because the literature research is based on two steps. The first step is to screen the literature review based on the main constructs – Student recruitment and retention. This is done by going through the most relevant search results on databases such as ProQuest, JSTOR and Scopus provided by Aalborg University using the keywords student recruitment, student retention. The abstract of the selected papers are analyzed to get the basic knowledge about the research area in order to select the most relevant models and concepts for the next step. The second stage in literature review is to find relevant research by using the identified constructs: student mobility, push and pull model, student satisfaction, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. The more in depth analyses are handled in order to use the information for the conceptualization part.

4. Data collection

In order to present a high quality paper, authors have a choice to use several methods for data collection. This section will give more extended view on the data collection methods and the reasoning behind it. In this project both, primary and secondary, data is collected to ensure the best solution for the problem statement.

4.1. Secondary data collection methods

Secondary data is used for the purpose to create the theoretical standpoint for the research area of student recruitment and retention. As it is mentioned before, the knowledge is gained through collecting various literature source from the databases such as ProQuest, JSTOR and Scopus provided by Aalborg University. The databases were selected because they are ranked as most suitable and reliable databases in International Business field that allows author to limit the articles to the most trust worthy.

The main reason to use a systematic literature review is to be able to identify the most relevant constructs and concepts to attain the understanding about the main reasons behind the student attraction and retention. The gained knowledge is a base for the conceptual framework that allows to provide the best solution for the case study. The main advantage of systematical literature review is the availability to create an overall picture of the reality by reviewing the most related articles from vatrious inquires in a resource consuming manner.

Author is aware that systematic literature review also brings a disadvantage for the project. Limiting articles by screening process increases the likelihood of bias based on the fact, that author selects the most relevant articles only by keywords and abstracts. As it is mentioned, only the most relevant articles are selected to be reviewed for the further research the reality vision is limited.

In secondary data collection there are two approaches for understanding and analyzing the literature: quantitative and qualitative. Even though both methods are concerned on knowledge creation, they have a significant difference in the way to reach the goal *"Each approach is presumed to have different research goals and assumptions and have developed specific techniques for collecting data to answer the types of questions they pose" (*Kuada, 2012:67). The quantitative research methods is strict that allows to generalize the knowledge and investigate the relationship between elements easier. While the qualitative approach focus on the context that increases the subjectivism because it is based on researcher understanding. The difference can be illustrated by following table 1:

Quantitative	Qualitative
Objective	Subjective
"hard" science	"Soft" science
Test theory	Develops theory
Measurable	Interpretative
Report statistical analysis. Basic element of analysis is number	Report rich narrative, individual; interpretation. Basic element of analysis is words/ideas
Researcher is separate	Researcher is a part of the process

Table 1 Difference between qualitative and quantitative data collection methods
Source: Anderson, 2006

The qualitative research approach is more suitable for this study. The conceptualization of the knowledge from literature review is a complex and dynamic process that requires a possibility to overview the process and adopt the knowledge in the progress.
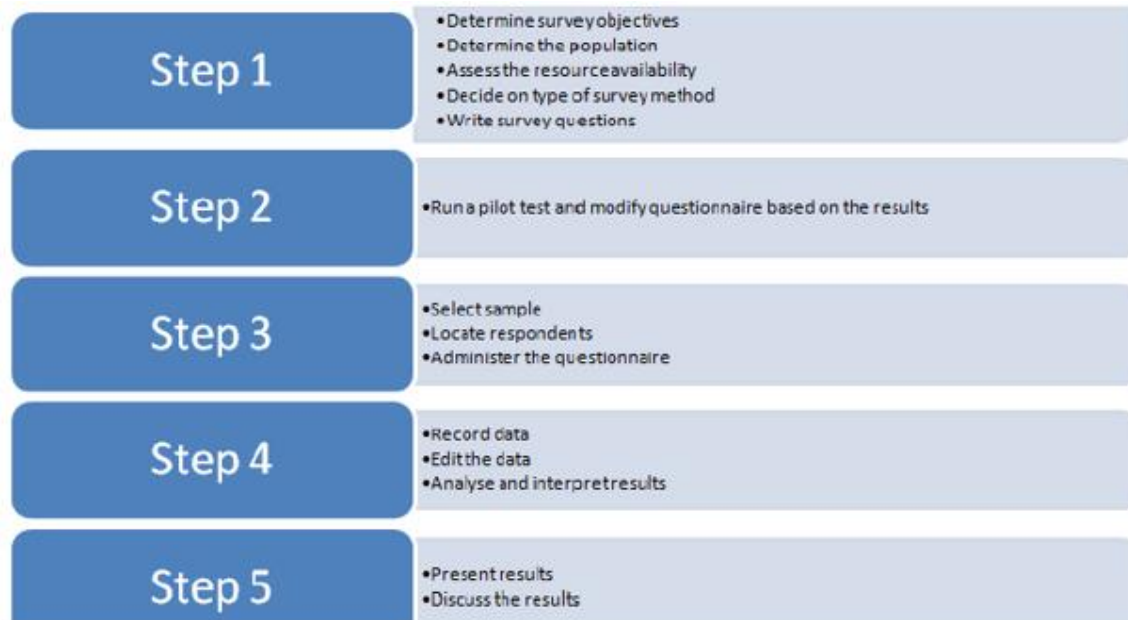
4.2.   Case research method

Author chose to illustrate the complexity of the research area using a case study. Researchers believe that it is one of the best methods to reveal the complexity of the social problems. Author believes that focusing on one university allows to explore problem in more complex environment and also it enables to obtain primary data in a time efficient manner. As mentioned previously in the project, author focuses on qualitative approach where the focus is not on statistical observations but on challenging the knowledge from literature review. The disadvantage of one case study is the probability of the subjectivism.

4.3.   Primary data collection methods

The primary data collection approaches are the same as in the secondary data quantitative and qualitative and has the same description. Qualitative research is focus on general understanding while quantitative method focus on statistical results. Differently that secondary data collection, primary data for this project is collected by employing quantitative results. The main reason behind is that this approach allows to check the conceptual framework by using a big pool of respondents.

Because of the limited time framework, the most suitable method for approaching the respondents the online survey was selected because of ability to collect and analyze the results easy and in time saving manner. The disadvantage of the online survey is the lack of flexibility to adopt changes during the collection period (Sounders et al., 2009).

Concerning the quality of the data collection process, the Process of Survey research by Kuada (2011) is adopted by the author.

Step 1	• Determine survey objectives • Determine the population • Assess the resource availability • Decide on type of survey method • Write survey questions
Step 2	• Run a pilot test and modify questionnaire based on the results
Step 3	• Select sample • Locate respondents • Administer the questionnaire
Step 4	• Record data • Edit the data • Analyse and interpret results
Step 5	• Present results • Discuss the results

Figure 4 Steps in the Process of Survey Research
Source: Adopted from Kuada, 2011

The objective of the survey is to gather the data that will be analyzed through the conceptual framework and provide solution for the case study. In order to have a high quality responses, the probability sampling is used to select respondents. The selection is made out of current bachelor and master students at Aalborg University that are included or are eligible to be admitted to International Marketing or International Business and Economics Master Programs.

The questionnaire was distributed to current students of Aalborg University in the English programs: BSc in Business administration and economics and MSc in International Business and Economics, International marketing. The distribution method was selected to be an official student email that is provided by university in order to have the access to all relevant students and to show the importance of the survey. Secretaries responsible for particular programs sent an e-mail including link to questionnaire. The e-mail was send to 363 students in total, where Bachelor students constitute 172 potential respondents and Master students were the rest 191. The questionnaire was open for two weeks – from 16th of May when the emails were distributed to 31st of May when survey was closed. In total, survey was visited by 107 people but because of

the uncompleted data, only 93 responses were used for the following analysis. This is 26% of the targeted population.

Questionnaire starts with an introduction where participants are shortly introduced to the purpose of the study, expected time to complete survey.

The first set pf questions are background variables for every respondent. It includes Age, Gender and Academic background questions (Questions 1,2 and 3). Background variables are used to segment respondents and see if the differences occurs based on gender or age differences. The academic background question is here to lead respondents into following sections.

Questionnaire is divided based on academic background – Bachelor students and Master students. Master students are additionally asked a question where they obtained their bachelor degree to see, if they are newly attracted students to Aalborg University or they are students that retained at Aalborg University (Question 8).

Bachelor students are asked four questions. In the first place they are asked to evaluate set of economic, social and academic variables based on their importance choosing the University for their Bachelor degree. This is rating question with the provided scale where 1- not important, 2- somehow important and 3- Very important. (Questions 4, 5 and 6). The last question is to rate criteria based on the satisfaction in a scale from 1- very dissatisfied to 5 – very satisfied (Question 7).

Master students, who did not had their Bachelor at AAU are asked four questions (Questions 9-12). The questions for Master students are the same as for bachelor students: they are asked to evaluate the same set of economic, social and academic variables based on their importance choosing the University for their Master Degree in the provided scale where 1- not important, 2- somehow important and 3- Very important. (Questions 9, 10 and 11). The following question is to evaluate criteria based on the satisfaction in a scale from 1- very dissatisfied to 5 – very satisfied (Question 12).

Student at the Master program who retained at the university after their bachelor program are asked six questions (Questions 12 to 18). First three questions are repetition of asking to evaluate criteria that impacted their decision to study at Aalborg University based on their importance (1- not important, 2- somehow important and 3- Very important, Questions 13, 14 and 15).

Question 16 refers to the previously mentioned criteria and respondents are asked to rate them in scale from 1 to 5 (1- very dissatisfied to 5 – very satisfied). In the following step students are asked about their participation in the range of activities and how they would rate the selected activities in a scale from 1 to 5 (1- very dissatisfied to 5 – very satisfied and 6 – not participated) according to their satisfaction (Question 17).

The questionnaire is finished by having an open question where people can express their opinion about studies at Aalborg University, recommend things or share ideas. Also respondents receives a gratitude for participation in the study.

Online survey method was selected to collect primary data because of the limited resources. Questionnaire online allows to administrate and analyze the results in an easy and fast way. The platform to proceed with the survey was selected to be SurveyExact because of the vide choice of possibilities for the different type of questions and easy to analyze results course.

The evaluation of the primary data is based on the validity and reliability. While reliability refers to the consistency of the findings, validity concerns if the consistency is truth or just a causal relationship. (Sounder's et al., 2009) As it is mentioned above, only 26% of the targeted population answered the questionnaire but author believes it is a representative number to be used for the case study not as a complete truth but as a guidance to understand the trend.

The data is available at:https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1lPNgtCE000sjwHuDkW9vqWXOhddagFyYkN35Ka -byaE/edit?usp=sharing

5. Delimitation

A first step in delimitation is the act of acknowledging the certain limit of the research and understand the reasons behind it and what kind of effect it has on a paper quality. The topic of student recruitment and retention is widely discussed in the social science and the research was limited to the selected databases and key words. The author is aware that it shows the fraction of the reality but after the preliminary research, believes that selected concepts and models are the most relevant for the answer of the problem formulation.

The conceptual framework is created based on the knowledge gained from literature review and with the purpose to provide the answer for the case study. Author acknowledge that other models

and concepts could be included in the conceptualization nonetheless, the writer is confident that chosen elements can provide high quality findings.

Another big delimitation subsequent from primary data collection method. The online survey is not flexible method to evidence the emotional and sub-conscious answers. Also it does not allow the researcher to guide the respondent through the questions so the quality of the answers can be questionable.

The last point of delimitation is the understanding which group of the students the research is targeting. The focus of the study is international students or in other words, people with foreign passports living in the country on a study permit.

6. Literature review

In this chapter the review of the relevant literature is provided. The purpose of the literature review is to analyze the literature in the researched topic and receive knowledge necessary for conceptualization. First of all, the student mobility phenomena will be revised in order to get the knowledge of why students chose the study abroad and what kind of set of criteria they evaluate for the choice of education institution. It describes the current trends in the world and analyses what attracts student for particular country and institution. Push and pull model is used here to understand what set of criteria researchers used in order to explain student mobility patterns and understand how it affects the final choice.

The second step is to look at satisfaction and retention. In this part reader is introduced into different literature that discuss the importance of satisfaction to student retention and different models that analyzes both concepts – satisfaction and retention.

6.1. Student mobility

For the past two decades, the number of international students has dramatically increased and it is expected to grow continuously. According to UNESCO data released in 2012, the population of international students in 2010 was nearly 3.6 million worldwide compared to 2.4 million in 2004 (UNESCO, 2012). According to UNESCO (2012), the most popular student destinations are the U.S., the United Kingdom (UK), Australia and Canada.

A lot of studies are done to investigate the student mobility, its advantages and disadvantages for students and both, home and host countries. Based on the studies done in the field of student

mobility, the benefits for the student can be divided into two categories. First discusses the intercultural experience and how it benefits students' mental horizons. Researchers claims that first-hand experience and insight of other cultures assistance people psychological development. (De Ville, Martou and Vandenberghe, 1996; Goodman, Jones and Macias, 2007; Kehm, 2005; Marcotte, Desroches and Poupart, 2007). The second category includes the benefits of the career opportunities. Students with intercultural experience are believed to be more adaptable to different situations and environment that increases the chances to be employed both, locally and internationally. (Kehm, 2005; Li and Bray, 2007; Marcotte, et al., 2007; Teichler and Janson, 2007).

Looking from the countries perspective, one of the benefits is the improvement of the reputation of host country's higher education system as popularity between students' works as an advocacy for others (Czinkota, 2005; Kehm, 2005; Marginson and van der Wende, 2007). Another benefit is the networking relationship between countries that can lead to inter-cultural experience that assists in business relationship. Companies, especially in trading area, can benefit from students cultural experience and network to establish or improve relationship between countries. (Goodman et al., 2007; Larsen, Martin and Morris, 2002; Larsen, Momii and Vincent-Lancrin, 2004). The last advantage discussed in the literature is the skills and potential employment. As studies shows that availability of specific academy program is one of the most important criteria for choosing the education institution, the home country can obtain the different skill set that are shortage in the country. From the host country point of view, countries can obtain potential employees that are really important for countries with shortage of skilled people for example Australia. (Coates and Edwards, 2011; Baruch, Budhwar and Khatri, 2007; Bourke, 2000; Tremblay, 2005).

6.2. Patterns and attraction criteria

As it is mentioned before, the most popular countries for international student movements are U.S., UK, Australia and Canada. According to UNESCO (2006), 90% of the students that decide to study abroad chose countries belonging to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with Western Europe as the primary destination choice. One of the most attractive determinant to be English language give a huge competitive advantage for English speaking countries and explains their popularity between overseas students. According to Verbik

and Lasanowski (2007), students are attracted to high standards facilities and financial incentives that high education institution provides for the students.

The decision of study destination is usually considered as two stage process where the first step is to select a country following educational institution. These two steps can be inter-related or independent to each other (Arambewela and Hall, 2007). The choice of country is influenced by factors such as safety, cost of living, culture, family, distance (Veloutsou et al., 2005; Arambewela, 2003; Lawley, 1998; Duan 1997; IDP, 1995) while the preference for the university is linked to program availability, tuition fees, reputation of the university, teaching methods and campus facilities (Veloutsou et al., 2005, Arambewela, 2003; Smith et al., 2002; Townley, 2001; Geall, 2000; DETYA, 2000; Burke, 1986).

Chapman (1981) investigated the university choice from the student point of view. During his research, author developed a model of student college choice where the focus is on the student's decision process. In Chapman's (1981) conceptual model, the set of different variables and inter-relationships are investigated with a purpose to identify the people who are influencing the opinion and what kind of marketing strategy should be used to communicate with the particular students. The variables here are background and characteristics of the student such as family situation, social status and university characteristics as following: cost, location and availability of the program. (Chapman, 1981)

A lot of studies in the field of student mobility patterns have inconsistent findings. Most of the American studies have listed important factors to be academic reputation, future working and career preparations, location and size of institution, cost of tuition and academic programs availability. Hence, the Australian studies show that priorities here are listed as: career preparation, academic reputation, and institution's location, socio-economic status of the student, school type and academic dignity. (Martin, 1994)

6.3. Push and pull model of student mobility

In order to explain student mobility patterns several models were used but one of the most used models are push and pull concept (Baldwin and James, 2000; Bodycott, 2009; Li and Bray, 2007; Maringe and Carter, 2007; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; McMahon, 1992). McMahon (1992) was one of the first one that uses push and pull concept to explain international student mobility. In his research he focused on U.S. students coming to U.S. or deciding to study overseas.

Researcher identified the push factors to be availability of higher education and economic wealth while pull factors target the social, political and economic attractiveness of the countries.

McMahon (1992) work was used as a ground for Altbach (1998) research where student movements were analyzed. Author expanded the previously identified criteria list by using advanced research facilities and prospects of multinationals classmates to pull factors. In the following works, authors were using different set of factors identified by literature review or internal researches (Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), Baldwin and James, 2000).

Wilkins and Huisman (2011) analyzed the reasons behind the students' choice to study in UK and their opinion towards international campuses. The purpose of the research was to analyze three dimensions: why students chose to study abroad, what influences the choice of the institution and would they stay and recommend university for others. Students were asked to rate different factors that were selected by literature review of push and pull factors. The self-completed questionnaire was distributed to more than 160 international students to create as broad as possible respondents' pool. The push and pull factors to study overseas were identified as: Difficult to gain place at Home, Course not available at Home, Lower quality of education at home, Experience a different culture, Improve my English, Improve employment prospects, Higher quality education overseas, Parental decision/influence and Improve prospects for emigration. This study shows that pull factors more important than push factors when making a decision to study overseas. As the most important factors were identified the improvement of employment prospects, improve English and experience a different a culture. Also a big part of respondents expressed an opinion, that education in their home countries was lower quality. Hence, the most important reasons selecting the university was the reputation of institution, the quality and the content of the study program and professors experience in the field. As the least important factor for the choice of institution was marketing. For the student retention, the most respondents answered that the reasons to consider international campuses for further studies were tuition fees and cost of living. The limitations of the study can be low respondents number and convenience sampling strategy. The further recommendations from author is to investigate how the decision-making process, especially attitudes and beliefs, effects their opinion about countries and studies overseas. (Wilkins and Huisman, 2011)

Another study about student mobility was carried by Levatino (2015). Author looked at the Australian students with the purpose to explore the connection between onshore and offshore enrollments and the importance of macro determinants strength of traditional student mobility. The study was carried in Australia counting in citizens, permanent resident permits and temporary residence students. Researcher used different push and pull criteria than previously mentioned authors. In this study, criteria were GDP, Distance, Common language, Unemployment and Visa. Studies confirms, that macro determinants are important for both, onshore and offshore, type of enrolments. Moreover, the results shows that push and pulls factors are closely related to traditional student mobility patters – the higher the investment for the high education is in the country, the more attractive it is for students from outside country. As the most important criteria to study overseas was ranked employment level. As the limitation of the research author refers to free movement of students as visa issues not necessary relevant for different countries and also micro elements could be taken into consideration in order to fully understand the reason of migration. (Levatino, 2015)

The push and pull concept was used in the work of Lee (2014) where author investigated students mobility in particular, decision making process for both studying abroad and choosing the institution to study in. The purpose of the study was to supplement existing literature on student mobility and illustrate it with case study of Taiwan. As a base for the study, Lee (2014) used Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) developed push and pull concept which concludes that push factors are associated with home country or in other words, what makes student leave their home country whereas pull factors are linked to host country and what motivate students to choose it. Lee (2014) used the same flow as Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) by firstly identifying the choice of studying abroad versus locally, second step is to analyze the choice of the country to study and lastly the institution. As it is mentioned before, the author of the research used push and pull factors identified by previously made study. Students rated importance of these push factors: higher quality of the studies, easier to be accepted to the program, course not available locally, better understanding of west culture and the last was intention to migrate. Hence, pull factors in the study included previously obtained knowledge about host country, personal recommendations, cost issues, environment, geographic proximity and social links (Lee, 2014). The results of the study shows that cost issues were rated as the most important criteria choosing Taiwan as country to study. The most important determinants were rated supporting learning

environment, higher quality education and recognition of the host qualifications which are part of knowledge about host country factor.

On the other hand, recommendations was selected as the least important factor that conflicts with previously done studies on decision making process (Lawley and Perry, 1998; Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Pimpa, 2003, 2004). The limitations of the study comes from a small sample size and very specific case study that has to be taken into consideration repeating the study.

As any other model, push and pull concept has its own limitations that should be taken into consideration when making final conclusions. Li and Bray (2007) identified that students are not only effected by external factors that are in push and pull model but also personal characteristics such as age, gender, motivation and socio-economic status. Moreover, study done by Brown (2001) shows that previously mentioned factors are influencing the decision making process, the destination choice is also effected by perception about countries and institutions by family situations, culture and personality.

6.4. Satisfaction and retention

The key to attract and retain students in the university is to understand and meet students' expectation. This part is focused on educational experience influencing the student satisfaction that leads to retention. The huge increase in the number of educational institutions competing for the international students created a fierce competition between organizations that leads to higher education to be discussed as service industry (Cheng and Tam 1997).

6.4.1. Satisfaction

The construct of student satisfaction is usually referred to *"a short term attitude resulting from an evaluation of a student's educational experience"* (Elliot and Healy, 2001:2). In other words, the satisfaction is a consequence of the performance that meets or exceeds students' expectations towards education and institution. According to Hartman and Schmidt (1995), the student satisfaction needs to be treated as multi-dimensional concept that is very dependent on the students' personality. The challenge to identify and retain student satisfaction because of the situation/individual specific situation. The satisfaction can be influenced by previous experience, learning style or lifestyle (Dawson Conti-Bekkers, 2002, Patterson and Smith, 2001). Arambewela and Hall (2007) made a study in Australia where the objective was to understand the key factors influencing satisfaction of Australian education. After analyzing more than 500

results, various statistical methods were applied and Structural Equatation Model of Student Satisfaction was completed.
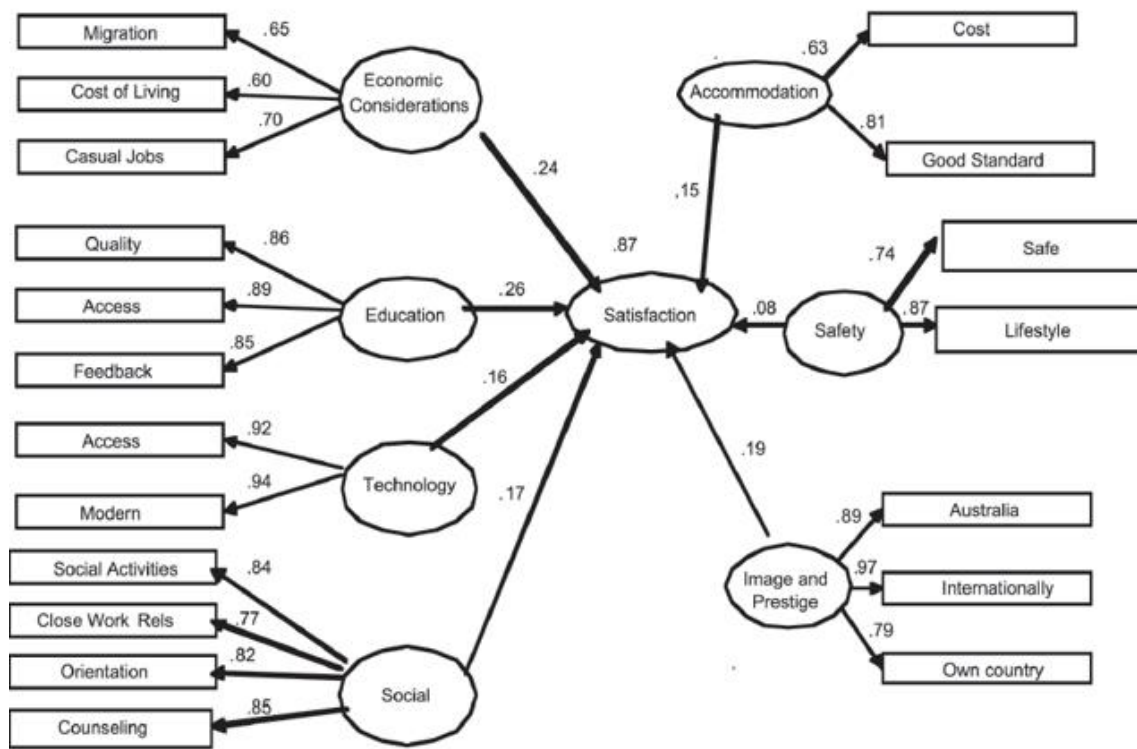

Figure 5 Structural Equation Model of Student Satisfaction
Source: Arambewela and Hall, 2007

Model includes seven constructs that influences student satisfaction the most: Education, Social, Technology, Economic, Accommodation, Safety, Prestige and Image. Even though only educational pillar is mostly related to university teaching methods and quality of the program, it is necessary for universities to evaluate the importance of other factors and understand how they can influence the rest of the constructs.

6.4.2. Retention

As it is mentioned previously, higher education is perceived as service industry, so students are treated as customers and their choice of university is anticipated as purchasing decision. A lot of studies are done in both, educational and service industries, to investigate the connection between satisfaction and retention. Scholars identified that customer satisfaction is strongly related to repurchase intention (Patterson, Johnson, and Spreng, 1997; Bolton, Kannan, and Bramlett, 2000).

One of the studies about student satisfaction related to recruitment and retention was done by Elliot and Healy (2001) where authors investigated the aspects of educational experience are

influencing the student satisfaction. Researched carried study in USA collected almost 2000 respondents including freshman, junior and senior students.

The students were asked to rate different college experiences by their importance and satisfaction. The results of the study shows that student satisfaction could be influenced by both, important and not important dimensions. As the most important dimension that affects their satisfaction students rated Student centered activities such as Academic advising, instructional effectiveness, safety and security. This was followed by campus climate and services. The study shows that recruitment and retention do not follow the same criteria. According to the authors, recruitment should promote the criteria that are most important for students while retention is gained by advocating the variables students are most satisfied with and improving the ones with the performance gap.

V. Tinto is one of the authors that did several studies in the field of education and student life (Engstrom, C, and V. Tinto, 2001; Tinto, V., 1997; Tinto, V, C.Engstrom, H. Hallock, and S. Riemer, 2001). One of his works research the conditions necessary for student retention (Tinto, 2006). According to his work, author identifies five conditions that supports the student retention. The first criteria is expectations towards students. In other words, students are more likely to retain in the university where they face high expectations towards their success from faculty and staff members. The second pillar is advising to students that includes a clear and consistent information about institutional requirements and future career choices and goals. The following condition is support from the institution through faculty, staff or social programs. Students are more likely to stay in the institution if they know that social, personal or educational support is available and connected to university. The fourth condition that students rates as very important is their involvement in the university over the contact with faculty, staff and other students. The last and rated as the most important case is the quality of education and teaching methods. According to researcher, the retention is highly affected by student perception about the learning curve and their engagement into learning activities. (Tinto, 2006)

Increasing the focus and competition in higher education institutions, more and more scholars tries to identify the right set of criteria that allows to predict student retention. Berge and Haung (2004) analyzed students' drop out in order to create a sustainable model of student retention. Authors analyzed previously done researches about student retention and based on the literature

review put together personal, circumstantial and institutional factors to understand interconnection between them in order to predict student decision making.

They argue that importance of the factors is very dependent on the context and person/institution that uses the model.
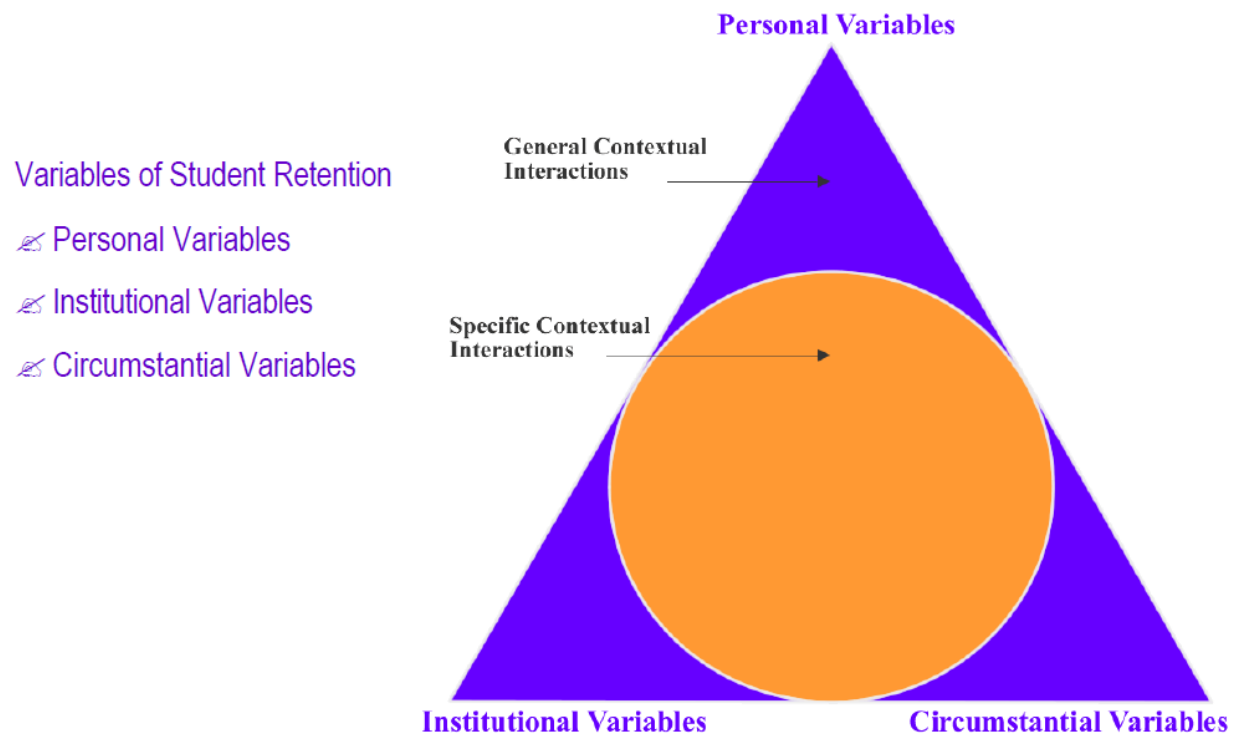
*Figure 6 Student retention model*
Source: Berge and Haung, 2004

Here personal values includes factors such as demographics, socio-economic status, expectations and previous experiences. Hence institutional variables refers to institutional values, structural systems, integration between student and social systems. Lastly, circumstancial variables are institutionals interactions, academic interactions, social interactions and external interactions such as work or family stituations, levels of satisfaction. (Berge and Haung, 2004)

7. Conceptualization

The research focus is to understand the attraction criteria and satisfaction that leads to retention of the students in case of Aalborg University recruitment to Master programs. A lot of researches have been done in fields of student recruitment, satisfaction and retention. The new framework is

presented to combine elements from different studies in order to provide a more holistic view of student recruitment and retention which is proved to be related to satisfaction.

Conceptual framework summarizes the literature review done and presents the flow of investigation that should be done in order to identify the relationship between attraction criteria for recruitment and retention. Expectation in the conceptual model refers to the attraction criteria that builds the primary interest into institution. In the literature review it refers to mobility criteria, Push and Pull criteria. Retention criteria are based on the literature review of the previous research. The last criteria for student retention is future relevance. The author believes that if all three conditions are satisfied/fulfilled, students are most likely to retain in university for the Master program. The triangle refers to the fact that all three conditions should be fulfilled and idea is taken from Berge and Haung (2004) work about student retention. This could be visualized as following:
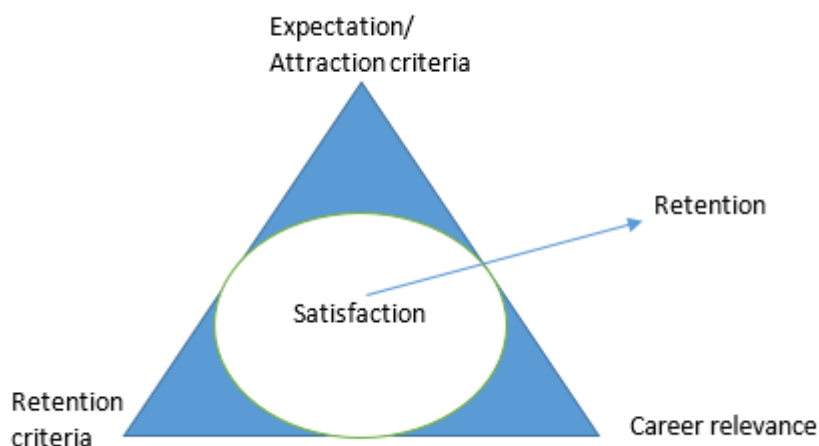
Figure 7 Conditions necessary to attract and retain students
Source: Own creation

Expectations/attraction criteria in this models are identified as set of social, academic and economic factors. In depth categories are analyzed further in the project. Retention criteria are the support available from university, advising system, involvement, quality of program and curriculum. The last pillar is future relevance that refers to career opportunities after finishing the program.

Looking from the time perspective, personality changes and the needs of the students differs. Because of this reason, the investigation of the attraction and retention criteria is based on two steps. First, attraction criteria for the Bachelor students and the following step is to understand what is important for people choosing institution for Master degree. As it is mentioned above, attraction criteria are divided into three categories (social, academic and economic) and are based on the literature review (Conceptual model 1). Retention criteria in this model is referred as Experience. Model also includes the importance of the factors that is shows in scale. Conceptual model where attraction and attraction criteria are included in the timeline is visualized as following:
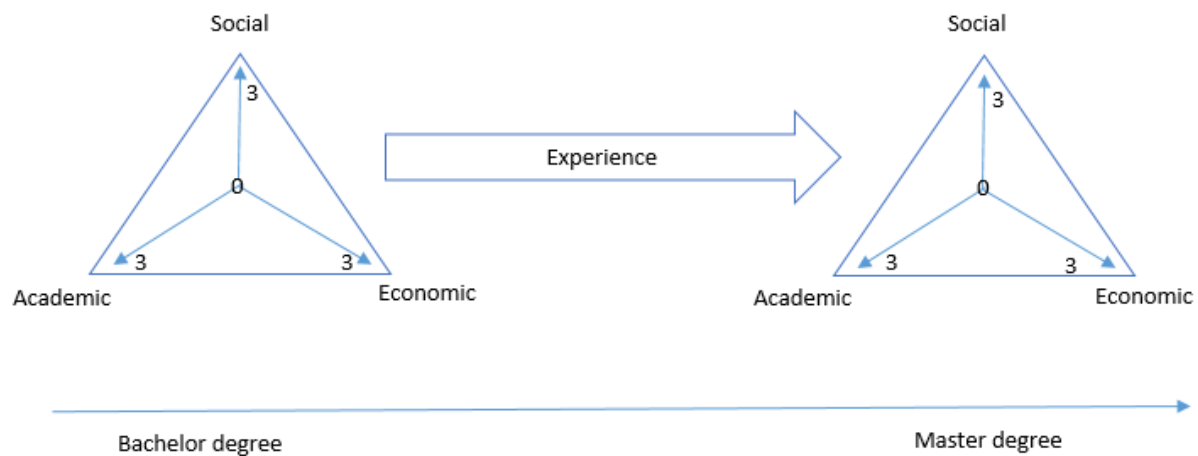
Conceptual model 1

The economic criteria are identified as: distance from home, access to accommodation, accommodation cost, tuition cost, cost of living, casual jobs.

The social criteria are: social life in the city, safety and security, social activities.

The academic consist of: career preparation, academic program, size of campus, student support programs, academic advising, quality of education, university image/reputation, friendly and supportive learning environment, time to get degree.

Author	Criteria
Martin (1994)	Career preparation, Academic program, Distance from home, social life, size of campus, access to accommodation, Student support programs
Elliot and Healy (2001)	Academic advising, Safety and security, Tuition cost, social activities
Arambewela and Hall (2007)	Cost of living, casual jobs, Quality of education, Accommodation cost, University image
Wilkins and Huisman (2011)	Friendly and supportive learning environment, Time to get degree.

Table 2 Literature review based summary on selected criteria
Source: Own creation

8. Questionnaire

The objective of the questionnaire is to test the conceptual model. The hypothesis were driven by literature review and the conceptual model.

Elliot and Healy (2001) analyzed students' choice for their education, how satisfaction of educational experience influenced their retention decision. Verbik and Lasanowski (2007) researched factors influencing students' choice to study abroad. Both paper had the same findings – the recruitment attraction criteria are the same for college and university students. According to Levatino (2016), the students could be segmented based on the importance of the factors. Based on these researches, the following hypothesis were made:

H1: The attraction criteria for Bachelor and Master Programs are the same.

H2: The importance of attraction criteria for Bachelor and Master Programs changes over time.

Based on Patterson, Johnson, and Spreng (1997) work, Elliot and Healy (2001) made a research and confirmed that satisfaction of the educational experience demonstrates a strong relationship with retention intentions. This is why, hypothesis is formed as following:

H3: Student who were satisfied their Bachelor program retains for their Master program.

The hypothesis also tests the conceptual model if the selection of criteria for both – Bachelor and Master – degrees are the same. It is done by asking people to rate factors that attracted them to study Bachelor or Master degree. The satisfaction impact to the retention is checked by asking respondents that stayed at Aalborg university after their Bachelor program to rate the educational experience.

9. Analysis

Analysis were divided into several steps. First of all, the demographic data is shown to understand the sample. After that, author provides the statistical analysis separately for each program (Bachelors and Masters) as a new students. The new students are considered Bachelors and Master students who started their Master program after finishing Bachelor education in another institution. Afterwards the analysis for the Master students who retained at Aalborg University after they completed Bachelor education is provided.

Additional comments from the survey are provided in the appendixes. Author does not include comments into analysis section. They are considered only in Conclusion and Discussion part.

9.1. The sample

The sample size was 93 respondents. As it can be seen in the table 3, the respondents almost equally divided by gender (53% female and 47% male). As for the age distribution, the biggest part of the respondents belong to group between 18 and 26. It can be explained by selected target group – Bachelor and Master students.

Row Labels	Female	Male	Grand Total
18-22	16	17	33
23-26	23	19	42
27-35	8	8	16
36+	2		2
Grand Total	49	44	93

Table 3 Gender vs. Age

The following question respondents were asked which education they are currently involved in. Again, the results are almost equally divided showing that both Bachelor and Master samples are presented equally that increases the validity of the results. Table 4:

Row Labels	Count of Overall
Bachelor/Top up	44
Masters	48
None of the above	1
Grand Total	93

Table 4 Distribution of respondents based on the degree

As it is mentioned above, Master students are divided into two groups: students who retained in Aalborg University after their Bachelor program and newly attracted students. As we can see from table 5, the biggest part of the current Master students are coming from other institutions from European Union and retaining from bachelor program (both of them represents 37.5%) while the lowest amount of student, according to the survey, comes from University college of Northern Denmark (UCN) which represents only 4% of the sample.

Row Labels	Count of Overall S
Other institution in Denmark	5
Other institution in EU	18
Other institution outside EU	5
UCN	2
AAU	18
Grand Total	48

Table 5 Distribution of respondents based the attained bachelor degree

9.2.   Importance analysis

The importance analysis are adopted from Cook and Zalloco (1983) work there the importance of the factors are represented by the mean analysis. The higher the mean is, the more important criteria is for students for selecting the educational institution. The mean analysis were selected because of its popularity in between authors working in the field of decision making about educational institution (Hall, 2007; Martin, 1994) and easy to understand and follow manner for the reader.

First of all, the mean importance is shown for new student. The Mean importance for Bachelor students are shown in table 6.

Category	Criteria	Mean	Average for category
Economic			**2,10**
	No tuition fee	2,64	
	Affordable cost of living	2,18	
	Number of casual jobs available	2,15	
	Affordable accomodation	2,10	
	Good access to accomodation	2,00	
	Short distance from home	1,54	
Social			**2,08**
	High safety and security	2,33	
	Good social life in the city	2,05	
	Interesting social activities	1,87	
Academic			**2,36**
	Future relevance for my career	2,87	
	High quality of education	2,85	
	Good career preparation	2,67	
	Good university reputation/image	2,64	
	Specific academic program	2,62	
	Friendly and supportive learning environment	2,44	
	Favorable time to get degree	2,31	
	Academic advising	2,08	
	Student support programs	1,82	
	Size of campus	1,28	

Table 6 Mean importance analysis for Bachelor students

The most important category for making decision about education institution for Bachelor student is Academic with the mean importance of 2.36 following by Economic (2.10) and Social category 2.08. What is more, the most important criteria 'Future relevance for my career' with the mean of 2.87, 'High quality of education' mean 2.85 and 'Good career preparation' holding mean of 2.67 also belongs to the academic category. The lowest rated criteria are 'size of campus' (mean 1.28) and 'Short distance from home' with a mean of 1.54.

Category	Criteria	Mean	Average for category
Economic			2,23
	No tuition fee	2,76	
	Affordable cost of living	2,45	
	Affordable accomodation	2,38	
	Number of casual jobs available	2,31	
	Good access to accomodation	1,97	
	Short distance from home	1,52	
Social			2,31
	High safety and security	2,45	
	Interesting social activities	2,45	
	Good social life in the city	2,03	
Academic			2,47
	High quality of education	2,97	
	Future relevance for my career	2,86	
	Good career preparation	2,86	
	Specific academic program	2,69	
	Good university reputation/image	2,59	
	Favorable time to get degree	2,52	
	Friendly and supportive learning environment	2,45	
	Academic advising	2,21	
	Student support programs	1,97	
	Size of campus	1,62	

Table 7 Mean importance analysis for New Master students

Master student mean importance is visualized in the table 7. It is shown that main trends are the same as for Bachelor students. The most important category is rated to be Academic having mean of 2.47 and even the most important factors are the same: the first place is taken by 'Future relevance for my career' with the mean of 2.97, 'High quality of education' mean 2.86 and 'Good career preparation' holding mean of 2.86. Both, Bachelor and Master, groups of students rated 'Short distance from home' and 'Size of campus' as the least important. The main difference between Bachelor and Master Students is that Master students rated social category as more important that economic. Also, Master students rated all the criteria higher than Bachelors.

The mean importance analysis for the Master students who retained at Aalborg University is shown in the following table 8.

Category	Criteria	Mean	Average for category
Economic			2,27
	No tuition fee	2,72	
	Affordable accomodation	2,51	
	Affordable cost of living	2,41	
	Number of casual jobs available	2,35	
	Good access to accomodation	2,18	
	Short distance from home	1,46	
Social			2,20
	High safety and security	2,41	
	Interesting social activities	2,21	
	Good social life in the city	1,97	
Academic			2,44
	Future relevance for my career	2,89	
	Good career preparation	2,82	
	High quality of education	2,74	
	Specific academic program	2,68	
	Good university reputation/image	2,56	
	Friendly and supportive learning environment	2,50	
	Favorable time to get degree	2,41	
	Academic advising	2,24	
	Student support programs	2,00	
	Size of campus	1,60	

Table 8 Mean importance analysis for retained Master students

The most important category for retaining at Aalborg university master students rated to be academic one with the mean of 2.44 while the second place was taken by economic category with slightly lower mean (2.27) and the least important category is social with the mean equal to 2.20. Comparing to the newly attracted students, the trend stays the same. Moreover, we can see that criteria 'Future relevance for my career' stays in the first place with the mean of 2.89 followed by 'Good career preparation' with mean 2.82 and 'High quality of education' with 2.74. Similarly to previously analyzed groups, criteria as 'Short distance from home' and 'Size of Campus' are rated as the least important (1.46 and 1.60 accordingly).

9.3. Satisfaction analysis

The satisfaction analysis were based on the same principle as importance analysis – the mean analysis. Again, the analysis of newly started students are provided first. The satisfaction analysis was made for the shorter list of criteria to be respondents friendly and evaluate the most important criteria based on the trial survey.

The bachelor students mean satisfaction results are provided in the table 9:

Criteria	Mean
Accommodation	3,66
Social life	3,37
Learning environment	3,26
Living cost	3,10
Problem Based Learning model	3,04
Curriculum	2,78

Table 9 Mean satisfaction analysis for Bachelor students

It is obvious, that students are most satisfied by the economic criteria 'Accommodation' while the academic criteria 'Problem Based Learning Model' and 'Curriculum' are rated the lowest.

Criteria	Mean
Learning environment	3,93
Accommodation	3,74
Problem Based Learning model	3,70
Social life	3,48
Curriculum	3,37
Living cost	3,14

Table 10 Mean satisfaction analysis for New Master students

From the table 10 we can see how newly attracted master students are satisfied with listed criteria. Overall, master students are more satisfied (higher means) than previously mentioned bachelor students. Here the most satisfying thing was rated 'Learning environment' that belongs to academic category and the least satisfying thing was from economic criteria 'Living cost'. The 'Problem Based Learning model' was in the middle.

The table 11 shows the satisfaction mean by Master students who retained at Aalborg University.

Criteria	Mean
Accommodation	3,62
Learning environment	3,62
Social life	3,56
Problem Based Learning model	3,32
Curriculum	3,32
Living cost	3,01

Table 11 Mean satisfaction analysis for retained Master students

The first place by satisfaction is taken by two variables 'Accommodation' and 'Learning environment' with the mean of 3.62. 'Problem Based Learning model' and 'Curriculum' also has the same satisfaction score of 3.32. The least satisfactory element is 'Living cost'.

Continuing the satisfaction analysis, Master students who retained in Aalborg University were asked to rate their experience in Bachelor students in the provided criteria list. The results can be seen in the table 12. The most satisfactory element was 'University support on social issues' with the mean 3.7. Moreover, the most people were using this service.

Criteria	Mean	Not participated
Support on social issues	3,7	5
Outside curriculum activities	3,41	7
Support on academic issues	3,1	6

Table 12 Mean satisfaction analysis for retained Master students for Bachelor experience

10.   Conclusion and discussion

The aim for the project was to identify the key attraction and retention factors. The conclusion is based on the results received from the analysis of the questionnaire and the literature review. According to the results, the most important criteria attracting student to study at Aalborg University are from the academic category. On the other hand, analysis shows, that all the categories shows a great importance for the study that only supports the conceptual framework which shows, that all the categories are inter related. Overall, Master students newly attracted and retained at University, has a higher means that shows the more complex decision making process.

Based on the mean analysis, it can be concluded, that key determinants for retention are the same attraction criteria. Master students evaluated the importance of criteria for staying the same as attraction. The most important attraction criteria are 'Future relevance for my career', 'Good career preparation' and 'High quality of education'. This course of reasons reflect very instrumental view of higher education which means that university is a gate to the professional work rather than a place for theoretical knowledge. The lowest ranked criteria were 'Size of campus' and 'Short distance from home'.

As reported in the satisfaction results, it is shown that 'Curriculum' and 'Problem Based Learning model' are rated as neutral factor by all groups of students. While 'Learning environment' is rated as most satisfying element. Master students are asked question for evaluating university support and outside curriculum activities in their bachelor experience. All three factors are rated just above the average where leading factor is support on social issues with the mean of 3.7. According to Dunn (2001), the support on social issues are one of the important criteria for international students' satisfaction because it helps to minimize the cultural shock and adaptation.

Based on the statistical results, there are several recommendations for Aalborg University how to attract students and increase the retention rate. As one of the selling point of studies at Aalborg University is Problem Based Learning, university should be improving by adopting curriculum and learning way to increase the satisfaction level. Based on the comment received in the survey (appendix 1), students are very disappointed by the continuously changing curriculum. What is more, students feels the need of less theoretical knowledge and higher focus on practical subjects. It is closely related with the critiques for the university about focusing on the basics and too general knowledge especially in the Master program.

International students have better opportunities to travel and study abroad. The decision making process of studying abroad become more complex and students evaluate institutions more critically based on the perceived quality (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003; Anderson and Sullivan, 1993). The ratings of the university in the international platform becomes very important factor to determine the study destination. It is a common belief that high prestige university will give a better start for the career.

Looking from the perspective of the conceptual model, it can be concluded, that the case study proves to be working. In other words, conceptual model can be used to visualized a student journey and predict his retention based on attraction criteria and university experience. The importance of the right mix of attraction criteria is necessary to attract and recruit new students. Based on the results from the case study, the importance of attraction attributes is only getting stronger with the higher degree.

11.   References

Altbach, P. G. (1998). Comparative higher education: Knowledge, the university, and development. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, The University of Hong Kong.

Anderson, R. E., (1973). Consumer Dissatisfaction: The effect of Disconfirmed Expectancy on Perceived Product Performance, Journal of Marketing Research, 10 (February), pp. 38-44.

Arambewela, R.A., (2003). Post-choice Satisfaction of International Postgraduate Students from Asia Studying in Victorian Universities. Doctoral thesis, Victoria University, Melbourne.

Arambewela, R. and Hall, J. (2007) ,"A Model of Student Satisfaction: International Postgraduate Students From Asia", in E - European Advances in Consumer Research Volume 8, eds. Stefania Borghini, Mary Ann McGrath, and Cele Otnes, Duluth, MN : Association for Consumer Research, Pages: 129-135.

Arbnor, I. and Bjerke B. (2009) Methodology for Creating Business Knowledge. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.

Baldwin, G., and James, R. (2000). The market in Australian higher education and the concept of the student as informed customer. Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 22(2), 139-148.

Baruch, Y., Budhwar, P.S., and Khatri, N. (2007). Brain drain: Inclination to stay abroad after studies. Journal of World Business, 42, 99–112.

Berge, Z. L., and Huang, Y. P. (2004). 13: 5 A Model for Sustainable Student Retention: A Holistic Perspective on the Student Dropout Problem with Special Attention to e-Learning.

Binsardi, A. and Ekwulugo, F., (2003) 'International marketing of British education: research on the students' perception and the UK market penetration', Marketing Intelligence and Planning, 21/5, pp. 318–327

Bodycott, P. (2009). Choosing a higher education study abroad destination: What mainland Chinese parents and students rate as important. Journal of Research in International Education, 8(3), 349-373.

Bolton R. N., Kannan, P.K., and Bramlett, M.D. (2000). Implications of Loyalty Program Membership and Service Experiences for Customer Retention and Value. Journal of Academy of Marketing Science, 28 (1): 95-108.

Bourke, A. (2000). A model of the determinants of international trade in higher education. Service Industries Journal, 20(1), 110–138.

Burke, B, D. (1986). Experiences of overseas undergraduate students, Bulletin No 18, University of New South Wales

Chapman, D. W. (1981) "A Model of Student College Choice", Journal of Higher Education, vol. 52(5) pp. 490-505.

Cheng, Y.C. and M.M. Tam. 1997. Multi-Models of Quality in Education. Quality Assurance in Education, 5: 22-31

Coates, H., and Edwards, D. (2011). The Graduate Pathways survey: New insights on education and employment outcomes five years after Bachelor degree completion. Higher Education Quarterly, 65(1), 74–93.

Cook, P., and Zallocco, R. L. (1983) "Predicting University Preference and Attendance: Applied Marketing in Higher Education Administration", Research in Higher Education, vol. 19(2) pp. 197-209.

Czinkota, M.R. (2005). Loosening the shackles: The future of global higher education, Paper presented at the World Trade Organization, Symposium on cross-border supply of services. Geneva, April 28–29.

Dawson, J. and Conti-Bekkers, G., (2002). Supporting International Students' Transitional Coping Strategies. Focusing on Students, Proceedings of the Annual Teaching Learning Forum, 5-6 February. Perth, Edith Cowan University.

De Ville, P., Martou, F., and Vandenberghe, V. (1996). Cost benefit analysis and regulatory issues of student mobility in the EU. European Journal of Education, 31(2), 205–222.

DeShields Jr, O. W., Kara, A., and Kaynak, E. (2005). Determinants of business student satisfaction and retention in higher education: applying Herzberg's two-factor theory. International journal of educational management, 19(2), 128-139.

Drucker, P., (1997). Still the youngest mind, Forbes, March 10, 1997.

Elliott, K.M. and Healy, M.A. (2001). Key Factors Influencing Student Satisfaction Related to Recruitment and Retention. Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, Vol. 10(4) 2001

Engstrom, C, and V. Tinto (2001), "Building Collaborative Partnerships with Student Affairs to Enhance Student Learning" in M. Barr (ed.) Handbook for Student Affairs Administrators. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Goodman, B., Jones, R., and Macias, M.S. (2007). An exploratory survey of Spanish and English nursing students' views on studying or working abroad. Nurse Education Today, 28(3), 378–384.

Hartman, D.E. and Schmidt, S.L. (1995). Understanding Student/Alumni Satisfaction From a Consumer's Perspective: The Effects of Institutional Performance and Program Outcomes. Research in Higher Education, 36 (2): 197-217

IDP Education Australia Pty Ltd., 1995. Destination and Choice–A Study of International Students Enrolling in Australian Universities, IDP, Sydney.

Kehm, B.M. (2005). The contribution of international student mobility to human development and global understanding. US-China Review, 2(1 (Serial 2) January), 18–24.

Kuada, J. (2012). "Research Methodology. A Project Guide for University Students". 1st ed. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur.

Kuada, J., (2011). Research Methodology, A Project Guide for University Students. Centre for International Business Department of Business and Management. Aalborg University.

Kotler, P and Murphy, P (1981) "Strategic Planning for Higher Education", Journal of Higher Education, vol. 52, pp. 470-489.

Lawley, M., and Perry, C. (1998). Thai and Malaysian students' perceptions of overseas study destinations: An exploratory study. Paper presented at ANZMAC98 Conference, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Levatino, A. (2016). Transnational higher education and international student mobility: determinants and linkage. Higher Education, 1-17.

Li, M., and Bray, M. (2007). Cross-border flows of students for higher education: Push-pull factors and motivations of mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau. Higher Education, 53(6), 791-818.

Litten, L. H. (1980) "Marketing Higher Education: Benefits and Risks for the American Academic System", Journal of Higher Education, vol. 51 (1) pp. 40-59.

Lee, C. F. (2013). An investigation of factors determining the study abroad destination choice: A case study of Taiwan. Journal of Studies in International Education, 1028315313497061.

Marcotte, C., Desroches, J., and Poupart, I. (2007). Preparing internationally minded business graduates: The role of international mobility programs. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 31, 655–668.

Sison, D.M. and Brennan, L. (2012) Students as global citizens:
strategies for mobilizing studies abroad, Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 22:2, 167-181, DOI: 10.1080/08841241.2012.736884

Maringe, F., and Carter, S. (2007). International students" motivations for studying in UK HE: Insights into the choice and decision making of African students. International Journal of Educational Management, 21(6), 459-475.

Marginson, S., and van der Wende, M. (2007). Globalisation and higher education. Paris: OECD Directorate for Education.

Martin, C. (1994). Institutional Research and Student Recruitment or How do Institutions of Higher Education Know What Attracts Students to their Doors? Market Research Can Help. AAIR Journal, Volume 5, No. 2

Mazzarol, T., and Soutar, G. N. (2002). „Push-pull" factors influencing international student destination choice. International Journal of Educational Management, 16(2), 82-90.

McMahon, M. E. (1992). Higher education in a world market: An historical look at the global context of international study. Higher Education, 24(4), 465-482.

Patterson, P. G., Smith, T. (2001). Modeling Relationship Strength Across Service Types in an Eastern Culture. International Journal of Service Industry Management, 12(2), 90-113.

Paul, P. G., Johnson, L.W. and Spreng, R.A. (1997). Modeling the Determinants of Customer Satisfaction for Business-to-Business Professional Services. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 25 (Winter): 4-17

Pimpa, N. (2003). The influence of family on Thai students' choices of international education. International Journal of Educational Management, 17(5), 211-291.

Pimpa, N. (2004). The relationship between Thai students' choices of international education and their families. International Education Journal, 5(3), 352-359.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., Thornhill, A., (2009). Research methods for business students. 5th edition.

Sison, M. D., and Brennan, L. (2012). Students as global citizens: strategies for mobilizing studies abroad. Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 22(2), 167-181.

Styron Jr, R. (2010). Student satisfaction and persistence: Factors vital to student retention. Research in Higher Education Journal, 6, 1.

Smith, L.R. and Cavusgill, S.T. (1984) "Marketing Planning for Colleges and Universities", Long Range Planning, vol. 17(6) pp. 104-117.

Smith, A. K., Bolton, R. N., Wagner, J. (1999). A Model of Customer Satisfaction with Service Encounters Involving Failure and Recovery. Journal of Marketing Research, 36(36), 356-372.

Teichler, U., and Janson, K. (2007). The professional value of temporary study in another European Country: Employment and work of former ERASMUS students. Journal of Studies in International Education, 11(3/4 Fall/Winter), 486–495.

Tinto, V. (1997). "Classrooms as Communities: Exploring The Educational Character of Student Persistence" Journal of Higher Education. 68,6 (November/December): 599-623.

Tinto, V. (1999). Taking retention seriously: Rethinking the first year of college. NACADA journal, 19(2), 5-9.

Tinto, V, C.Engstrom, H. Hallock, and S. Riemer (2001). "Learning Communities in Higher Education" (with C.Engstrom, H. Hallock, and S. Riemer), Higher Education in the United States: An Encyclopedia. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO Publishers.

Townley, P., (2001). The construction of a model of qualitative evaluation to support the development of the policy and practice of raising student satisfaction in an institution in the higher education sector, Conference proceedings, Higher Education Close Up Conference 2, Lancaster University, UK, 16-18 July.

Tremblay, K. (2005). Academic mobility and immigration. Journal of Studies in International Education, 9(3 Fall), 196–228.

Veloutsou C, Paton RA and Lewis J (2005). 'Consultation and reliability of information sources pertaining to university selection', International Journal of Educational Management, Vol 19, No. 4, 2005, pp. 279-291 of Marketing, 62(2), 60-76.

Verbik, L. and Lasanowski, V. (2007). International Student Mobility: Patterns and Trends. The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, 2007

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2012). Global Education Digest 2012. Retrieved from http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/global-education-digest.aspx International stdents are defined as those who have crossed a national or territorial border for the purpose of education and are now enrolled in institutions outside of their country of origin.

Wilkins, S. and Huisman, J. (2011). Student recruitment at international branch campuses: can they compete in the global market? Journal of Studies in International Education, 15(3), 299-316.

Williams, TE (1986). Optimizing Student Institution Fit", New Directions for Higher Education, no. 53, pp. 35-46.

Wilkins, S. and Huisman, J. (2011). Student recruitment at international branch campuses. Can they compete in the global market? Journal of Studies in International Education, 15 (3). pp. 299-316. ISSN 1028-3153

12. Appendixes

Appendix 1: comments from the survey

I believe that a lot of things can be changed at this university but don't have enough time/space to go into detail.

1. Schedule planning, in our department it is almost impossible to get one schedule for the whole semester as it continuously changes.

2. There is not always enough place to study in groups. This means that we are sometimes very limited in what we can do.

3. There is no logical structure to the schedule as we have classes and project work together but then don't have time to do them at the same time and sometimes exams are not immediately after subjects finish (but 3-4 months later instead).

4. Having more study places in the city centre or different parts of the city would be better because then everyone has more space to study and can then meet up without having to worry about space. For example, we sometimes go from Nordkraft to the public library in town to the one in Nørressundby and then all the way to university just to find out that we have to work from home because there is a lack of space.

There is too much focus on philosophy of science. I comparison to the importance and what we can use it to when we got our degree. It is not creating enough value. Most people don't want to conduct research afterwards and I don't think it is THAT important in most jobs. Besides, the requirements from the university to the students are too low. Aim higher! The content is too easy for a university (in general). Have ambitions, and aim higher. Now is unsatisfying for students and the society, and thereby also for AAU

My personal opinion is that it will be a good idea to focus more on the practical stuff. Too much theoretical subjects are involved in the programme, so I recommend more practical subjects like mathematics, financial accounting and finances to be included in the studying process.

Budget cuttings are severly putting our degrees in jeopardy. Less lectures do worsen this situation. I will there for not attend any masters Programm at AAU. I feel that I do not learn enough. And grades are given very subjectively and untransparent.

M.Sc. International Marketing program should be more marketing focused than it is currently => no shared courses with IBE students any longer (Would like to have courses about brand management, b2b marketing etc.)

Facilitate the accomodation facilities for non-eu students. Also increase response time when complains are filed in especially with issues with courses, accomodation, challenges faced by new students.Very proud of the PBL learning system.

Interdiscipline Active Sports Activities

Schedules on time,ability to enroll more courses

I think the education level on EBA (i do not know if the same counts for HA) is quite lower than other danish universities, like Aarhus university and CBS. I am quite disappointed about that. Therefore, I will study my master degree in one of these places instead. However, I will miss the PBL model. I think it is very good, both due to the fact that I get a rather practical understanding and experience in team work, but the educational level is just to low to make me want to continue at AAU after I finish my Bachelor. I am 4th semester pt.

People who are ambitious and very committed serve for the ones who need to be pulled (group works). This is very demotivating, since then at the exam presentation you are getting a very close grade with the ones been pulled. Very unfair and silly.
I can see anyhow the point that I am here to learn, so if the person who does not do anything got a grade close to who really committed.the person not deserving the good grade in life will cross other difficulties in future, but still. Very unfair!

They should improve on schedules, and be more stable in regards to keeping the plan!

I am happy about Aalborg university because of the problem based learning, it is really nice when you are allowed to work on your favourable projects, You can decide your self what to write about. Supervisors are asigned also helps to improve the quality of the studying

1. Make the study cases up to date. Do not use the same case for many years in a row;
2. Even though you call it "Problem Based Learning" it is still more "Theory Based Learning". Real problem and practical solutions are considered badly. There is one theoretical path which has to be followed, otherwise your project (for example) is bad;
3. Better adjust some of the courses for people who have knowledge/experience in the area and for those who does not. For example - coursers in which a software has to be learned;
4. One of the most important thing is when appointing supervisors to different groups, do so based on supervisor's knowledge in the chosen area. Do not pick one supervisor for 90% of the groups no matter if can he contribute to the real problem in the project or only to theoretical-methodological part of it;
5. When it comes to internship semester, contact companies not only in Denmark, organise events and meetings in order to be of a help to the students. Saying that we have the freedom to choose and do whatever we want is not guiding, it is not a help, it is you running away from taking responsibility, because we will still have the freedom to chose even though you guide us during this process. It is a good thing that you give so much attention to that but much more efforts has to be done;
6. For each exam set clear directions of what is expected from the students and a clear grading system - which parts of the exam have the highest weight, which parts of the student's performance have the highest weight, and so on.

its actually providing me the tools to handle most economic problems,thanks to her model of studying.that is problem based

I thought that PBL will be more practical and not writing only some project packed with methodology... which is completely useles unless you want to study a PhD. programme.

supervisor should allow more time and more frequent meetings for the groups under their supervision.

I am fully satisfied with the overall experience as a student at AAU, and greatful for initiatives such as re-evaluations and concerns towards continuous improvements. I wish more could see the end use and positive outcomes of filling out a 5 minute survey, even as a sign of solidarity for our peer students. Thank you.

Aim higher from the University's perspective. Have higher requirements to the students and the teachers. The content is too easy especially when starting at the university. Too much time is spent on providing the students basic knowledge. Many students are frustrated because the content is too easy.

Less focus on philosophy of science. It is very important if you wanna be researcher yes, it is important when making personal reflections yes. BUT it is too much time spent on it.

| curricculum should be improved, since during lectures some teachers were repeating each other and talking about same things.Besides that the scedule was changing a lot and it was dificuilt to keep up sometimes. |
| The most important factor and the main reason why I chose AAU is the problem based learning |

Appendix 2: Literature review summary

Author	Name of the paper	Parameters that were investigated	Results
Chris Martin	Institutional Research and Student Recruitment or How do Institutions of Higher Education Know What Attracts Students to their Doors?	Career preparation, Specific academic program, Academic reputation, Distance from home, Quality of research program, Library resources, Social life, Costs, Consulting profile of university, Student support programs, Size of campus, Access to accommodation, Parents' of friend preference	The highest ranked factors: 'career preparation', 'specific academic program', 'distance from home', 'academic reputation', 'and the quality of research program 'and 'library resources'. The least important factor 'Parents' or friends' preference
Kevin M. Elliott Margaret A. Healy	Key Factors Influencing Student Satisfaction Related to Recruitment and Retention	Academic Advising, Campus Services, Instructional Effect., Student Centeredness, Safety and Security, Recruit./Financial Aid, Registration Effect., Service Excellence, Campus Climate, Campus Life, Concern for Individual	The most important: Academic advising, Instructional efficiency, Safety and security. The least important was Campus life
Rodney Arambewela and John Hall	A Model of Student Satisfaction: International Postgraduate Students From Asia	Categories: Education, Economic Factors, Image, Social Orientation, Technology, Accommodation and Safety.	The most important: Education, Economic considerations and Image and prestige. The least important was Safety

Stephen Wilkins and Jeroen Huisman	Student recruitment at international branch campuses Can they compete in the global market?	Over 60 criteria such as tuition fees and living costs are lower at international branch campuses, branch campuses are closer to my home, quality of education, high rankings, best for employment prospects, best for improving English language skills	The most important factors: improve employment prospects, to experience a different culture and to improve English
Vincent Tinto	Taking Student Retention Seriously	Literature based review	The necessary conditions: supportive of retention, namely expectation, advice, support, involvement, and learning.
Zane L. Berge and Yi-Ping Huang	A Model for Sustainable Student Retention: A Holistic Perspective on the Student DropoutProblem with Special Attention to e-Learning	Three main pillars: Personal variables, Institution variables, Circumstantial variables. Example: Demographic Variables: Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Residence, Family income/socioeconomic status, parental educational level and parental expectation. Individual Variables: Academic Skills and Abilities, Motivation, Goals and Commitment, Prior Educational Experiences, Record of academic achievements, Prior schooling experiences. Bureaucratic Variables: Mission and Policy, Budgeting and Funding, Institutional Awareness and Participation.Academic Variables: Structural System, Normative System. Social Variables: Social System, Mechanisms for Social Integration, Institutional Interactions, Bureaucratic Interactions, Academic Interactions, Social Interactions, Interactions External to Institution: Life Circumstances, Work Circumstances, Family/ Socio-Economic Circumstances.	All the pillars are important and are interrelated. No specific importance was shown in the article.

Jalynn Roberts, Ronald Styron, Jr.	Student satisfaction and persistence: factors vital to student retention	Academic advising, Social connectedness, Involvement and engagement, Faculty and staff approachability, Business procedures, Learning experiences and Student support services	The most important: Learning Experiences while Social Connectedness and Involvement and Engagement rated the lowest.
Marianne D. Sison and Linda Brennan	Students as global citizens: strategies for mobilizing studies abroad	I can broaden my horizons, I can get international experience, Everyone should do it at some stage, I can meet new people and make new friends, It will look really good on my CV, I like the idea of participating in different cultures, I do not want to stay in Australia for my study	The most important reasons: Everyone should do it at some stage and I do not want to stay in Australia for my study. The least important: I can get international experience
Ali Kara and Oscar W. Deshields Jr., Erdener Kaynak	Determinants of business student satisfaction and retention in higher education: applying Herzberg's two-factor theory	Cognitive development, Career progress, Business student satisfaction, career plans, faculty, staff advising, classes, student partial college experience, satisfaction and intentions	The most important rated was faculty and classes. The least important was staff advising.

| Cheng-Fei Lee | An Investigation of Factors Determining the Study Abroad Destination Choice: A Case Study of Taiwan | Personal improvement, Live in a different culture, Make international contacts, Improve language skills, Knowledge and awareness of the host country, Quality of education in host country, Recognition of host qualifications, Established population of overseas students, Recommendation from others, Parent's/relative's recommendation, Friend's recommendation, Professor's recommendation, Agent's recommendation, Physical and learning environment, Comfortable climate, Exciting place to live, Friendly and supportive learning environment, Cost issues, Tuition fees, Cost of living, Opportunity of working during the course, Time to get the degree, Safe environment (low crime and racial discrimination), Social links and geographic proximity, Friends/relatives study or live here, Home-host country distance, Institution image, Reputation for education quality, Reputation for excellent staff, Links to other institutions known to me, A strong alumni, Recognized by employers, A board range of courses and programs, Large campus and excellent facilities, Is financially stable | The most important cost issues: such as Tuition fees, Cost of living, Time to get the degree, Safe environment (low crime and racial discrimination). The lowest rated Recommendation from others, Parent's/relative's recommendation, Friend's recommendation, Agent's recommendation |