

2016

Internationalization – the case of recruitment strategy of AAU



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8/10/2016

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Number of characters: 132 946

Pages: 56

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1. Introduction

Nowadays doing international business is very important and also required as it has become almost impossible to survive by economic isolation. The size of an organization going to a foreign market is not the most important any more as the speed, creativity and innovation has become the key for international businesses. (Czinkota, et al. 2009)

By doing their business international organizations get the opportunity to access new markets. Therefore, operating on domestic and foreign market gives opportunity for more expansion, growth and earnings rather than just staying at the home market. Selecting right target countries for foreign operations is an important decision, which has a major impact on internationalization (Jiang & Carpenter, 2013).

International business gives organizations new options and certainly increases competition within all kind of industries. Therefore, organizations have to take important decision regarding their international strategy and might have to consider relocation of their resources or activities on a global level. (Czinkota, et al. 2009)

One of the recent definitions of international business is: *“International business consists of transactions that are devised and carried out across national borders to satisfy the objectives of individuals, companies and organizations.”* (Czinkota, et al. 2009, 8). The most important in international business is that for participant to be satisfied because only then there is an opportunity for developing business relationships and expanding networks. (Czinkota, et al. 2009)

Many external key factors were identified, including culture and languages, governmental regulations and policy, transactional costs, risk, opportunity and market size (Bell, 1995; McGoldrick and Davies, 1995; Coviello and Munro, 1997; Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Moen et al., 2004; Rothaermel et al., 2006). Alexander and De Lira e Silva’s (2002, p. 301) add further three factors and state that “geopolitical, economic and competitive conditions fundamentally altered the direction of market expansion.” (Jiang & Carpenter, 2013)

In the same way of thoughts globalization and internationalization have changed the structure of higher education system worldwide. International activities of most universities in terms of international students’ recruitment, faculty mobility, twinning programs, foreign branch campuses have expanded tremendously. (Ramanathan, Thambiah, & Raman, 2012)

The concept of internationalization of higher education seems to cover a wide range of methods and approaches. Many countries perceived internationalization as crucial in achieving international academic standards (Knight, 2004). As for many universities in developed countries, internationalizing their campuses can help students acquire knowledge, skills, and experiences to be

able to compete in the global economy and become productive members of a diverse world society (Bendriss, 2007).

AAU was established in 1974, thus being considered as relatively new, the University has *experienced rapid growth in education* (University, 2015). In the strategy report of AAU it is stated that the *“goal has been to use our platform as a global knowledge generating institution to challenge, support and develop society. We can conclude that successful collaboration with our local communities renders the University an even stronger player in our fields of expertise: research, education and knowledge collaboration.”* AAU is truly believed to be a university with a different approach already from the day of its establishment. Through time that has proved to be a good strategy, since the university has become a bigger and complicated system, gathering more and more institutions in its network and becoming a considerable player in the local and national economic development and at international cooperation and involvement levels. Concentrating on the research, the AAU is divided in 3 faculties – the Faculty of Humanities (HUM); the Faculty of Social Sciences (SAMF) and the Faculty of Engineering, Science and Medicine (INS), all of which are performing research in their dedicated centers or departments.

This thesis will focus on recommendations for recruitment strategy regarding students applying for Master programs within Economics and Business Administration:

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In order to give recommendations for improvement of the current recruitment strategy, the focus would be on investigation of students' behaviour when choosing university.

1. What is current AAU recruitment strategy?
2. What is the decision-making process of students in regards to higher education?
3. What are the factors influencing on students' decisions?

Structure of the thesis

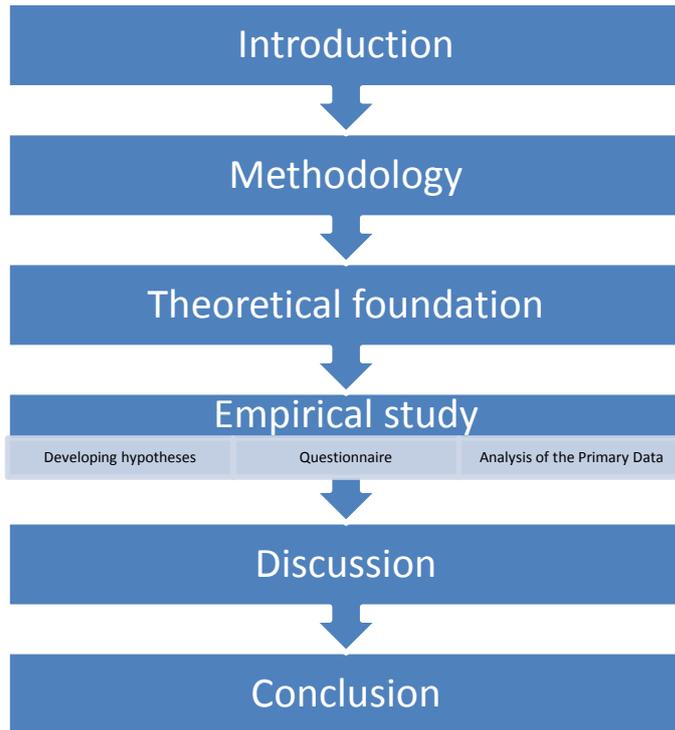


Figure 1 Structure of the research

2. Methodology

A paradigm is both theoretical and philosophical framework of beliefs, which influence the process of creating the study. It dictates what should be studied, identifies the way research should be conducted and results should be interpreted. (Bryman and Bell, 2011) By defining paradigmatic assumptions, the researcher creates a useful guidance of the methodology of a project (Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009). Paradigms can be systemized in terms of ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

Questions of social ontology seek to understand the nature of the reality, which the researcher wants to obtain. If the researcher perceives social reality in objective way, meaning that people and reality exist independently, then objectivist position appears. Opposite to that position, constructionism position stands for believes of the researcher that humans are creating social constructs through their behavior and believes, since they are part of reality. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

According to scholars, epistemology is a set of philosophical assumptions about what is or should be regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. One of the main epistemological issues is a question about is social reality can and should be studied according to the same principles and

procedures. It is a study of the nature of knowledge and its grounds. ((Bryman and Bell, 2011) (Arbnor and Bjerke 2009))

Epistemological assumptions stand for either subjective or objective views. If the researcher believes that social reality cannot be created separately from humans participating in it, since they by their actions are conducting it that means that the researcher has epistemological assumptions related to interpretivism. In this case, the researcher believes that in social science there are differences objects and actors. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

If the researcher believes that social reality and individuals are existing separately, that means that he or she have epistemological assumptions related to realism. There are two types of realism – Critical realism and Empirical realism. Difference between two of them is that for critical realism individuals should also receive the sensation, since simple observation is not enough for creating the knowledge. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

Assumptions about human nature define the researcher's believes in a regard to relationship between actors and social world around them. The first position stands for believe that individuals are the actual creators of social world, since actors are interacting with social environment. Polar point of view assumes that actors and social world are independent from each other. The social reality is not affected by actions of actors. (Kuada, 2012)

Methodology is a specific method, defining the process of study creation. The researcher depending on the nature of the research chooses methodology. If the researcher perceives social world in subjective way, that will lead him or her to the approach based of interpretations of actors. The researcher will be explaining social truth by focusing on relationships. (Kuada, 2012)

Depending on the nature of the research, researcher's methodological assumptions, aim of the study, the researcher chooses the research strategy – either Quantitative or Qualitative. Sometimes both of the methods are applied simultaneously, since some scientist believe that it gives better insights in field of interest. Quantitative research is objective, where the aim is to test how the theory works in practice. In the beginning, the researcher makes hypothesis, later on he or she test the justification of them by collection and analysis of necessary data. Opposite to this type of a research, Qualitative research is subjective. In that case, the researcher seeks to generate theory. The table below illustrates the major differences between Quantitative and Qualitative research strategies. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

	Quantitative	Qualitative
Principal orientation to the role of theory in relation to research	Deductive: the researcher is testing the theory	Inductive: the researcher is generating the theory
Epistemological orientation	Natural science model, in particular positivism	Interpretivism
Ontological orientation	Objectivism	Constructionism

Table 1 Quantitative vs Qualitative (Bryman & Bell, 2011)

Arbno and Bjerke

In order to obtain the knowledge within area of interest, the researcher can choose from different methodological approaches. Ingeman Arbno and Björn Bjerke systemize methodological approaches in three major groups:

- The Analytical approach;
- The Systems approach;
- The Actors approach. (Arbno and Bjerke, 2009)

Figure below shows how six paradigms are creating the Analytical, the Systems and the Actors approaches through subjective-objective continuum.

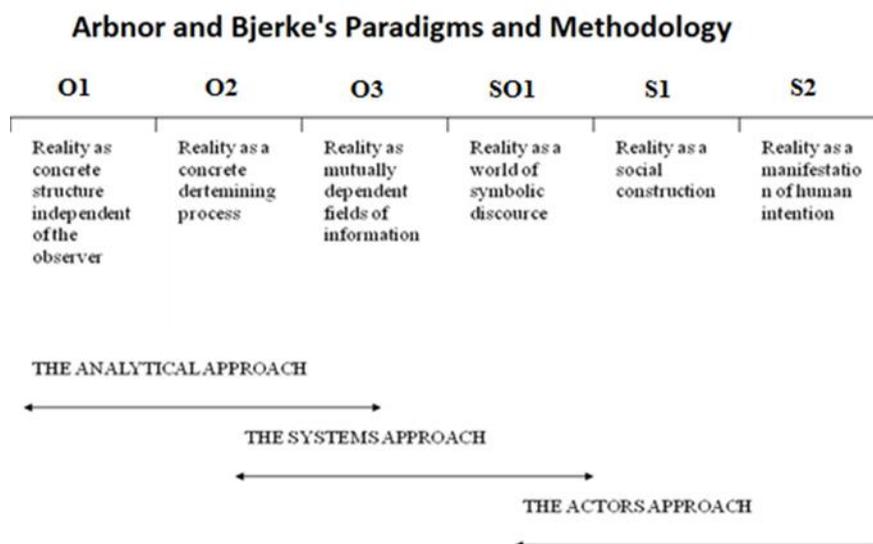


Figure 2 Arbno and Bjerke's Paradigms and Methodology (Arbno and Bjerke 1994)

The Analytical view stands for the most objective position. It covers three objective paradigms (O1, O2 and O3). Where paradigm O1 stands for the most objective view and O3 for the least

objective one. The researcher believes that social reality and observer exist independently and do not influence each other. The facts, which have both subjective and objective elements, are constructing social reality. Opinions of observers are representing subjective elements and circumstances are objective elements, which observer cannot influence. Even though elements are not influencing each other and exist independently, the social reality has summative character. That means that if reality consists out of four elements, which have value one, two, three and four, that will give a result of ten. (Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009)

The table below describes the objectivist position in Analytical approach:

DIMENSIONS	Paradigm O1	Paradigm O1	Paradigm O3
ONTOLOGY	Reality is seen as concrete phenomenon that is conformable to law and exists independently from the observer	Reality is seen as a concrete determining process	Reality is seen as mutually dependent fields of information
RESEARCH APPROACH HUMAN NATURE METHODOLOGY	Analytical Approach		

Table 2 Ontological Considerations in the Analytical Approach (Kuada 2012)

The Systems approach has some overlapping with both Analytical and Actors approach, meaning that it combines subjective and objective views. It is made out of three paradigms, two of which are objective (O2 and O3) and one is subjective-objective (SO1). The social reality has mostly objective character and it is filled with different facts. The observer perceives reality as a system. Individuals are representing components of the system and they are described through their connection to the system. Opposite to Analytical approach, Systems view does not have summative character, since components of reality do not exist independently. However, Systems approach is still useful since synergy effect appears due to the fact that different components of social reality are interacting with each other. (Arbnor and Bjerke, 2009)

The table below represents Systems approach:

DIMENSIONS	Paradigm O2	Paradigm O3	Paradigm SO1
ONTOLOGY	Reality is seen as a concrete determining	Reality is seen as mutually dependent	Reality is seen as a world of symbolic

	process	fields of information	discourse
RESEARCH APPROACH HUMAN NATURE METHODOLOGY	Systems approach		

Table 3 Ontological Considerations in the Systems Approach (Kuada 2012)

Actors approach represents the most subjective views. It consists of three paradigms (SO1, S1 and S2). The researcher believes that social reality depends on individuals. Reality is seen as social construct since it is created by actors by their actions, beliefs and interpretations. The researcher does not aim to explain social reality, but rather to obtain the knowledge and create insightful actions. (Arbnor and Bjerke 2009)

The table below represents Actors approach:

DIMENSIONS	Paradigm SO1	Paradigm S1	Paradigm S2
ONTOLOGY	Reality as a world of symbolic discourse	Reality as social construction	Reality as a manifestation of human intentionality
RESEARCH APPROACH HUMAN NATURE METHODOLOGY	Actors Approach		

Table 4 Ontological Considerations in the Actors Approach (Kuada 2012)

Quantitative research

Quantitative research emphasizes quantification in the numerical data collection and further analysis of it. This type of a research implies deductive approach and it is objectivist. While making such a research, the researcher is following linear series of steps in order to move from theory to conclusions. (Bryman and Bell, 2011) According to Bryman and Bell (2011), the researcher while making quantitative research is suggested to follow these steps:

1. Elaborate theory;
2. Devise hypothesis;
3. Select research design;
4. Devise measures of concepts;
5. Select research site (s);
6. Select research subjects/respondents;
7. Administer research instruments/ collect data;

8. Process data;
9. Analyse data;
10. Develop findings/ conclusions;
11. Write up findings/ conclusions (after this step the researcher is coming back to the first step – elaboration of theory).

Survey research is commonly used type of quantitative researches. It can be explained as cross-sectional design in relation to which data the researcher is collecting data either by questionnaire or by holding structured interviews (on more than one case). Afterwards quantitative data, which has at least two variables, is analyzed in order to detect patterns of association. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

Action research

In action research exist action researcher and a client, there is collaboration between two these parts. Together they are diagnosing a problem and then, depending on a diagnosis, they develop a solution of a problem. Scientists see an action research as a very useful type of a research, since it is providing a means of empowering participants. Action research intends to contribute not just academic theory but also practical action. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

In business and management exist a gap between researchers and practitioners (usually they are managers), action research is helping to bridge the gap between these two parts. Scholars emphasize the need for researchers to be involved in business and management practice, since the difference between the roles of researcher and management consultant is rather small. Action research is seen as very useful while researching processual problems in organizations such as learning and change. Many action researches are made by part-time students, which take their own problems and experiences within organization as a primary focus of academic study. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

There are number of opinions when it comes to evaluation of action research. Some scientists believe, that this type of a research is providing uniqueness and richness of insights in existing problems and that knowledge cannot be gained in other ways, since action research is actually involving opinions of practitioners in regard to current issues. However, some researchers are criticizing action research for insufficiency of repeatability and rigour. (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

Applied methodological approach

Authors' choice of appropriate research approach is based on how they perceive social reality and the nature of study area. When it comes to authors' views about reality, authors assume that bigger number of proven causes will provide stronger explanation. Authors are distancing themselves from

reality and believe that it exist independently from the observers. Authors believe that reality has factive and summative character, due to the fact that more complete picture of reality can be obtained by putting facts, based on hypothesis, together. That leads authors to the choice of applying Analytical approach.

Bryman and Bell (Bryman & Bell, 2011)emphasize on the importance of the role of the researchers during the research process. In order to evaluate the outcome of the business research, it is essential to explain how the data was collected, how it was analysed and on what theoretical perspective it has been built.

There are two different approaches when speaking of research strategies – inductive and deductive approach. The induction process starts with observation, then pattern, then tentative hypothesis and then theory. In this approach researchers collet information which can be generalized from an empirical observation, meaning that the theory is based on the observations. In other words, conclusions are merged with already existing knowledge in order to come up with new or simply to improve theories. The induction is often used with qualitative research as the process goes from assumptions to conclusions.

The deductive approach is used for concluding things based on logical reasoning. It is not a requirement that the findings will be true, but the results have to be logically explained. The process of deduction starts with theory, followed by developing of hypothesis, then observation, and revision of theory. This method consists of testing existing concepts during the research process. In other words, deductive approach is based on logic, while inductive approach is based on empirical evidence. Figure 3 presents the two approaches.

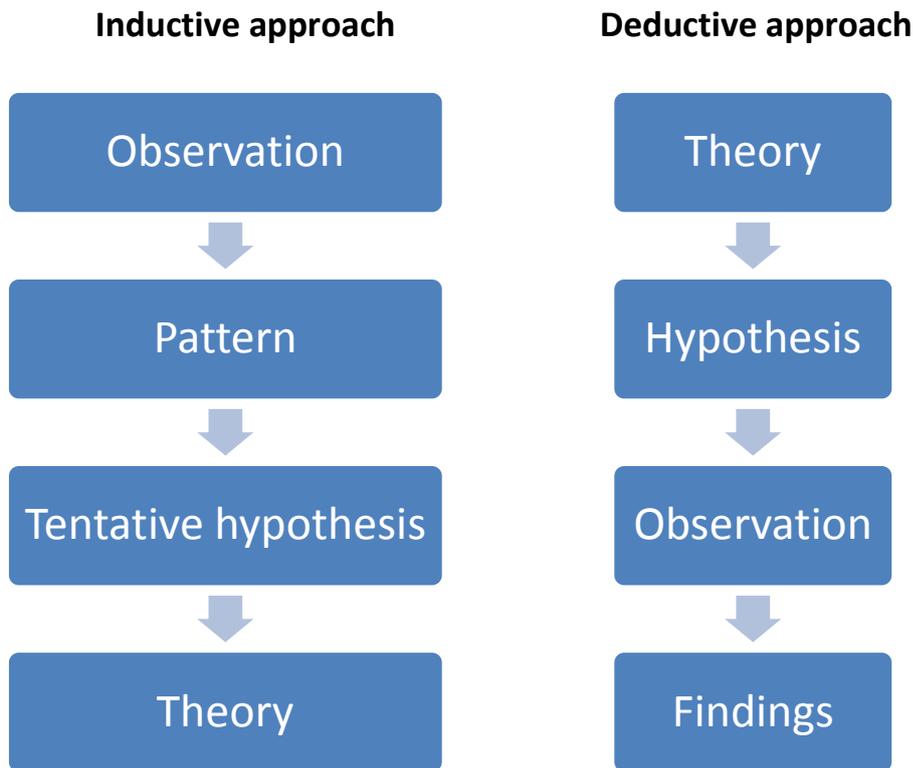


Figure 3 Inductive vs Deductive approach (Source: (Bryman & Bell, 2011))

Since the authors of the project started current study by choosing the theory, after develop the hypothesis and in order to prove or deny hypotheses a questionnaire was sent out. The collected was analysed and findings were provided. Therefore, it means that the authors of the project used the deductive approach.

Since authors are objective, they seek to obtain greater number of proven causes and want to measure opinions and experiences of group of people; they choose quantitative research strategy – surveys. Online surveys are seen as less costly; also respondents are not influenced by the researcher. In addition, online survey will allow obtaining more answers due to the geographic dispersion and size of the study group. While applying this particular research strategy there is a possibility of misunderstanding of some questions by respondents and rather low amount of responses.

Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed using SurveyXact, which is an online tool for conducting researches in a form of questionnaires.

The first step of the questionnaire consists of an introduction what the survey is about and what the main goal is. The respondents will remain anonymous. Almost all questions were mandatory except

one open question regarding recommendations for improvement at AAU. The questionnaire was created in English and it was distributed in Denmark.

Primary Data Collection

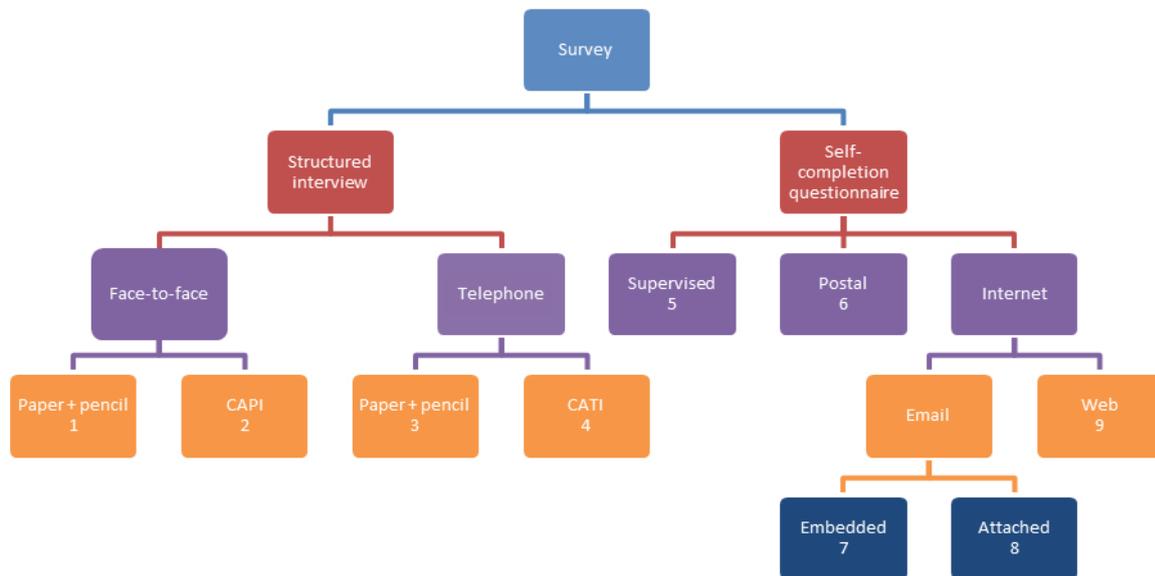


Figure 4 Main modes of administration of a survey (Business Research Methods (Bryman and Bell))

The figure above shows the different ways of sending out the survey. This projects' survey was self-completion questionnaire which was distributed to respondents via Facebook to 220 people. The reason to use only Facebook is that it is summer time; people do not check emails regularly, and those that have graduated in June 2016 (the majority of our class) do not have access to their official university mail anymore. A short message with brief introduction was sent to each person introducing the topic and the researchers. Since the research was conducted online, the researchers had low possibility of influencing the sample.

Using the online tool SurveyXact, after finishing the time for data collection, a raw dataset was available to be downloaded from the website of SurveyXact.

Coding Cleaning and Analysis of the Primary Data

After downloading the raw dataset from the website, the sample had to be coded. The data had to be cleaned accurately. The process was done in Excel. The total sample size was 94 respondents. 89 of them were completed and 5 respondents had answered partially. Those 5 respondents were deleted from the data as their partial answers could have influenced the data.

In the dataset every single question had its own variable. In these variables the various answers were coded into numbers. After the data was coded, the data was imported into the computer software-tool SPSS 24 to analyse the relevant variables and to test the hypotheses.

3. Literature review

Internationalization

Due to global dynamics of internationalization and globalization, the theme of Internationalization of universities has been widely discussed for the last few decades. As a response to increasing competition in higher education and changing global trends, higher education organizations are applying internationalization strategies to their activities, in order to perform competitively and cooperatively at global level. (Horta, 2009)

Speaking about internationalization of higher education institution, academic scholars usually define it as *“the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institutions.”* (Kinght, 1994) It can be said that this ciation is the direction for the first steps that institution needs to take in order to become international. The goal of institution is to integrate intercultural dimension in the existing institutional settings, such as for example academic researches of university, study programs, teaching style, etc. (Hawawini, 2011)

Due to the need of becoming more entrepreneurial, it can be seen the trend worldwide of universities extending the scope of activities towards international borders. In regard to international framework universities seek cooperation with foreign universities and in regard to global framework they are seeking to become more competitive. Even though some universities are successful on national level, they see the need of improving on international level, due to the high quality of foreign higher education organizations. One of the goals why universities are becoming more internationalized is because they seek to improve their position on international universities ranking. (Horta, 2009)

Scholars identify three major categories of internationalization process in universities:

1. Setting up the design of internationalization: this step stands for university searching for suitable internationalization strategy by identifying strategic intentions, corporate strategy, strategic plan, strategic vision and making mission statement.

2. Activating design of internationalization with real action of university: on managerial level, university makes organizational steps towards implementing the design of internationalization process.
3. Evaluation of the process: the university is making comparison of the design with actual implementation of it by comparing intentions of initial strategic design with actual internationalization achievements. The university evaluating by looking at results from different perspectives, so not just advantages are analyzed, but also difficulties and obstacles. (Ayoubi & Massoud, 2007)

While speaking about internationalization of the campuses in Europe, there are two major trends: internationalization of academic staff and internationalization of students. There is relationship between these two trends. Universities are focusing at graduate students, mostly with doctoral degree, since there are supporting higher education organizations with academic researches. While recruiting academic staff, universities are focusing on internationalization of doctoral students, who can perform research and teach students at graduate level. (Horta, 2009)

Apart from academic and economic benefits, which internationalization can bring to higher education organizations, it is crucial to mention one of the most important issues that might appear while going to international arena. Due to the differences in cultural and legal environment, it is important for institutions not just recognize but also understand laws, regulations and cultural of foreign country. Otherwise, the lack of understanding could result culture clash or problems in civil or criminal liability. (Mahani & Molki, 2011)

In his research paper, Hawawini modified existing definition of internationalisation in higher education institutions, by going beyond service, research and teaching : “ *It is the process of integrating the institution and its key stakeholders – its students, faculty, and staff – into a globalizing world.*” (Hawawini, 2011) This definition emphasizes the need of major change in existing mindset, structure, how institution operates. If the changes will be successful, that will lead institution to join other actors on global arena and become a part of international study network. (Hawawini, 2011)

Motives of higher education institutions to become international may differ, however, four major groups of motives can be identified:

- Academic;
- Economic;
- Political;

- Religious. (Hawawini, 2011)

Institution that has academic motives has a strong belief that academic research and education in general have a scope of world- wide. Economic motives usually stand for the need of finding alternative resources (human or/and financial) in order to increase existing revenues and be able to grow in the future. Political motives are coming from institution's desire of having an influence on prospect or currently existing opinion of leaders, eventually – if it will succeed- that will lead institution to improvement of political standing. Institution that is driven by religious motives seeks to spread the knowledge about particular religious organization and its' faith. Political and religious motives are mostly funded by private religious organizations and political organizations. These two motives are rather rare when we speak about internationalization of higher education institutions, however, their existence cannot be ignored. (Hawawini, 2011)

Benefits of internationalizing from academic perspective

Academic motives are one of the most popular ones when it comes to internationalization of higher education institutions. One of the first steps institution should think about is educational mission. The starting point for institution would be asking itself (1) if there is a need of having international dimension in order to fulfill existing ambitious; (2) will it have positive effect on accomplishment the mission of institution. The next step is to address questions about international research for example, whether or not institution wants to go very broad, and to analyze the sufficiency of existing resources in order to start implementation of strategy to go on international level. Depending on different factors such as size of institution, amount of human and financial resources, possibility to attract students from foreign countries, network with other institutions, location of university, etc., the institution finds the most suitable strategy for internationalization. (Hawawini, 2011)

If institution wants to stay relevant in academic field, it should not ignore the changes in academic reality that is created by increasing level of globalization in general. That is why fulfilling mission of higher education institution just by providing credible learning to students is not sufficient. One of the ways to become more internationalized is to provide for both students and staff programs, classes, researches that are based on current issues arising on global level. (Hawawini, 2011)

Speaking about economic motives of institution it is crucial to mention recruitment best of students and qualified faculty not just on national level, but also to see how to attract them from abroad. Once university has efficient international strategy, it becomes easier to become more attractive for students from foreign countries and faculty due to following reasons:

- 1) It can be “tracked” from which countries and intuitions most academically attractive students and academics are coming from;
- 2) Institution can use gained knowledge in regard of evaluating prospect students and scholars in easier way;
- 3) One foreign students and academics will help attract others to institution. (Hawawini, 2011)

Benefits of internationalizing from economic perspective

On national level, institution may face the lack of limited amount of qualified students and scholars. That issue can be solved by attracting them from abroad. In case if it is rather hard to attract qualified candidates from abroad to local campus due to some restrictions or financial costs, then institution can consider opening the brunch programs abroad. (Hawawini, 2011)

Another argument for opening programs abroad is that due to different changes within home country of institution, for example, political changes or economic changes it might be hard for students and academics to come from their countries. Also it needs to be taken into consideration that economic instability may arise in different countries and that would have negative effect on attracting foreign candidates. That is why opening programs in other countries helps to reduce that operating risk. (Hawawini, 2011)

Number of countries, such as for example Singapore, The United Arab Emirates, Qatar, show their high interest in attracting foreign higher education institutions in their countries. (Olds, 2007) These countries are providing financial support not just for those campuses that are open in their territory, but also providing funding for research and development of intuition that is willing to collaborate for their home campus. Despite of the wish of institutions to play on global academic arena and being relevant internationally, it can be said that in lots of cases the funding for home campus is the most powerful driving force. (Hawawini, 2011)

Obstacles to internationalization

If internationalization strategy picked by institution is effective, that can benefit institution on different levels, for example at academic and economic dimensions. However, process of internationalizing is very complex; sometimes obstacles and struggles may arise. (Hawawini, 2011)

Obstacles in academic dimension

Even if on high administrative level university is interested to play on global academic arena, the rest of faculty may not share the enthusiasm. The lack of interest and dedication from faculty staff may arise due to different reasons, for example because they did not get a promotion and have not been

financially rewarded. That has an overall negative effect on international activities and effective implementation of internationalization strategy. (Hawawini, 2011)

Another issue is appearing when higher education institution wants to open program abroad. Some of the scholars are not convinced by moving abroad due to personal reasons, for example, friends and family. Others are not convinced with academic standards in host university, since academic standards differ from country to country. However, the issue of difference in standards can be solved, if two universities will make an agreement of meeting the standards. (Hawawini, 2011)

There is always a concern that studying experience while looking at the same faculty may differ in home campus and at its' faculty abroad. If students have negative experience on international faculty of institution, that will have negative effect on overall brand of institution and decrease level of loyalty. (Hawawini, 2011)

Obstacles in economic dimension

Process of internationalization requires not just financial resources but also time, that is spend for creating a network, finding suitable partners, promoting university, searching for candidates, etc. Even after identifying suitable partners and agreeing on partnership conditions, there is a constant need of maintaining to invest time in order to develop and benefit this relationship in the future. Therefore, as financial resources, time is not limitless. Sometimes time spend on international initiatives, takes attention and efforts from solving existing problems and issues at home campus. In addition, head of administration might be very much involved in the activities, since not all kind of responsibilities can be delegated. (Hawawini, 2011)

Higher education institutions in the United States and United Kingdom till a very big extend depend on donations from gradueates. There is a tendency that alumni from home country are donating larger amounts in comparisin to international alumni. Currently exist a concern from domestic alumni that institution will be spending their donations on its international activities, menaing they will invest less in local students which might be the children of alumni. (Hawawini, 2011)

Models of international reach

The process of internationalization of higher education institutions has several dimensions. The first step is to attract more foreign students to student body and make courses and academic content more international. The further step is to start internationalization of the faculty and study programs. The last step is to launch campuses in other countries. However, before starting the program of internationalization it is crucial to address few questions. (Hawawini, 2011)

In the beginning, higher education institution needs to decide how international they want to be. Meaning, is it just adding some international program to existing curriculum, is it opening international school within campus, is it changing whole institution's system to international one? If university decides just to launch international program that is not going to make an entire institution international, due to small percentage of the represented activities. That is why usually institutions, that are keen on internationalization, are internationalizing either whole university or at least whole unit within an institution. The second question that needs to be addressed is which dimension of higher education institution they want to internationalize. That could be either combination of internationalizing study program, university staff, student body, faculty itself, activated within academic research; or just internationalization of singular dimension. (Hawawini, 2011)

One of the most important issues while choosing internationalization strategy is to choose, adopt and execute the model of international reach. Scholars identify five models of international reach:

- 1) The import model;
- 2) The export model;
- 3) The academic-joint venture model;
- 4) The partnership model;
- 5) The foreign-campus model. (Hawawini, 2011)

It can be said that most of higher education institutions are not using exclusively just one model, for example they combine import and export models. In addition, these models do not have sequential character, meaning that institution may have an international campus in foreign country without being part of academic partnership. (Hawawini, 2011)

The import model

The goal of this model is to attract students, academics, university staff, and administration members from foreign countries to university's home campus. Importers are seeking not just for large number of candidates but also they seek to have as large diversity within nations as possible. This need appears due to the goal of maximizing the cross-cultural learning and international interactions. If number and qualification of foreign studies and faculty is sufficient, also if the pressure from local environment is rather low, that is increasing the chances of creating effective and organic international culture on home campuses. (Hawawini, 2011)

However, no matter of how organic international culture is in higher education institution and how low the pressure of domestic environment is, there is limitation on import model. Even if campus is filled in with both international students and faculty, their international experience of students and

faculty may be different from the possible experience they would have if staying for studies and job in foreign countries. (Hawawini, 2011)

The export model

If import model concentrates on hosting faculty and students from abroad, the export model seeks to send their students by exchange programs to foreign countries, to teach their programs in foreign universities, to send members of faculty to higher education institutions abroad in order to gain more international experience in educational and research fields. No matter how many faculties are brought to foreign countries the home campus of institution is still remaining as the core and center of attention of whole system. Usually universities of hosting country are renting out their facilities to another university in order to have faculties from abroad. One of the biggest benefits from export model, those students that have been studying abroad not just benefiting on personal level, but they are bringing their international experience, cross-cultural learning and knowledge to home university. (Hawawini, 2011)

Nowadays, it is rather common for higher education institution to have exchange programs with other institutions all over the world. However, one of the issues is connected with complexity of that process, because sometimes it is hard to monitor programs consistency and standards from different schools. Some scholars believe, that exchange experience is having less add-value comparing to previous years, due to raised popularity of these programs and raising amount of students from abroad on home campuses. Also it is very important to manage your time resources very carefully, once higher education institution starts sending their staff to other countries. Scholars believe that there is very limited amount of successful and effective exchange schemes, due to limited amount of suitable partners, where both sides are benefiting from this academic relationship. In addition, if partnership is not successful, or does not have well planned program, or has too large amount of involved students and faculty, that will not help higher education institution to become more global. (Hawawini, 2011)

The academic-joint venture model

This model is adapted by many higher education intuitions. The joint venture usually is developing from exchange programs that allow bachelor and master degree student to study for some time in foreign universities. Eventually exchange program evolves into either to curricular or academic joint ventures, when institution is opening campuses in foreign country, where there are represented specially designed joint programs. When students are going abroad there two ways of graduation, during one the student receives either two separate degrees from each universities that are part of

joint venture programs or just single degree from home university, that is co-signed by host university. (Hawawini, 2011)

Even when two higher education institutions are established joint venture or just signing in international program, it does not necessary mean that university that initiated the process of internationalization eventually be internationalized. That could be explained that due to silos mentality, when two different departments of one company are not willing to share sufficient information and knowledge with each other even though they work for the same company. In university case, it means that host university might not be willing to collaborate effectively with international faculty from other country. In addition, in some cases it can be seen that institution that set the joint venture or international program up do not go broader on their internationalization program since they believe that made effort is sufficient. (Hawawini, 2011)

One of the goals while signing up joint venture program is to work on international academic research projects together as partners. However, there is no clear evidence in the literature that this academic collaboration is actually happening. It is noticeable that monitoring joint ventures also increases the level of complicity in management. Another issue that may arise is possible conflicts between joint venture members due to differences in quality, standards, philosophy of institutions, culture. Because of these potential issues sometimes it is questioned the possibility of maintaining effective long-term relationship between parts of joint venture. (Hawawini, 2011)

The partnership model

If higher education institution seeks to expand the existing academic network and to establish relationships with more than one university there are several possible ways of collaborating on international level. Universities can agree on opening their courses for students that are enrolled in intuition of their partner. It is possible to arrange that those students who participated in a particular amount of classes can graduate from two different universities. Partner universities are usually interested in collaboration and working together on the same research project. Sometimes partners initiate the launch of new academic joint venture programs. (Hawawini, 2011)

Due to complicity of partnership that is harder to maintain and develop than joint ventures it is suggested to agree on several issues since that can help to avoid or at least decrease amount of possible misunderstandings in the future. The questions that need to addressed are:

- What are the purposes of having academic partnership? Which goal they want to achieve? What is the motivation they are driven by?
- What kind and how many of activates the partnership should include?

- Are they keeping partnership completely exclusive? Or are academic partners are allowed to start other partnerships with other higher education institutions?
- How partners should share the costs, revenues, deficits or surpluses? Is everybody involved until the same extend or does it depend on the size of institution?
- In case if conflicts arise how they should be solved and in which country? How to set the clear objectives? (Hawawini, 2011)

The foreign-campus model

In case if higher education institution feels that being importer, exporter, part of joint venture or partner in the alliance is not enough, and it wants to have physical presence of university in foreign country , it can adapt foreign- campus model. In that case the institution opens fully-equipped campus in foreign country, locating there either temporary or permanently (depending on goals ant strategy) staff and faculty, attract there both local and international students. (Hawawini, 2011)

In some cases, university prefers to rent the facilities in host country and provide academic programs without stationing faculty permanently. In other cases, the university opens office in foreign country in order to support members (with logistics and research) of institution that are working on academic research abroad. (Hawawini, 2011)

The reason why higher education institutions decide to go abroad can be explained by demand and supply factors. The demand factor is the wish of host university to attract foreign universities in their countries in order to provide education to local students and in some cases also to become more competitive in terms of international education. The supply factor is coming from home universities that want to promote their university and programs for those students who cannot or do not want to come to study to the country where university is located. In some cases, universities provide the possibility for student from home country to study in their campus abroad, in case if students want to have foreign studies as part of their current program. (Hawawini, 2011)

In case of poor planning or unsuccessful execution, that can cause failure of foreign campuses, however, this is happening very rarely. It can be said, that this is happening mostly because if home campus stop internationalization initiatives. (Hawawini, 2011)

International richness

According to the statistics, average amount of international students on campus is not more than 20% from student body. Statistics provided by OECD shows that in 2007 just in seven countries worldwide the amount of foreign students had more than 10 %. These countries were following Australia – 19,5%, Great Britain – 14,5%, Switzerland 14,0%, New Zealand – 13,6%, Austria 12,5%,

France – 11,3%, Germany – 11,3%. For example, in the United States the percent of international students was just 3,4%. It can be seen that in general Asian and European higher education institutions are more internationalized than American institutions. (Hawawini, 2011)

Cultural dominance

Once we speak about cultural richness, it is crucial to notice that even if university has a lot of international students it does not immediately mean that cross-cultural learning is happening. In case if proportion of foreign student from one country is dominating over other nationality students the cultural dominance may appear. To illustrate this issue following example can be made: institution X has 20 percent of international students coming from 90 different countries. Institution Y has 20 percent of foreign students coming from 45 different countries. However, in institutions B case there is no nationality that would be more than 10% of the international student body. The question is: which out of two these institutions would be more international? The one with bigger diversity of countries or the one with less amount of nationalities? In this case institution B is more international due to the rule that there is no nationality that would be dominant, since it can exceed 10% of foreign student body. (Hawawini, 2011)

Traps of assimilation

To create rich and organic international learning environment may be really challenging for higher education institutions. That challenge can be explained by traps of assimilations. Assimilation traps may appear on two different levels:

- Individual level (the influence of dominant group of some particular nationality on other students' norms and thoughts);
- Institutional level (the pressure on higher education institution due to the primary need satisfy the academic needs of local students). (Hawawini, 2011)

The assimilation trap on institutional level is very hard to overcome in cases when amount of local students is large. It can said that countries that have big local market, for example China, India, Russia, the United States, the transformation to institution with international richness is rather hard. This is due to the reason of existence of lack of capacity to enroll all foreign student that would like to attend these institutions; the number of students from abroad is limited. Some international institutions are more concentrating on one particular nation, for example China-Europe International; Business School (CEIBS) is rather Chinese business school than European business school. That can be explained by high demand from qualified Chinese students. That is why usually

higher education institutions with big proportion of students from abroad are the ones, which are located in the countries with rather low demand from local students. (Hawawini, 2011)

The assimilation gap on individual level has subtle character. For example, if foreign students are going to study in Canada, they are mostly seeking Canadian education and not international education. Therefore, since Canadians are dominant nationality in the class, during discussions or group-works student from abroad would be more likely to agree and adopt perspective of local students. In order to reduce individual assimilation gap, it is suggested to create an environment where no nation would be dominant, and since it would be no national majority, that will turn everybody into group of minorities. That will allow student freely share their thought and experience without being hardy influenced by some particular nation. In addition, that will provide locals to get cross-cultural experience while still staying at their home country. (Hawawini, 2011)

Current recruitment strategy of AAU

During conversation with Erling Jensen, representative of AAU staff, the authors of the research have been told that currently AAU have not completely and clearly formulated recruitment strategy for students, because this is what staff of AAU was working the last year and half in order to create recruitment strategy for the next five years. (Jensen, 2016)

Currently in “AAU Strategy 2016-2021” the recruitment strategy is formulated as following: *“Robust study programmes are characterised by sustainable intakes of motivated and well-informed students. An AAU strategy must be developed for the recruitment of the students of the future. The purpose of this is to coordinate bridge-building and marketing activities across the organization, and to integrate the development of these activities with the supply of current and future student places.*” (AAU, AAU Strategy 2016-2021, 2016)

Scandinavian study agency

Scandinavian study is one of the most popular agencies in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe. The agency was founded in 2010. The team of Scandinavian studies consists of either former or current students from one of the universities in Denmark. Therefore, staff is able to provide all necessary information about studies and social life in Denmark to prospect students mainly from EU countries. For EU citizens education in Denmark is for free and for citizens from other countries the tuition fee is around 10 000 Euro annually. Scandinavian study spread its’ international activities in following countries: Germany, Italy, Russia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia. (ScandinavianStudy, 2016)

This agency consult for free about education in Denmark, cost of living, student jobs, accommodation, scholarships, how to apply. (ScandinavianStudy, 2016) However, there agencies where prospect student can be asked to pay extra fee for additional services, for example, help while filling in the documents, writing CV and motivational letter, etc. (Integral, 2016)

This agency has several university partners In Denmark: Zealand Institute of Business and Technology, VIA TEKO Design College, Business Academy Aarhus, University College of Northern Denmark, Aalborg University, Lillebaelt Academy, Dania, Via Horsens, International Business Academy, Business Academy South West, KEA Design and Technology, Copenhagen Business Academy, Aarhus University. Recently they became partners with Jönköping University that is located in Sweden. (ScandinavianStudy, 2016)

During conversation with AAU staff member, Erling Jensen, the authors of the project we provided with a table that shows amount of students that were brought to AAU by agencies (without specifying where the student is coming from and through which agency he or she applied to AAU). The agreement between AAU and agency consists two parts:

1. If the recruited student finish 1st semester in AAU, then the agent gets 300 Euro from AAU;
2. If the recruited student finish 3rd semester in AAU, then the agent additionally gets 450 Euro. (Jensen, 2016)

The table below represents part of the table, the whole table can be found in Appendix. The red color means that recruited student did not pass the first semester (in some case due to failing the exam, in other cases because the student drop off), yellow color means that student passed the semester, however, the agent have not got yet the commission from AAU. The green color means that student passed the semester and the agent received money from AAU. (Jensen, 2016)

Student nr.	Student name	1st semester status	3rd semester status	Accepted Programme	1st semester fee paid	3rd semester fee paid
1		Passed 1 semester	Passed 3rd semester	Economics and Business Administration		
2		Passed 1 semester	Passed 3rd semester	Economics and Business Administration		
3		Passed 1 semester	Failed 1 semester	Economics and Business Administration	2014-11-03	
4		Passed 1 semester	Failed 1 semester	Economics and Business Administration		
5		Passed 1 semester	Passed 3rd semester	Economics and Business Administration	2015-05-08	
6		Passed 1 semester	Passed 3rd semester	Economics and Business Administration	2015-05-08	
7		Passed 1 semester	Failed 1 semester	Economics and Business Administration	2015-05-08	
8		Passed 1 semester	Failed 1 semester	Economics and Business Administration	2015-03-23	
9		Passed 1 semester	Passed 3rd semester	Economics and Business Administration	2015-03-23	
10		Passed 1 semester	Passed 3rd semester	Economics and Business Administration		
11		Passed 1 semester	Failed 1 semester	Economics and Business Administration	2015-11-20	
12		Failed 1 semester	Failed 1 semester	Economics and Business Administration		

Table 5 List of students recruited by agencies to AAU. Source: (Jensen, 2016)

Internationalization in AAU

From the interview with Helle Therkildsen, staff of AAU, the authors of the project got to know the opinion of Aalborg University in regard to following university promotion tools:

- *University fairs*: this method is almost not used any more due to time and financial cost, in addition amount of students that were recruited this way was rather low.
- *Advertising in printed media* (outside Denmark): this method is not used any more due to financial costs; also that kind of advertising had very low efficiency.
- *Agencies*: promotion AAU through the agencies if found rather effective, especially in the Eastern Europe
- *Word-of-mouth power*: this channel is seen as one of the most influencing, however, apart from satisfying the needs of current AAU students in the best possible way, there is no other way to influence it. (Therkildsen, 2016)

By its' international activities Business Economics and Administration program of Aalborg University covers almost all five models of internationalization reach:

- 6) **The import model** – Aalborg University's internationalization level is high due to the fact, that in 2014, 13% of student body were students from abroad. European countries were represented by 61,1% of students, 14,7% of students were from other than Denmark Nordic countries (Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), Asian students were 9,4%. (AAU, 2016) The percentage of international students in Economics and Business administration faculty is even higher because programs are in English.

Import model also covers not just attraction foreign students on campus, but also university staff, especially researchers and teachers from abroad. AAU has a large amount of foreign researchers. In 2013, the Aalborg University had 3.362 permanent staff employed, 45% were Danish academic staff, 17 % were foreign academic staff and 38% were technical-administration staff. (AAU, 2016)

- 7) **The export model** – AAU every year sends students to study in other countries by Erasmus program or other exchange program. AAU provides to its students to take European higher education institution in any of the other 33 countries participating in Erasmus+ with the possibility to study abroad for free in Europe and also to apply for a grant. When it comes to inter-institutional agreements, the AAU signed it with approximately 350 higher education institutions around the Europe.

The following countries are part of Erasmus+ program: Ireland, France, Italy, Austria, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Iceland Turkey, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and FYR of Macedonia.

- 8) **The academic-joint venture model:** the only joint venture AAU has is in the department of Humanities. The joint venture is created by Aalborg University, Arhus University and University of Southern Denmark, in cooperation with University of Alberta (Canada) and Georgetown University (USA). The name of this joint venture is The Network, and it is aiming “to combine historiographic, literary and rhetorical analysis of Cassius Dio’s work and of its political and intellectual agendas” (AAU, Network, Cassius Dio: Between History and Politics, 2016).
- 9) **The partnership model:** Aalborg University as an institution that prioritized its network especially in terms of internationalization is a member of many different international networks and collaborations from worldwide. AAU is the member of the international listed below:
- *The Sino-Danish Centre for Education and Research (SDC):* this partnership agreement exist from 2008. The main aim of SDC is to promote and improve the academic collaboration between Denmark in China in terms of education and to increase exchange students’ and researcher’ rates between two these countries. The Sino-Danish Center is located in Beijing and every year is enrolling 24 students (12 of Aalborg University and 12 from the University of International Relations (UIR)). The first year students spend in AAU and for the next year, they are transferred to UIR. (SDC, 2016)
 - *The European Consortium of Innovative Universities (UCIU):* The AAU became part of that network in 1997. The other universities are from Lithuania, Russia, Mexico, Germany, Norway, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Sweden, Poland and the Netherlands. The main aim of this collaboration is by having cooperation in such fields as education, research and development of the region, to improve the international position of its participants. (UCIU, 2016)
 - *Nordic Centre:* this collaboration starts from 1995 as an initiative to strengthen the collaboration between students and academic researchers between 25 members from 6 countries: China and Nordic countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland). The Nordic Centre located in Shanghai (China) on Fudan University’s campus. (NordicCentre, 2016)
 - *Centre of The Infrastructure Global (CTIF Global):* it was found in 2004. The aim of this collaboration is to promote academic research and international education on global level. Another aim is to strengthen the positions of regional businesses by opening them to partners worldwide. The global network is based on collaboration

between Denmark, India, the United States, Italy, Japan and South East European countries. (CTIF, 2016)

- *Det Nordiska Universitets Administratörs Samarbetet (NUAS)*: this collaborative organization was established in 1976. Nowadays, in NUAS there are 65 universities and university colleges from Denmark and other members of Nordic countries. This collaboration is aiming to create networks at all administrative levels between universities of Nordic countries and to strengthen the contacts between each other. (NUAS, 2016)
- *Building Stronger Universities in Developing Countries (BSU)*: this collaborative organization was established in 2011. The partnership established academic relationship between eight universities in Denmark and selected universities from Nepal, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania. BSU is focusing on increasing and strengthening the capacity of institutions by strengthening quality of PhD programs and academic researches. (BSU, 2016)
- *The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*: the organization was established in 1961. Currently it has members from 35 countries. The main aim of organization is to improve well-being of people worldwide by developing relevant and effective economic and social policies. AAU is a part of one of OECD's programs, that is "Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE)"; This program is represented by the forum, that allows different educational institutions to share the thought and come up with new ideas together with policy makers by using international academic networks, academic studies and different types of research. (OECD, 2016)
- *Ilisimatusarfik (University of Greenland)*: in 2012 AAU signed to collaborative partnership agreement with Ilisimatusarfik for five years. The collaboration is based due to the need of concentrating on following areas : commercial and business studies, tourism and affairs in Arctic region, technological and economic planning in Arctic region, to increase qualification of teachers, assessment on regulations and strategy. In 2017, the agreement will expire, and then both sides will need to decide again if they want to continue collaboration.(AAU, Aalborg University/International cooperation/network alliances/University of Greenland, 2016)

10) **The foreign-campus model**: so far Aalborg University has no international campus abroad.

Decision-making process

It is crucial to explain what decision-making is as the term can be used very widely. In his paper *“Decision Making: Rational, Nonrational, and Irrational”* Herbert A. Simon describes the decision-making process as three steps starting with finding issues that require attention and to take care of them, then start to consider what the alternatives are, what solutions might solve the problems, and last step is to evaluate the alternatives from the second step so that one option has to be chosen. (Simon, 1993) The figure below represents the adopted five stage model of consumer behaviour which has led to the creation of a seven step decision-making model for students.

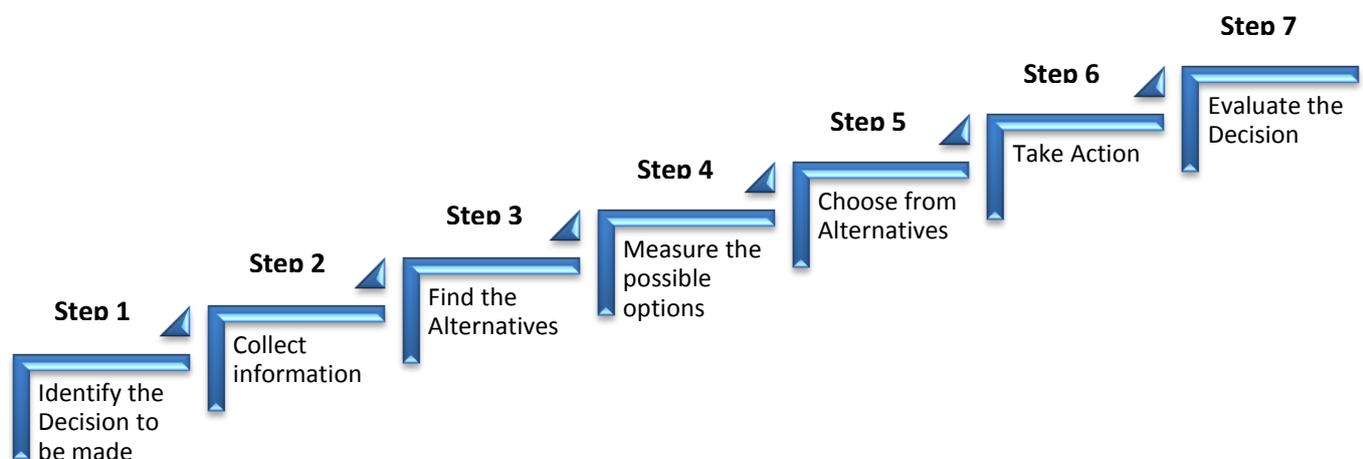


Figure 5: 7-step Decision-making process (Negulescu, 2014)

Step 1: Identify the decision to be made.

The first step is the recognition that a decision has to be made. Assuming that students have already decided to take a higher education, here at this step it is about making the decision of place and program. This first step is a very important as it is the beginning of the internal process each individual goes through as trying to determine the direction of the decision. (Negulescu, 2014)

Step 2: Gather relevant information.

To search for information and to put it together is almost necessary for all types of decisions. The most essential skills in this second step are to know what information is necessary, the most creditable sources of this information, and how to get access to it. Some information has to be searched within yourself through a process of self-evaluation like understanding personal interests that can lead to choosing a specific program. Other information has to be searched outside yourself.

Active information search includes sources which can be divided into three groups (Kotler & Keller, 2006):

- Personal sources: family, friends, neighbours, members of the same reference group;
- Commercial sources: media advertising, web sites, promotional brochures, salespersons, dealers, packaging, price marketing and displays, and others;
- Public sources: non-commercial and professional organizations and individuals who give information for consumers, in our case for students, such as educational agency, government agency.

Therefore this second step involves both internal and external “work”. However collecting information might be frustrating and confusing sometimes since the opportunities are many. Even though, the Internet has changed the way information is gathered since almost everything can be checked online, there are might still students that prefer to talk to a representative person of the university or visit the campus, if possible.

Step 3: Identify alternatives.

While collecting information about different option for higher education, the student is actually building a list with various alternatives that they can choose from at the later stage. In other words, in this stage the student is making a list with all possible and desirable universities to go to.

Step 4: Weigh evidence.

In this step, each person brings on the gathered information together with their emotions to image what it would be like to choose an university from based on the research they just have made. The student has to evaluate if there is an option that would be the best from all alternatives. In going through this difficult internal process, each starts to prefer certain alternatives more than others as they seem to have higher potential for reaching the set goal. Students are different and therefore the criteria for evaluation most likely will not be the same for everyone. However, at the end of this step each student should be able to place the different universities in priority order, based upon their own value system. (Evans, Jamal, & Foxall, 2009)

Step 5: Choose among alternatives.

Once the alternatives have been prioritized, the students are ready to choose the one that seems to fit best their own criteria. At this step, one might choose more than just one university.

Step 6: Take action.

In this step, the student takes action, meaning sending applications to the chosen universities in Step 5. When the respond from each university is received, the student has to take an action to confirm the place at the university he or she has been accepted to. As mention in Step 5, the universities have been prioritized therefore the student most likely will go with the top rank university from the own list.

Step 7: Review decision and consequences.

In the last step students experience the results of their decision and evaluate whether or not it has “solved” the need identified in Step 1. The evaluation after decision results in satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the made choice. For universities the after evaluation is important for their future reputation and image. Positive feedback confirms the student’s expectations and may lead to recommendations to family members, reference groups, friends, etc.

Science of psychology can be applied for partly identifying, analyzing and explaining the nature of decision-making process of individuals. Different scholars suggest different categories of tradition of social science, which significantly affect decision making process. One of the most applied categorization was developed in 1995 by Arnould, which suggest four traditions:

- Psychodynamic approach;
- Behaviorist approach;
- Cognitive approach;
- Humanistic approach. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Psychodynamic approach

The psychodynamic approach is mainly based on Sigmund Freud’s theories. According to Freud, “instinctive forces” also known as “drives” influence decisions, behavior and actions of people from their subconscious mind. Freud identified the significance of sexual gratification and need for reproduction as the most influential instinctual drives. However, nowadays more scientist emphasize role of life experience. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Freud introduced the theory, which helps to understand individual decision-making process. The psyche of individual has three facets:

- *The id*: this facet is identified as pleasure principle, since this component seeks for immediate gratification. The id has instinctual character and is basic source for physiological and physical actions of individual.

- *The ego*: this facet also referred as the delayed gratification principle, meaning that impulses from id facet are combined with individual experience and that influence behavior towards directions which are socially accepted.
- *The superego*: the third facet is identified as conscious principle. Superego starts to develop at a very early stage of life- in the childhood, and later on have a significant influence on morality of individual and his or her standards of behavior. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

The theory suggests that all these three facets are continuously conflicting with each other, therefore individual starts to experience anxiety. In order to restrain anxiety individual is using defense mechanism, which represent combination of different processes. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

This particular theory is helping to understand decision-making process due to several reasons. First, biological instincts and social factors are both influencing behavior of individual during decision-making process. The interaction that is created by social and biological factors has a significant effect on development and state of psychological mind of individuals. Second, in between of a range of actions or behavioral options there is a strong desire or motivation to seek to reduce anxiety that appears from psychological conflict. Since motivation usually has unconscious character, it is rather hard to discover associated motivation. Third, in most of the cases the defense mechanisms towards the reduction of anxiety are denying objective factors, therefore decision has irrational character for an objective observer even though it can appear completely rational to a decision maker. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Behaviorist approach

In contrast to psychodynamic tradition exist behaviorist framework, that denies credibility of psyche as an area of study, unless internal working of individuals' mind can be openly observed and measured afterwards, for example behavior. Behaviorist tradition denies that biological factors can be used as factors for explaining decision-making process. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

According to that tradition, both decision-making process and decision-making choices, in other words individual behavior is significantly influenced by personal experience. That means that people will be making similar processes towards their decision, while being affected by similar external stimuli that these individuals made in the past. This theory suggest, that individual decision-making process is rather influenced by habitual responses and learned experience, than by rational choice towards satisfying or even maximizing existing desire. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Cognitive approach

Cognitive tradition until particular extend agrees with psychodynamic and behaviorist frameworks. Cognitivists agree that psychological processes of individuals have a significant role on peoples' behavior, as well as they acknowledge the importance of social and environmental experience. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

In the cognitive process the outcome is based on the choice of a belief or a sequence of action between various alternative options (Jenkins, 1972). Decision-making is the process of finding and defining, and select alternatives depending on the values and priorities of the individual making the decision (Evans, Jamal, & Foxall, 2009). In other words, decision-making process is a mental process of making a choice based on a certain alternatives which derived upon their own value system.

The main idea of cognitive tradition is the view on human as the "information processor", meaning that behavior of individuals is both influenced by decisions made from understanding the significance and using information from environment and personal experience that came from individual sensations. However, the psychological activities of how individuals process gained meaningful information differs from individual to individual in terms of objective factors. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Cognitive framework has significant importance since it illustrates the existence of different factors, which limit rationality. According to cognitivists, individuals, based on their own experience, create personal set of concepts, which influence their perception of external world as well as their behavior. As an illustration can be used such a construct as "good-bad". For each individual this construct has unique meaning. For example, the same "objective" information can be perceived differently by different people, meaning what for one person is good, for another one it will be completely unacceptable and bad. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Humanistic approach

Humanistic tradition combines philosophical and psychological approaches. This approach assumes that experiences of people are unique and subjective. Therefore, interpretations of reality are not universal and differ from person to person. Humanists believe in "free will" concept, meaning that believes and actions of individuals are coming from self-motivation for fulfilling personal potential. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

This approach has been criticized by other schools towards implying humanistic approach on decision making, due to the fact that human's interpretation is very subjective and unique, therefore rather hard to apply it for overall analysis of peoples' behavior. This tradition emphasizes the

meaning of behavior of the person and his or her personal experience, rather than opinion of the external observer. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

Humanists rejects assumptions from psychodynamic and behaviorist traditions due to their deterministic character. From behaviorists' point of view, both these traditions are dehumanizing. This school was criticized by other schools for ignoring unconscious mind of human and effect of biological processes in us, for example, testosterone. (Jennings & Wattam, 1998)

In social science and mainly in economics, it is mostly considered that humans make their decisions based on the measured outcome. This means that people make rational decisions where all pluses and minuses have been taken into account. The rational choice theory suggests that each person has their own preferences throughout the feasible choice alternatives that give the individuals to say which possibility they prefer. The options are considered to be perfect meaning that one can always state the preferable option. By definition, "*rational*" means to be "*able to think sensibly or logically*" (Oxford Dictionary, 2016).

People do not always make rational decisions. Individuals can also make decision which has no logical explanation for the surrounding people but it is completely logical decision for the decision-maker. It is considered that when people go after their emotion and instinct, when they make impulsive decisions that those decisions are irrational. By definition rational means "*non- logical or reasonable*" (Oxford Dictionary, 2016).

However, everyone has an intuitive system and an effortful rational system, meaning that decision cannot be fully rational neither fully irrational. Seeking of finding how people actually make decisions the idea of "*bounded rationality*" has been proposed by Herbert A. Simon. Bounded rationality is based on the belief that when individuals make decisions their rationality is restricted by the information that is available, pressured by time, and also the cognitive restrictions of their minds. In other words, students are limited by the available information and they can never be completely rational or irrational. For example, most likely it is rather hard to find information about all existing universities within a country, that leads the decision-maker to considering alternatives just from universities he or she has found out about. The students form preferences among the different universities they research about and their final decision is heavily influenced by the perceived risk based on the feasible gathered information. (Kahneman, 2003)

Different scholars from both perspectives of organizations and consumers intensively studied decision-making process. However, it can be seen that mostly decision-process was analyzed

through the prism of rationality, meaning that different organizational processes follow a “logic of consequence”. (Fioretti & Lomi, 2008)

However, due to constant changes in organizations and consumers’ minds, it is crucial to get alternative perspective on decision-making process. In 1972 Michael D. Cohen, James G. March together with Johan Olsen developed Garbage Can model. This model can be seen as opposite approach towards tradition decision-making models. Garbage can model works under assumptions of irrationality, where participants, problems, solutions and decision makes are disconnected from each other and decisions themselves are rather unsystematic and random. (Fatima, 2015)

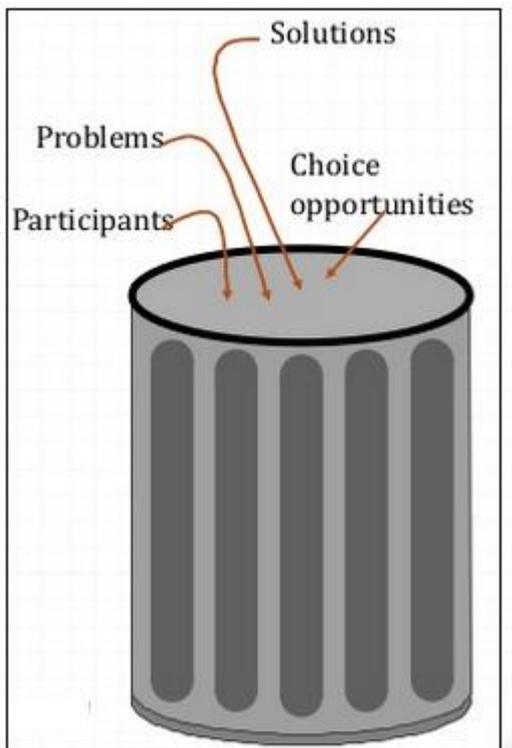


Figure 6 Garbage Can Model (source: (Fatima, 2015))

The Figure 6 above illustrates garbage can theory, where organization’s decision-making process is a collection of choices, since it is disconnecting all the parts unlike as traditional models of decision-making process. Sometimes this model is compared with a chemical reactor that has four different elements. There are those who make decisions – participants to an organization; the choice opportunities are presenting the solutions they can apply in order to solve problems. (Fioretti & Lomi, 2008)

This model represents problems as the factor that need attention, since problems are the gaps of representation or they are showing lack of ability of the company to predict what is going to happen in the future. The model works under the assumption that origin of the problem can be both inside

or outside of the company. Usually is assumed that after recognition of the crucial problem the decision-making process appear. However, according to the model the decision-maker goes through the whole “garbage” before finding the solution. (Cohen, 1972) (Fatima, 2015)

Solutions and problems exist separately from each other even though solutions might appear due to the need of solving the problem. In this model, solutions are rather answers that are looking for a question. Meaning that actors may have ideas how to solve the problem, they can be engaged in the solution-making process and even initiate to advocate the solutions. This model assumes that only obvious solutions can be made without preparation and advocacy, otherwise solutions for the problems sometimes are coming without the knowledge which problem in particular they are made to solve. (Cohen, 1972) (Fatima, 2015)

When we speak about organization’s choice opportunities, it is expected that organization will produce the behavior or in other words, it can be called either decision or initiative. According to the model it can be said, that sometimes choices will be made even without solving the actual problem. Meaning that choice opportunity will exist separately from the decision. (Cohen, 1972) (Fatima, 2015)

Participants in this model change, meaning that different participant may have different type of solutions towards problems they face. The participation degree vary between solutions and problems within organization. (Cohen, 1972)

The model has the name of “garbage can” due to the fact that organizations are providing different solutions which are not really connected to the existing problems. However, the model works under the assumption that eventually problems may appear and while searching in the garbage can the solutions, that were provided previously, may be useful for solving the problem. (Fioretti & Lomi, 2008)

Since garbage can model has no organizational structure, the authors of the model elaborate the possibility that either combinations of the elements or all the elements have certain extend of “importance” level. In other words, the structure of decision defines which decision-makers/participants are using particular choice opportunities, for example, just directors can attend meetings of the board directors. Another example can be that problems on a small level will not reach the board, meaning that particular problems are handled in the specific opportunities. (Fioretti & Lomi, 2008)

Garbage Can Decision Making Theory in Regard of Student Taking Higher Education

Even though garbage can model was developed for analyzing the decision-making process of organizations, the authors of the project apply it as a model for analyzing students' decision-making process in regard of them taking higher education. The authors of the project are working under the assumption that the choice of taking higher education is not completely rational; therefore, the model is applied.

The garbage can is representing students' mind or their decision making process when they think about taking higher education. As the "problems", authors define the need itself of having higher education. Other universities are seen as "participants". The "solutions" are consisted of students' options of having higher education in other universities. The "opportunities" is a component that defines of different criteria such as the possible carrier opportunities after graduation from master's program, having an education abroad from the homeland or from the country where the bachelor degree was obtained.

University choice factors

Deciding on a study program and on a university is a serious and very important step which young people have to make each year. Nevertheless, choosing university is especially relevant not only to the students but also to university since different universities are competing continuously to attract more applicants to their institutions. *Therefore, insights into the decision-making process, including the main factors influencing the choice of a university and a study program, are important to universities.* (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013)

A research in UK has been made in year 2000 and 2001 to investigate the influence of infrastructure on the choice of university. The authors have found out that the two most important factors for students apply in UK are: the study program and the university's teaching reputation. (Price, Matzdorf, Smith, & Agahi, 2003)

Another research made in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland showed that for students is very important the career opportunities and business contacts. Other important results from that research were that before applying students collect information regarding university's reputation, learning experience and accommodation provided by universities. (Veloutsou, Lewis, & Paton, 2004)

Other studies implied that the most important factors for students when choosing university were study programs and courses, costs and scholarships, university campus, and reputation (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013).

A case study research in Turkey by Yamamoto (2006) looked into what universities criteria were for students selection and found out that the main choice factors were examination grades, family

opinion and their personal wishes. Another study made in Australia investigating what the preferences are when students have the option to choose campus versus online teaching. The research showed that undergraduate students yet would choose face-to-face rather than online teaching courses (Hagel & Shaw, 2010).

It can be noticed that in academic literature the important factors that influence the choice of university are university reputation, education experience, career opportunities and personal development (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013)

Some research has been also done in terms of source information and preferences when selecting a university and three categories were identified by the authors: media source (mainly advertisements), social sources (friends, teachers, parents, etc.), and direct sources (materials provided by the university) (Bonnema & Waldt, 2008). The results showed that demographical characteristics had major impact on the source preferences.

Marketing concepts are more and more applied by universities (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013). Different academics have noted that students make a choice as consumer. Durkin, McKenna and Cummins (2012) debated that students can be compared to consumers when choosing a university by using the consumer decision-making process.

Factors in relation to the career in the future, possibility of employment, companies that recruit students, are very essential in the decision making process (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013)

A study made in Lithuania investigating students' behaviour showed that when selecting a study program the biggest influence on their choice have the student's personal characteristics together with the study related factors such as career opportunities, prestige of the studies, etc. While choosing a university the highest rates has been given to the reputation of the university and the city it was located in. (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013)

It is noticed, that the decision in regard to further education start even before students enter high-school. Once the decision of continuing studies is made, the decision making process of perspective students is seen as more advances due to personal preferences of potential students. (Ivy, 2010)

According to Hossler, the decision-making process is made by two major steps:

1. Decision in regard of taking higher education.
2. Selection of specific institution. (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987)

Academic scholars introduce three models of student choice in regard to higher education. These models are falling into groups regarding economic issues, sociological issues and information processing issues, which are influencing perspective students' decision-making process:

1. Economic models of student choice: this model covers money related issues, since student is analysing cost-benefit aspects. Potential student is evaluating study-related costs (either taking into account real cost of the studies or opportunity cost, meaning the income which they main have if they chose to work instead of having a higher education. Prospective student is also evaluating possible salary after graduation.
2. Sociological models of student choice: this model includes personal background of prospective student. The process of selection of the institution is influenced by issues related to family background (also counting opinion of family), academic ability, opinion of school counsellors, personal goals and motivation, fulfilment of himself or herself.
3. Information processing models of student choice: this model is seen as combination of first two models, since it has overlapping issues. Prospective student is not concentrating more on either economic or sociological issues, but analyzing both of them and final evaluation has a great influence on decision-making process. (Ivy, 2010) (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987)

The choice of university for prospective students is identified as complex choice, which includes several sequential decisions. This choice is seen not as purely rational but also emotional, which involves multiple decision makers and different attributes. (Johnston, 2010)

For a long time the importance of word-of-mouth communication has been studied by different scholars. Numbers of researches showed that the listener is more influenced by opinion of his or her peer rather than by information provided by company. The power of word-of-mouth differs depending on social ties between humans. Studies prove that strong ties such as opinions of a family or group are more influential than weak ties. However, weak ties are playing important part while spreading information between different subgroups. (Johnston, 2010) (Brown & Reingen, 1987)

According to different scholars, it is proven that word-of-mouth communication from personal sources of information has rather big influence when it comes to student choice of university. Students were influenced the most by opinions of their friends and family members. Studies reveal that opinion from parents is the most influential, where opinion of mother is valued as slightly more influential. Influence from other members of family, peer from high school and/or university is lower than parents influence, however it is ranked rather high. (Johnston, 2010)

There is no surprise that personal sources of information are having high influence on decision-making process while choosing university. Apart from family and peers, perspective students are also influenced till a high extend by faculty, coach and staff – university representatives. Meanwhile staff members from high school are not perceived as very influential source. (Johnston, 2010)

From non-personal communication, the visit to university campus is also seen as highly influential tool. That is why hosting perspective student on campus is seen as the way to recruit students, however this strategy is seen as rather expensive and challenging to scale up. Also studies reveal that the influence of social media is rather low on decision-making process of prospective students. (Johnston, 2010)

Speaking about choice of university, it is interesting to look at international students' migration on a global level, since it has become highly popular, especially among western countries for the last 15 years. Scholars shows that there multiply reasons for prospective students to choose education abroad. It can be seen that perspective students are adopting consumerist approach when it comes to decision-making process in regard to higher education. Some scholars identify two major factors that have a high degree influence. The first factor is related to employment and career possibilities after graduation, the second one is related to study program itself and money related issues (such as tuition fee, living cost, etc.). (Maringe, 2006)

It can be identified that there are "push and pull" factors, which affect decision-making process of the students. One of the most influential push factors can be identified lack of career possibilities after graduation in countries of origin. When it comes to pull facts, which influence decision-making process of potential students for choosing specific country, the biggest influence, have: future employment prospects, political and educational environment, the high standards of education, the quality of teaching technique, possibility to get scholarship or other type of funding, opportunities to get part or full time work and also opportunities for post-graduate education. (Maringe, 2006)

Institutional characteristics have significant influence of decision-making process of prospect students. When it comes to the choice of particular course of study there are multiple factors that influence students, for example, level of satisfaction from graduates from the course, reputation of it among peers and employers, possibility of having flexible studies (have bigger importance to single parents and older students). (Maringe, 2006)

The level of importance of specific factors differs among ethnic groups. For example, studies show that family members' opinion has bigger influence on students from Pakistan and African countries. For Asians academic and social factors have bigger influence while choosing university. Also studies show that for Afro-Caribbean students it is important the age of university, since they prefer to apply to "old" universities (predominantly "pre-1992" universities). However, it can be seen that career opportunities after graduation is seen as highly influential factor for all ethnic groups. (Ivy, 2010)

University selection criteria also differs not just among different ethnic groups, but among those who applying to education either at public or private universities. Students, who prefer education at private university, are influenced more by criteria such as: reputation of university, facilities, and cost of life, personal interaction and selectivity. For those, who prefer public universities, bigger influences have these criteria: program of studies, location of housing opportunities, reputation of university, cost of living, and athletic programs. However, student from both of these groups are highly influenced but such factors as the latest and highest technology, involvement of community and attractiveness of campus environment. (Joseph, Mullen, & Spake, 2012)

Due to raising competition between universities in regard of recruiting new students, different scholars start speaking about the importance of university branding. The motives behind university branding are different. Some universities seek to improve their ranking; some others are more concentrating on creating completely new image of university. Another motive for branding is improving university awareness, perceived quality of studies and creating strong brand associations. However, no matter what are the motives behind university branding, the most common university branding approaches are falling in the categories such as: increasing quality of academic studies, improving high-athletic programs, increasing convenience, co-branding, creating unique study programs or majors. (Joseph, Mullen, & Spake, 2012) (Kurz, 2008)

Branding that is based on key associations and symbolic images are influencing perspective students at emotional level. In some cases it can be noticed, that brand is an essential part while creating and developing relationship with existing and potential consumers. (Simms & Trott, 2006) (Joseph, Mullen, & Spake, 2012)

The university also has an influential lead role to perform in creating and accumulating appropriate stimulation to the decision-making process. The process is dynamic as there is an interaction between the student and the environment. The students actively take part in the process by looking for information on the alternatives available, by providing evaluations of different universities, and by expressions of risk. In this process the higher educational institutions also actively take part by manipulating the variables that are under their control. Students' behaviour is determined by a large group of variable stimuluses. There are some main factors that affect in different ways the students' decision making process. Such factors are the cultural and social influence on students. In other words, students' behaviour is influenced by cultural, social and personal factors. Process is about the order of steps used by the students in the internal process of those influences. The order shows the cause-and-effect relationships engaged in the making decisions. *"The processes include the*

perceptual, psychological and inner feelings and dispositions” of students in relation to evaluating university.

What influences students behaviour?

Looking at cultural factors it has to be mention that culture, subculture and social class have high impact on students’ behaviour when choosing university since culture is considered to be the main determinant of person’s wants and behaviour. Different authors describe culture with different terms but all mean that culture is set of values, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, preferences and behaviour shared by family and other institutions and passed on from generation to generation. Therefore, cultural values are considered to be relatively stable over time; however adjustment may occur in response to changing social conditions.

Cultural differences lead to different decisions choices. Within the same culture, there are also different social classes based on for example occupation, income, education, value orientation, etc. However, it is most likely that people from similar social class have the tendency to have similar preferences for choosing a university.

The students’ behaviour is not based only on cultural factors, but also on social factors as mentioned previously. Social factors are *“reference groups, family, social roles and statuses”* (Kotler & Keller, 2006). A reference group is a group which has direct or indirect influence on people’s behaviour or attitude. As part of the natural way of living, people belong to different groups where they interact, some places more than others. Furthermore, by frequent interacting each one influences or is influenced by each other.

The family is the first and maybe the most important group and also the group that has the highest influence on students’ choice of university. In different countries the culture is different and therefore the family has different power on their children’s choices for education. Another thing related to the choice of university would be the ambition the students have or have seen in the family. Parents can influence their children’s choice by their own preferences or by their economic situation.

A students’ choice of university is also influenced by personal characteristics. According to Kotler (2006) those are the student’s *“age and stage in the life cycle; occupation and economic circumstances; personality and self-concept; and lifestyle and values”*.

The different age and stage in the life cycle have different impact on the decision making process. Students continuing choosing master program directly after their bachelor degrees might be a result of family influence. People that have gained some work experience after bachelor program might be driven to a master program based on the desire to develop their careers. However, economic circumstances are of a great importance when choosing a university. The tuition fees, cost of living

and the ability for students to adapt to the present economic of a country might be a challenge since there is a different social class.

Each student has personality characteristics that affect their university choice behaviour. By personality, Kotler (2006) describes the following – “*set of distinguishing human psychological traits that lead to relatively consistent and enduring responses to environmental stimuli*”. Personality could be a valuable variable in analysing students’ university choice. One could choose based on how he or she views themselves or based on how they would like to view themselves or even how they would like others to see them.

Even though students might be the same age, the same economic situation, and same subculture, they might lead to different lifestyles since they might have different opinion, interests, values and activities. As a result, students might have different criteria for choosing a university based on activities and interests.

Furthermore, motivation is part of the fundamental influences for students to take an action of choice. As all humans, students have some needs called - *biogenic* (hunger, thirst, discomfort) and other needs called – *psychogenic* (need for recognition, esteem, or belonging). According to Kotler (2006) “*a motive is a need that is sufficiently pressing to drive the person to act*”.

There are three best-known theories that explain the human motivation – Sigmund Freud’s Theory, Abraham Maslow’s Theory, and Frederik Herzberg’s Theory.

Using the Sigmund Freud’s theory would imply that student’s behaviour is shaped largely unconscious and their own motivation cannot be fully understood. When student choose university, they react not only to the stated competences, but also to other less conscious suggestions such as size, image, campus, rooms, facilities where all of those can trigger specific emotions and associations.

Maslow’s theory consists of five basic needs:

1. *Physiological needs*: food, water, shelter
2. *Safety needs*: security, protection
3. *Social needs*: sense of belonging, love, family, friends, acceptance
4. *Esteem needs*: self-esteem, prestige, status
5. *Self-actualization needs*: self-development and realization

Those five needs are hierarchy based and according to that theory, students will not try satisfy their realization needs if the previous ones are not satisfied first.

Frederik Herzberg’s theory is a two-factor theory that differentiates dissatisfiers (factors that bring dissatisfaction) and satisfiers (factors bringing satisfaction). The first implication of the theory is that universities should do their best to avoid dissatisfiers (for example poor student service). Second

implication, the universities should identify the primary satisfiers or motivators of choice of higher institution.

Once a person is motivated that means it is ready for action. But how the motivated students actually act is influenced by their own perception of the situation. *“Perception is the process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets information inputs to create a meaningful picture of the world”* (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Perception depends not only on the physical stimuli, but also on the current beliefs and attitudes of individuals. This means that two students exposed to the same reality and receiving the same information about different universities might not have the same opinion about the universities.

Students are also selective in what they remember. As a consequence, students tend to remember the information that strengthens their own beliefs. However, the more information they get, the bigger are the chances that in the near future students would come back to what they have heard about the certain university.

For better understanding of student choice behaviour, the five-stage model of the consumer buying process will be discussed. The figure below (**Error! Reference source not found.**) presents the adapted model for students' behaviour.

In summary, it has been found out that different studies where using different factors influencing decision-making process of students in regard of taking higher education. Some of the factors, scholars found being more influencing then others. The authors of the project decided to group them according to their nature:

- 1) Academic factors (the study program, reputation of university, reputation of faculty, quality of studies, future carries opportunities, teaching style etc.);
- 2) Financial factors (tuition fee, cost of living, financial aid, possibility to find part-time/student job, scholarships etc.);
- 3) Personal factors (opinion of family, friends, partner, study counselors; personal preferences, personal motivation, church influence etc.);
- 4) Cultural factors (international environment, location of university, size of the city, social life, cultural differences, etc.).

The authors of the project created a table that is represented below. Table 6 represents most influencing factors according to scholars. On the left column located researchers and on the right column are most influencing in their opinion factors. It can be seen that the study program, the university's reputation, career opportunities business contacts, cost of living, opinion of friends/family/partner and personal wishes have the biggest influence on decision-making process

of prospect student. It can be said that student is influenced by combination of economic, academic, cultural and personal factors; however, level of influence of particular factors is different from individual to individual.

Authors	Factors
Price, Matzdorf, Smith & Agahi (2003) Veloutsou, Lewis, & Paton (2004) Alonderienė, R. & Klimavičienė (2013) Maringe (2006) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012) Kurtz (2008)	The study program
Maringe (2006) Alonderienė, R. & Klimavičienė (2013) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012)	Tuition fee
Price, Matzdorf, Smith & Agahi (2003) Veloutsou, Lewis, & Paton (2004) Alonderienė, R. & Klimavičienė (2013) Maringe (2006) Ivy (2010) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012) Kurtz (2008)	The university's reputation
Veloutsou, Lewis, & Paton (2004) Alonderienė, R. & Klimavičienė (2013) Ivy (2010) Maringe (2006) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012) Kurtz (2008)	Career opportunities & business contacts
Alonderienė, R. & Klimavičienė (2013) Price, Matzdorf, Smith & Agahi (2003) Maringe (2006)	Cost of living

Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012) Kurtz (2008)	
Alonderienė, R.& Klimavičienė (2013) Maringe (2006) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012)	Scholarships
Hagel & Shaw (2010)	Face-to-face (not online) teaching courses
Yamamoto (2006) Bonnema & Waldt (2008) Johnston (2010) Brown&Reimgen (1987) Maringe (2006) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012)	Family/ friends/ partner's opinion
Alonderienė, R.& Klimavičienė (2013) Maringe (2006) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012)	Location of university
Yamamoto (2006) Alonderienė, R.& Klimavičienė (2013) Ivy (2010) Maringe (2006) Kurtz (2008) Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012)	Personal wishes
Maringe (2006)	Having education abroad
Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012) Kurtz (2008)	Athletic programs

Table 6 The most influencing factors towards decision making process of students in regard of talking higher education (Source:own)

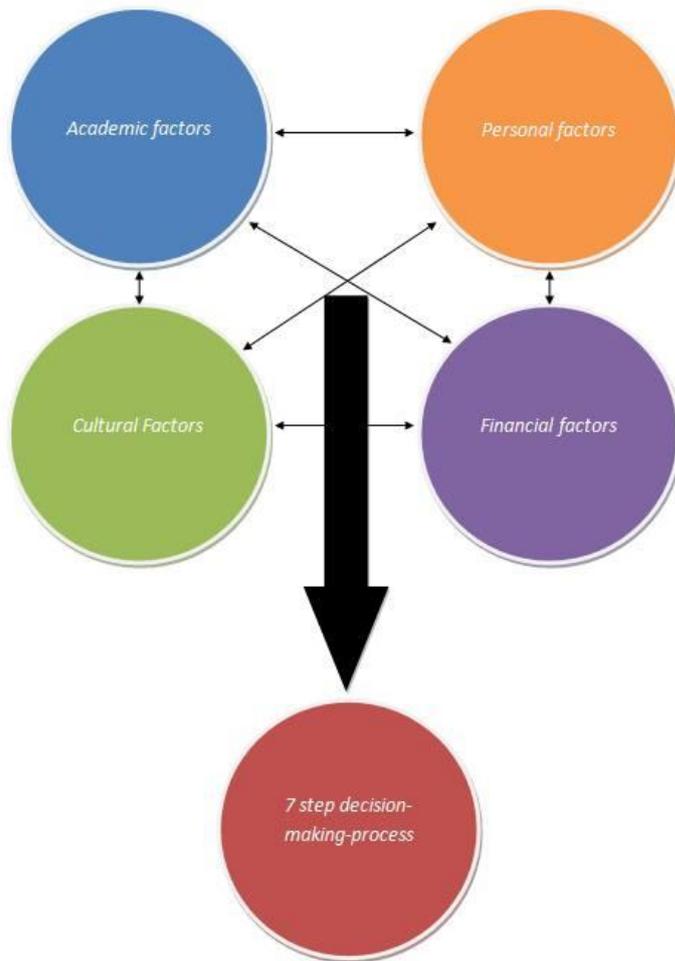


Figure 7 Factors and decision-making process (Source: own)

The 7 step decision-making process of a prospect student in regard of taking higher education is influenced by such factors as academic, personal, financial, and cultural. Depending on a person it might be that some factors are influencing him or her more than others. However, it can be seen that all factors are not just influensive, but also there are connected with each other. These connections also represent interactions between factors.

4. Empirical study

Developing hypotheses

Results from multiple researches show that there are multiple different factors that have an influence on prospect student's decision-making process while choosing university. (Price,Matzdorf, Smith, & Agahi, 2003). One of the factors with significant influence is academic factor (for example, the study program, reputation of university, reputation of faculty, quality of studies, future carries opportunities, teaching style etc.) (Ivy, 2010) (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). However, the academic

researchers that were analysing the importance of academic factors in regard of decision-making process of students while choosing university were mostly applied rather generally on different students. Therefore, the authors of the project developed this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Academic factors have higher importance level when choosing university.

Results from multiple researches show that cost of living, tuition fee, and possibility for on-campus residence have a significant influence on prospect students while choosing university (Price, Matzdorf, Smith, & Agahi, 2003) (Maringe, 2006) (Alonderiene & Klimavičiene, 2013). However, there is no proof that there is correlation between these factors and cultural ones. Based on that, authors create following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between financial and cultural factors when students choose university.

Numbers of studies show that personal factors (such as for example opinion of family, friends, partner, etc.) have a high influence when it comes to decision-making process in regard to taking further education (Johnston, 2010). However, there is no proof that some types of personalities are influenced more than others. Based on that fact, the authors are developing following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between personal factors and type of personality when students choose university.

5. Analysis of the Primary Data

Demographics of the Respondents

A total number of 89 respondents were gathered during the data collection, where 46 are females and 43 are males. It is presented in figure. The results are not generalizable because of the relatively small sample size. The findings are considered more as indications and cannot be taken for granted.

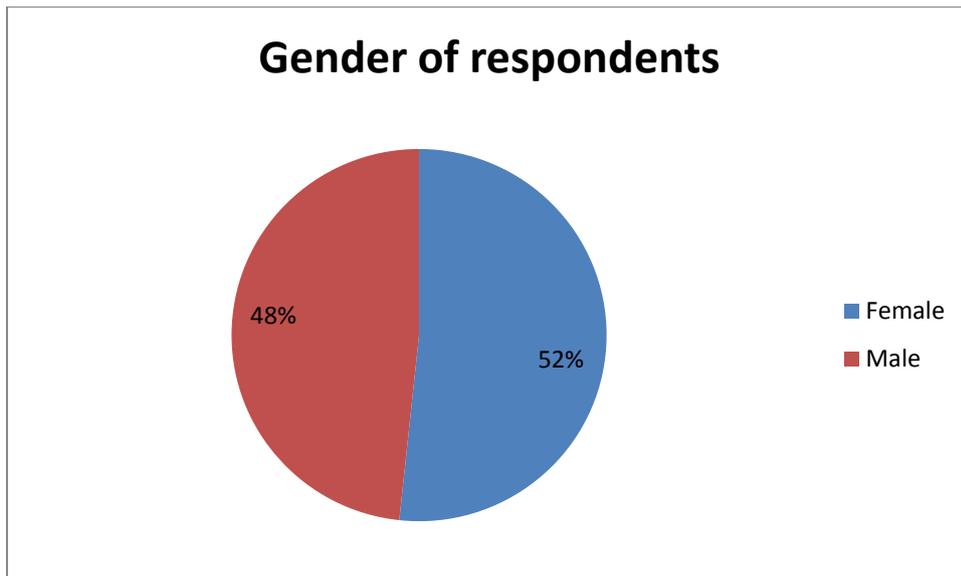


Figure 8 Gender of respondents (Source: own)

The Figure 8 below shows a cross tabulation of the variables of gender and age group.

Gender * Age Crosstabulation

		Age				Total	
		18-22	23-26	27-35	36 or older		
Gender	Male	Count	2	30	10	1	43
		% within Gender	4.7%	69.8%	23.3%	2.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	1	38	6	1	46
		% within Gender	2.2%	82.6%	13.0%	2.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	3	68	16	2	89
		% within Gender	3.4%	76.4%	18.0%	2.2%	100.0%

Table 7 Cross Tabulation Gender*Age (Source: own)

The table illustrates that the majority of respondents are in the age group of 23-26 (76.4 per cent). Out of the 46 females 38 are in the major group, which represent 82.6 per cent of the total. There are 30 males out of 43, which makes 69.8 per cent of the total. The sample may indicate interesting results as the decision-making process for higher education is around the mentioned major age group.

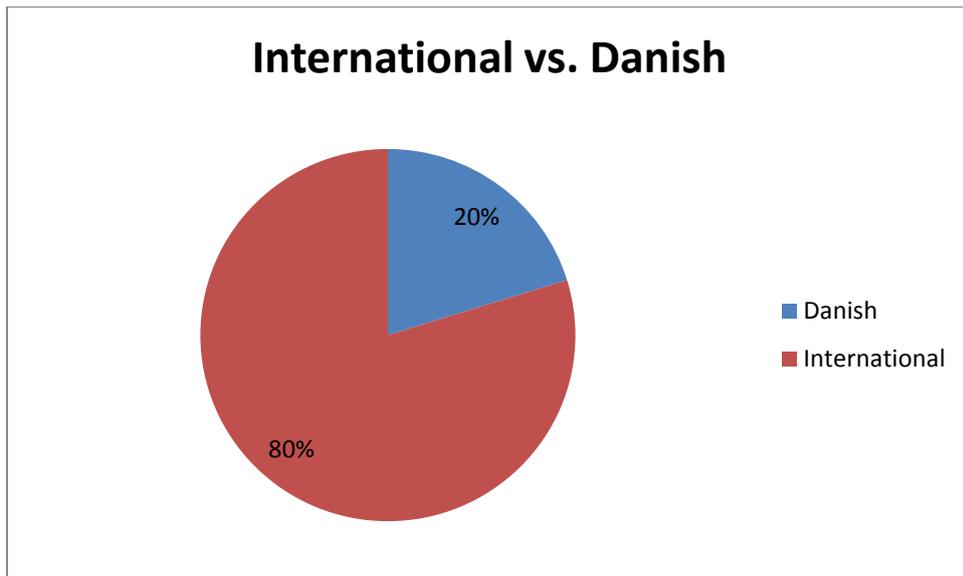


Figure 9 International vs. Danish (Source: own)

Row Labels	Count of Nationality groups
Danish	18
International	71
Grand Total	89

Table 8 International vs. Danish (Source: own)

Despite the fact, that the survey has been distributed on the Danish market, Figure 9 and Table 8 shows that many international students have spent time giving their opinion.

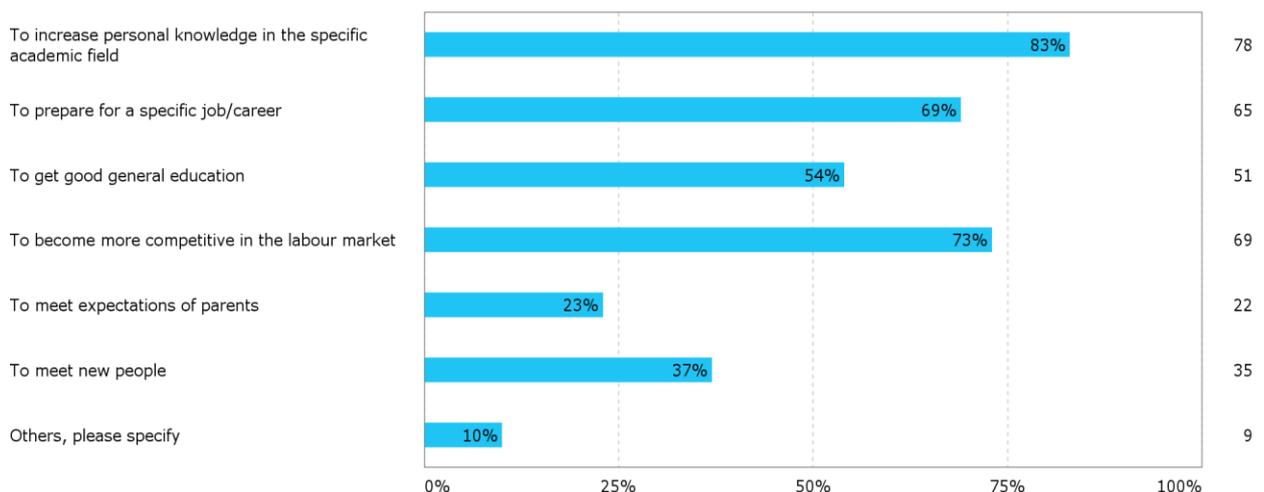


Figure 10 The important reasons in regard of attending university (Source: own)

On the figure above it can be seen that for 83% of respondent one of the important reasons to attend university is the demand of increasing personal knowledge in the specific academic field.

Such reason as becoming more competitive in the labour market and preparation for specific job/career are also important (73% and 69% respectively). 54% of students decided to attend university due to the need of getting good general education. Such reasons as meeting new people and meeting expectations of parent are important for less than a half of respondents (37% and 23% respectively). For 10% of students the important reason to attend university was different from mentioned above. These reasons are rather personal:

- ✓ The demand to have international experience (2 students),
- ✓ The demand to get more knowledge about life in general (2 students),
- ✓ Partner related: maintain the relationship/get distracted from relationship that ended (2 students),
- ✓ The excitement to experience something new (2 students),
- ✓ The example set by friends (1 student).

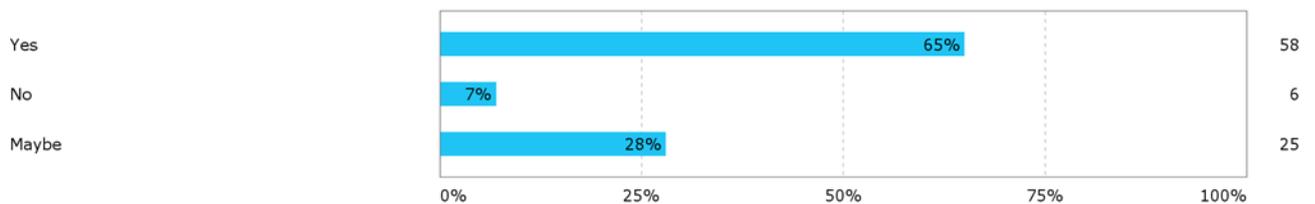


Figure 11 Will you recommend AAU to others? (Source:own)

The figure above represents proportion of students in regard to their recommendations to attend AAU to others. 65% students were satisfied with their experience; therefore they will recommend this education institution to others. Less than a half of students 28% still have not decided if they recommend AAU or not. Just 7% of students will not suggest to others to attend AAU.

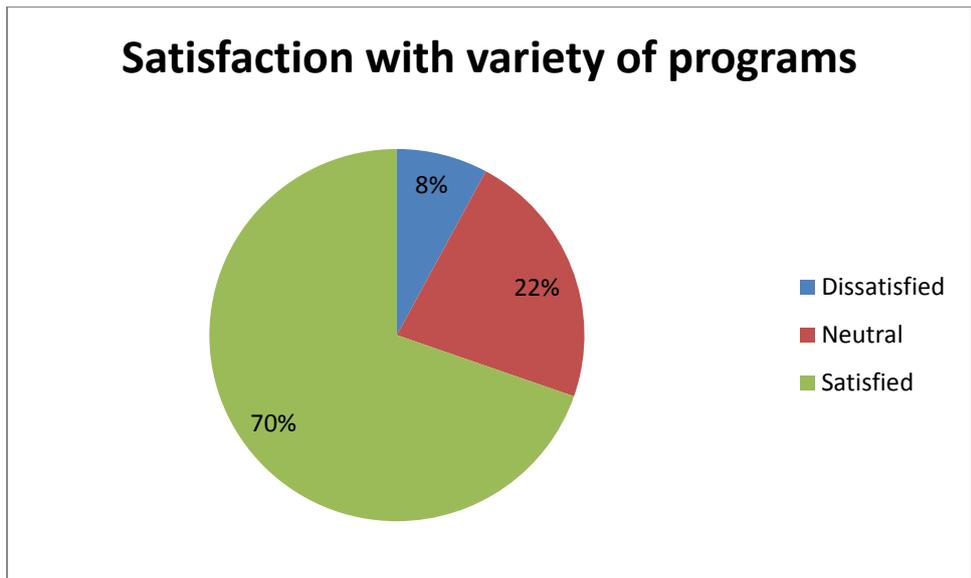


Figure 12 Satisfaction with variety of programs (Source: own)

Figure 1 shows that the majority of students are satisfied with the variety of programs offered by Aalborg University. The percentage of students that are dissatisfied is relatively low.

However, students still would like to see more programs at AAU. The figure below represents what kind of other programs students would be interested. The program of Strategy, Organization and Leadership has the highest demand (31%). Students have almost the same interest in such programs as Finance and Business Intelligence (28% and 25% respectively). Approximately 20 % of students are interested in such programs as Management, Logistics and Supply Chain management, Statistics and Economics (22%, 21% and 21% respectively). 12% of students would be interested Management Accounting and Control. It is the same amount of students that are satisfied with variety of programs in AAU (18%) and those, who would like to have an options of some other programs.

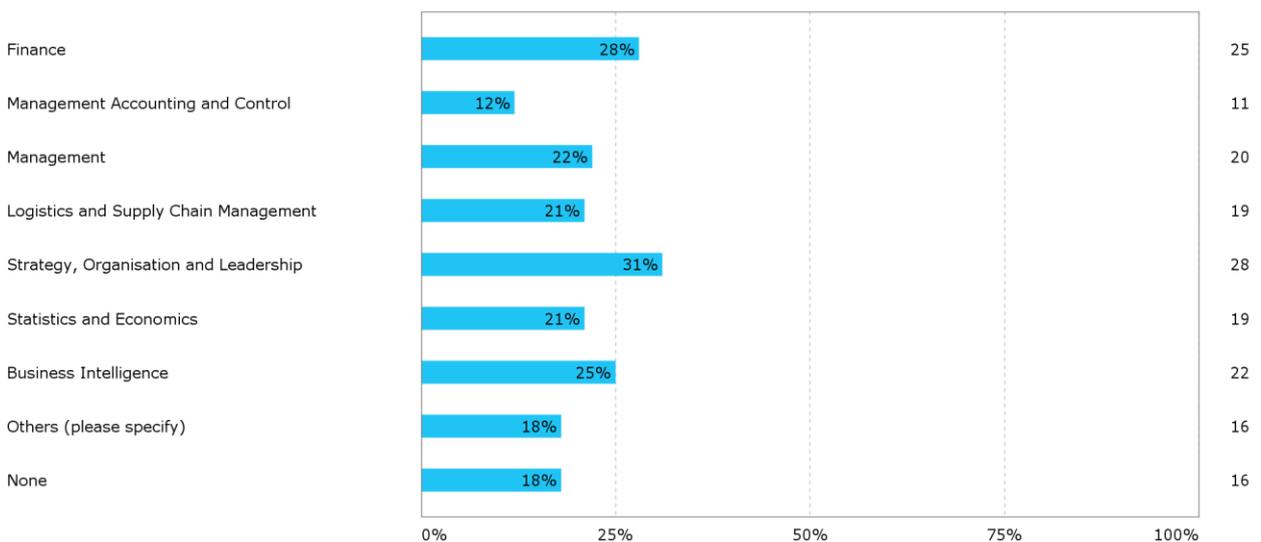


Figure 13 What other programs would you like to see at AAU? (Source:own)

8% of students identified the need for following programs:

- 1) Marketing related: Brand Management, Advertising, Public Relation, Fashion (Marketing& Management & Branding) etc. (8 students),
- 2) Business related: Innovation, Politics and Business, Business Administration, International Economics and Business, E-business (6 students),
- 3) Design related: Fashion Design; Interior design (3 students)
- 4) International Economics (1 respondent).

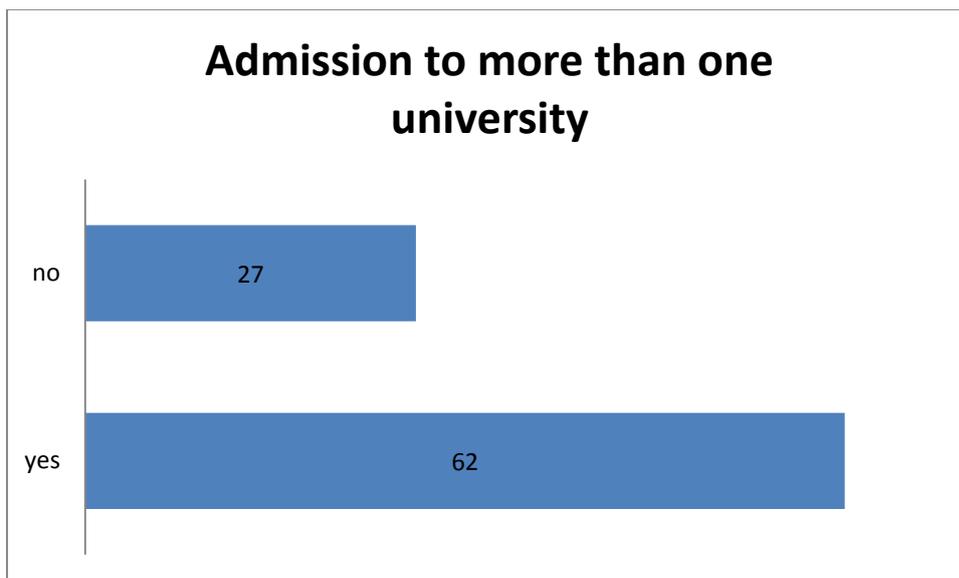


Figure 14 Admission to more than one university (Source: own)

Row Labels	Count of First choice
Aarhus university	4
CBS	10
Harvard	1
Humboldt university Berlin	1
ICN Business School (France, Nancy)	1
Imperial College Business School (London)	1
KU	1
Odense University	1
Radboud University, Nijmegen	1
SDU in Odense	1
The University of Edinburgh	1
Grand Total	23

Table 9 First choice university

The figure above represents how many have applied to more than one university and the table shows which universities have been first choice. Of main interest is to observe which universities in Denmark have been preferred that Aalborg University.

Verification of Hypotheses

In this chapter, the hypothesis presented in sub-section will be analysed and based on the results findings will be presented. SPSS is used to check the significances between the different variables. The question s_58 has been recoded into additional variables, which have been used in the analysis. The “very rational” and “rational” have been combined and the “irrational” together with “very irrational”. The statement “in the middle” has been kept as it is. For the analysis, Pearson Chi-Square has been performed for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3 as the count of various levels in the variables is below 5. The used significance level in this thesis paper is 0.05.

In the process of choosing university, scholars have described that different factors influence students’ mind. In this survey, this claim is researched by the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: Academic factors have higher importance level when choosing university.

In order to investigate if the academic factors have higher influence an analysis with Pearson Chi-Square test was carried out. For the analysis the variables of question 9 from 1 to 21 from the survey were tested with the variable of most important factor. The results are shown in the following Table

10

Question	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square
1	Tuition fee	0.013
2	World rank of the university	0.293
3	Cost of living	0.149
4	Problem based Learning	0.03
5	Group work	0.132
6	Quality of academic programs	0.013
7	Program related to specific job/career	0.018
8	Reputation of university	0.049
9	Influence from parents	0.146
10	Influence from friends/partner	0.071
11	Other family member/relative is/was studying there	0.179
12	Friends/partner are/were studying	0.119
13	Advice from counselor/teacher	0.62
14	Opportunities for international study/work abroad	0.004
15	Size of university	0.044
16	Size of city	0.01
17	Social life	0.005
18	Possibility for on-campus residence	0.484
19	Short distance to home	0.239
20	Long distance from home	0.462

Table 10 Test of Hypothesis 1

The performed tests above show that seven out of twenty one have a p -value which is ≤ 0.05 . The rest of the variables are having a p -value which is ≥ 0.05 . This means that the hypothesis cannot be rejected neither fully accepted.

The next hypothesis is based on the assumption that financial factors are related to the cultural factors when students are making their decision where to have their higher education.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between financial and cultural factors when students choose university.

In order to find out if there is a relationship or not, a Pearson Correlation analysis is conducted between financial factors and cultural factors.

The first table shows Pearson Correlation for tuition fee and size of university.

Correlations

		Tuition fee	Size of university
Tuition fee	Pearson Correlation	1	.116
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.280
	N	89	89
Size of university	Pearson Correlation	.116	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.280	
	N	89	89

Table 11 Pearson Correlations Tuition fee and Size of university (Source: own)

The table shows that size of university has no significant effect on the choice of university regardless tuition fee. There is no strong relationship between those variables. The next variables are tuition fee and size of city presented in Table 12.

Correlations

		Tuition fee	Size of city
Tuition fee	Pearson Correlation	1	.180
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.092
	N	89	89
Size of city	Pearson Correlation	.180	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.092	
	N	89	89

Table 12 Pearson Correlations Tuition fee and Size of city (Source: own)

The table shows that tuition fee has no significant effect on the choice of university regardless the size of the city. There is no evidence for a relationship between these variables. The Correlation of tuition fee and social life is presented in the next table.

Correlations

		Tuition fee	Social life
Tuition fee	Pearson Correlation	1	.089
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.405
	N	89	89
Social life	Pearson Correlation	.089	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.405	
	N	89	89

Table 13 Pearson Correlations Tuition fee and Social life (Source: own)

The table shows that tuition fee has no significant effect on the choice of university regardless the social life. The next variables are cost of living with size of university, size of the city and social life. The three figures below represent the findings.

Correlations

		Cost of living	Size of university
Cost of living	Pearson Correlation	1	.381**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	89	89
Size of university	Pearson Correlation	.381**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	89	89

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 14 Pearson Correlations Cost of living and Size of university (Source: own)

Correlations

		Cost of living	Size of city
Cost of living	Pearson Correlation	1	.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	89	89
Size of city	Pearson Correlation	.290**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	89	89

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 15 Pearson Correlations Cost of living and Size of city (Source: own)

Correlations

		Cost of living	Social life
Cost of living	Pearson Correlation	1	.318**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	89	89
Social life	Pearson Correlation	.318**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	89	89

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 16 Pearson Correlations Cost of living and Social life (Source: own)

The last two tables show that there is no significant correlation between size of city, social life and cost of living when choosing university. However Table 16 shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between the cost of living and the size of university. The correlation is significant at the level of 0.01. This means that cost of living has a significant effect on size of university when it comes to choice of university. Based on this result hypothesis 2 can be rejected. This means that financial factors, or at least some of them, are connected to the cultural factors when students choose higher education.

The next hypothesis to be analysed is number 3.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between personal factors and type of personality when students choose university.

In order to investigate if personal factors are related to the type of personality an analysis with Pearson Chi-Square test was carried out. For the analysis the variables of question 9 from 9 to 13 together with 21 from the survey were tested with the variable of most important factor. The results are shown in the following table

Question	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square
9	Influence from parents	0.995
10	Influence from friends/partner	0.153
11	Other family member/relative is/was studying there	0.958
12	Friends/partner are/were studying	0.749
13	Advice from counselor/teacher	0.282
21	Athletic/varsity sports	0.238

Table 17 Test of Hypothesis 3 (Source: own)

The table above shows the results from Pearson test. Each p -value is ≥ 0.05 . This means that there is no significant connection between the variables and it is failed to reject the hypothesis. There is no relationship between the personal factors and type of personality when students choose university. In other words, in this data there is no significant evidence of a connection between the variables.

Analysis of open questions

In this chapter the authors of the project analyzed open questions of the questionnaire, where respondents were answering why they would not recommended AAU to other students and answers about students' recommendations for AAU. In order to simplify and organize the answers authors categorized them and in the brackets wrote down amount of people sharing similar thoughts.

One of the biggest concerns of current students and graduates is related to academic performance of AAU:

- Practicality: the studies are rather theoretical than practical. In AAU students are being taught about different models and theories, however, they do not feel like they apply gained knowledge in real life situation .(11)
- Dated data: the cases studies are not up to date. Students are interested in case-projects that are related to the problems that companies are having currently. That is mainly cause by the belief that old case studies are not representing reality that is constantly changing. (3)
- Variety of programs: some of the students would like to see bigger variety of programs, especially the ones that would be presented in English. (3)
- Brand of AAU: the reputation of AAU is not as good as reputation of other Danish universities, for example Copenhagen Business School and Århus University. (1)
- Network: some of the students would like to see more collaboration between AAU and other univeristies, companies (especially in Denmark) or businessmen. Then it would be easier to gain international experience in practise. Also some students identified demand for unqualified jobs that will help them to sustain themselves. (10)
- Elective courses: several students identify the need of having elective courses, that will be helping them for the future careeer. Such classes would be : debate class, business culture, how to negotiate. One of the suggestions is to create a class,where one part of the team will represent the company and another would be suppliers and they try to negotiate prices, bonus programs and so on. (5)
- Exams: some students were concerned that they need to experince the situation where, member of group was not actively participating in project writing, however, during exam the person ot a great. It is questioned by some if exams the way they are now can represent the knowledge and project-writing experience. Also the need of having written feedback for the exam and presentation was identified. In addition, few students mentioned that projects that require large amount of pages are only decreasing the quality of academic study. (4)

- Supervision: it has been noted that some groups had same supervisor through the whole program and others getting a new supervisor every single time. Due to this fact, the allocation of supervisor should be fair for all the students. Also it could be questioned if the group actually learns new things, because every supervisor has his or her own personal style of supervision. (2)
- Quality of program: some of the student were disappointed with quality of program. It was suggested to make bigger emphasize on statistics, econometrics, quantitative research methods, accounting. Also it was questioned if AAU should make such an emphasize on methodology. (4)
- Broad courses: some of the students showed strong depend in courses being more specific rather than broad. Since they believe that it will provide them with better knowledge. (5)

Another issue that students are facing is dissatisfaction with performance of AAU staff:

- Incompetence: the complaint is based on negative experience with international accommodation office (IAO), international office (IO), SU office, technical support and administration due to their incompetence. Also it suggested making management of university more centralized. (6)
- Not being heard: some of the students feel like their opinion is not valuable to AAU staff, since they keep complaining about the same things but they cannot see the changes. (1)
- Student card replacement: one of the students faced with a problem when he lost his student card during 4th semester, however, he could not replace it with a new one, because it was no contact from AAU. That negative experience also got worse once he realized that he could not use some functions of library or to printing service. (1)
- Qualification of lecturers: some of the students are not satisfied with academic qualification of particular lecturers (especially when it comes to Ph.D. students). The recommendation provided is to increase the criteria for selection. (2)

Some of the students had a negative experience while working in groups. However, the reasons are different:

- Qualification of students: some students think that requirement for being accepted to AAU is rather low, that create academic knowledge misbalance in groups since some member of the groups have lack of skills or knowledge (2). One of the recommendations provided by student is:
 - To have face-to-face evaluation, where potential students will be tested in regard of relevant academic knowledge;

- In case certain students are lacking a course in order to enroll to a certain program, specific exams could be offered by AAU as an options for being eligible for the recruitment process.
- Level of English: the complaint is based not just on general level of English of their colleagues but also on quality of business vocabulary (2). It is suggested that AAU could offer an equivalent test of English to the one that Cambridge offers, for better selection purposes.
- Team-work: some of the students had a poor experience while working in groups due to the fact that other members where not respecting each other's opinion. The suggestion is to create groups according to their type of personality. In addition, it was suggested to make group formation automatic and random. (2)
- Diversity of nationalities: one of the students identified a strong demand of working on projects with Danish students, because they prefer to work with each other (1). The recommendation is not applicable exclusively on Danes but also on international students. AAU could introduce the rule, where from the same country it could be just two students top, which will help to prevent dominance of any particular nationality in group.
- Individual work and assessment: the need of working alone at least on some projects was identified. (1)

Some of the issues students face are about campus and comfortability while staying there:

- Parking: several students have negative experience when it comes to park the car, especially in the mornings. (2)
- Printing service: several students identify the need to improve AAU printing system because they experience printers breaking in the middle of printing; the price of printing is rather high, therefore, university could provide students with more printing units or to lower down the price. In addition it was questioned if there is such a need always deliver physical copies of the project, since that is very complicated to do if you have an internship abroad, also in any case students need to put the project in e-library. (2)
- Library: one of the students identified the problem of getting books for classes. They are too expensive to buy, and in the library there is lack of needed information. The recommendation to the library is to offer e-version of books or, for example, printed copies of books (just with possibility to read them in the library). (1)
- Study group-rooms: there are two major problems with study rooms. The first one is the lack of them; the issue intensifies closer to deadlines. The second issue is in regard equipment in study rooms. Ina particular it was identified the need to have more projectors in them. (2)

- Canteen: some of the students find prices in the canteen too expensive. Therefore there is a recommendation of introducing the system, where student can monthly pay for his or her lunch and then have it for lower price. (1)
- Accommodation prices: due to high prices of accommodation, the need of lowering the prices for accommodation provided by IAO was identified. (1)

There are some students that are dissatisfied with web-page of AAU:

- Home page: the recommendation is to add accurate descriptions and explanations of disciplines, schedule and syllabus (1).
- Moodle (1).

One of the recommendations in regard of improving home-page is to create a video, the concept of which would be "one day in AAU", where a viewer can see the area around, classes, library, night life, study rooms, etc. Because some friends/family members/partner of a student were really interested about how the life is in Aalborg and what is different comparing to their home countries. That can turn into effective promotional tool. (1)

One particular student was very particule describing her admission to AAU experience. Student identified the need of getting physical letter of acceptance to AAU, and then it would be possible to show it to her friends, family, share it on social media, etc. In addition, she noticed that her experience while communicating by e-mail with staff of university would be better, if on the bottom of the e-mail a photo of a person with who you talk was allocated. (1)

One of the Norwegian students mentioned that in his opinion AAU is not promoted enough in Norway. He believes that promotional activities of AAU may increase amount of students from this country. (1)

6. Discussion

In this study, authors get better understanding about internationalization activities of Aalborg University. AAU has a strong and well-developed international network all around the world, however, in order to stay academically relevant and keep the brand of university there is a strong demand of continuing establishing new partnerships.

As one of the future goals AAU can have is to establish the partnership agreement, later joint venture agreement or even campus abroad in one of the countries such as Singapore, The United Arab Emirates, Qatar. The reason behind it is that it is beneficial for both sides. AAU wants to

strengthen its academic network and spread the academic word on global level, while Singapore, Arab Emirates and Qatar are highly interested in importing scholars and students from foreign countries. In addition, these countries are willing to invest not just in programs that will be opened in their countries but also to home-campuses of imported universities.

Nevertheless, while having large amount of different internationalization activities, as for example Aalborg University does, it is crucial to allocate time and financial resources effectively. Otherwise, in case, if allocation will be not very accurate, that can have negative effect on AAU main campus and overall brand of university.

While seeking to attract large number of foreign students, it is always crucial to take into consideration national dominance of one particular nation over others. Firstly, that can have negative effect on richness of international study environment (since it will turn into one pre-dominant culture) and also it will reduce effectiveness of cross-cultural learning. It is recommended not to have more than 10% of any nation, apart from the cases when it is the nation of the country where university is located. However, it is also important to find a right proportion between international students and local students.

It is important to remember not to lose focus from problems that are happening on the main campus, while seeking to improve international relationships all over the world. There are several factors that are influencing students while forming their opinion about experience they had on campus. In case, if students are facing too many issues and they have not been solved for a period of time, which can negatively affect word-of-mouth channel. Meaning, that if university is ready to solve the problems of students on their own campus, that will also benefit the reputation of university.

The problems of students differ from person to person; however, some of them were repeated by different people. One of the biggest concerns from students is that the studies are not up-to –date. That can be easily solved by providing fresh cases for the group-projects. Lack of practicality of the studies is another issue. That can be tried to improve by few steps:

- (i) more projects on latest case studies;
- (ii) providing students with possibility to have elective classes, that might help to reduce the knowledge gap between students due to the fact that during bachelors not everybody had the same subjects;

- (iii) to have classes where students can actually simulate real-job atmosphere, for example, to have more debates, where two groups of the students will be representing different departments of the company or even different companies;
- (iv) to change the requirements for the project, that will help projects to become less theoretical and more practical;
- (v) to have more guest-lecturers where the guest is a successful businessman, then they can tell about their own story of success.

Even though Aalborg University has a large circle of international partners, however, international students still experience certain amount of complications while trying to find an Internship/job in Denmark. The situation can be improved if AAU would have more business contacts with a companies that a willing to have international students in their working environment.

7. Conclusion

The main goal of this paper is to answer the research questions that were formulated in the beginning of the project.

1. *What is current AAU recruitment strategy?*

After speaking with staff from AAU it was identified that current recruitment does not exist, therefore should be developed.

However, there are several models of internationalization reach, which AAU is currently applying. That attracts students to Aalborg University. These models are: import model, export model, the academic-joint venture model, the partnership model.

There are several agencies, that are mostly popular in Eastern Europe, through which potential student get to know about Aalborg University. Some of these students eventually enroll into the university.

2. *What is the decision-making process of students in regards to higher education?*

The decision making model from marketing can be adopted – the 7 steps decision-making process. However, it is crucial to remember about the bounded rationality. Meaning it can be assumed, that decision-making process of prospect student in regard of choosing higher education institution is not completely rational.

3. *What are the factors influencing on students' decisions?*

It can be said that different factors affect different students in different ways. However, the influencing factors can be grouped as following:

- Academic factors (quality of program, reputation of university, teaching style, etc.);
- Financial factors (cost of living, tuition fee, etc.);
- Cultural factors (size of the city, size of the university, social life, etc.);
- Personal factors (influence from parents, opinion from friends/partner, athletic programs, etc.)

Internationalization - the case of recruitment strategy of AAU

The authors of the project believe that different types of internationalization activities is an effective strategy of recruitment international students or Danes who are seeking international education within home-country. By expanding its' global academic network, AAU opens new possibility for recruitment.

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9. Appendix

Appendix A

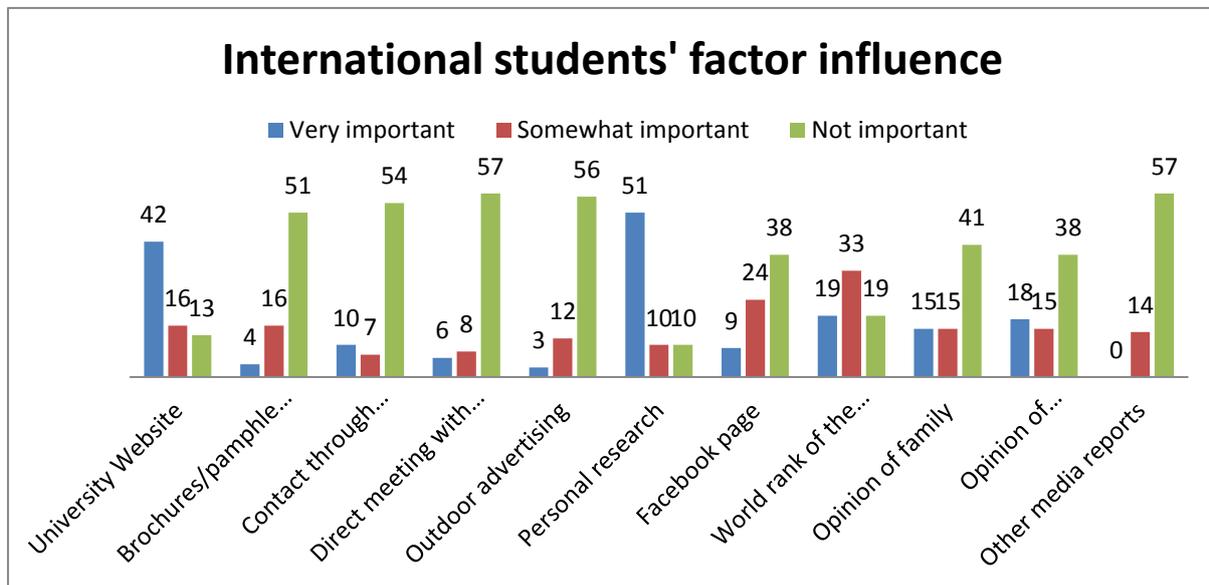


Figure 15 Factors influencing internationals (Source: own)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Total
University Website	42	16	13	71
Brochures/pamphlets	4	16	51	71
Contact through agencies	10	7	54	71
Direct meeting with AAU representative on the campus	6	8	57	71
Outdoor advertising	3	12	56	71
Personal research	51	10	10	71
Facebook page	9	24	38	71
World rank of the university	19	33	19	71
Opinion of family	15	15	41	71
Opinion of friends/partner	18	15	38	71
Other media reports	0	14	57	71

Table 18 Factors influencing internationals (Source: own)

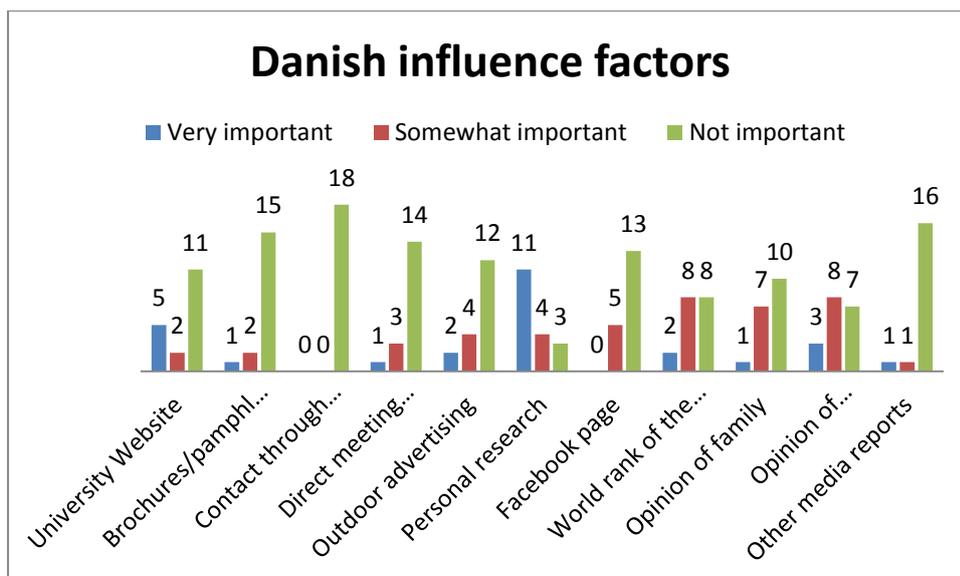


Figure 16 Factors influencing Danes (Source: own)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Total
University Website	5	2	11	18
Brochures/pamphlets	1	2	15	18
Contact through agencies	0	0	18	18
Direct meeting with AAU representative on the campus	1	3	14	18
Outdoor advertising	2	4	12	18
Personal research	11	4	3	18
Facebook page	0	5	13	18
World rank of the university	2	8	8	18
Opinion of family	1	7	10	18
Opinion of friends/partner	3	8	7	18
Other media reports	1	1	16	18

Table 19 Factors influencing Danes (Source: own)

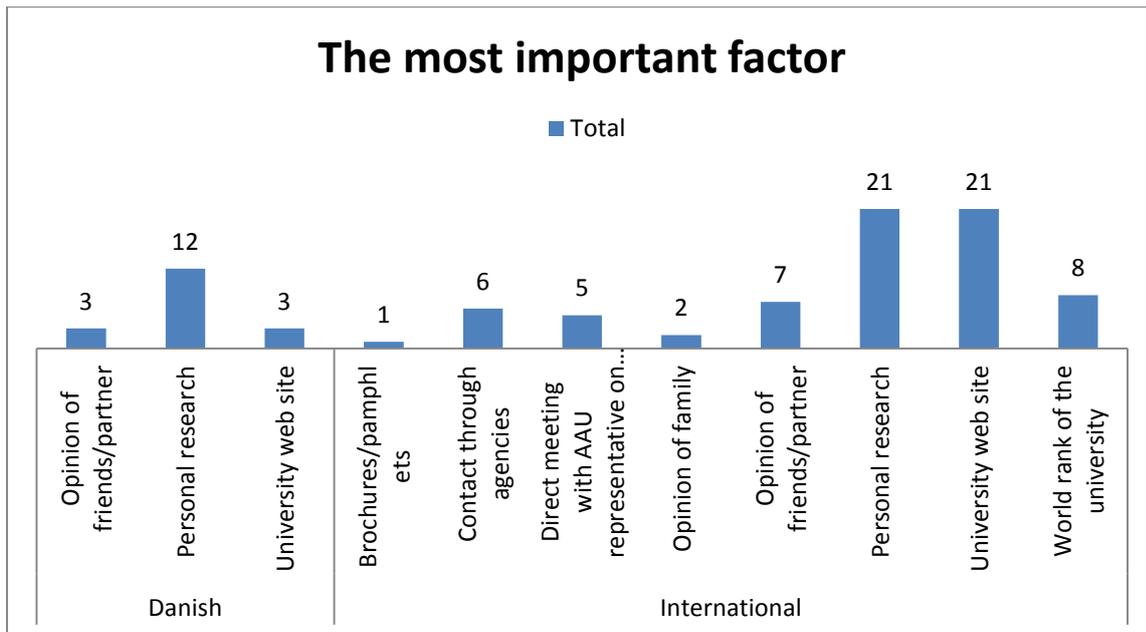


Figure 17 The most important factor (Source: own)

Appendix B



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

This survey is being completed by fourth semester master degree students of International Business and International Marketing programs of AAU. The goal of this survey is to improve current recruitment strategy of AAU. All the responses are confidential.

Question 1: What are the important reasons in regard of attending university?

- (2) To increase personal knowledge in the specific academic field
- (3) To prepare for a specific job/career
- (4) To get good general education
- (5) To become more competitive in the labour market
- (7) To meet expectations of parents
- (6) To meet new people
- (8) Others, please specify _____

Question 2: From Question 1 what is the most important reason in regard to your decision to attend master program

- (2) To increase personal knowledge in the specific academic field
- (3) To prepare for a specific job/career
- (4) To get good general education
- (5) To become more competitive in the labour market
- (7) To meet expectations of parents
- (6) To meet new people
- (8) Others, please specify _____

Question 3: Did you apply for admission to more than one university?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Question 4: How many did you apply to?

Question 5: Please, specify the countries where you applied to

Question 6: Is the university you are currently attending your first choice?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

Question 7: Please, specify the university, which was your first choice?

Question 8: What were the reasons of applying to that university?

- (1) More attractive study program
- (2) Better preparation for specific job/career
- (3) More attractive country
- (4) More attractive city
- (5) Better brand of university
- (6) Cost of living
- (7) To meet expectations of parents
- (8) My friends/partner were/was studying there
- (9) Other, please specify _____

Question 9: How important are the following reasons in regard to your decision to attend AAU?

Not important	Somewhat important	Very important	Neutral
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	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important	Neutral
Tuition fee	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
World rank of the university	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of living	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Problem Based Learning	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Group work	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of academic programs	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Program related to specific job/career	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Reputation of university	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Influence from parents	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Influence from friends/partner	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Other family member/relative is/was studying there	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Friends/partner are/were studying	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Advice from counselor/teacher	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for international study/work abroad	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Size of university	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Size of the city	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Social life	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Possibility for on-campus residence accommodations	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Short distance to home	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important	Neutral
Long distance from home	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Athletic/varsity sports	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>

Question 10: From Question 9, what is the most important reason in regard to your decision to attend AAU

- (1) Tuition fee
- (2) World rank of the university
- (3) Cost of living
- (4) Problem Based Learning
- (5) Group work
- (6) Quality of academic programs
- (7) Program related to specific job/career
- (8) Reputation of university
- (9) Influence from parents
- (10) Influence from friends/partner
- (11) Other family member/relative is/was studying
- (12) Friends/partner are/were studying
- (13) Advice from counselor/teacher
- (14) Opportunities for international study/work abroad
- (15) Size of university
- (16) Size of the city
- (17) Social life
- (18) Possibility for on-campus residence accommodations
- (19) Short distance to home
- (20) Long distance from home
- (21) Athletic/varsity sports

Question 11: How important were the following in regard of your decision to attend AAU?

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important	Neutral
University web site	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Brochures/pamphlets	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact through agencies	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Direct meeting with AAU representative on the campus	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor advertising	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Personal research	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Facebook page	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
World rank of the university	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Opinion of family	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Opinion of friends/partner	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>
Other media reports	(1) <input type="checkbox"/>	(2) <input type="checkbox"/>	(3) <input type="checkbox"/>	(4) <input type="checkbox"/>

Question 12: From Question 11 what is the most influencing factor in regard of your decision to attend AAU

- (1) University web site
- (2) Brochures/pamphlets
- (3) Contact through agencies
- (4) Direct meeting with AAU representative on the campus
- (5) Outdoor advertising
- (6) Personal research
- (7) Facebook page
- (8) World rank of the university
- (9) Opinion of family

- (10) Opinion of friends/partner
- (11) Other media reports

Question 13: How satisfied are you in regard of the way AAU handled your admission application?

- (1) Very dissatisfied
- (2) Dissatisfied
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Satisfied
- (5) Very satisfied

Question 14: How satisfied are you with the variety of programs offered by AAU?

- (1) Very dissatisfied
- (2) Dissatisfied
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Satisfied
- (5) Very satisfied

Question 15: What other programs would you like to see at AAU?

- (1) Finance
- (2) Management Accounting and Control
- (3) Management
- (4) Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- (5) Strategy, Organisation and Leadership
- (6) Statistics and Economics
- (7) Business Intelligence
- (8) Others (please specify) _____
- (9) None

Question 16: What would you do different if you could go back when choosing university?

Question 17: Will you recommend AAU to others?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No
- (3) Maybe

Question 18: Why?

Question 19: Why not?

Question 20: Can you give some recommendation to AAU for improvement?

Question 21: What is your gender?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female

Question 22: What is your age?

- (1) 18-22
- (2) 23-26
- (3) 27-35
- (4) 36 or older

Question 23: What is your nationality?

Question 24: How do you see yourself when taking decisions: rational (based on logic) or irrational (based on feelings, emotions)

- (1) Very Rational
- (6) Rational
- (3) In the middle
- (4) Irrational
- (5) Very irrational

Question 25: In which country did you complete your bachelor degree?

Thank you for your time!



