

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING, NON  
MARKETING AND DEMOGRAPHIC  
FACTORS ON PRE-PURCHASE STAGE OF  
CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS  
FOR PRIVATE COLLEGE IN MALAYSIA**

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## ABSTRACT

Studies on the pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process have been done in isolation by establishing the association between selected external (marketing mix and non marketing), individual factors (demographics) and consumer decision making process. The highly competitive state coupled with numerous challenges faced by private colleges has propelled this decision to ascertain comprehensively the influences of these external and individual factors on the pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process. The objective of this study is to determine consumer's perceived influence of the marketing mix strategies, non marketing factors and demographics on their pre-purchase process for private colleges.

The importance of marketing mix, non marketing factors and demographics in influencing consumer's pre-purchase stage of decision making has been well supported by literature. Eight marketing mix strategies for private colleges are service product, pricing, placing, promotion, people, process, physical evidence and service performance outcome. Non marketing factors included social class, family and reference group. Four demographic factors included are gender, age, economic situation and ethnicity. Pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process encompassed problem recognition, perceived risk, information search and evaluation of choice alternatives. The theoretical framework of this study treated the marketing, non marketing and demographics as independent variables and pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process as dependent variable.

The study hypothesized that there were independent relationships between marketing mix, non marketing factors, demographics and pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process. It was also hypothesized that there were integrated relationships among marketing mix, non marketing factors, demographics and pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process. This study expanded knowledge on the relationship between marketing mix, non marketing factors and pre-purchase process by relating them to demographics. The five hypotheses advanced were supported.

A total of 120 multi-disciplined private colleges listed in Wencom Higher Education Guide were taken as samples for this study. The drop-off and mail survey methods employed to solicit the needed responses yielded a response rate of 62%. Correlation, multiple regression, bivariate and multivariate cross-tabulation were used for data analysis. The SPSS program was used to test for reliability of the instrument and normality of distribution. Content validity too was performed on the instrument. The findings showed that people, physical evidence and performance outcome are the marketing mix perceived to be most important in influencing the pre-purchase process. Reference group was the most important non marketing factor displaying a similar relationship. Ethnicity was the only demographics associated with elements of the pre-purchase stage of consumer decision making process.

Overall this study supports the notion that marketing mix strategies, non marketing factors and demographics do influence consumer's pre-purchase stage of decision making process as depicted by Lancaster and Massingham (2001), Schiffman and Kanuk (1990, 2000) and Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995).

## ABSTRAK

Tesis ini melaporkan penyelidikan tentang hubungan di antara pembolehubah strategi pemasaran, faktor bukan pemasaran dan demografik dengan peringkat pra pembelian keputusan pembelian pengguna untuk kolej-kolej swasta di Malaysia. Suasana industri yang begitu kompetitif dengan pelbagai cabaran yang dihadapi oleh kolej swasta telah mempengaruhi keputusan penyelidik untuk mendalami pemahaman tentang apakah faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian pengguna diperingkat pra-pembelian bagi kolej swasta. Penyelidikan yang dijalankan sebelum ini banyak memberi penumpuan pada peringkat selepas pembelian (post purchase). Disamping itu penyelidikan yang menyentuh peringkat pra pembelian hanya tertumpu pada isu-isu pemasaran dan sosial yang khusus sahaja dan tidak menyeluruh. Lima hipotesis telah diuji kaji dengan data yang diperolehi dari 808 responden yang berdaftar di 72 kolej swasta.

Strategi pemasaran yang bertindak sebagai pembolehubah bebas merangkumi, perkhidmatan produk, harga, pengedaran, promosi, kakitangan, proses, bukti fizikal, dan prestasi perkhidmatan. Tiga faktor bukan pemasaran termasuklah kelas sosial, keluarga dan kumpulan referens. Faktor demografik utama terdiri daripada jantina, umur, keadaan ekonomik dan etnik. Peringkat pra pembelian pengguna terdiri dari empat elemen utama iaitu pengenalan permasalahan, persepsi risiko, pengumpulan maklumat dan penilaian alternatif yang juga adalah pembolehubah bersandar.

Kajian ini telah mendapat bukti bahawa secara amnya kakitangan, bukti fizikal dan prestasi perkhidmatan adalah strategi pemasaran yang mempunyai hubungan keertian dengan semua elemen diperingkat pra pembelian. Kumpulan referens pula adalah antara faktor bukan pemasaran yang mempunyai hubungan keertian dengan peringkat pra pembelian. Akhir sekali faktor etnik didapati mempunyai hubungan keertian dengan peringkat pra pembelian.

Pada keseluruhannya kajian ini menyokong pernyataan yang mengatakan strategi pemasaran, faktor bukan pemasaran dan demografik ada mempengaruhi elemen-elemen di peringkat pra pembelian keputusan pembelian pengguna, seperti yang disarankan oleh Lancaster dan Massingham (2001), Schiffman dan Kanuk (1990, 2000) dan Engel Blackwell dan Miniard (1995).

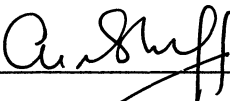
## CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non - academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

In the event that my thesis be found to violate the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree to be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.

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