

Factors affecting Choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Thailand

Niramon Akkarasrisawad and Krit Witthawassamrankul, Ph.D.

Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Kasem Bundit University, Thailand

Abstract: *The research aims to study the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management (International Program), Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Thailand. The researcher applied purposive sampling and selected the 63 international students as the samples. In order to develop the conceptual framework and construct the questionnaire, the researcher did focus group and studied theories and concepts and literature reviews.*

In the beginning, the researcher did focus group with the 8 students from different nationalities to find the major factors affecting choosing the bachelor degree. The 5 major factors from focus group are personal needs, demand of the labor market, quality of the instructors, location, equipment and facilities, others, i.e. payment & credit and advertising. In addition, theories and concepts such as internal and external factors of decision making and consumer behavior with related literatures were studied. The constructed questionnaire divided into 3 parts as demographic information, the factors affecting choosing the bachelor degree and other comment.

The result showed that the highest factors affecting choosing the bachelor degree was that the students would like to improve English proficiency for aviation (Mean = 4.65), lecturers have enough experience in the field of study (Mean = 4.45), the institute has good environment (Mean = 4.40), the students would like to work in aviation industry (Mean = 4.35). The students informed that they chose the program since the program is very niche. They preferred cultural diversities and would like to have an airline job in emerging and developing countries.

Keywords: *Aviation, Bachelor, International Students, Choose*

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Aviation Industry Management grows rapidly in Thailand and the globe due to an increase of low cost airline travelling from middle income earners of emerging economies [1] and international trade. Since the demand of airlines increases, there is a need to produce more and more qualified personnel to serve the airline and aviation industry. Pilots, flight attendants and supporting staffs were needed more in the industry. Therefore, the higher education institutes in Thailand have started to launch the Aviation Management Programs in order to supply the labors (qualified workers) for the industry.

The Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management (A.I.M.), Aviation Personnel Development Institute is a course for international students aimed to produce qualified graduates to fulfill the demand of aviation industry growth in Thailand and the globe. The revised course of the new curriculum 2016 consists of 130 credits. The curriculum consists of the core business courses for aviation management and elective courses delivering the knowledge on specific area such as ground service, passenger service, aviation safety and security, total quality management in aviation industry [2][3]. In 2017, the 80 students, who have diverse backgrounds such as nationalities, races, religions, are studying the course. Therefore, the researcher

would like to study the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute.



Fig. 1. In-Flight Service Mockup



Fig. 2. Ground Service Mockup



Fig. 3. Aviation Training Center



Fig. 4. Students from Africa and China



Fig. 5. Students from Southeast Asia and South Asia

1.2. Research Objective

To study the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Thailand.

1.3. Significance of the Study

1. To develop the marketing plan in order to increase numbers of the study who enroll in this program.
2. To increase learning motivation of the students who chose this program.

1.4. Research Hypothesis

The international student demographic factors affect choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management.

1.5. Scope of the Study

1. Population and Sample

The population of the study is 84 students from the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management (International Program), Aviation Personnel Development Institute. However, the researcher applied purposive sampling in order to study the international students. Therefore, he distributed the questionnaires to 63 international students, but Thai students.

2. Content

The research aims to study the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management focusing personal needs, demands of the labor market, quality of instructors, location, equipment and facilities and others, i.e. payment & credit, advertising.

3. Area

The area of the study is Aviation Personnel Development Institute, 8th floor.

2. Developing Conceptual Framework

The researcher studied the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, using 63 international students in the program as the samples. Since the researcher did not know the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management for the international students and developed the tailored conceptual framework to the study, he did focus group to know the reasons why the international students selected the program.

In the beginning, the researcher invited the students from 8 different nationalities, as Chinese, Congolese, Filipino, Cambodian, Nigerian, Somali, Nepali and Japanese to do focus group by using the question “What are the factors choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Thailand?” and reviewed the theories and related concepts and literature in order to develop the conceptual framework.

The step of doing the conceptual framework was shown in Figure 6 as below:

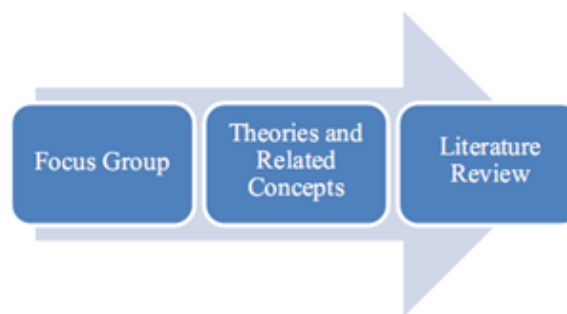


Fig.6. Developing Conceptual Framework.

3. Result of the Focus Group

The international students purposed the model of factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute, as personal needs, demand of the labor market, quality of the instructors, location, equipment and facilities, others, i.e. payment & credit and advertising. The students informed that they chose the program from personal needs such as personal interest, from demands of the labor market such as finding a job in Thailand, from quality of instructors such as preferred experienced instructors in the field of aviation industry, from location, equipment and facilities such as good transportation, and from others such as payment and credits for tuition fee. The result was used to develop the questionnaire (Figure 2).

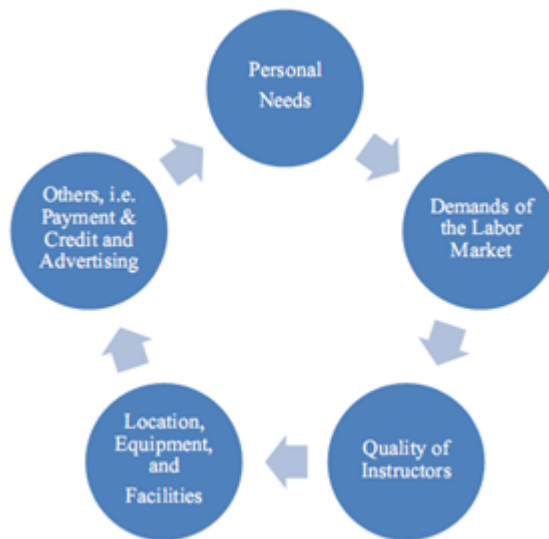


Fig. 7. Factors Affecting Choosing B.B.A. (AIM), APDI.

4. Theories and Related Concepts

Consumer decision making and behavior [4] explained that a person decides to buy a product or service based on both internal and external factors. There are 4 factors influencing consumer decision making and behavior as: Cultural: culture, subculture, social class; Social: reference group, family, roles & status, opinion leader; Personal: age & life cycle stage, occupation, economic status, lifestyle, personality and self-concept; Psychological: motivation, perception, learning, beliefs & attitude. In addition, marketing mixes, which consist of product, price, place, promotion and three service marketing mixes as physical evidence, people, and process are also the factors affecting choosing the decision making and purchasing behavior by marketers [5] (Figure 3).



Fig. 8. Factors Affecting Consumer Decision Making and Behavior.

In free economy, market mechanism is active and marketers apply marketing mixes in order to encourage the consumers to choose and decide to buy. Marketers use 4 marketing mixes for products and 7 marketing

mixes for service. Consumers have right to be informed in the free economy; therefore, they can choose based on rational decision making when having full information. The decision making model is below (Figure 4) [6][7].

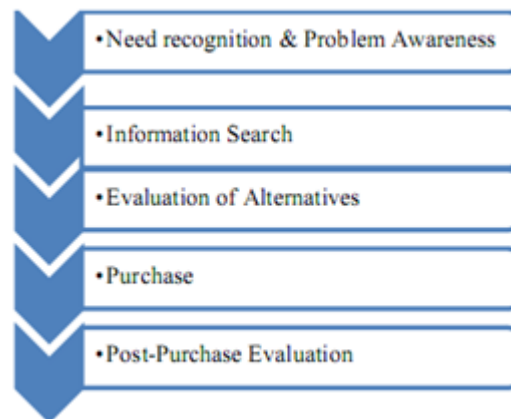


Fig. 9. Consumer Decision Making Model.

5. Literature Review

Researchers studied factors affecting choosing the bachelor degrees as:

The independent study on Factors Affected Overseas Students Decisions on Advanced Study in the International Graduate Program in Bangkok Metropolitan Region investigated the personal information, personal needs, and the factors affecting overseas students' decision on advanced study in the international undergraduate program, in Bangkok Metropolitan Region. Most respondents were males whose age more than 21 years old and resided in Asia. The respondents informed that they preferred to study in Thailand since they would like to have new friends and experiences. For marketing mixes, they considered the reputable universities that allow the transfer of credits and ask for fair tuition fees. The students preferred the courses that are modern and offer overseas trips or study tours. The security system and university website are also important [8].

The research on Motivating Factors Influencing College Students' Choice of Academic Major aimed to assess the factors, motivation and non-academic influences affecting the choice of major among pharmacy and non-pharmacy undergraduate students by using survey. The survey was administered to 618 pharmacy and non-pharmacy. The samples were freshmen and sophomores who enrolled in a required speech course. The result showed that Asian-Americans were more likely to choose pharmacy as major and to be interested in sciences and math than non-pharmacy students [9].

After doing focus group, studying theory and concepts and reviewing related literature, the researcher developed the conceptual framework. The independent variables consist of demographic information as gender, age, religion and permanent residence and the 5 major factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management as personal needs, demands of the labor market, quality of instructors, location, equipment and facilities, and other, i.e. payment & credit and advertising. The dependent variables is the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Thailand.

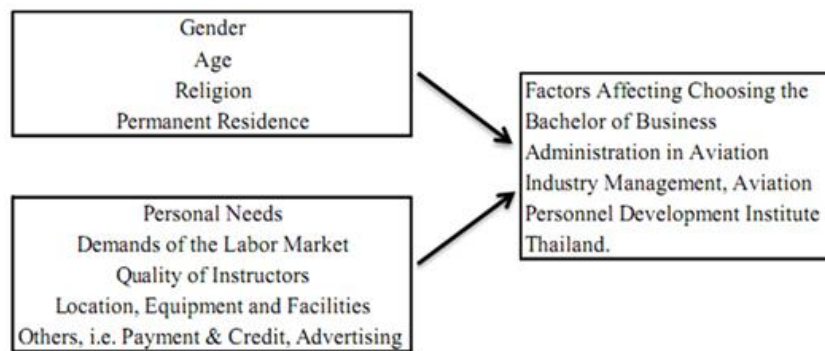


Fig. 10. Conceptual Research Framework

6. Research Methodology

6.1. Questionnaire

The quantitative research instrument is the questionnaire which was constructed based on conceptual framework. The questionnaire consisted of 3 parts as Part 1: Demographic Information of the respondents (4 multiple choice questions asking gender, age, religion and permanent residence) Part 2: Factors Affecting Choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management (20 multiple choice questions asking personal needs, demands of the labor market, quality of instructors, location, equipment and facilities and others, i.e. payment & credit, advertising) and Part 3: Other Comments (1 written part). In part 2, the questions provides 5 choices and the respondents have to tick only one answer in the box provided. The range of 5 choices (Likert's Scale) was calculated by using highest value minus lowest value over interval $[(5-1)/5 = 0.80]$ with the meaning as:

4.20- 5.00	Highest
3.40- 4.19	High
2.60- 3.39	Moderate
1.80- 2.59	Low
1.00- 1.79	Lowest

6.2. Reliability and Content Validity

After developing the questionnaire, the researcher asked 3 experts from the Business Administration to check content validity using IOC (Item-Objective-Congruence) and then adjusted the wording. The researcher checked the reliability of the adjusted questionnaire by tryout to the 30 students in a similar major. The questionnaire was reliable ($\alpha = 0.87$). Then, the researcher could distribute the questionnaires to the purposive samples/respondents (63 students from the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management).

6.3. Data Collection

The researcher collected the data in September, 2017 which was during final exam. Therefore, he could collect the current students' information at the institute.

6.4. Data Analysis

Analyzing the data from the completed questionnaires was divided into 3 parts as:

Part I: Demographic Information: Use descriptive statistics as frequency, percentage.

Part II: Factors Affecting Choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management: Use descriptive statistics as mean, standard deviation.

Part III: Other Comments: Use content analysis.

7. Result of the Study

The result divided into 3 parts: as 1) Frequency Table 2) Factors Affecting Choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration, and 3) Other Comments.

TABLE I: Result of Frequency Table

Demographics (n = 63)	Frequency	Percentage	Remarks
1.Gender			
Male	46	73.01	
Female	17	26.98	
2.Age			
Less than 19 Years Old	6	9.52	
19-22 Years Old	44	69.84	
23-25 Years Old	8	12.69	
More than 25 Years Old	5	7.94	
3.Religion			
Buddhism	22	34.92	
Islam	7	11.11	
Christianity	22	34.92	
Hinduism	8	12.69	
Others	4	6.35	Atheism, Confucianism, Animism
4.Permanent Residence			
Southeast Asia	6	9.52	the Philippines, Cambodia
South Asia	8	12.69	Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan
Africa	30	47.62	Congo, Nigeria, Somalia, Ethiopia, Guinea, Djibouti
China	17	26.98	Kunming, Yunnan
Others	2	3.14	Japan, Nicaragua

From the study, males (46) were more than females (17), the highest age frequency was about 19-22 years old (44 students or 69.84%). There were 2 equally high frequency for religions as Buddhism (34.92%) and Islam (34.92%). The highest permanent residence was from Africa (30 students or 47.62%). The second was from China (17 students or 26.98%).

TABLE II: Factors Affecting Choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Thailand.

Question	Mean	S.D.	Meaning
1.The program meets demand of the labor market.	4.20	0.6156	Highest
2.The course taught are modern for today economy.	4.25	0.7164	Highest
3.Tuition fee is reasonable.	4.25	0.7164	Highest
4.Credit and payment condition is acceptable.	3.85	1.2260	High
5.Information from brochure, website and letter are persuasive.	3.80	1.0563	High
6.International study agency convinces the application.	4.05	0.8870	High
7.The institute location has convenient transportation.	3.75	1.1642	High
8.The facilities in campus are ready-to-use.	4.15	0.7452	High
9.The institute has good environment.	4.40	0.7540	Highest
10.Instructors have enough experience in the field of study.	4.45	0.5104	Highest
11.Instructors possess strong academic knowledge.	4.30	0.6570	Highest
12.Instructors graduated from a reputable university.	4.30	0.5712	Highest
13.The institute provides good equipment for studying.	4.10	0.6407	High
14.The institute has modern technology and innovation.	4.00	0.9177	High
15.To graduate from the program helps me getting a job.	4.10	0.9680	High
16.I would like to make friends from different cultures.	4.25	0.5501	Highest
17.I would like to learn Thai culture.	4.00	1.2140	High
18.I would like to find a job in Thailand.	4.00	1.0760	High
19.I would like to work in aviation industry.	4.35	0.8751	Highest
20.I would like to improve my English proficiency for aviation.	4.65	0.4894	Highest

The highest factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute was that the students would like to improve English proficiency for aviation (Mean = 4.65), lecturers have enough experience in the field of study (Mean = 4.45), the institute has good environment (Mean = 4.40), the students would like to work in aviation industry (Mean = 4.35), lecturers possess strong academic knowledge (Mean = 4.30) and lecturers graduated from a reputable universities (Mean = 4.30), and the students would like to make friends from different cultures (Mean = 4.25). Therefore, this can conclude that reasons of choosing the program were from intention to improve English proficiency and working in the aviation industry, quality of lecturers based on experiences, knowledge and university graduation. In addition, the environment of the institute and the friends from the institute were also the factors in choosing this program.

7.1. Other Comments (Written Part)

The answer written in the questionnaire showed that there were 3 major reasons why students chose the program in this institute as: 1) the program is niche and it is difficult to find this program in Thailand. Therefore, the students preferred to choose the well-known institute with the long-term establishment with the qualified instructors and ready-to-use equipment for the study, 2) the institute opens for diversities of the students in terms of nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds and 3) studying the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management is practical and advantageous to the students, who come from the emerging and developing countries. The students can apply the knowledge and skills from the program in their home countries, especially in tourism and transportation. The students expect that they can find jobs in an airline industry in Thailand.

8. Conclusion and Discussion

Overall, the factors affecting choosing the Bachelor of Business Administration in Aviation Industry Management, Aviation Personnel Development Institute came from personal needs, quality of instructors and location, equipment and facilities, rather than marketing mixes such as price and promotion. Other factors are niche program, cultural diversities and opportunities to get an airline job in emerging and developing countries.

9. Recommendation of the Study

Based on the study, it found that quality of instructors and location, equipment and facilities are very important in choosing the program. The institute should increase the quality of instructors by finding the instructors who have experiences, strong academic knowledge and graduated from reputable universities. The equipment and facilities in the institute need to be modernized and ready-to-use at all time since the students expect more on them, rather than developing pricing and promotional strategies, which do not attract the international students significantly.

10. Acknowledgment

Niramon Akkarasrisawad and Krit Witthawassamrankul, Ph.D. thank Senee Suwandee, Ph.D., Vice President of KBU and Meta Ketkaew, Ph.D., Director of APDI for their encouragement and financial support in this research.

11. References

- [1] AFP, "Low-Cost Airlines Drive Growth. Available: <http://www.ttrweekly.com/site/2017/01/low-cost-airlines-drive-growth/>
- [2] <http://apdi.kbu.ac.th>, 2017.
- [3] Aviation Personnel Development Institute, Self-Assessment Report, 2016.
- [4] P. Kotler and G. Armstrong, "Marketing Management," 11th ed. London: Pearson Education, 2014.

- [5] C. Lovelock, "Service marketing: people, technology, strategy, 7th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2014.
- [6] M.Solomon, "Consumer Behavior," Global Edition. London: Pearson Education, 2014.
- [7] P. Kotler and G. Armstrong, "Principles of Marketing," 14th ed. London: Pearson Education, 2012.
- [8] T. Prachararoenpong, "Factors affected overseas students decisions on advanced study in the international graduate program in Bangkok Metropolitan Region," Thesis, Graduate Business School, Marketing, Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi, Bangkok, Thailand, 2011.
- [9] F. Keshishian, J. Brocovich, T. Boone and S. Pal, "Motivating Factors Influencing College Students' Choice of Academic Major. American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education," American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education. American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, 74(3), 46, April. 2011.