



**FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS ON THE SELECTION
FOR OVERSEAS STUDY
AT ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY, THAILAND**

BY

MISS HATAICHANOK YIMPENSOOK

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH FOR CAREERS
LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2014
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ENTITLED

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was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts in English for Careers

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate factors influencing international students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University, Bangna Campus, Thailand (AU, formerly known as ABAC). Push and pull factors were used to explore the relationship between the influencing factors of the decision making process and satisfaction of international students toward overall images of institution. A total of 50 self-administered questionnaires were distributed using convenience sampling during March – April 2015. The results showed that the most important factors influencing international students' destination choice are recommendation of friends and family, transportation, safety, and cost and tuition fees. The least important factor is the course reputation. It was also found that the highest level of satisfaction goes to the instructors having good knowledge and skills, followed by the pleasant instructors' teaching style and supportive staff members, while the lowest level of satisfaction is the easy access to the university. Moreover, 100% of them said they would recommend their acquaintances to study at AU.

Keywords: international students, overseas study, destination choice, push and pull factors

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Miss Hataichanok Yimpensook

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Student's mobility and academics across borders has become a large business in recent years, and authorities in receiving countries have become increasingly efficient in tracking and reporting the data surrounding their education-export industries.

Meanwhile, studying abroad is a good experience to help students become globalized citizens. Overseas students are among the biggest group of international students in higher education studying outside their home country.

Thailand is one of the most attractive countries for international students. Overseas students are an important part of the higher education at university level. There were estimated to be about 120,000 international students each year, making up about 20% of the market in Thailand. Assumption University (AU, formerly known as ABAC) is a very famous international university of Thailand, and it is the most popular choice for international students around the world. The following information is emphasized in Admission Assumption University, (2015).

“Assumption University was initially originated from Assumption Commercial College in 1969 as an autonomous higher education institution under the name of Assumption School of Business”.

“In 1972, with the approval of the Ministry of Education, it was officially established as Assumption Business Administration College or ABAC and it was granted a new status as Assumption University by the Ministry of University Affairs in 1990” (www.admissions.au.edu).

“The University is a non-profit institution administered by the Brothers of St. Gabriel, a worldwide Catholic religious order, founded in France in 1705 by St.

Louis Marie De Montfort, devoted to education and philanthropic activities. The congregation has been operating many educational institutions in Thailand since 1901”.

“Assumption University is an international community of scholars, enlivened by Christian inspiration, engaged in the pursuit of truth and knowledge, serving the human society, especially through the creative use of interdisciplinary approaches and cyber technology”.

“There has been providing education to the youth of the Thai and other nations since 1969. The University employs English as the official medium of instruction and has formal links and cooperation agreements with a large network of international institutions of higher learning for scholastic exchange and research programs”.

The Congregation operates many educational institutions in Thailand such as

the Association of Christian Universities and Colleges in Asia (ACUCA), the Association of Southeast Asian Institution of Higher Learning (ASAIHL) and the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU).

This University has a student body of about 19,870 including

a fairly large complement of foreign students drawn from 75 countries of the world, contributing to 25% of the whole. It also has a high capability faculty, a truly international community of scholars and professionals representing diverse academic disciplines and different fields of business. These arrangements help considerably in bringing students into close touch with pragmatic aspects of life.

AU is *“recognized in the U.S.A. and other countries and transfer of credits from the University is accepted by many foreign universities”* (www.admissions.au.edu) such as Assumption University - Wollongong (Australia), Assumption University - Beijing Language and Culture University BLCU (China), Assumption University - Rajagiri (India) and Assumption University - University

California Davis UCD (United States). ABAC graduates can pursue advanced degrees anywhere in the world.

According to globalization, there has been an increasing globalization in the sector of higher education. The globalization of higher education can be seen from the large flow of students studying abroad and the increasing number of colleges and universities providing educational services across borders. In order to catch the growing trend, Assumption University also provides valuable education and services in many different faculties as an alternative for international students.

This study, using Push and Pull Model, attempts to determine the main factors influencing international students on the selection for overseas study in higher learning institutions in Thailand. Many factors proposed in this study such as the suitability of environmental factors and recommendations of friends and family were components of country characteristics as a pull factor. On the other hand, the high cost of education, the quality of the degree (content and structure), physical facilities and the quality of provided resources, along with the value of education appear as a push factor, but will vary depending on the country or region of origin.

A study related to international students from more than 82 countries with 2,085 people determined the classification of the top 20 countries. The total number and percentage of international students who studied for a Bachelor's degree at Assumption University are shown as the details below.

Table 1.1 Classifications of Assumption International Students on the Top of 20 Nationalities Representation in 2/2014

No.	Nationality	Bachelor's Degree			Percentage
		F	M	Total	%
1	Chinese	390	395	785	37.65
2	South Korean	80	108	188	9.02
3	Myanmar	79	95	174	8.35
4	Bhutanese	59	54	113	5.42

5	Vietnamese	35	50	85	4.08
6	Nepalese	30	43	73	3.50
7	Cambodian	15	51	66	3.17
8	Taiwanese	33	32	65	3.12
9	Bangladeshi	17	44	61	2.93
10	Timorese	18	41	59	2.83
11	Indian	19	32	51	2.45
12	Laotian	20	15	35	1.68
13	Russian	16	16	32	1.53
14	American	8	17	25	1.20
15	Japanese	11	14	25	1.20
16	Korean (DPR)	9	12	21	1.01
17	Filipino	14	4	18	0.86
18	Nigerian	9	6	15	0.72
19	Zimbabwean	10	4	14	0.67
20	Iranian	2	11	13	0.62
	Other countries	60	107	167	8.01
	Total	934	1,151	2,085	100%

Assumption University – International Students Database 2014

With a total of 2,085 students from more than 82 countries, the classification method for this study will focus on international students who studied for a Bachelor's degree at Assumption University. These students can be grouped into four regions to show the total number and percentage in each group.

Table 1.2 International Students Clarify into Six Continents Representation in 2/2014

No.	Region	Bachelor's Degree			Percentage %
		F	M	Total	
1	Asia (AS)	853	1,027	1,880	90.17%
2	Africa (AF)	32	24	56	2.69%
3	Europe (EU)	31	61	92	4.41%
4	America (USA)	11	18	29	1.39%
5	Middle East (ME)	4	17	21	1.00%
6	Other (OT)	3	4	7	0.34%
	Total	934	1,151	2,085	100%

Assumption University – International Students Database 2014

Why do they choose AU?

With high competitiveness around the world to be the first choice of targeted customers, I would like to know the factor influencing international students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University towards the courses provided. It is important to know target customers' background for purposes of the push factor and I also need to find out their attitudes and expectations towards the courses in order to correctly service their needs for the pull factor.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To investigate the factors that influence international students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University, The study aims to answer the following questions:

- 1.2.1 What factors influence international students' decision on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University?
- 1.2.2 How satisfied are international students towards the overall image of education at Assumption University?

1.3 OBJECTIVES AND THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study has the objectives as follow:

- 1.3.1 To investigate major factors that influence international students' decision on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University.
- 1.3.2 To survey the satisfaction level of international students towards overall image of education at Assumption University.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the underlying factors for international students' destination choice as well as to explain the relationship between the influencing factors and decision making process of international students. Meanwhile, push and pull factors were used to explain the motivation supporting students' choice of study destination. A total of 50 self-administered questionnaires were distributed using convenience sampling at Assumption University, Bangna Campus in Samutprakran Province from March to April 2015.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **International student** is defined as foreign students from several countries who are enrolled for credit at an accredited higher education institution in Assumption University, Thailand.
- **Overseas study** is defined as the study in which foreign students would like to attend college or university outside their home country especially in Assumption University, Thailand and receive a certificate toward their major.
- **Higher Education** is defined as studying further than the senior high school level, which is education provided by college or university.
- **Decision-making** is defined as the process of thinking and settling results in the selection of something possibilities. Decision-making involves a final choice included the study of a particular course and choosing a university based on the values and preferences of the students.
- **Globalization** is defined as the advance of higher education for the purpose of becoming universal and worldwide.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on Assumption University students in bachelor's degree programs. This study is limited to international students in any fields, age and sex at Bangna Campus in Samutprakran Province. The data collection occurred from March 2015 to April 2015.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study has several aspects as follows:

1.6.1 To investigate the major factors that influence international undergraduate students' decision making for selecting overseas study destination at Assumption University which will benefit the university to understand the students' satisfaction towards the required courses and their overall impression of university. It will also allow the university to adjust the required courses to be more practical and

suit the students' requirements so as to improve the students' skills which can be used in real life and their careers.

1.6.2 To survey what are the satisfactions of international students towards required courses and overall of university. The findings will help the institute to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the overall image of education and may lead to a redesign of syllabus or improve the management of higher education and services.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study of factors influencing international students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the general background of the study, objective of the study, definitions of terms, scope of the study, and significance of the study. Chapter two focuses on review of literatures, related theories, concepts and relevant studies. Chapter three consists of the methodology of the study, subjects, materials, procedures and data analysis. In chapter four the results of the survey are analyzed and interpreted. Finally, the last chapter will provide a summary of the study, a summary of findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The key concepts reviewed in this chapter concern the relevant research of factors influencing International students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University.

2.1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

There are two main factors that determine this study. The Push and Pull factors are a major factor which either approaches people or forcefully pushes them in order to move from one country to another. A push factor is a motivation factor which drives people to move from their home country because they might have some problem there and would like to meet something new and challenges to improve their life. The opposite side, a pull factor, is something concerning the place which can attract people to migrate to that country. It can be thought of as benefits that persuade people to a certain place.

A push factor is condition that motivates one to leave and force people away from a place. On the other hand, a pull factor is what draws them to a new location or attracts people to go and live in a particular place. The key different types between Push and Pull factors are shown below.

Table 2.1 Different types of “push” and “pull” factors (Lawley, 1998).

Push Factors (-)	Pull Factors (+)
1. Facilities and resources	1. Personal reason
2. Cost of education and degree	2. Knowledge and awareness of the host country
3. Recommendation of friend and family	3. Environment factors (geographic/climate)
4. Political	4. Recommendation and social link
5. Religious persecution	5. Job opportunity
6. Poverty	

7. Natural disasters	6. Country image
8. Pollution	7. Institution image
9. Lack of improving education in country	8. Value of education

2.2 PUSH AND PULL FACTORS AFFECTING DECISION MAKING

Tantivorakulchai (2013) examined “Push and Pull” factors affecting decision making when choosing higher education. The study of higher education is considered very intangible, which causes prospective students to experience high risk when making decisions. One of the reasons is that higher education is a high involvement initiative. There are many factors that can affect the decision making process. It has been found that many researchers have divided the macro environmental influences into push and pull factors. Push factors are those factors that arise from the home country that can initiate student decisions to engage in international study. On the other hand, Pull factors are those factors from the host country that attract students to select a particular destination (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

Much of the research in the past decade on push and pull factors has been conducted in Asian and African countries. The reason is that the number of students from these countries has made the greatest contribution in the Higher Education (HE) industry (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). The linkages between the host and home factors play an important role in the international education field. It has been said that both push and pull factors are factors that involve economic, political and educational opportunities in the home compared to the host country.

In this research, the objective is to conduct a study on student choice of international education that is non-retrospective. Therefore, the respondent’s intention is measured by “the likelihood of choosing a country destination” in this study. Few complete models have been proposed in this area of study. One such model in the area of choice of destination for international education was proposed by Lawley (1998) who identified ‘intention’ as a dependent variable. The most significant factors that can

influence a student's intention are the country and course characteristics factor and alternative evaluation.

Moreover, personal factors from the study outside their home country (Push factors) is refer to some courses might not available in their home country. One of the reasons was found to be the lack of development in the domestic education structure (Cumming, 1984; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). This may be due to a lack of resources in home country.

Meanwhile, the factors influencing the choice of host country (Pull factors) have a positive correlation between the country characteristics and the student's intention to choose their study destination (Cubillo, Sanchez, & Cervino, 2006). This construct is composed of five factors which are: the importance of knowledge and awareness of the host country, the importance of the influence of family and friends, the importance of cost issues, the importance of the environment, and the importance of social links and geographic proximity. It is expected that students are likely to choose their country's destination when there is a positive feeling in student's cognitive beliefs about that country's characteristics

Lim, Yap, & Lee (2011) described the pull factors influencing international students in selecting Malaysia as the host country and their perceptions of service quality in Malaysian institutes of higher education. It has been found that the students from the Middle East countries and China came to study in Malaysian institutions due to many reasons such as, agent recommendation, lower costs, comfortable climate, the recommendation of their parents and relatives, familiarity of the country, and a perceived favorable study environment. Both of the students were highly concerned about education as an investment and they also focused on important factors such as, reputation, quality of academic staff, course content and program-related issues. Overall, they perceived that they were dissatisfied with the provided service quality of education in their host institutions.

The globalization of higher education has been increasing in the past couple of decades. It has been estimated from the large flow of students studying abroad and the

number of colleges and universities providing educational services across borders may increase from two million to eight million by the year of 2025. Most of the international students studied in leading host countries such as, USA, France, Germany, UK, and Canada.

Joseph (1997) clarifies four factors regarded as the main sources of influence: one is financial (cost, money related factor); another is the influence of family and friends; a third one is a student's personal interest in the field; and a fourth one is job opportunities and career satisfaction.

First of all is the finance factor. The main source of finance for students comes from their parents. Parents' financial standing is a part of student's education because they are needed to support and take care of the education. Second is the influence of friends and family factor. It is another source to influence international students to select a host institution. The course of the study comes from word-of-mouth of their friends and family to motivate and make suggestions to students. Third, personal interest might come from student's preferences according to their satisfaction with place, accommodations and facilities. Lastly, job opportunities and career satisfaction comes from achievement in academics and the need to apply for a job in their host country.

2.3 HUMAN MOTIVATION

Human motivation refers to internal factors that explain human needs in real life. Human motivation theory is used in this research in order to support internal factors as it is one of the factors influencing students on the selection for overseas study in regards to their decision making and perceived satisfaction.

Maslow's theory of human motivation states that human need is unlimited and it's difficult to meet the level of complete satisfaction. This is because when humans are satisfied in one thing, they will demand to be satisfied in other things continuously. Human's desires will step up from the basic level to the higher needs accordingly (Maslow 1943).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be described from the bottom as a basic needs and people must be satisfied before pass more advance to the next step in the shape of a pyramid. The hierarchy of needs can be showed in details as follow. (See Figure 2.1)



Figure 2.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

From figure 2.1, Maslow's hierarchies of needs in which human's motivation levels are arranged from the bottom to the top of the pyramid. The first level is physiological needs or basic needs which are required for survival in real life such as the need for air, shelter, water, food, clothing, sleep and sex. The physiological needs are an important level for understanding an individual's behavior.

Next, the second level is safety needs which are required for security in a human's life. Examples of safety needs are health, job, property, family, social stability and resources. The safety needs refer to the way individuals stay safe and normally protect themselves by establishing laws.

The third level is social needs which are required for love and belonging. Examples of social needs are, friendship, family and, sexual intimacy. This level is reached when both of the basic needs (physiological and the safety needs) are satisfied. People will enter the next step with love affection and belongingness.

Actually, people would like to give and receive love from other people at the same time.

The fourth level is the esteem needs level. This is the need to be a unique individual demonstrating quality such as self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others and respect by others. This level can give an individual a feeling of prestige and accomplishment. These needs will occur after the needs in the prior stage are satisfied.

Lastly, the final level at the top of the pyramid is the self-actualization needs level which is required for self-fulfillment. Examples of qualities at this level are morality, creativity, spontaneity, authenticity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, meaning and inner potential and acceptance of facts. This refers to people understanding their true needs in order to achieve the highest level. This stage states that person who knows their needs can achieve goals since they truly know themselves (Maslow 1943).

Due to the finding from Maslow's concept, people's motivation is actually based on the hierarchy of needs from five levels. This would lead people to decide or choose the way that can fulfill their needs and meet their satisfaction. International students who have made their choice to study at AU may seek for some of Maslow's basic needs available at the institution.

2.4 SATISFACTION MEASUREMENT

The satisfaction concept is another explanation to analyze international student perspective and requirement towards the selection for overseas study at Assumption University. This concept will be another important tool to find out the problems and solutions which come from international student's perspective toward higher education institution. This can be used to update institutions for future development to provide quality of people knowledge skill in society.

Satisfaction can measure international students' thinking and feeling from their expectations. Expectation usually comes from many features of overall

education and service activities. Satisfaction measures the psychology of people regarding their experiences in educational and services. Satisfaction measures emotion as the outcome of student's opinions toward education and service experience. Satisfaction and attitude concepts are linked together. Satisfaction is linked to the human "post experience" which has been built by education and service quality or value (Smith 2007).

A previous article has mentioned that satisfaction measures whether education and service meets expectations or not. After a student has experience with an educational institution, then students can perceive and recognize their own opinion towards education services. Education service in the opinion of the researcher is considered as teaching, time learning schedule, education system, etc.

2.5 DECISION MAKING / REASONING SKILLS

The literature review of decision making describes decision making as the method of what people consider to be the possible result of different alternatives (Beyth-Marom et al. 1991; Von Winterfeldt & Edwards 1986). Thinking system is a skill in decision-making process (Fischhoff ET al.1999). There are basic processes which usually influence decision-makers. These consist of:

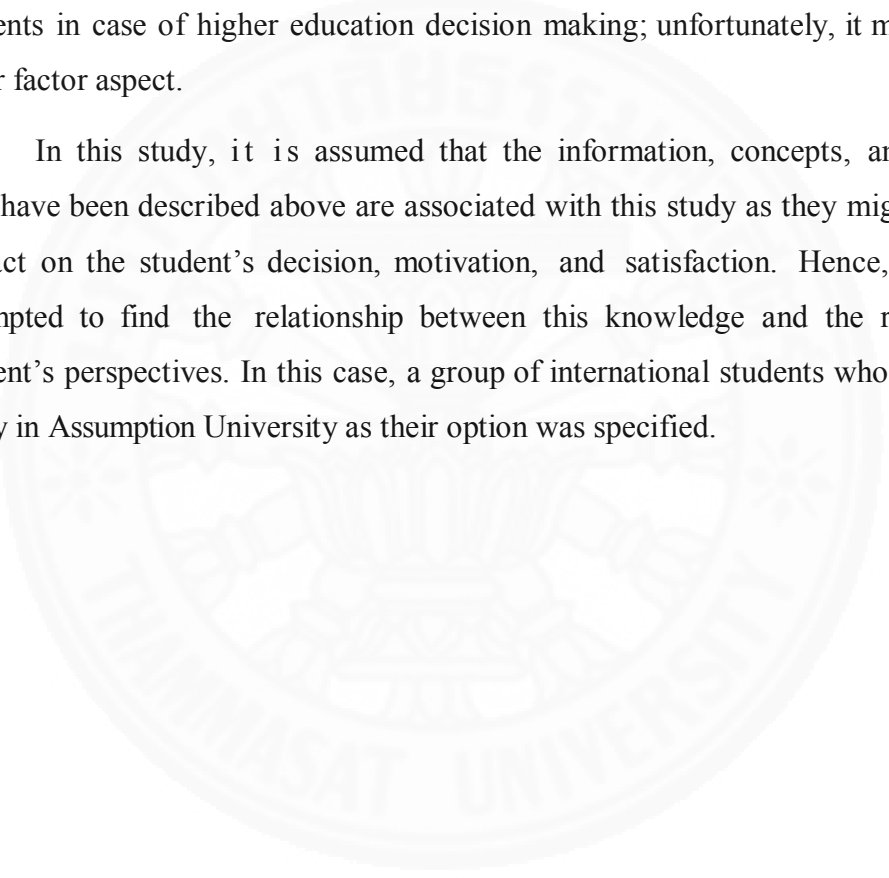
1. Listing relevant choices
2. Identifying potential consequences of each choice
3. Assessing the likelihood of each consequence actually occurring
4. Determining the importance of these consequences and
5. Combining all this information to decide which choice is the most appealing (Beyth-Marom et al., 1991)

Another important factor that is explained by previous literature focuses on cognitive, psychological, social, cultural and societal factors that might influence students making decision (Gordon 1996). The maturity in the decision making process is related to age and experience which is governed by student's

brain development and knowledge. Also, family, peer group, religious beliefs, economic condition, and ethnicity are the social and psychological factors that lead to making decision (Gordon 1996).

The relevant information from other articles has explained that factors of psychology, sociality, culture, age, experience, family, peer group, religious beliefs; economic condition and ethnicity might be the dynamics that influence students in making decisions. Although, it is not directly identified the effective toward students in case of higher education decision making; unfortunately, it might be the other factor aspect.

In this study, it is assumed that the information, concepts, and theories that have been described above are associated with this study as they might have an impact on the student's decision, motivation, and satisfaction. Hence, the study attempted to find the relationship between this knowledge and the result from student's perspectives. In this case, a group of international students who decided to study in Assumption University as their option was specified.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes: (1) the subjects, (2) the materials, (3) the procedures used in the collection and analysis of the data, and (4) the data analysis.

3.1 SUBJECTS

The subjects of this research were 50 foreigners who joined the Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University at Bangna campus, Samutprakran province. They will be used as the sample population of this study during March – April 2015. They were international students, male or female. They were approached and verbally informed about the purpose of the survey. If they expressed their willingness to participate in the study, a self-administered questionnaire was given to each.

3.2 MATERIALS

In this research, self-administered questionnaires were used as a key tool to collect the data. In order to make it as reliable and practical as possible. Before conducting the surveys, the researcher studied a large number of related study, books, and questionnaires of other studies. The researcher applied knowledge from such literature to develop this questionnaire.

The questionnaire was used to investigate the factors which attract international students to join the Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University, Bangna campus; Samutprakran province. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended and open-ended questions and five-point Likert scale, which are divided into three parts as follow:

Part I: Personal information of the respondents

This part is about general background of respondents. It comprised closed-ended and open-ended questions regarding personal information of the samples such

as, gender, age, marital status, education level, faculty, occupation, annual income, religion, nationality, and home country.

Part II: Push and Pull Factors

1.2.1 Factors influencing your decision making to join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand

In this part, the respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of each factor that might have affected their decision to join AU in Bangkok. The Likert 5-point scale was used.

1.2.2 Satisfaction of respondents after joining Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand

Referring to the satisfaction of international students in this part; the closed-ended questions were used to measure the sample's satisfaction with place, accommodations and facilities, courses, instructors and staff members. The Likert 5-point scale was used.

Part III: Respondent's opinions and suggestions

This part contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions regarding the respondents' advice the improvement for overall image of Assumption University.

3.3 PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Research Design

This survey-based study aims to capture quantitative data on the decision making and satisfaction of international students who are studying in Bachelor's degree in any field at Assumption University.

3.3.2 Data Collection

The questionnaires were distributed to 50 international students who study in Bachelor's degree in any field, age and sex at Assumption University in order to find out factors that influence the decision making on selecting overseas study destination

at Assumption University. The primary data was gathered by distributing self-administered questionnaires to participants after the students joined the university. The completed questionnaires were collected right after the respondents finished. The questionnaires were distributed from March to April 2015, and the total number of sample was 50.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

SPSS was used to assess the relationship of factors that influence decision making on a selecting overseas study destination at Assumption University. The qualitative and quantitative data were gained through an analysis of responses using SPSS (statistical package for the social science).

After all questionnaires were completed, the data was entered and calculated to find percentage, frequency, and mean by SPSS in order to analyze the data. Percentage and Frequency was used to describe personal information in the first part and the opinions and suggestions in the third part.

The Likert 5-point scale was used to analyze push and pull factors in part two which consist of factors influencing the decision making and satisfaction of respondents.

The Likert 5-point scale was used for factors influencing of international students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University towards their decision making and satisfaction. In this part, the respondents were asked to indicate the satisfaction level that best corresponded to their feelings as follows:

- Strongly Agree = 5 points (very important factor)
- Agree = 4 points (important)
- Neither agree nor disagree = 3 points (moderately important)
- Disagree = 2 points (not important)
- Strongly disagree = 1 points (not important at all)

To analyze and interpret the data and mean score obtained from each statement, the level of agreement was divided into 5 levels:

	Meaning: level of satisfaction
• Strongly Agree	mean score = 4.30-5.00 points (very high)
• Agree	mean score = 3.50-4.29 points (high)
• Neither agree nor disagree	mean score = 2.70-3.49 points (medium)
• Disagree	mean score = 1.90-2.69 points (low)
• Strongly disagree	mean score = 1.00-1.89 points (very low)

In summary, this chapter has shown the methodology of this research concerning the subjects, materials, procedures and data analysis. In the next chapter, the result of data analysis will be revealed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the finding of the study. The data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and table of percentage. The result can be divided into four parts as follows:

Part 1: Personal information of the respondents

Part 2: Factors influencing the decision making to join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University

Part 3: Satisfaction of respondents after joining Bachelor's degree at Assumption University

Part 4: Respondent's opinions and suggestions

4.1 PERSONAL DATA OF THE RESPONDENTS

In the first part of the questionnaire, there were eight questions asking about the respondents' personal data. Fifty respondents answered the questions in Part 1. The result for each question is shown in the table below in terms of frequency and percentage.

From table 4.1 indicates that from 50 respondents, there were 30 male and 20 female respondents.

Table 4.1 Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	30	60%
Female	20	40%
Total	50	100%

From table 4.2 indicates that there are 4 respondents who were under 18 years old, 29 respondents were between 18-20 years old, 11 respondents were between 21-23 years old and 6 respondents were over 24 years old. The result shows that more than half of them were between 18-20 years old joining in Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University

Table 4.2 Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Under 18	4	8%
18 – 20	29	58%
21 – 23	11	22%
Over 24	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.3 shows that 49 of respondents were single and one of them was married.

Table 4.3 Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	49	98%
Married	1	2%
Total	50	100%

According to Table 4.4 international students who join in Bachelor's degree at Assumption University are well-educated. The respondents were 20 sophomore students (40%), followed by 15 junior students (30%). Then, 8 senior respondents (16%) and 7 freshman respondents (14%).

Table 4.4 Educational Level

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Freshman	7	14%
Sophomore	20	40%
Junior	15	30%
Senior	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.5 indicates that most of the respondents (42%) earn an income per month of THB 20,001 – 30,000, followed by THB 10,000 – 20,000 (28%). More than THB 30,000 were next (26%) and less than THB 10,000 were last (4%). We may say that 68% of the respondents have annual income per month more than THB 20,000. This amount of money is relatively high, especially when compared with Thai students' income per month. One reason could be that in order to join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, the respondents need to pay for living expenses. Thus, they need to have enough money to cover all their expenses.

Table 4.5 Annual Income per Month

Month Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less than THB 10,000	2	4%
THB 10,000 – 20,000	14	28%
THB 20,001 – 30,000	21	42%
More than THB 30,000	13	26%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.6 shows that 50% of the respondents were Buddhists. This is probably because Buddhists tend to have a background in Asian countries. Other than Buddhism, 38% of the respondents were Christian, 4% were Islamic, 2% were Hindu, and the rest 6% of the respondents had other beliefs or no religion.

Table 4.6 Religion of the Respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Buddhism	25	50%
Christianity	19	38%
Islam	2	4%
Hinduism	1	2%
Other	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.7 indicates that most of the respondents (76%) come from Asian countries (none of them resided in Thailand), 8 of respondents (16%) were from Europe. And 2 of each respondent (8%) were from Africa and the Middle East.

Table 4.7 Home Country of the Respondents (By continent)

Country	Frequency	Percentage
Asia (AS)	38	76%
Africa (AF)	2	4%
Europe (EU)	8	16%
America (USA)	0	0%
Middle East (ME)	2	4%
Other (OT)	0	0%
Total	50	100%

According to Table 4.8 31 students (62%) found the information of Bachelor's degree of Assumption University from the Internet or Website, while 14 of the respondents (28%) heard about studying for a Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, the rest of the respondents were 5 students (10%) who found the information from a brochure or guidebook. None of the respondents found the information from TV or Radio channel.

Table 4.8 How Students Found out About Bachelor's Degree at Assumption University

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Words of mouth	14	28%
Brochure/Guidebook	5	10%
Internet/Website	31	62%
TV/Radio channel	0	0%
Total	50	100%

4.2 INFLUENCING FACTORS

In this part of questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the factors influencing their decision making to join Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University.

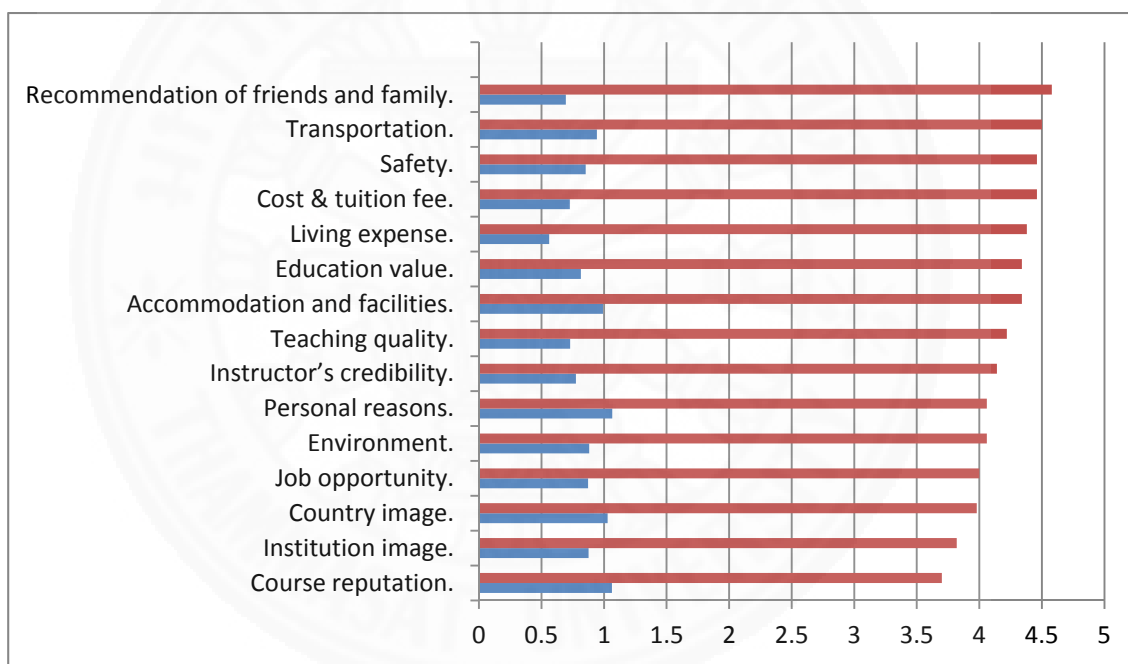
Table 4.9 indicates the degree of importance of each factor that affected the respondents' decisions to join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University. The result shows, with the mean score, that the most significant factors were recommendation of friends and family (4.58), followed by transportation (4.5), safety and the cost & tuition (4.46), living expense (4.38), accommodation and facilities and education value (4.34), teaching quality (4.22), instructor's credibility (4.14), personal reasons (4.06), job opportunities (4.00), country image (3.98), institution image (3.82), and the least important factor was course reputation (3.70).

Table 4.9 Factors Influencing International Students' Decision Making to Join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand (Overall Image)

Factors		The degree of importance					Mean	SD	Meaning
		Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)			
1	Recommendation of friends and family.	34 68%	12 24%	3 6%	1 2%	0 0%	4.58	0.695	very important
2	Transportation.	34 68%	9 18%	7 14%	0 0%	0 0%	4.50	0.943	very important
3	Safety.	31 62%	15 30%	0 0%	4 4%	0 0%	4.46	0.853	very important
4	Cost & tuition fee.	29 58%	16 32%	4 8%	1 2%	0 0%	4.46	0.727	very important
5	Living expense.	21 42%	27 54%	2 4%	0 0%	0 0%	4.38	0.562	very important
6	Education value.	27 54%	14 28%	8 16%	1 2%	0 0%	4.34	0.815	very important
7	Accommodation and facilities.	31 62%	10 20%	4 8%	5 10%	0 0%	4.34	0.992	very important
8	Teaching quality.	20 40%	21 42%	9 18%	0 0%	0 0%	4.22	0.729	important
9	Instructor's credibility.	19 38%	19 38%	12 24%	0 0%	0 0%	4.14	0.775	important
10	Personal reasons.	23 46%	13 26%	9 18%	4 8%	1 2%	4.06	1.066	important
11	Environment.	19 38%	17 34%	12 24%	2 4%	0 0%	4.06	0.881	important
12	Job opportunity.	17 34%	18 36%	13 26%	2 4%	0 0%	4.00	0.872	important

13	Country image.	20 40%	14 28%	12 24%	3 6%	1 2%	3.98	1.029	important
14	Institution image.	21 42%	6 12%	14 28%	5 10%	1 2%	3.82	0.876	important
15	Course reputation.	14 28%	14 28%	17 34%	3 6%	2 4%	3.70	1.063	important

Overall Influencing Factors



4.3 SATISFACTION FACTORS

In this part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the satisfaction with place, course requirement, the instructor and staff members after the retreat ended. Table 4.10-4.12 indicates the respondents' satisfaction with the Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University in each aspect.

Table 4.10 show the highest level of satisfaction was given to the pleasant atmosphere of the university (4.78). The result shows that 90% of the respondents strongly agreed and 10% of the respondents agreed. Nobody strongly disagreed, disagreed, or was undecided. The second highest level of satisfaction with the place was that the place is clean (4.74); followed by the university is safe from danger (4.52), and the accommodation is comfortable (4.28). The least satisfying element was rated at 3.82 on easy access to the university.

Table 4.10 Satisfaction with Place

Factors		The degree of Satisfaction					Mean	SD	Meaning
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree			
		(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)			
The satisfaction with place									
1	Atmosphere of the university is pleasant.	45 90%	5 10%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4.78	0.300	very high
2	The place is clean.	40 80%	10 20%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4.74	0.856	very high
3	The university is safe from danger.	24 48%	26 52%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4.52	0.505	very high
4	The accommodation is comfortable.	36 72%	14 28%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4.28	2.040	High
5	Easy access to the university.	10 20%	15 30%	23 46%	2 4%	0 0%	3.82	0.848	High

Table 4.11 reveals the highest level of satisfaction was given to course requirements corresponding to the curriculum (4.64), the result shows that 68% of the respondents strongly agreed and 30% of the respondents agreed with this point. Only one of the respondents is undecided. The second highest level of satisfaction with the course requirement was the admission fee is reasonable with the score of 4.58, followed by instructor teaching easily to understand with the score of 4.50, and the class duration is appropriate with the score of 4.28. The least satisfying element was rated at 4.24 on the size of classroom being appropriate.

Table 4.11 Satisfaction with Course Requirement

Factors	The degree of Satisfaction					Mean	SD	Meaning	
	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)				
The satisfaction with course requirement									
1	Course requirements correspond to the curriculum	34 68%	15 30%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	4.64	0.671	very high
2	The admission fee is reasonable.	29 58%	21 42%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4.58	0.494	very high
3	Instructor teaching easily to understand.	27 54%	22 44%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	4.50	0.686	very high
4	Class duration is appropriate.	20 40%	21 42%	9 18%	0 0%	0 0%	4.28	0.737	High
5	The size of classroom is appropriate.	21 42%	9 18%	20 40%	0 0%	0 0%	4.24	0.915	High

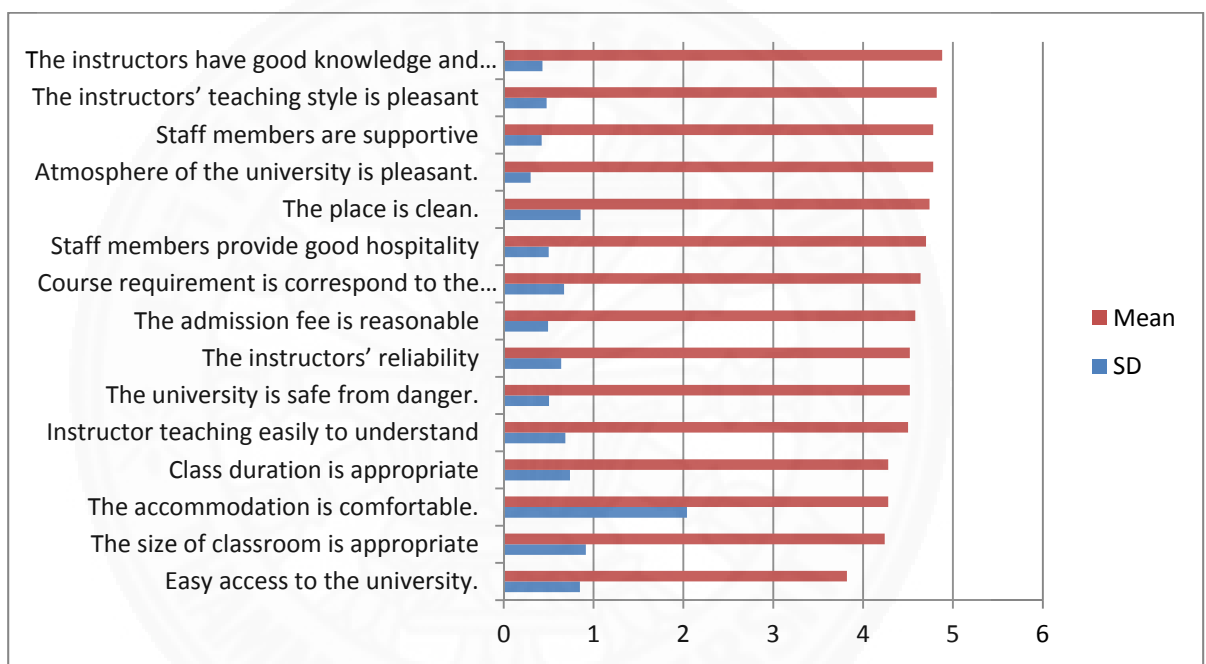
Table 4.12 indicates the highest level of satisfaction was given to the instructors having good knowledge and skills with the score of 4.88, the result shows that 92% of the respondents strongly agreed, 4% of the respondents agreed with this point. Only 4% of the respondents are undecided. The second highest level of the respondent's satisfaction with the instructor and staff members was the instructors' teaching style is pleasant with the score of 4.82, followed by staff members are supportive with the score of 4.78, and the staff members provide good hospitality with the score of 4.70. The least satisfying element was rated at 4.52 on the instructors' reliability.

Table 4.12 Satisfaction with the Instructor and Staff Members

Factors		The degree of Satisfaction					Mean	SD	Meaning
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree			
		(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)			
The satisfaction with the instructor and staff members									
1	The instructors have good knowledge and skills.	46 92%	2 4%	2 4%	0 0%	0 0%	4.88	0.431	very high
2	The instructors' teaching style is pleasant.	43 86%	5 10%	2 4%	0 0%	0 0%	4.82	0.477	very high
3	Staff members are supportive.	9 18%	40 80%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	4.78	0.422	very high
4	Staff members provide good hospitality.	36 72%	13 26%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	4.70	0.500	very high
5	The instructors' reliability.	30 60%	16 32%	4 16%	0 0%	0 0%	4.52	0.640	very high

In conclusion, regarding the overall satisfaction of the respondents, they were most satisfied with the instructors having good knowledge and skills (score is 4.88), followed by the pleasant atmosphere of the university (score is 4.78), and they were least satisfied with the course requirements being corresponded to the curriculum (score is 4.64), although the mean score is rated as “very high”.

Overall Satisfaction



4.4 OPINIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The last part of the questionnaire asked about the respondents' feedback after joining a Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University, as well as their opinions and suggestions for future improvement.

Table 4.13 shows that most of the respondents (74%) had the intention to continue in Master's Degree program at Assumption University after graduated in the Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University, while (10%) said maybe and (16%) of the respondents would not.

Table 4.13 Intention to Continue in Master's Degree at Assumption University

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	37	74%
Maybe	5	10%
No	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Table 4.14 indicates that all of the respondents (100%) were willing to recommend the course of Bachelor's degree at Assumption University to others.

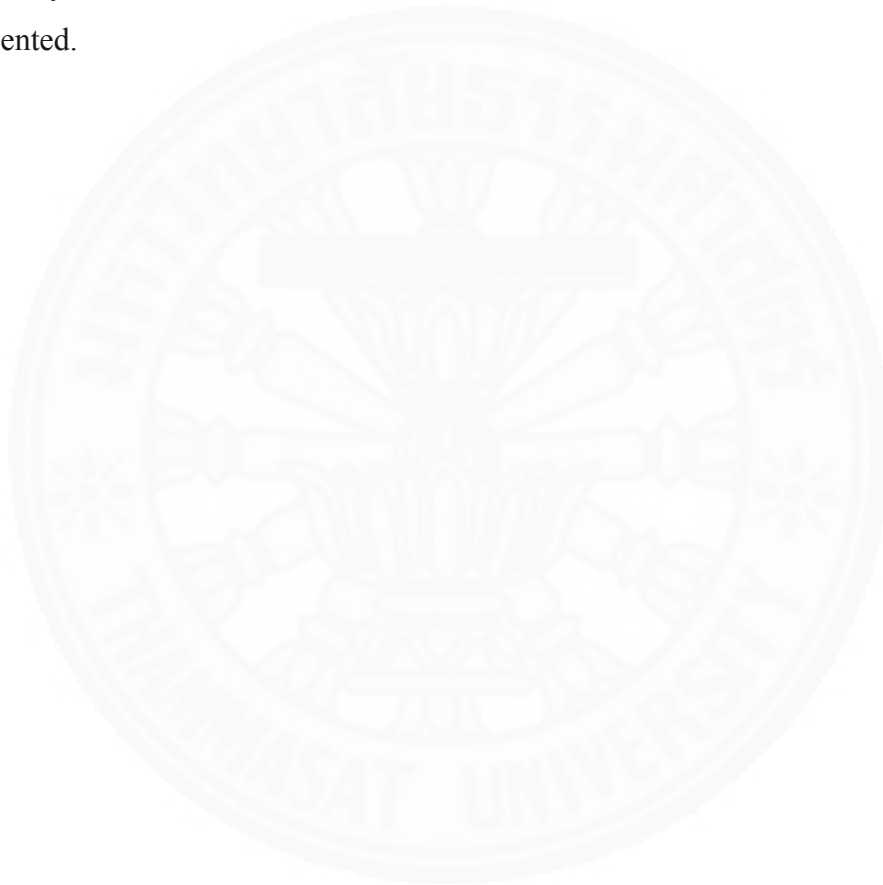
Table 4.14 Intention to Recommend Master's Degree at Assumption University to Others

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	100%
Maybe	0	0%
No	0	0%
Total	50	100%

In this part, the respondents were also requested to provide opinions and suggestions for the improvement of the studying in Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University. 36 of 50 respondents skipped this open-ended questions, 12 respondents stated that they are already satisfied with the studying in the Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University. The other 2 respondents provided some opinions and suggestions to improve the quality of institution in the future. The students said that "Abac should improve university's website, providing more

information about the tuition by email and they would like to study with professional instructors.

In summary, this chapter showed the result of the finding of factors influencing international students on the selection for overseas study at Assumption University, Thailand. The satisfaction, opinions and suggestions are shown in 13 tables, together with chart and explanations for each item. In the next chapter, summary, discussion, conclusion and recommendation for further study will be presented.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is composed of four parts along with the summary: (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings, (3) discussion, (4) conclusion and (5) recommendations for further study.

5.1 THE SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The main purposes of this research were to identify the factors which attracted international students from many countries who were studying in a Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University, Thailand and to measure push and pull factors that influenced the international students' decision making and their satisfaction.

The study was conducted by distributing self-administered questionnaires to 50 international students who were studying in a Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand. Closed-ended questions, open-ended questions, and Likert scale were used in the questionnaire, divided into four parts: personal information, influencing factors, overall satisfaction, and suggestions. The respondents were given the questionnaires after the course ended. The completed questionnaires were collected right after the respondents finished. The questionnaires were distributed in monthly classes during March – April until the number in the sample reached 50 students. All data received was analyzed by using SPSS program.

5.2 THE SUMMARY OF THE FINDING

The result of the research finding can be summarized as follow:

5.2.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

This part of the research question aimed to get an overview of the general characteristics of students studying in a Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University, Thailand. The result showed that the majority of subjects (60%) were

male. More than half of respondents (58%) were between 18-20 years old. Many respondents were single (98%) and were in their sophomore year (40%). Regarding their income, many of them (42%) earned THB 20,001 – 30,000 per month. Half of the group resided in Asian countries such as, China, South Korea, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Nepal etc. (76%). Fifty percent of them were Buddhist. And they found about the studying in Bachelor's degree at Assumption University from the Internet or website (62%).

5.2.2 Factors influencing your decision making to join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University

The second part of this research question sought to determine the perceived importance that international students placed on various factors concerning why they study in Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University. The result shows, with the mean score of each category, that the most important factors influencing their choice are 1) recommendation of friends and family (4.58) 2) transportation (4.50) 3) safety and the cost & tuition were at the same range (4.46) 4) living expense (4.38) 5) Education value (4.34) and 6) Accommodation and facilities (4.34). The second rank of important factors are 1) Teaching quality (4.22) 2) Instructor's credibility (4.24) 3) Personal reasons (4.06) 4) Environment (4.06) 5) Job opportunity (4.00) 6) Country image (3.98) 7) Institution image (3.82) and 8) Course reputation (3.7).

5.2.3 Satisfaction of respondents after joining Bachelor's degree at Assumption University

Most of subjects were satisfied with the atmosphere of the university. The highest level of satisfaction include the instructors having good knowledge and skills (4.88), the instructors' teaching style is pleasant (4.82), staff members are supportive (4.78), atmosphere of the university is pleasant (4.78), the place is clean (4.74), staff members provide good hospitality (4.70), course requirements correspond to the curriculum (4.64), the admission fee is reasonable (4.58), the instructors' reliability (4.52), the university is safe from danger (4.52) and instructor teaching easily to understand (4.50). The high level include class duration is appropriate (4.28), the

accommodation is comfortable (4.28), the size of classroom is appropriate (4.24), and easy access to the university (3.82).

5.2.4 Opinions and suggestions for the improvement of the studying in Bachelor's degree at Assumption University

This part of the research shows that most of the respondents had the intention to continue in Master's degree program at Assumption University after graduating from Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University (74%) and all of the respondents (100%) were willing to recommend the course of Bachelor's degree at Assumption University to others.

5.3 DISCUSSION

This section concerns how the findings of the study match the theories and the earlier research. The discussions are as follows:

The results of the study showed that there were international students from many countries studying in a Bachelor's degree program at Assumption University. This result could support the fact that more people are concerned about the quality of the overall images of institutions and personal reasons. The Bachelor's degree at Assumption University is not limited for international students who are interested to join in any courses. They will gain knowledge and job opportunities after the courses end. It can benefit students of all ages, languages, nationalities and regions.

Main interesting points are push and pull factors. The concept showed that the personal factor (push factor) was positively related to international students who chose to study in overseas destinations because they perceive that they can improve language skills, understand in host country's cultures better and enhance their future career prospects.

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the first level of physiological needs or basic needs and the second level of safety needs show the result from student's satisfaction with the place which is clean and the university which is safe

from danger motivating international students to choose their study destination as a pull factors.

Also, positive recommendations from friends and family and social links can motivate international students to choose their study destination. Especially, the relationship is in line with many previous researches which indicated that family and friends' recommendation is one of the most influencing pull factors for students' choice to study overseas destination (Chen & Zimitat, 2006; Duan, 1997; Lawley, 1998; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

Moreover, the result of this study is partially in line with the hypothesized relationship that the likelihood of international students' choice of overseas study destination increases when the students perceive that the environment of the host country better than other destination choices (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

The reasons showed that the suitable environmental factor can attract international students to choose overseas destinations over US and Australia because of the increase in job opportunities. A better career with higher salary can attract international students to select the destination for both study and work after graduation. The respondents in this study also rated job opportunity as an important factor for their decision (mean score =4.00).

Regarding to cost issues, these were found to be important for international students; Lawley's (1998) result indicated that cost issues were not related to international students' destination choice. In fact, many international students rely on financial support from their family which may explain the significant relationship between cost issues and international student's destination choice.

The statistical analysis reveals that the value of education is a determinant related to international students' destination choice. Basically, students tend to evaluate the reputation and recognition of a university and program before considering other factors (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Interestingly, the statistical results suggest that the value of education is negatively related to international students' destination choice. This may be explained by international students' perception of the value of educational programs and institutions in Thailand as relatively lower when compared to

institutions from US and UK. This is supported by Lawley (1998) who indicated that despite international students perceiving the overall standard of universities in Thailand as high, they rated them lower than universities in US and UK.

Furthermore, the result showed that facilities and resources were significantly related to international students' destination choice. It is argued that students tend to have cognitive and affective emotions attached with physical aspects of the institution such as the buildings, facilities and the environments.

Another significant factor influencing host institution and program selection was the cost of education and degree (content and structure) factor. Lawley (1998) found that although international students perceived the overall quality of institutions from Thailand was higher than other host countries, they perceived the study and living cost to be low as well.

As a result, some students may need to change their plan by choosing an alternative that offers a lower cost rather than the first choice which has higher cost. This is in line with many previous studies which stated that university and living costs were the major barriers for students to select their destination.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Thailand educational institutions are, increasingly, feeling the pressure to become more internationalized. It is a challenging stage in which institutions not only have to improve their academic quality, but also their internationalization. The international student population is a valuable part of education field since it is one of factors that contribute to the higher education development.

This study presents an investigation of motivation factors that play an important role in international students' decision-making process to choose a foreign university to study. Through the use of a structured questionnaire, international students' motivation factors in their decision-making of study abroad were explored. The international students of Assumption University were asked to express their attitudes by using closed-ended and open-ended questions, and four-point Likert scale method.

The findings of this study highlighted important factors that lead international students to choose Thailand as a study destination. The most important factors influencing international students' destination choice are recommendation of friends and family, transportation, safety, and cost and tuition fees. The least important factor is the course reputation. It was also found that the highest level of satisfaction goes to the instructors having good knowledge and skills, followed by the pleasant instructors' teaching style and supportive staff members, while the lowest level of satisfaction is the easy access to the university. Moreover, 100% of them said they would recommend their acquaintances to study at AU.

The study also related to the Maslow's theory of human motivation that explains internal factors of human needs in the real life. The concept is used to support that basic level of needs such as safety and physical environment are important factors influencing international students on the selection of overseas study towards their decision making and satisfaction.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research.

5.5.1 The major limitation of the study was the generalization of the data collected from only one particular period of time. Moreover, there should be a larger sample size in order to make the study more valid and reliable.

5.5.2 In order to find accurate information, future research should include in-depth interviews, due to the fact that there were comments from international students who complained about the inconvenience of transportation between two campuses and a problem of foreign teachers' accent from neighboring countries.

5.5.3 Only willing international students answered the questionnaire. This created bias of analyzing by favorable or unfavorable response, in which the case study might not represent the population in the study area.

5.5.4 This study is very useful for international students who would like to find information about higher education in order to make the decision to study in an international university in Bangkok, Thailand and other researchers for further study.



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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is not a test. The principal objective of this questionnaire is to study the factors influencing international students' decision making to studying in Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand and their satisfaction toward overall images of institution. Your responses to this questionnaire will be kept anonymous. The findings obtained would help the management of Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand improve their services. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

.....

Part One: Personal Information

Instruction: Please mark \checkmark into or write down the answer for the following questions

1.1 Gender of the Respondents?

Male Female

1.2 Age of the respondents?

Under 18 years old 18-20 years old
 21-23 years old Over 24 years old

1.3 Marital Status of the respondents?

Single Married

1.4 Educational level of the respondents?

Freshman sophomore
 Junior Senior

1.5 Income per month?

- Lower than 10,000 baht / month
- 10,000 – 20,000 baht / month
- 20,001 – 30,000 baht / month
- More than 30,000 baht / month

1.6 Religion of the Respondents?

- Buddhism Christianity
- Islam Hinduism
- Others

1.7 Nationality of the Respondents (clarify by continent)?

- Asia (AS) Africa (AF)
- Europe (EU) America (USA)
- Middle East (ME) Other (OT)

1.8 How did you find out about Bachelor's degree at Assumption University?

- Words of mouth Brochure/Guidebook
- Internet/Website TV/Radio channel

Part Two: Factors influencing International students' decision making to join Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand (Overall image)

Instruction: Please mark \checkmark in the column that most matches your opinion.

(5-Most important, 4-Important, 3-Quite important, 2- Not so important, 1- Not important)

Factors		The degree of importance				
		(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
2.1	Personal reason					
2.2	Recommendation of friends and family					
2.3	Environment					
2.4	Accommodation and facilities					
2.5	Safety					
2.6	Country image					
2.7	Institution image					
2.8	Education value					
2.9	Cost & tuition fee					
2.10	Course reputation					
2.11	Teaching quality					
2.12	Instructor's credibility					
2.13	Living expense					
2.14	Transportation					
2.15	Job opportunity					

Part Three: Satisfaction of respondents after joining Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand

Instruction: Please mark \checkmark in the column that most matches your opinion.

(5-Strongly Agree, 4- Agree, 3-Undecided, 2- Disagree, 1- Strongly Disagree)

Factors		The degree of Satisfaction				
		(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
The satisfaction with place						
3.1	Easy access to the university.					
3.2	Atmosphere of the university is pleasant.					
3.3	The accommodation is comfortable.					
3.4	The place is clean.					
3.5	The university is safe from danger.					
The satisfaction with course requirement						
3.6	Course requirement is correspond to the curriculum.					
3.7	Instructor teaching is easy to understand.					
3.8	Class duration is appropriate.					
3.9	The size of classroom is appropriate.					
3.10	The admission fee is reasonable.					
The satisfaction with the instructor and staff members						
3.11	The instructors have good knowledge and skills.					
3.12	The instructors' teaching style is pleasant.					
3.13	The instructors' reliability.					
3.14	Staff members provide good hospitality.					
3.15	Staff members are supportive.					

Part Four: Opinions and Suggestions

Instruction: Please mark \checkmark into or write down the answer for the following questions

4.1 Will you decide to continue in Master's Degree at Assumption University?

Yes Maybe No

4.2 Will you recommend Master Degree at Assumption University to others?

Yes Maybe No

4.3 What is your recommendation for the improvement of overall image in Bachelor's degree at Assumption University, Thailand?

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“End of questionnaire. Thank you for your kind participation”