

Received: December 2023 Accepted: January 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/ks.v12i2.274>

# Factors Influencing College Students' Educational Enrolment Choice in Private Higher Education Institutions in Klang Valley, Malaysia

N Wickneswary<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Rahman Bin S Senathirajah<sup>2</sup>, Rasheedul Haque<sup>3</sup>, Lester Naces Udang\*<sup>4</sup>, Zahir Osman<sup>5</sup>, Shaikhah Al-Ainati<sup>6</sup>, Ahmed Al-Hunaiyyan<sup>7</sup>, Majid Bin Md. Isa<sup>8</sup>, Ganesh Ramasamy<sup>9</sup>

## **Abstract**

*Education enrollment at private higher education institutions (PHEIs) is a key focus of the Malaysian government, in accordance with the government's objective of promoting Malaysia as a regional hub for higher education in Southeast Asia. The goal of this study is to investigate the variables that affect college students' selection of PHEIs in the Klang Valley. The study centers on the effects of three key factors—cost, brand image, promotions and marketing—on students' selection of PHEI, with brand image serving as a mediating variable. The findings indicate that PHEI selection by college students is mostly influenced by brand image, with little to no effect from price, promotions and marketing. The findings also demonstrate that marketing, promotions, and pricing all have an impact on a PHEI's brand image. Additionally, it is discovered that brand image acts as a mediator affecting how pricing, marketing, and promotions affect college students' choice of PHEI. The study's conclusions offers recommendations to PHEIs on how to revamp their marketing strategies and highlight important elements that may have an impact on student enrollment.*

**Keywords:** *College Students' Choice, Educational Enrollment, Private Higher Education Institution, Cost, Brand Image, Promotions and Marketing.*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Research Background**

In 2020, Malaysia had 51 private universities, 10 foreign university branch campuses, 38 private university colleges and 336 private colleges (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). PHEIs' are being compelled to use competitive marketing tactics to differentiate their services (Nuseir and El-Refae, 2021). In order to draw students, PHEIs in Malaysia must thus comprehend the numerous aspects that influence students' decisions regarding which institute to attend. Students are also increasingly seeking the best value for their

---

<sup>1</sup> Inti International University, Malaysia, Email: [wickynn@gmail.com](mailto:wickynn@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Inti International University, Malaysia. Email: [arahman.senathirajah@newinti.edu.my](mailto:arahman.senathirajah@newinti.edu.my), Orcid Id: [orcid.org/0000-0001-6044-9051](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6044-9051)

<sup>3</sup> Mahsa University, Malaysia, Email Id: [rasheedul@mahsa.edu.my](mailto:rasheedul@mahsa.edu.my), Orcid Id: [orcid.org/0000-0001-8170-5413](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8170-5413)

<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Liberal Arts, Shinawatra University, Thailand, College of Education, University of the Philippines Diliman, Philippines. \*Corresponding author

<sup>5</sup> Faculty of Business Management, Open University Malaysia

<sup>6</sup> Business Department, College of Business Studies, PAAET, Kuwait

<sup>7</sup> Business Department, College of Business Studies, PAAET, Kuwait

<sup>8</sup> Inti International University, Malaysia. Email: [abdmajid.mdisa@newinti.edu.my](mailto:abdmajid.mdisa@newinti.edu.my)

<sup>9</sup> Inti International University, Malaysia. Email: [ganesh.ramasamy@newinti.edu.my](mailto:ganesh.ramasamy@newinti.edu.my)

money and are therefore pickier about the educational institutions they attend (Padlee et al., 2010). Therefore, the students tend to consider wide range of factors before choosing the institution. A number of factors impact Malaysian students' choice of selection of higher education institution such as tuition fee, curriculum and structure, personnel, facilities and equipment, educational value, institutional information (Haron et al., 2017), reputation, family support, and employment after graduating (Adom, 2015). In order to understand the reasons behind students' decisions to attend a certain PHEI and to identify the most pertinent criteria to take into account during the selection process, PHEI officials need to be aware of these reasons. All key factors affecting student choices should be studied as it is linked to customer satisfaction which have been studied in numerous research (Faisal et al, 2020; Haque et al., 2020; Nellikunnel et al. 2017; Nellikunnel et al., 2015; Rahman et al., 2011; Rahman et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2018; Yi et al.,2018). Customer satisfaction has been a key factor in many industries including universities (Adetayo et al., 2022; Senathirajah et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022; Hailong et al., 2022a; Hailong et al., 2022b)

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The nation's private universities might be forced to close significantly, leaving only a few campuses with sufficient funding to ensure their continued existence, if Malaysia's private higher education system fails (Hunter, 2020). The emergence of the Covid-19 coronavirus undoubtedly pushed the PHEIs into a recession. Income loss for Malaysians, campus closures, postponements of public examinations, and border closures have all had a significant impact on students' enrolment in PHEIs which directly affects the institutes revenue (Azman, 2021). Department of Statistics Malaysia (2020) claims that the total number of students enrolled in PHEIs declined from 669,688 students in 2018 to 633,344 students in 2019 and 537,434 students in 2020. There was a decrease of 19.7% of students' enrolment PHEIs from 2018 to 2020. This study's findings will help institutions identify and separate factors that cannot be influenced from those that can, allowing decision-makers to focus exclusively on those that can. Institutions must understand the factors which can influence enrolments and avoid loss of revenues (Mcfadden, 2015). When the PHEI rebuilds itself after the recession, institutions must find a strategy to persuade more students to choose and enroll in the institute's programs (Ooi, 2019).

## **1.3 Research Gap**

Inspite of the numerous studies in countries such as Indonesia (Artyasto and Nawiroh, 2021; Jatisidi and Vera, 2021), United States (Agrey and Lampadan, 2014; Easter, 2012), Qatar (Nuseir and El-Refae, 2021), and Vietnam (Le, 2020), the outcomes and findings could be quite different due to cultural and socioeconomic differences. As a result, this study presents a more balanced overview by taking into account certain common key considerations linked with college students' choice of PHEIs in the Klang Valley area.

Besides, with the significant changes occurring during the previous few years in Malaysia higher education ecosystem, the main elements that are used to be primary influencers for the college students' choice of PHIEs may no longer be considered as vital anymore (Ong & Ramasamy, 2022). For instance, price is not the most essential criterion in college students' selection of PHEI; rather, brand image and reputation of the institutions are the most crucial variables, according to Shah et al. (2013). However, according to Migin (2015), cost remains the most important factor in deciding which PHEI their study. As a consequence, future research in this

area will be able to assist close the gap by giving students with more current and evaluative information to consider when choosing their PHEI. This study will also aid in filling the gap in smaller universities as small organizations have shown their importance to a country's progress (Khalil, 2022b & Ahmed, 2022b)

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 College Students Choice of Private Higher Education Institution (PHEI)

Throughout their lives, people make a number of significant decisions (Daily et al., 2010). The first decision pertains to the career path that the individual wishes to take, which will subsequently impact the University of Choice. Accordingly, the initial step in a student's educational journey is choosing a higher education institution (Padlee et al., 2010).

A student's career and future growth is highly dependent on the institution they choose (Adom, 2015). Students are faced with numerous attractive factors during the choice criteria review (Padlee et al., 2010). Their chosen institution is also determined by information obtained from adverts in the media, Internet, and word of mouth (Adom, 2015). Various initiatives were taken by private institutions to increase enrolment because of the importance of the preferences and how it influences the potential student's choices (Retamosa et al., 2022).

Besides that, Callender and Melis (2022) suggest that college students' enrolment choices are heavily influenced by social and cultural factors too. Consequently, there has been a surge in research studies that concentrate on the variables influencing students' selection of PHEI.

### 2.2 Research Framework

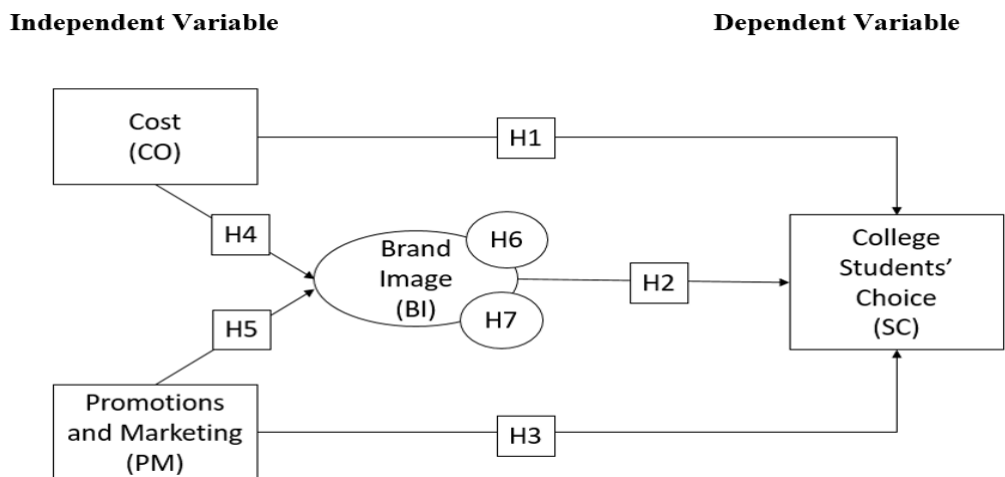


Figure 1: Research Model on College Students' Choice.

### 2.3 Hypothesis Development

#### 2.3.1 The Relationships between Cost and College Students' Choice of PHEI in Klang Valley

According to Qasim et al. (2020), students are sensible and will make a cost-benefit decision after carefully weighing all of their options. A study by Al-Ali Mustafa et al. (2018) discovered cost of education affects students choice of college. Moreover, Adom (2015), discovered that

the fifth most significant element influence students' choice of PHEI is the cost of attending, which refers to reduced prices for essentials such as food, housing, and transportation. The study indicated that due to the inexpensive cost of attending, many local and foreign students select Sarawak private university as their first option for education.

Similarly, Qasim et al. (2020), stated that students are content with their institution choice because of the availability of financial aids and affordable tuition fees. Furthermore, Dao and Thorpe (2015), found that the cost is one of the most influencing factor influencing students whereby cost also comprises the flexibility of tuition fee payment and scholarship options. Therefore, besides the tuition fee, the overall cost is important to be taken into consideration to find its influence on students' choice of PHEI.

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H1:** *Cost has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

### **2.3.2 The Relationships between Brand Image and College Students' Choice of PHEI in Klang Valley**

Students and their parents place a high value on institution's brand image (Baliyan, 2020). Schlesinger et al. (2021) study revealed that students tend to recommend an institute with good image to their friends and family. Hidayat et al. (2018) research on Indonesian students' university selection discovered that brand image, comprising the institution's history, accreditation, achievements, and rankings, had a significant and positive influence.

Similarly, research by Adom (2015) concluded that the reputation and brand name of a private institute is key reason influencing students' choice of enrolment. It is presumed the future success and advancement of students is heavily reliant on their selection of a reputed private institution (Chapman, 1981). This is due to market have a good opinion of graduates from this institution and high expectations for their work success because of the institution's strong reputation. Besides that, Qasim et al, 2020 indicated that brand image as the topmost factor affecting students' institution choice in Kurdistan-Iraq. The brand image consists of background of the institution, public reputation, local and international accreditation, and international partnerships.

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H2:** *Brand image has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

### **2.3.3 The Relationships between Promotions and Marketing and College Students' Choice of PHEI in Klang Valley**

Jatisidi and Vera (2021), found that the factor that most strongly impacts Indonesian student's choice to attend PHEI is promotions, particularly via the university's website. The research states a complete information regarding study programmes that are included on private university websites (curriculum, activities, etc.) provides students with immediate information and therefore are more preferred by students (Chapman, 1986). Besides that, Kristanto et al. (2021) research found that the marketing tactics implemented in private institutions using social media, brochures, and electronic medias has increased the number of enrolments from 14% to 49%. The study concluded that adopting marketing techniques increases the prefer ability of private institutions among the students.

Mico et al. (2019) also proved that the promotions significantly influence students' choice of institutions. The research demonstrates that the more marketing and promotional campaigns are executed to inform customers about the institution and its programmes, the more demand is created. Furthermore, study conducted by Secore (2018), shows that campus visits, open days, or exhibitions, the standard method of promotion for most institutions also influences the student's college choice. The study states visit to college campuses and meeting admissions personnel gives students a better sense of the character and distinctiveness of the institution they are interested to join.

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H3:** *Promotions and marketing has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

### **2.3.4 The Relationships between Cost and Brand Image of PHEI in Klang Valley**

Studies on the relationship between cost and brand image are few, especially those that look at whether expenses may have a big impact on how private institutions are seen. Nonetheless, a small number of research that are pertinent to this subject have been conducted in this sector. According to Hermawan's (2021) assessment, the cost of private institutions in Bali significantly affects their brand image. According to the findings of the research, it has been shown that private institute students' perceptions of their institution's brand may be positively impacted when the tuition rates are kept within reasonable bounds.

Dib and Awad-Alhaddad (2015), also deduced that awareness on the overall cost will significantly influence the brand image. The study showed that customers may remember the cost of the brand and recognise it because they remembered that cost or because the cost assessment is encoded in their memory, thus creating a brand image. In other words, the cost of the item may be used by the customer to encode an opinion of the brand image, such as favourable or unfavourable/costly or affordable (Bartik et al., 2021).

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H4:** *Cost has a positive and significant influence on brand image of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

### **2.3.5 The Relationships between Promotions and Marketing and Brand Image of PHEI in Klang Valley**

Markle (2015) explains that an institution's brand image is the shared reputation of the university, including the promotions and marketing that have been built up over a period of time. Therefore, it is important that when marketers do promotional activities, they should be extremely careful to tell the truth about the facts, since over-promising and under-delivering can break students' trust. This could damage the brand's image and make students less confidence because of the disparity between what they expected and what they received (Swati et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Alkhaldeh et al. (2020) mentioned that higher education service marketers need to focus more on promoting and marketing a strong brand image rather than sharing the information about the programmes. This is because institutions that have built strong brand image will have an edge in the competitive market (Azoury et al., 2014). It is recommended that PHEIs marketers should constantly showcase their activities, rankings and achievements in different marketing platforms (Swati et al., 2019).

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H5:** *Promotions and marketing has a positive and significant influence on brand image of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

### **2.3.6 The Relationships between Cost and Students' Choice of PHEI in Klang Valley Via the mediator Brand Image**

Not much research has been done on how brand image influences pricing and students' selection of PHEIs. However, studies on a range of topics related to purchasing decisions or selections have looked at the brand image's mediating effect on pricing. In the realm of education, especially with regard to institutions, purchasing decisions have similarities to a new student choosing an educational institution. According to Armayani and Jatra (2019) brand image may mitigate the impact of cost factors on consumer decisions. Cost affects brand image, which in turn affects decisions, according to the study. In addition, Purnamasari and Murwatiningsih (2015) assert that a product or service's brand image influences consumers' willingness to pay extra for a benefit.

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H6:** *Brand image mediates the effects of cost on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

### **2.3.7 The Relationships between Promotions and Marketing and Students' Choice of PHEI in Klang Valley via the mediator Brand Image**

There is a lack of research on brand image mediating between promotions and marketing and students' choice of PHEIs. A study done by Hermawan (2021) found that students in Bali are more likely to choose a private institute if it promotes itself well and has a good brand image.

Besides that, there are several researches done on mediating effect of brand image on promotions and marketing and purchasing decisions. As per Armayani and Jatra (2019), a firm may increase its income by promoting and marketing its by focussing on the brand image of an organization. Moreover, Purnamasari and Murwatiningsih (2015) contend that marketing and promotions on consumers' purchasing decisions is contingent on brand image. The study shows how marketing initiatives influence customers' ultimate purchase decisions by taking into account their level of trust in a product's brand image.

Thus, this hypothesis is proposed.

**H7:** *Brand image mediates the effects of promotions and marketing on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

## **3. Data Collection Method**

This study used a quantitative methodology that was widely utilized by earlier research (Jiang et al., 2023, Wider, 2023). Because of the link between the dependent variable—college students' choices—and the independent variable—factors influencing students' choices—the study design is causal explanatory in design. College students who are now enrolled in private higher education institutions in Malaysia's Klang Valley region make up the target audience. In order to achieve statistical significance, Hair et al. (2019) stated that a sample size ten times larger than the total number of latent variables under examination is required. The sample size for this study was calculated to be 170, as there are 7 latent variables being examined.

Survey based questionnaires were used as research instruments to collect data for this research study as this strategy enabled the researcher to evaluate a big sample in a short amount of time. The questionnaire has a few key sections. In first section, the respondents' demographic backgrounds are required including gender, age, type of programme enrolled, mode of study, total household income and parents' highest education level. In second section, respondents are required to provide their responses to five items pertaining the dependent variable which is choice of PHEIs. In third section, respondents are required to respond twelve items about three independent variables that influence choice of PHEIs which are cost, brand image, and promotions and marketing.

#### 4. Data Analysis

In order to verify the applicability of the measurement model, PLS-SEM was utilized in this study to examine the internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. In order to further examine the structural model, path coefficients and the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) were employed.

##### 4.1 Demographics Data

The demographic profile of respondents are tabulated below.

**Table 1:** Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N=170).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	67	39.4%
Female	103	60.6%
Age		
21 and below	35	20.6%
21 - 25	46	27.1%
25 - 30	34	20.0%
30 and above	55	32.4%
Type of Programme Enrolled		
Certificate/Foundation/A-level	7	4.1%
Diploma	23	13.5%
Undergraduate Degree	73	42.9%
Postgraduate Master	64	37.6%
Doctorate (PhD)	3	1.8%
Mode of Study		
Full Time	110	64.7%
Part Time	60	35.3%
Total Household Income		
RM 4,850 and below	56	32.9%
RM 4,851 – RM 10,970	61	35.9%
RM 10,971 and above	53	31.2%
Parent's Education (Highest)		
High School	88	51.8%
Diploma	18	10.6%
Degree	44	25.9%
Postgraduate Master	14	8.2%
Doctorate (PhD)	6	3.5%



Based on the data collected, there are 67 (39.4%) male respondents and 103 (60.6%) female respondents. In terms of age group, 35 (20.6%) of the respondents were below 21 years, 46 (27.1%) were between 21 to 25 years of age, 34 (20.0%) were 25 to 30 years of age, and 55 (32.4%) were above 30 years of age.

In regards to the type of programme enrolled, 7 (4.1%) of the respondents are enrolled in Pre-U programmes such as certificate, foundation or A-level. Meanwhile, 23 (13.5%) are currently enrolled in diploma and majority of the respondents, 73 (42.9%) are enrolled in undergraduate degree programmes. The second highest contributors, 64 (37.6%) are pursuing their postgraduate masters and the remaining 3 (1.8%) have enrolled into doctorate (PhD) programmes. Besides that, among the respondents, 110 (64.7%) of them are currently enrolled into full time mode programmes (conventional programme) and 60 (35.3%) are enrolled in part time mode programmes (working adults programmes).

A total of 61 (35.9%) respondents have a household income between RM 4,851 and RM 10,970 (M40), 53 (31.2%) respondents have a total household income of RM 10,971 and above (T20), and 56 (32.9%) respondents have a household income of RM 4,850 or less (B40). Lastly, the data shows that the majority, 88 (51.8%) of the respondent's parent's highest education is from high school, while 18 (10.6%) are diploma holders and 44 (25.9%) have completed a degree. Besides that, 14 (8.2%) of the respondents' parent's highest education are postgraduate masters and there are 6 (3.5%) of the parents with a doctorate (PhD).

## 4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

### 4.2.1 Internal Consistency Reliability

When each construct's Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability (CR) meet the requirement of 0.70 and above, the measurement model's internal consistency reliability is deemed excellent (Hair et al., 2017). According to Table 2, the composite reliability (CR) for first-order constructs varied from 0.836 to 0.895 and was higher than the 0.70 criterion. Also, Cronbach's alpha findings in Table 4.2 indicate values greater than 0.70, indicating that the items chosen to represent the constructs have acceptable internal consistency reliability (Hair et. al., 2017).

### 4.2.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is stated to be good when a construct's average variance extracted (AVE) value is equivalent to or greater than 0.50 (Hair et. al., 2012). Initially, the specified model was introduced and it was found that after the preliminary assessment of outer loading was performed, an item of the student's choice construct needed to be deleted due to lower loading, and it has caused the construct reliability and validity. After the deletion of the lower loading item, the requirement for Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was achieved with all the constructs' AVE ranging from 0.564 to 0.681 (Table 2), all of which were greater than 0.50, hence confirming the presence of convergent validity for all latent structures (Hair et. al., 2012).

**Table 2:** Construct Reliability & Validity.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
BI	0.841	0.852	0.895	0.681
CO	0.801	0.815	0.870	0.627
PM	0.830	0.862	0.887	0.663
SC	0.740	0.774	0.836	0.564

**Note:** BI= Brand Image, CO= Cost, PM= Promotions and Marketing, SC= College Students' Choice.



### 4.2.3 Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity of the measurement model was evaluated in this study using three measures: (i) Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria, (ii) cross loadings, and (iii) Hetrotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. To verify the presence of discriminant validity in this study, the Fornell-Larcker criterion was computed and it showed that the square roots of AVE (**bold numbers in diagonal**) are higher than the correlations among the constructs (off-diagonal values) (Table 3), proving that Fornell and Larcker's condition is achieved (Fornell and Larcker,1981).

**Table 3:** Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

	<b>BI</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>PM</b>	<b>SC</b>
BI	<b>0.825</b>			
CO	0.548	<b>0.792</b>		
PM	0.640	0.448	<b>0.814</b>	
SC	0.546	0.406	0.400	<b>0.751</b>

The second step as per Table 4 shows the results of cross loadings generated by the PLS-SEM algorithm function. As a result, the cross-loading results validates the discriminant validity of the measurement model (Chin, 1998).

**Table 4:** Cross Loadings.

	<b>BI</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>PM</b>	<b>SC</b>
BI1	0.852	0.473	0.603	0.509
BI2	0.901	0.469	0.523	0.470
BI3	0.824	0.534	0.454	0.451
BI4	0.712	0.317	0.531	0.356
CO1	0.400	0.778	0.250	0.331
CO2	0.450	0.863	0.326	0.347
CO3	0.506	0.815	0.450	0.351
CO4	0.362	0.704	0.393	0.243
PM1	0.493	0.379	0.837	0.279
PM2	0.515	0.425	0.860	0.317
PM3	0.392	0.171	0.702	0.226
PM4	0.636	0.430	0.847	0.432
SC1	0.399	0.283	0.228	0.696
SC3	0.424	0.316	0.321	0.786
SC4	0.271	0.208	0.261	0.638
SC5	0.504	0.380	0.374	0.863

Lastly, the Hetrotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios were checked to further confirm the presence of a discriminant. As shown in Table 5, all the HTMT values are lower than 0.90, proving the existence of discriminant validity of all ratios of the four constructs (Henseler et al., 2015).

**Table 5:** Hetrotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio.

	<b>BI</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>PM</b>
CO	0.658		
PM	0.749	0.530	
SC	0.672	0.509	0.486

Therefore, the reliability and validity tests done on the measurement model are good, indicating that the items used to measure the constructs in this research are valid and suitable for estimating the structural model's parameters (Hair et al., 2014).

### 4.3 Structural Model

#### 4.3.1 Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

Findings from the structural model (Figure 4.1) show that students' choice of PHEI has an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.316, higher than Cohen et al. (2011) suggested threshold value of 0.26. This shows that the model is significant and further suggests that cost, brand image, promotions and marketing would account for 31.6% of the variations in students' choice of PHEI (Hair et al., 2021). Moreover, an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.495 shows cost and promotions and marketing would account for 49.5% of the variations in brand image of PHEI's. Overall, the structural model has sufficient predictive power and the R<sup>2</sup> criteria is satisfied (Chin, 1998).

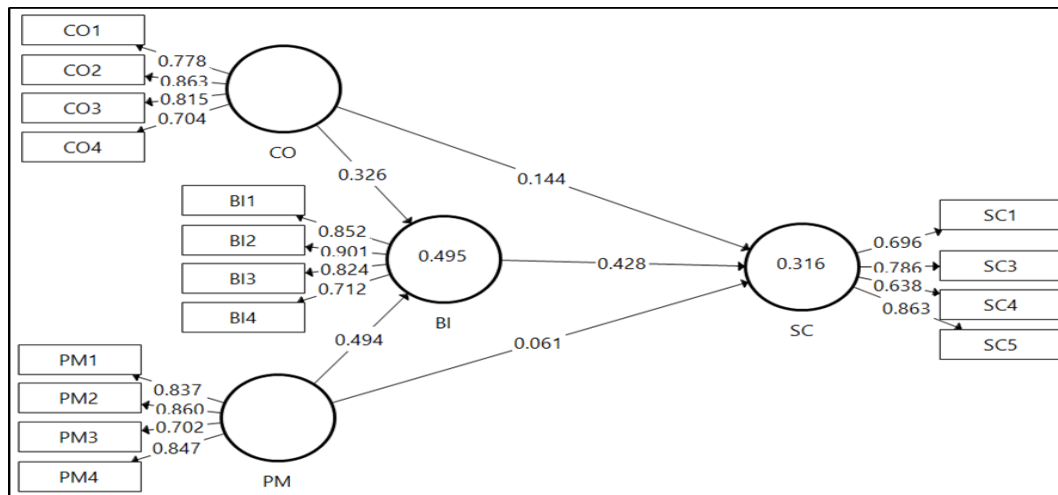


Figure 2: Structural Model.

#### 4.3.2 Path Coefficients

In the context of ordinary least squares regression, path coefficients may be regarded of as standardised beta coefficients (Henseler et. al., 2015). In this study, the bootstrapping method and t-statistics are both employed to assess the significance of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2021). Table 4.6 shows the statistical results of the hypotheses testing of path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-value. Using the path coefficient findings, each suggested hypothesis is either accepted or rejected (Hair et al., 2021).

#### 4.3.3 Hypothesis Testing

In Table 4.6, hypothesis 1 result demonstrates a positive but insignificant relationship between cost and student choice ( $\beta=0.144$ ,  $t=1.578$ ,  $p=0.115$ ); therefore, H1 is not supported. Hypothesis 2 proposes a relationship between brand image and student choice and the result confirms that there is a positive and significant brand image and student choice ( $\beta = 0.428$ ,  $t = 4.811$ ,  $p=0.000$ ); as a result, H2 is supported. However, the hypothesis result reveals the positive but insignificant relationship between promotional & marketing and student choice ( $\beta=0.061$ ,  $t=0.657$ ,  $p=0.511$ ), and thus, H3 is not supported. The result of hypothesis 4 reveals a significant and positive relationship between cost and brand image ( $\beta=0.326$ ,  $t=4.622$ ,

$p=0.000$ ); thus, supporting H4. Hypothesis 5 result reveals the positive and significant relationship between promotional & marketing and brand image ( $\beta=0.494$ ,  $t= 9.011$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and thus, H5 is supported. Then, the hypothesis 6 result reveals that brand image positively and significantly mediated the relationship between cost and student choice ( $\beta=0.140$ ,  $t=3.324$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), and thus, H6 is supported. Lastly, the hypothesis 7 result reveals that brand image positively and significantly mediated the relationship between promotion & marketing and student choice ( $\beta=0.211$ ,  $t=3.961$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and thus, H7 is supported.

**Table 6:** Hypotheses Testing Results.

	Direct Effect	T Statistics	P Values
CO -> SC	0.144	1.578	0.115
BI -> SC	0.428	4.811	0.000
PM -> SC	0.061	0.657	0.511
CO -> BI	0.326	4.622	0.000
PM -> BI	0.494	9.011	0.000
	Indirect Effect	T Statistics	P Values
CO -> BI -> SC	0.140	3.324	0.001
PM -> BI -> SC	0.211	3.961	0.000

**Table 7:** Summary of Hypothesis Testing.

	Hypothesis Statement	Results
H1	Cost has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Not Supported
H2	Brand image has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Supported
H3	Promotions and marketing has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Not Supported
H4	Cost has a positive and significant influence on brand image of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Supported
H5	Promotions and marketing has a positive and significant influence on brand image of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Supported
H6	Brand image mediates the effects of cost on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Supported
H7	Brand image mediates the effects of promotions and marketing on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.	Supported

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1 Discussions of Findings

The following sections will discuss on the conclusions drawn from the findings:

**i. H1:** *Cost has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Hypothesis 1 is not supported since it does not have a significant p-value, indicating that cost has no significant influence on college students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. These

findings, however, contradict the conclusions of prior research that suggest cost has a significant influence on students' choice of PHEI, such as Hidayat et al. (2018) in Indonesia, Le (2020) in Vietnam, Nuseir and El-Refae (2021) in Qatar, and Ooi (2019) in Malaysia's Northern Region. This factor may not be an issue for students' in the Klang Valley area since they come from reasonably well-off households (Abdullah, et al., 2021). Nonetheless, before applying for enrollment to an institution, students tend to establish strong preferences for certain institutions by analyzing their own financial potential, and consider alternate finance options (Nuseir and El-Refae, 2021). In other words, students enrolled in PHEIs are aware of the high cost of attending a private institution, but they choose the PHEI because it is feasible and affordable for their parents' financial situation (Kusumawati, 2013).

Besides that, the Klang Valley area is very small in contrast to Indonesia, Vietnam, and Qatar, and PHEIs in Klang Valley are widely scattered around the region (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2021). Therefore, the expenses for accommodation and transportation are relatively affordable for local students. As a result, in this research, with this particular sample of students, cost does not seem to be a concern for choosing a private institution.

**ii. H2:** *Brand image has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Hypothesis 2 is supported based on the path coefficient findings since its significant level was 0.000. These results are aligned with those of Adom (2015) in Sarawak, Haron et al. (2017) in Perak, Hidayat et al. (2018) in Indonesia, and Migin (2015) in Malaysia, all of which discovered that an institution's brand image has a significant influence on students' choice. The most important brand images that students take into account while enrolling in private universities are elements such as university rating and rankings, university accomplishments, and local or international accreditation (Qasim et al., 2020).

The brand image of the institution attended, especially the ratings and ranking, influences students' employability (Migin, 2015), and according to Bol et al. (2019). Students that graduated from well-respected universities have a favorable reputation in the job market, where they are expected to perform well (Adom, 2015). As a result, the brand image of the PHEI is particularly crucial for students in the Klang Valley area since it increases the likelihood of securing a job soon after graduation (Hossler and Gallagher, 1987).

**iii. H3:** *Promotions and marketing has a positive and significant influence on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Hypothesis 3 is not supported since it lacks a significant p-value, indicating that promotions and marketing have no significant influence on college students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. According to Ghansah et al. (2015), students do not believe their usage of social media influences their choice of institutions, therefore increasing enrolment numbers via social media marketing and promotion is unlikely to be effective. However, the study concluded that if social media marketing provides useful information about the institution and enhances its integrity, it might increase the number of students who knows about the institution and consider it when choosing one to enrol.

In addition, Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2015) studies found that students who are matured do not choose an institute merely based on promotions via advertisement or media as they emphasise more on collecting and comparing facts to support their decision before enrolling. Besides that, Amoako (2020) also reported that promotions and marketing are the least

influencing factor of students' choice to higher educational institution. Therefore, it can be concluded that students in Klang Valley regions does not get influenced with promotions and marketing of a PHEI when choosing an institution.

**iv. H4:** *Cost has a positive and significant influence on brand image of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Based on the path coefficient findings, Hypothesis 4 is supported since its significant level was 0.000. The results of this study agree with the findings from studies by Dib and Awad-Alhaddad (2015) and Hermawan (2021) that cost has significant effect on brand image. According to Hermawan (2021), private institutes have an image of exclusivity, but many people mistakenly believe that only those who are economically privileged can afford to attend. Since students attending private institutions are subject to a wide range of expenses such as transportation and accommodation fees, semester tuition fees, and application fees, it is important for PHEIs to have a competitive price as it affects the brand image.

Besides, empirical research conducted by Dib and Awad-Alhaddad (2015) indicated that a high or low cost approach improves the brand's image. It is possible to draw the conclusion that the brand image of the PHEIs in Klang Valley may be improved to a greater extent if the institutions incur a fair fee for the students who would want to enroll with them.

**v. H5:** *Promotions and marketing has a positive and significant influence on brand image of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Based on the research findings, hypothesis 5 is accepted as the significant value for promotions and marketing is 0.000, where it clearly establishes a relationship with the brand image of PHEI in Klang Valley as is aligned with findings of Alkhawaldeh et al. (2020), Bilgin (2018), and Swati et. al. (2019) studies who made the claims that promotions and marketing significantly influence brand image of institutions. Promoting the institute is one of the most important tasks PHEIs do to build their brand image (Swati et. al. 2019). Prospective students gain a greater awareness of what it is like to attend the PHEI as a result of these promotions and marketing. This promotion will contribute to shaping people's perceptions of the institution's brand image (Hermawan, 2021).

Many service providing industries, such as PHEIs may worry on the impact of utilizing marketing communication mix to promote their programmes to potential students as it might affect their brand image (Hermawan, 2021). However, this study's finding shows that promotion and marketing of an institute's brand has a beneficial impact on students' perceptions on the company's brand image. In conclusion, PHEIs in Klang Valley can improve their brand image with better promotions and marketing strategies.

**vi. H6:** *Brand image mediates the effects of cost on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Hypothesis 6 is accepted based on the path coefficient findings since its significant level was 0.001, indicating that brand image mediates the effect of cost positively and significantly on college students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. According to Armayani and Jatra (2019), the cost that a product or services sets for itself helps build the image of both the brand and the firm when consumers are making choices about which products to purchase. Additionally, Leksono and Herwin (2017) asserted that the higher the cost, the stronger the brand image and the more likely the consumer is to make a purchase. Also, the results of a study by Purnamasari

and Murwatiningsih (2015), shows that brand image can help to improve purchasing decision when cost affects the choices.

**vii. H7:** *Brand image mediates the effects of promotions and marketing on college students' choice of private higher education institution in Klang Valley.*

Hypothesis 7 is accepted based on the path coefficient findings since its significant level was 0.000, indicating that brand image mediates the effect of promotions and marketing positively and significantly on college students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. Hermawan (2021) suggests that an institute's brand image is how potential students recognize the institution. If the institution is able to promote and market itself well and prospective students have a good impression of the institute's brand, then most of them will decide to enroll there (Hossler and Stage, 1992).

Besides that, both Armayani and Jatra (2019) and Purnamasari and Murwatiningsih (2015), mentioned that the brand image is best pathway for promotions and marketing to influence purchasing decisions of consumers. Their research indicates that a stronger sales promotion and marketings leads to a more favorable brand image of the company and a more determined approach toward making a purchase.

## **5.2 Implication of the Study**

### **5.2.1 Theoretical Implications**

This study's results may aid other researchers in understanding the factors that influence college students' choice of PHEIs in Klang Valley. This study adds to academia since private institutions are on the brink of economic collapse as a result of their competitive market and the Covid-19 epidemic, yet there is little research on the factors that attract students to this market. Moreover, this research contributed to the scholarly community by examining and comprehending the mediating influence of brand image as a mediator variable in conjunction with the influential factors chosen for this study (cost and promotions and marketing). As previous research did not concentrate on brand image as a mediator variable with both of these independent factors, this study contributed to the body of knowledge by filling in the gap in the literature. The results of this research might serve as a starting point for further research that may focus on other variables or apply a different methodological approach. This study has extended the current models and framework on college choice decisions.

### **5.2.2 Managerial Implications**

According to the findings of this research, brand image has a direct significant relationship with students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. Brand image also acts as a moderator for cost and promotions and marketing to have a significant relationship with students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. Besides, it is extremely important for PHEIs to encourage students to enroll in the institutions so that the organization may continue to generate revenues. Hence, marketing managers in PHEIs should prioritize brand image improvements such as academic quality, accreditations, ratings, and rankings, which have been shown to be major determinants of students' decision to enroll at a particular PHEI in this study. Moreover, the findings show that more students will be drawn to highly recognized PHEIs that provide programmes at reasonable costs. In addition, the findings recommend PHEI's marketing management team should work on publicizing the institution's accomplishments in order to recruit more students. Overall, this research contributes to the betterment of the marketing strategies of PHEIs to attract more students to enroll.



### 5.2.3 Implications to Policy Makers

In keeping with the objective of the Ministry of Higher Education to make Malaysia the regional higher education centre (Munusamy and Hashim, 2019), the study's results offered new knowledge that would aid government and the local authorities in implementing a more suitable policy and formulating a strong strategy. The study's results show that students place an emphasis on a college's brand image and reputation when making their decision, thus it's crucial that the government of Malaysia keep monitoring on the standards of education provided by each institutions in the country. As a result of this research, policymakers will have a better idea of how to motivate PHEIs to keep providing potential students with chances for further education. In addition to that, this will encourage more international students to pursue their studies in Malaysia and thus achieving the goal of the policymakers.

### 5.3 Limitation of the Study

This research has a few limitations, including its short research duration and the restricted scope of the factors that were examined. This is a cross-sectional study since it is conducted over a brief period of time (Saunders et al., 2019), leaving insufficient time for data collection, in-depth interpretation, and analysis of the outcomes. A more in-depth understanding of students' choice of PHEI may be gained if this study were undertaken as a longitudinal study over a longer time frame (Sekaran and Bougie, 2019).

In this study, three influencing variables and one moderator variable were chosen with the assumption that it will significantly influence college students' choice of PHEI. However, that other variables, such as parental influence (Adom, 2015; Ooi, 2019), educational facilities (Qasim et al., 2020), and locations (Nuseir and El-Refae, 2021), that may influence college students' choice of PHEIs are not considered in this study.

### 5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The concepts given in this study might be further studied in a number of ways in considering the above limitations. Firstly, it is advised that future studies should be on a longitudinal time frame and be conducted over an extended period of time as this research was conducted only in 10 weeks long. This study may provide more thorough information of college students' PHEI choices if it had been done as a longitudinal study in a longer time period (Sekaran and Bougie, 2019).

Lastly, it is advised that future research investigate additional possible influencing variables, such as parental or peer influence, educational facilities or geographic location, which may have a significant impact on students' choice of PHEI in Klang Valley. In addition, variables such as future career expectations or employability can be investigated. Since the job market is becoming more competitive due to the dynamism of the economy, consequently, it is essential to guarantee that the institutions chosen by the student will provide a secure employment (Hidayat et. al., 2018).

### 5.5 Conclusion

According to the analysis findings, college students' choice of PHEI in the Klang Valley region are most significantly influenced by brand image. Cost, and promotions and marketing factors do not have a direct impact on the students' decisions, but when brand image acts as a mediating element, these two variables do have an impact. In conclusion, to draw in more prospects, private institutions must continue to seek to enhance their brand image by

improving its quality and accreditations. PHEIs also need to make sure the fees that the students are paying are valuable for them and the information shared during marketing are legit in order to keep up the good image. In addition, the results are expected to provide a significance information to academia, industry, and policymakers. In conclusion, the results of this research has addressed the research questions, and the study's objectives were also achieved.

## References

1. Abdullah, L., Mansor, N., Mohamad, M., & Teoh, S. (2021). Quality of Life and Associated Factors Among University Students During The COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cross-Sectional Study. *BMJ Open*, 11(10), pp. 1-12.
2. Adetayo, A., Dr. Senathirajah, A. R. B. S, Devasia, S.N. & Haque, R. (2022). Modelling Consumer Perception of Service Quality in Banks, *Res Militaris*, European Journal of Military Studies, (12)(2), 1357-1373. <https://resmilitaris.net/menu-script/index.php/resmilitaris/article/view/207/137>
3. Adom, A. (2015). Students' Factors Preference of Choosing Private University in Sarawak, Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Conference on Business and Social Sciences*. Kuala Lumpur: The Journal of Developing Areas, pp. 206 - 218.
4. Agrey, L., & Lampadan, N. (2014). Determinant Factors Contributing to Student Choice in Selecting a University. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 3(2), pp. 391-404.
5. Ahmed, S., Haque, R., Senathirajah, A. R. bin S., Chowdhury, B., & Khalil, M.I. (2022b). Examining the Mediation Effect of Organisational Response Towards Covid-19 on Employee Satisfaction in SMEs, *International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management*. (28)(2), 461-485. <https://submissions.ijocm.org/index.php/ijocm/article/view/93/26>
6. Al-Ali Mustafa, S., Sellami, A., Elmaghraby, E., & Al-Qassass, H. (2018). Determinants of College and University Choice for High-School Students in Qatar. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 7(3), p. 1.
7. Alkhalwaldeh, A., Alsaad, A., Taamneh, A. & Alhawamdeh, H. (2020). Examining Antecedents and Consequences of University Brand Image. *Management Science Letters*, 10(5), pp. 953-960.
8. Amoako, N. (2020). Factors Influencing Students' Choice of Tertiary Education. *Africa Development and Resources Research Institute*, 11(5), pp. 58-92.
9. Armayani, A., & Jatra, I. M. (2019). Peran Brand Image Memediasi Promosi Dan Harga Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Smartphone Samsung Di Kota Denpasar. *E-Jurnal Manajemen*, 8(8), pp. 5222–5239.
10. Artyasto, J., & Nawiroh, V. (2021). Factors that Influence Students in Choosing Private Universities in Indonesia. *British Journal of Contemporary Education*, 1(1), pp. 99-108.
11. Azman, N. (2021). Private Universities, Colleges Risk Permanent Closure. *The Malaysian Reserve*.
12. Azoury, N., Daou, L., & Houry, C. E. (2014). University Image and Its Relationship to Student Satisfaction-Case of The Middle Eastern Private Business Schools. *International Strategic Management Review*, 2(1), pp. 1-8.
13. Baliyan, S.P. (2020). An Investigation into Factors Influencing Students' Choice to Enrol at Private Higher Education Institutions in Botswana. PhD. University of South Africa.
14. Bartik, T., Miller-Adams, M., Pittelko, B., & Timmeney, B. (2021). Economic Costs and Benefits of Tuition-Free College in Illinois. *Employment Research*, 28(4), pp. 4-7.

15. Bilgin, Y. (2018). The Effect of Social Media Marketing Activities on Brand Awareness, Brand Image and Brand Loyalty. *Business & Management Studies: An International Journal*. 6. 10.15295/v6i1.229.
16. Bol, T., Ciocca Eller, C., Werfhorst, H., & DiPrete, T. (2019). School-to-Work Linkages, Educational Mismatches, and Labor Market Outcomes. *American Sociological Review*, 84(2), pp. 275-307.
17. Callender, C., & Melis, G. (2022). The Privilege of Choice: How Prospective College Students' Financial Concerns Influence Their Choice of Higher Education Institution and Subject of Study in England. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 93(3), pp. 477-501.
18. Chapman, D.W. (1981). A Model of Student College Choice. *Journal of Higher Education*, 52, pp. 490-505.
19. Chapman, R. G. (1986). Toward a Theory of College Selection: A Modal of College search and Choice Behavior. *Advances in Consumer Research*,13. pp. 246-250.
20. Chin, W. W. (1998). The Partial Least Squares Approach to Structural Equation Modelling. *Modern Methods for Business Research*, 19(2), pp. 295–358.
21. Cohen, L., Manion. L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.
22. Daily, C. M., Farewell, S., & Kumar, G. (2010). Factors Influencing the University Selection of International Students. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal*, 14(3), pp. 59–76.
23. Dao, M., & Thorpe, A. (2015). What Factors Influence Vietnamese Students' Choice of University? *International Journal of Educational Management*, 29(5), pp. 666-681.
24. Department of Statistics Malaysia, (2020). *Education Statistics*. Department of Statistics Malaysia.
25. Dib, H. & Awad-Alhaddad, A. (2015). Determinants of Brand Image in Social Media. *International Journal of e-Education, e-Business, e-Management and e-Learning*, 5(4), pp. 180-190.
26. Easter, A. (2012). *A Comparative Analysis of Factors Influencing Students' College Choice Between Attending Public Colleges, Private Colleges, or Religiously Affiliated Colleges*. PhD. Union University.
27. Faisal, A.S., R. Haque, A.K. Pang, A. Rahman, and G. Connie. 2020. The influence of e-service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and purchase intention: An Indian e-market perspective. *Asian Journal of Technology & Management Research* 10 (01): 1–22.
28. Fornell, C. G., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), pp. 39–50.
29. Ghansah, N., Ghansah, B., Benuwa, B., & Ocquaye, E. (2015). Using Social Media as a Marketing Tool in Tertiary Institutions: A Case Study of Data Link University, Ghana. *International Journal of Engineering Research in Africa*, 20, pp. 218-232.
30. *Global Education Monitoring Report*. (2021). Private higher education in East and Southeast Asia: growth, challenges, implications. UNESCO Digital Library.
31. Hailong, Y., Tao, M.W., Michael,M.A., Senathirajah, A. R. B. S., & Connie, G.(2022b), Online Apparel Retailing: E-Service Attributes Influencing Purchase Intention, *Res Militaris*,12(2) Summer-Autumn, 1141-1153, <https://resmilitaris.net/menu-script/index.php/resmilitaris/article/view/185/114>
32. Hailong,Y., Senathirajah, A. R. B. S, Connie,G., & Haque,R. (2022a). Key E-Dimensions influencing hotel website quality, *Res Militaris, European Journal of Military Studies* , (12)(2) Summer-Autumn,1567-1583. <https://resmilitaris.net/menu>
33. Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2014). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

34. Hair, J. F., Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Mena, J. A. (2012). An Assessment of the Use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling in Marketing Research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 40(3), pp. 414–433.
35. Hair, J., Anderson, R., Babin, B., & Black, W. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis*. 7th ed. Australia: Cengage.
36. Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A Primer On Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*. Los Angeles: Sage Publication.
37. Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N.P., & Ray, S. (2021). *An Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling. In: Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Using R. Classroom Companion: Business*. Cham: Springer.
38. Haque, R., Rahman, A., & Kow, A. P. A. (2020). Factors Affecting Customer's Satisfaction and Loyalty in Hospitals in China. *Asian Journal of Technology & Management Research*, 10(1), 101-115.
39. Haron, H., Hamid, N., Jamaludin, J. & Azan, K. (2017). Students Decision Factors in Choosing Private Higher Education Institutions. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 7(11), pp.1372 - 1382.
40. Hemsley-Brown, J., & Oplatka, I. (2015). University Choice: What Do We Know, What Don't We Know and What Do We Still Need to Find Out? *International Journal of Educational Management*, 29(3), pp. 254-274.
41. Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A New Criterion for Assessing Discriminant Validity in Variance-Based Structural Equation Modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), pp. 115-135.
42. Hermawan, D. (2021). Analysis of Factors Affecting Selection Decisions of Private Universities in Bali Through Brand Image Mediation Variables. *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR)*, 59(2), pp. 48-60.
43. Hidayat, R., Sinuhaji, E., Widyaningrum, Erdiansyah, & Adrianto. (2018). Factors That Affect Students Decision to Choose Private Universities in Medan City Indonesia. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 17(6), pp. 1-8.
44. Hossler, D., & Gallagher, K. (1987). Studying College Choice: A Three-Phase Model and The Implication for Policy Makers. *AACRAO*, 62(3), pp. 207-221.
45. Hossler, D., & Stage, F. K. (1992). Family and High School Experience Influences On the Postsecondary Educational Plans of Ninth-Grade Students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(2), pp. 425-451.
46. Hunter, M. (2020). The Collapse of Malaysian Private Universities. *Asia Sentinel*.
47. Jatisidi, A., & Vera, N. (2021). Factors that Influence Students in Choosing Private Universities in Indonesia. *British Journal of Contemporary Education*, 1(1), pp. 99-108.
48. Jiang, Y., Abdullah, SINW., Lim, BJH., Wang, R., & Phuah, KT. (2023). The role of marketing stimuli and attitude in determining post-COVID buying decisions toward organic food products: evidence from retail consumers in Beijing, China. *Front. Sustain. Food Syst.* 7:1051696. doi: 10.3389/fsufs.2023.1051696
49. Khalil, M.I., Haque, R., Senathirajah, A. R. bin S., Chowdhury, B., & Ahmed, S., (2022b). Modelling Factors Affecting SME Performance in Malaysia, *International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management*, (28)(2), 506-524. <https://submissions.ijoqm.org/index.php/ijoqm/article/view/95/28>.
50. Kristanto, J., Soleh, A., Al-Idrus, S., & Raya, M. (2021). Promotion Mix Nahdlatul Ulama University of Surabaya to Increase New Student's Interest. *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 5(2), pp. 1-14.

51. Kusumawati, A. (2013). A Qualitative Study of the Factors Influencing Student Choice: The Case of Public University in Indonesia. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, 3, 314-327.
52. Le, H. (2020). Factors Affecting Students' Decision to Select Private Universities in Vietnam. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(4), pp. 235-245.
53. Leksono, R. B., & Herwin, H. (2017). Pengaruh Harga Dan Promosi Grab Terhadap Brand Image Yang Mempengaruhi Keputusan Pembelian Konsumen Pengguna Transportasi Berbasis Online. *Jurnal Riset Manajemen Dan Bisnis (JRMB) Fakultas Ekonomi UNIAT*, 2(3), pp. 381–390.
54. Li, X. T., Rahman, A., Connie, G., & Osman, Z. (2020) Examining customers' perception of electronic shopping mall's e-service quality, *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, 11(4), 329-346. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSEM.2020.111930>
55. Markle, G. (2015). Factors Influencing Persistence Among Non-traditional University Students. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 65(3), pp. 267–285.
56. Mcfadden, M. (2015). What Factors Influence College Choice for Today Students.
57. Mico, S., Syamsurijal, R. B., & Shihab, M. (2019). Students' Decision in Selecting Private Universities in Palembang City. *Eurasia: Economics & Business*, 20(2), pp. 52-65.
58. Migin, M. W. (2015). Impact of Institutional Characteristics on International Students' Choice of Private Higher Educational Institutions in Malaysia. *Higher Education Studies*, 5(1). pp.31-42.
59. Munusamy, M., & Hashim, A. (2019). Internationalisation of Higher Education in Malaysia: Insights from higher education administrators. *AEI Insights*, 5(1), pp. 21 - 39.
60. Nellikunnel, S., Haldorai, K., Rahman, A., & Zangose, M. (2017). The country of origin effect on consumer purchase intention: PLS modelling. *International Journal of Business and Globalisation*, 19(3), 378– 395. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBG.2017.087219>
61. Nellikunnel, Syriac, Abdul Rahman, Arif Jawaid, and Lim Eng Sim. (2015). "Generation Y male cosmetic consumption patterns: regression modelling." *International Journal of Modelling in Operations Management* 5, no. 2: 154-176
62. Nuseir, M., & El-Refae, G. (2021). Factors Influencing the Choice of Studying at UAE Universities: An Empirical Research on the Adoption of Educational Marketing Strategies. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, pp. 1-23.
63. Ogiemwonyi, O., Harun, A., Rahman, A., Hamawandy, N. M., Alam, M. N., & Jalal, F. B. (2018). Examining the impact of service quality dimensions on customer loyalty towards hypermarket retailing: A case study of Malaysia. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(04).
64. Ong, C., & Ramasamy, R. (2022). Service Quality and Corporate Image Leads to Student Loyalty Mediated by Student Satisfaction in The Malaysia Context. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 4(1), pp. 146 - 156.
65. Ooi, C. (2019). A Study of College Students' Choice in The Selection of Private Institute of Higher Education in Northern Region, Malaysia. Master. Inti international University.
66. Padlee, S., Kamaruddin, A., & Baharun, R. (2010). International Students' Choice Behavior for Higher Education at Malaysian Private Universities. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2(2), pp. 202-211.
67. Purnamasari, S., & Murwatiningsih. (2015). Brand Image Sebagai Mediasi Pengaruh Promosi, Harga Dan Sikap Konsumen Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Jamu Nyonya Meneer Di Semarang Timur. *Management Analysis Journal*, 4(3), pp. 265–272.
68. Qasim, A., Al-Askari, P., Massoud, H., & Ayoubi, R. (2020). Student university choice in Kurdistan-Iraq: what factors matter? *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 45(1), pp. 120-136.



69. Rahman, A., Hong, C., Haque, R., Alfred, P. and Connie, G. (2011). Customer Satisfaction in Tourism Service Quality. *Advanced Science*, American Scientific Publication. 4, pp. 3398-3402
70. Rahman, A., San, L. H., Jing, D., Yan, Q., and Nellikunnel, S. (2017). Modelling consumers' perceptions of internet service quality by structured equation analysis. *International Journal of Services, Economics and Management*, 8(3),197. doi:10.1504/ijsem.2017.095447
71. Rahman, A., Siang, T., Zahir, O., San, L., Jawaid, A., Subramaniam, P., and Haque, R. (2018). Modelling Consumer Perceptions of Internet Retail Service Quality through Structured Equation Analysis. *Herald NAMSCA* 1
72. Retamosa, M., Millán, A., & García, J. (2022). The Journey Towards Finding Your Favourite University. A Segmentation Study Based on Selection Criteria. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, pp. 1-25.
73. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students*. 8th ed. New York: Pearson.
74. Schlesinger, W., Cervera-Taulet, A., & Wymer, W. (2021). The influence of university brand image, satisfaction, and university identification on alumni WOM intentions. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, pp. 1-19.
75. Secore, S. (2018). The Significance of Campus Visitations to College Choice and Strategic Enrollment Management. *Strategic Enrollment Management Quarterly*, 5(4), pp. 150–158.
76. Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2019). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*, (8th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
77. Senathirajah, A. R. B. S & Haque, R. (2022). A Phenomenological Study Exploring Consumers' Perception Of E-Service Quality: A Case Study on Online Shoppers, *Res Militaris*, (12)(2),1250-1262, <https://resmilitaris.net/menu-script/index.php/resmilitaris/article/view/199/129>
78. Shah, M., Sid Nair, C., & Bennett, L. (2013). Factors influencing student choice to study at private higher education institutions. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 21(4), pp. 402-416.
79. Swati, P., Satyendra, C., Andrea, B., & Tian, X. (2019). University Brand Image as Competitive Advantage: A Two-Country Study. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 33(2), pp. 234-251.
80. Wider, W. (2023). Effects Of Metacognitive Skills on Physics Problem -Solving Skills Among Form Four Secondary School Students. *Journal of Baltic Science Education*, 22(2), pp.357-369.
81. Yi, L. M., Wan, T. S., Haldorai, K., Rahman, A., Haque, R., Haibin, P., & Shengnan, Y. (2018). Structure Equation Analysis on Customer Satisfaction of Public Transport: An Empirical Study in Klang Valley Malaysia. *International Journal of Engineering & Technology*,7(4.38), 778-782.