

Chapter Three

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The issue of tertiary institution choice has been widely researched with varied results. Most of these studies have researched on the impact and type of influences during the total search process. There is, however, a relatively smaller amount of literature that focused on the last phase, that is identification of the choice criteria which students consider important when choosing an educational institution. Studies of this final phase usually are conducted from the perspective of individual colleges seeking to determine which institutional attributes are significant in distinguishing between those who enroll and those who do not. This study attempts to find out what are some of the choice criteria which students in a private college have considered when they decided to enrol in the college.

3.1 Research Instrument

This study makes use of a questionnaire, which was developed by referring to earlier works done by other researchers and in consultation with the Supervisor. There are a total of 35 items in the questionnaire, which comprises open-ended questions as well as close-ended questions. The close-ended questions employ 5 point Likert-like items. All the questions in Section Two were designed to measure the level of influence each item has

on the student choice of a college and the item is based on the following Likert-like scale.

Respondents were requested to circle only one item in the scale.

1. No influence
2. Slight influence
3. Moderate influence
4. Strong influence
5. Very strong influence

3.2 Research Design

The questionnaire is basically divided into 2 parts, Part One and Part Two. Part One attempts to find out the following background information of each of the respondent:

- Gender
- Age
- Race
- Family size
- Position in family
- Father's / guardian's occupation
- Father's / guardian's highest academic achievement
- Father's / guardian's monthly income

- Last school attended
- Total aggregate in SPM examination
- Full – time / part-time studies

Part Two lists some of the possible factors, which may have influenced the choice of the respondent, and these factors are categorized into six headings:

- Course information available
- Reputation of the college
- Location
- Facilities
- Sports activities
- Financial

3.3 Target Population and Sampling Procedure

A total of 71 students from the Foundation Programme were identified from a private college in Petaling Jaya to give their response for this study. All 71 students responded to the questionnaire, thereby making a 100% response. The administrator of the college was asked to assist in the questionnaire administration after the students were briefed on the purpose and nature of the research.

The population comprises 66.2% of females and 33.8% males. The ethnic composition of the sample group has a strong Chinese bias at 91.4%. The balance of the population comprises 7.1% Indian students and 1.4% Malays.

3.4 Analysis of Data

The data collected was analysed using the Minitab software package. The results were presented in tables, charts, and figures using Excel. Simple statistics such as means, percentages and frequencies were used to describe the findings.