FACTORS INFLUENCING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS’ CHOICE OF ENROLLING AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS VIA THE INTERNET

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Technologiae in Business Administration at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

PROMOTER: PROF. N. D. KEMP

25 November 2009
DECLARATION

I, Ning Yang, here with declare the following:

- This work has not been previously accepted in substance for a degree and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any degree.

- This dissertation is being submitted in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Business Administration.

- This dissertation is the result of my own original work and all sources used or referred to have been documented and organized.

- I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be made available for photocopying and for interlibrary loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organizations.

Ning Yang

November, 2009
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ABSTRACT

As the competition increase in the Higher Education industry, marketing departments of Higher Education Institutions view students as consumers and market their institutions. At the mean time, universities around the world encourage their international offices to increase the foreign student enrollments. This research investigates the factors influencing international students’ choice of enrolling at Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) via the internet: international students’ Internet use to facilitate information search and decision making.

This survey of international students from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) explored the Internet’s role in marketing international education. Based on this exploratory research, NMMU educational institutions gain insights of online customer service for successfully recruiting students.

The results show that prospective overseas students do indeed use the internet. Overall evaluation of the factors influencing the use of the internet for enrolling at HEIs was determined by four factors: namely, perceived usefulness, consumer involvement, perceived ease of use and opinion leadership.
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CHAPTER 1
OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION
It is now widely accepted that the information technology revolution will have a profound effect on the conduct of international business as society moves towards the new millennium (Hamill, 1997:300). Executives, government leaders, educators, and students alike are taking advantage of the opportunities to learn and transmit the knowledge of the world (Onkvisit & Shaw, 2004: xviii).

Global trends within the field of Higher Education have brought new competitors (Ivy, 2001:158-70), who are involved in increasing the intense struggle to attract new students (Nicholls, Harris, Morgan, Clark & Sims, 1995: 31-8; Soutar & Turner, 2002: 139-46). At the same time, many universities around the world are encouraging their international offices and faculties to increase foreign student enrolments. Global marketing and national marketing is essential to both the universities and students. Nowadays Higher Education Institutions should devote themselves to attracting international students, and offer international education in order to generate income from overseas countries, differentiating between business techniques that are universal and those that are unique to a particular country or region (Onkvisit & Shaw, 2004: xviii).

The exploration of the international marketing activity on the internet and the
associated emergence of the global information superhighway have a profound effect on the conduct of international business in the new millennium (Hamill, 1997:300). The internet can substantially improve communications with actual and potential customers, suppliers and partners abroad (Hamill, 1997:300). The internet generates a wealth of information on the market trends and developments worldwide, and is a very powerful international promotion and sales tool (Hamill, 1997:300).

In order to remain competitive, Higher Education Institutions are starting to use internet technologies. Universities invite candidates to take part in the internet transformation through websites and e-mail. Through the internet students can discover information about the university, staff contact details and enrolment requirements. In the past, this information was only available from agencies concerned with students wishing to study abroad. Now information can be obtained from universities' websites or via e-mail requesting further detailed information.

Having reviewed the related literature, the researcher found that no research has been done to date on international students’ option of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENTS
The aim of the study is to determine international students’ choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet. This will help Higher Education Institutions to increase their overseas students’ enrolment in order
to be more competitive. This research problem to be addressed in this study is:

To what extent do international students choose an institution of Higher Education via the internet?

Sub-problems
To address this main research problem, the following sub-problems will be identified:

- What, according to the literature, is international marketing?
- What role does the internet play as an international marketing tool?
- What factors, according to the literature, affect consumers’ use of internet technologies?
- Which of these factors are likely to influence international students’ choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet?

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
In order to address the sub-problems, the following objectives will be identified.

- Study the literature on the nature of international marketing and analysis on international competitive environment.
- Analyse the factors that influence the individual use of internet technologies, with the aim of providing a conceptual framework for the understanding of the choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet.
- Identify an appropriate measuring instrument to evaluate the elements on
the use of internet technologies.

- Identify the demographic characteristics of international students and analyse whether there is a relationship between these characteristics and use of internet technologies.
- Accurately report the findings of the above-mentioned empirical investigations.
- Make recommendations on the international students’ choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUALISATION

The survey of the literature presents a clear overview of Higher Education and determinants that influence international students’ decision making. With the aim of addressing the objectives of the research, the research will conduct a conceptual model for the study.

1.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Cubillo, Sanchez and Cervino (2006:103) state that most quality attributes in Higher Education cannot be perceived, felt, or tested in advance. The quality of Higher Education may vary markedly according to different circumstances: from year to year, class to class, student to student, lecturer to lecturer (Patterson, Romm & Hill, 1998:135-57; Owlia & Spinwall, 1996:15-20). This results in the growing number of international students in search of Higher Education and the inclusion of new countries as destinations.

Because of the inaccessibility of Higher Education services and its
associated benefits, it is difficult for international students to obtain help in decision making (Maringe & Carter, 2007:461). The complex nature of the decision to study abroad, such as of missed opportunities back home, disruption of family life, uncertainties about progress and chances of success in the course, make this a difficult decision for the international student (Maringe & Carter, 2007:461). According to (Cubillo et al, 2006: 104), there are four factors with a total of nineteen variables that influence decision making. The factors identified are personal reasons, country image, and institution image and programmed evaluation.

Gomes and Murphy (2003:116) state that Higher Education Institutions use internet technologies (websites and e-mail) to assist the international students in their decision making. International students use the internet to acquire information regarding country image, institution image and programme evaluation. Direct contact may also be made with these institutions by way of e-mail. The role of the internet therefore becomes increasingly more important for Higher Education Institutions.

1.4.2 CONCEPTUALISATION

Nicholl et al (1995:31-8) state that international education is not a frequent purchase and demands a high level of involvement for customers. This study aims to show international students’ choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet. In order to address the aim of the study, the proposed model (see Figure 1.1) suggests that consumer option of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet is determined by:
- Perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU);
- Personal characteristics (consumer involvement, consumer innovativeness and opinion leadership); and
- Perceived risk and trust (Kamarulzaman, 2007:705).
Figure 1.1

Conceptual model of international students’ choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet

Source: Adapted from Kamarulzaman (2007:705)

Each of the factors contained in Figure 1 are explained below:

- **Perceived usefulness**: consumers perceive the internet purchasing as useful because it serves all aspects of purchasing convenience (Kamarulzaman, 2007:713).

- **Perceived ease of use**: in order to enhance the perceptions of ease of use, which will increase people’s intention to make use of the service, marketers should pay attention to the ease of use. Websites should be tailored more effectively to meet the needs of users on skill levels
Trust: the role of trust is a critical area in the domain of internet purchasing. Consumers could overcome their fear, derived from perceived risk of e-shopping, by building up trust in a website (Kamarulzaman, 2007:713-4).

Perceived risk: the more their risk perception of the internet purchase is, the less their trust will be. Consumers will purchase from a web retailer which is perceived to be a low-risk. Creating a risk-free image would seem to be a key strategy for marketers if they are to attract consumers to an e-shopping format (Kamarulzaman, 2007:713).

Consumer innovativeness: the level of consumer innovativeness could help marketers to identify early adopters of their products (Kamarulzaman, 2007:714).

Consumer involvement: is vital in stimulating online purchasing behaviour. Marketers can create various stimuli in order to encourage consumers to be involved in web searching and shopping. Some interactive features (e.g. audio, video, 3D pictures) can also be use to attract consumers involved in the purchasing process (Kamarulzaman, 2007:714).

Opinion leadership: influences the choice process by acting as a social role model whose innovative behaviour is imitated by others (Aggarwal & Cha, 1997: 393).
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to analyse the international students’ choice of enrolling in Higher Education Institutions via the internet. The research is important for the following reasons:

- It is necessary for the universities to enter the field of international marketing in order to expand their markets.
- Relatively small universities need foreign revenue to achieve greater income in order to become more competitive with other bigger universities.
- Foreign markets constitute a large share of the total business of many organizations that have wisely cultivated markets abroad.
- In the higher education industry, e-business could cut the costs and increase the accessibility of higher education.
- As universities and new players such as textbook publishers and private ventures explore effective online strategies, the internet’s role becomes increasingly important for Higher Education Institutions.
- Universities and businesses alike see the internet’s far-reaching capabilities as a global competing tool and the new information technologies push Higher Education Institutions to respond to internet technology (IT) development.
- The internet can provide universities with a low cost gateway to global markets, and improve communications with actual and potential students abroad.
1.6 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPT

To address the aim of the research, the following definitions are given.

1.6.1 HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)

According to (Republic of South Africa-Higher Education Amendment Bill, 2008:2), “Higher Education means all learning programmes leading to [qualifications higher than grade 12 or its equivalent in terms of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as contemplated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995(Act No. 58 of 1995), and includes tertiary education as contemplated in Schedule 4 of the Constitution] a qualification that meets the requirements of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF).” In this research, Higher Education is especially focused on education which provides learning programmes which allow international students to complete the degree study.

1.6.2 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION (HEI)

According to the Republic of South Africa-Higher Education Amendment Bill, (2008:2), Higher Education Institution means any institution that provides Higher Education on a full-time, part-time or distance basis. This research is focused on the institutions around the world that offer Higher Education.

1.6.3 INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

According to Johansson (2000:8), “International marketing is an older term encompassing foreign trade analysis, environment differences, and all marketing efforts in foreign countries, whether coordinated or not.”
Muhlbacher, Leihs and Dahringer (2006:38) state that “international marketing is the application of marketing orientation and marketing capabilities to international business.” In this research, international marketing is focused on Higher Education Institutions developing markets in foreign countries that reach the marketing objectives and achieve benefit from the trade.

1.6.4 THE INTERNET

According to Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Johnston and Mayer (2006:26), “internet is the physical network that links computers across the globe. It consists of the infrastructure of network servers and communication links between them that are used to hold and transport the vast amount of information on the internet.” In this research, the internet is related to marketers using websites for international students to collect information, and for e-mail contact with universities.

1.6.5 INTERNET MARKETING

Mohammed, Fisher, Jaworski and Paddison (2003:4) state that “internet marketing is the process of building and maintaining customer relationships through online activities to facilitate the exchange of ideas, products, and services that satisfy the goals of both parties.” Chaffey et al (2006:8) state “internet marketing is the application of the internet and related digital technologies in conjunction with traditional communications to achieve marketing objectives.” In this study, internet marketing is the process that marketers develop through internet activities in order to achieve marketing
objectives.

1.7 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF RESEARCH

This section indicates mainly what the research will be limited to. There are two parts in this section, namely demographic delimitation and geographic delimitation that will be explained in detail.

1.7.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DELIMITATION

The research sample is focused on the international students at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

1.7.2 GEOGRAPHIC DELIMITATION

The research area is in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, and is limited to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following section will elaborate on the research methodology, and introduce the data collection and data analysis adopted. Below is a brief introduction to the research methodology.

1.8.1 THE TYPE OF RESEARCH

Quantitative research and analytical research will be used in this study. Collis and Hussey (2003:13) state that quantitative research involves employing strategies of inquiry, using research instruments to interpret and analyse the statistical data. Analytical research goes beyond merely analysing and
explaining why or how events are happening (Collis & Hussey, 2003:11). The research on how the internet effects Higher Education Institutions’ development can thus be labelled analytical research.

1.8.2 DATA COLLECTION

Extensive secondary and primary data sources will be used for this research. Secondary sources include books, journals and information from internet websites. Two chapters cover the use of the secondary sources, which provide an explanation of the theoretical concepts of international marketing, internet marketing and factors which influence the adoption of innovation.

In terms of primary sources the following aspects are relevant. Primary data will be collected from 200 international students at the NMMU using a questionnaire that will be drawn up for the purpose. The sample includes students from South Campus, North Campus, 2nd Avenue Campus and the international students’ residences.

1.8.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Editing, coding and tabulation are the ways to set out all the collected data. A percentage, which is used to measure international students’ demographic information, will be calculated. Three measures of central tendency namely mean, median and mode can be used to determine the skewness of the data. Measures of dispersion (such as range, variance and standard deviation) describe how the data is clustered around the mean or central value (Parasuraman, Grewal & Krishnan, 2007: 384).
1.8.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A self-administered questionnaire will be designed, which will use Likert scale type questions and open-ended questions. According to Lewis, Chambers and Chacko (1995:178) a nonprobability sample implies that everyone in the population does not have an equal chance of being selected. It is also called a convenience sample, whereby people are selected simply because it is convenient. The following step of solving ‘n’ sets of raw data is data reduction which is used for collating the data obtained from the completed questionnaires into a form that the researcher can use (Ferreira, 2005:97).

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The study follows a rational structure, which is divided into 6 chapters.

Chapter 1 will introduce the research purpose and background and the research design of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 will conclude the theoretical background which focuses on the definition of international marketing, internet marketing, and analysing the marketing environment.

Chapter 3 will provide greater clarity on the factors influencing the choice of the internet technologies, and the motivation for studying abroad.

Chapter 4 will focus on the data collection method and primary data sourcing techniques.

Chapter 5 will present the major findings resulting from the empirical study.

Chapter 6 will present a summary of the research. The empirical findings, recommendations and conclusions will be conducted.
CHAPTER 2
GLOBAL COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS AND INTERNET MARKETING

2.1 INTRODUCTION
The HEIs are facing the global competitive situation. As trade barriers are lowered, new growth opportunities in foreign universities open up and new markets may be entered. Foreign competitors enter local markets and challenge the local universities. A university with a narrow view of its capabilities and its market will fall short. In order to be competitive, it is very important for HEIs to enter the global market. This research explores how HEIs recruits international students via the internet, websites and e-mail.

This chapter addresses the who, what and how of international marketing by giving an overview of the nature of international business, as well as the importance of the internet in international markets. The discussion begins with the definition of international marketing, and other related definitions. The following section will focus on the analysis of the international marketing environment which influences the international business success or failure. Finally, internet marketing will be introduced and for the purpose of the current study, internet usability which provides support to e-business will be studied.

2.2 A DESCRIPTION OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING
An overview of the nature of international marketing should begin with an understanding of what international marketing is. Onkvisit et al (2004:3) state that "international marketing is the multinational process of planning and executing the
conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.” Johansson (2000:9) argues that “international marketing is an older term encompassing foreign trade analysis, environmental differences, and all marketing efforts in foreign countries, whether coordinated or not.” In this study, international marketing is the process of the HEIs entering the international markets to attract international students to come to study and to achieve the marketing objectives.

Muhlbacher, Leihs and Dahringer (2006:38) state that “international marketing is the application of marketing orientation and marketing capabilities to international business.” Marketing orientation is characterized by the following issues:

- A system which explains the relationship between the organization and its various stakeholders in a market
- An exchange perspective, interpreting all interactions among the stakeholders in a market as episodes in an ongoing complex exchange that needs to be balanced.
- A value perspective, focusing the mind of all members of a business organization on the values or benefits to be mutually provided in the continual exchanges with stakeholders
- A process-oriented approach to all decisions and actions of organization (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:39)

With international communications and spreading affluence, many previously multidomestic markets are becoming more susceptible to internationalization. The main differences between multidomestic and international markets are highlighted in
### TABLE 2.1

MULTIDOMESTIC VERSUS INTERNATIONAL MARKETS: KEY DIFFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Multidomestic markets</th>
<th>International markets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market boundaries</strong></td>
<td>Markets are defined within country borders. Customers and competitors are of local origin.</td>
<td>Markets transcend country borders. Customers and/or competitors cross frontiers to buy and to sell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customers</strong></td>
<td>Significant differences exist among customers from different countries; segments are defined locally.</td>
<td>Significant similarities exist among customers from different countries; segments cut across geographic frontiers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competition</strong></td>
<td>Competition takes place among primary local firms; even international companies compete on a country-by-country basis.</td>
<td>Competitors are few and present in every major market. Rivalry takes on global scope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interdependence</strong></td>
<td>Each local market operates in isolation from the rest. Competitive actions in one market have no impact elsewhere.</td>
<td>Competitive actions in one market impact other markets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies</strong></td>
<td>Strategies are locally based. Little advantages exist in coordinating activities among markets.</td>
<td>Strategies are international scope. Great advantage exists in coordinating activities within worldwide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Johansson (2000:11) and Onkvisit et al (2004:5).

### 2.3 FACTORS INFLUENCING ORGANIZATIONS INTERNATIONALIZATION DECISIONS

There are four factors influencing organizations' internationalization decisions: external stimuli, internal stimuli, defensive motives and offensive motives.
(Muhlbacher et al, 2006:35-37). External and internal stimuli conclude the first question: should the organization expand its business internationally or not?

(1) External stimuli include “unsolicited orders from foreign customers, perceived market opportunities, competitive pressures in the home market, or government programs to encourage exports” (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:35). For example, the Australian HEIs found competition by European universities so strong in its Chinese home markets that it decided to enter the less competitive markets of German and African countries in order to grow.

(2) Internal stimuli may include “unique products, strong marketing skills, or excess capacity in the areas of production, finance, marketing, or management” (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:36). For example, when South African universities enter the Chinese market, their competitive tuition fees compared to European universities, the good weather, environment, and English teaching systems attract Chinese students to study in South Africa.

(3) Defensive motives may be to focus on “protecting domestic market share from a foreign competitor or to ascertain a satisfactory level of company value added, sales, or profit” (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:37). When the foreign competitors enter the local market, management is reluctant to become involved in international business. Some management still follows the traditional lines of business being satisfied with the local business success, and is afraid of becoming involved in international business.

(4) Offensive motives may respond and attack foreign competitors in their strong markets (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:37). For example, when other international businesses have an efficient computer management system, more and more organizations start using this system. This situation will motivate HEIs to respond to
the opportunity changing its computer management system and in the meantime also developing some new capabilities.

2.4 POTENTIAL MARKET ASSESSMENT

In order to prove the advantages, and a comparison of geographic sub-markets’ attractiveness, the successful characteristics of the business in the selected product markets have to be identified. In addition, the potential market assessment when local markets enter the international markets will be explained in detail.

2.4.1 Types of business environment

The world is made up of a variety of potential markets as well as business environments. Figure 2.1 shows different types of business environments; namely, macro-environment, operating environment and internal environment. The decision makers of an internationally operating company live in their firm’s internal environment, which is/maybe influenced by the international macro-environment. In the following sections, the researcher is going to discuss how these market environments influence business internationally.

FIGURE 2.1 TYPES OF BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. economy, technology, culture, legislation, political system, infrastructure, education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. customers, intermediaries, suppliers, competitors, workforce, media, administration, pressure groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4.2 Macro-environment

According to Muhlbacher et al (2006:53), macro-environment can be defined as the political, legal, economic, ecological, social, culture, and technological dimensions of the universe in which the operating environment of the firm is embedded. Macro-environment influences the company’s structure and state of its operating environment, the development of the macro-environment is influenced by individual members of the operating environment (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:53).

(1) Political environment

The political environment copes with the politics of more than one nation. According to Onkvisit et al (2004:86), there are three different types of political environment: foreign, domestic, and international. A country’s political system is an important criterion for the assessment of market attractiveness under the following conditions which is concluded by Muhlbacher et al (2006:69).

- Business opportunities depend on the political system. International students won’t come to study in a country if the country’s politics is not stable. Political system can be related to the country’s reputation, safety, ease of visa processing and visa cost. According to Gomery et al (2003:118), the factors of a country’s reputation, safety, ease of visa processing and visa cost influence the students in choosing overseas institutions.
- The firm’s business requires big investments, such as in the oil business, which may be jeopardized by political instability.
- Business is done directly with the political authorities of the country. For example, South Africa has a stable, comfortable political environment, especially Port Elizabeth, which has good weather and a safe environment. The HEIs in that city with their own competitive advantages attract many international students to study there.

(2) Economic environment

The economy of the country is the major part of the company’s macro-environment. Generally, it is the first dimension to be studied in assessing the attractiveness of any country market. According to Cubillo, Scanchez and Cervino (2006:108), economic environment is the second factor which influences international students in choosing overseas institutions; it also enhances the country’s image and institution’s image. As a matter of fact, there is a development level and a city dimension related to the country’s image. For example, Cape Town University is located in the city of Cape Town, is home to millions of people who work in shipping, tourism and the services sector. The faculty of Health Sciences at UCT has the oldest medical school in southern Africa. Its campus extends from the teaching hospitals, Groote Schuur Hospital where the first heart transplant was performed and the Red Cross Children’s Hospital to numerous others. This attracts a lot of students in making the decision to study heart disease at this university. The natural resources available in Cape Town enhance the institution’s image, especially for the students who want to study environmental management.
According to Muhlbacher et al (2006: 93) human, the natural and technical resources are main factors that affect a country’s economic wealth. These resources enable a country to produce competitive goods and service and offer them to other countries in order to create a variable market for such goods. Human resources are the most important factors that influence a country’s economic wealth. These are defined by Muhlbacher et al (2006:93) as follows:

i) Population composition and distribution

According to Muhlbacher et al (2006:93), the total population of a country and its growth rate are two main factors that attract many international marketers. Imbalanced distribution of age groups can lead to economic problems as it is closely related to the demand of certain products and the availability of labour. For example, many international HEIs marketers are interested in rapidly developing markets in China and India. The two countries together represent 70per cent of Asia’s population and close to 40per cent of the population of the world. Therefore, there must be a large number of prospective international students who are willing to study abroad (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:93).

ii) Degree of urbanization: it represents concentrations of potential customers which have a strong impact on market attractiveness (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:98).

iii) The capabilities available in a country’s population.

The natural environment of a country is another important source of potential wealth for its population. According to Muhlbacher et al (2006:101), natural sources, such as minerals, water and waterpower, oil, coal or gas, and the country’s climate and topography are major determinants of the economic structures and interdependencies of a local economy. For example, the city of Port Elizabeth in
South Africa is located on the edge of a bay with magnificent beaches and rich marine resources. Nelson Mandela Bay guarantees a quality of life second to none while providing the students with a gateway to the world. The HEIs in P.E. offer Nature Resource Management which provides a unique programme to equip students with the management expertise to conquer these challenges. These rich natural resources significantly offer the students who study environmental science, such as agricultural management, game ranch management, geosciences, zoology, botany and nature conservation with a diversity of places, animal and plant life. The natural environment in the city of Port Elizabeth provides important sources of potential wealth for its local HEIs.

2.4.3 Operating environment assessment: organization’s competitive environment

Muhlbacher et al (2006:54) state that the operating environment of a business organization contains individuals or people, representing organizations and institutions, who have a passion for concentrating on the behaviour and performance of the organization in conducting its business, for example, customers, competitors, suppliers, intermediaries, potential and the current workforce, owners, stakeholders, banks, media, trade unions, and other so-called stakeholders of the company (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:54).

In order to be successful in a market, a company must differentiate itself attractively from the major competitors at a profit, and assess its market independently from the perspective of its own resources and capabilities. Muhlbacher et al (2004:223) state that management must use positive differences (strengths) as distinctive competences to build and sustain the company’s advantages, and work on negative
differences (weaknesses) to overcome their potential impact on the success of the company. These are the factors shown in Figure 2.3 which influence international marketing success.

- Capabilities

Capabilities are the internal factors that determine a company’s potential for international marketing success. According to Muhlbacher et al (2004:224), capabilities can be described as “the specific blend of the skills of its personnel times the availability of appropriate resources.”

For example, The University of Port Elizabeth, the Port Elizabeth Technikon and the Port Elizabeth campus of Vista University merged to form The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and thus is now able to offer the best capabilities for the full spectrum of career focused, academic-orientated and professional programmes, from diploma through to doctoral level. Academic programmes are offered in seven faculties: Arts, Business & Economic Sciences, Education, Engineering, the Built Environment & Information Technology, Health Science, Law and Science. VWSA supported the initiative of establishing an International Chair in Automotive Engineering at NMMU, where international knowledge exchange would take place. The company is also partnering with NMMU on a student exchange programme where local students will have the chance in practical training in German (Undergraduate Prospectus, 2007/2008:iii). The connection between NMMU and Volkswagen South Africa attracts numbers of international students to study here. The university has a strong track record in both fundamental and applied research, working extensively in partnership with business and industry. In its first three years
NMMU has concluded several high-level research and development partnerships with leading companies.

- **Skills**
  The skills which match the company’s personnel and the expectations and aspirations of customers and other important stakeholders in the market are important in international marketing success (Muhlbacher et al, 2004:224). A person’s skills are built on his blend of knowledge and activity and the proper application of this knowledge.

- **Motivation**
  Motivation of company personnel is to “adjust new markets and their macro-environments which are based on the dominating values and social norms that form the firm’s corporate culture” (Muhlbacher et al, 2004:224). For example, the HEIs’ higher education network is committed to develop its international links with universities from developing countries, with specific reference to local education to enhance its internationalization.

- **Resources**
  Company resources which include financial, technological, production, information, and organizational elements are of major importance for successful internationalization (Muhlbacher et al, 2004:225). The HEIs offer extensive academic support to students. International students have access to the full range of services, but find particular value in the language and computer courses and facilities. Most of the HEIs offer comfortable student accommodation on all campuses and off-campus. Off-campus accommodation is normally situated in close proximity to the campus for the students’ convenience. The Library which is a place where students can read, study and have access to information services is another important resource for
international students.

2.4.4 Internal environment

The company decision makers in a firm play their role as part of an organization which has an implicit, if not explicity stated corporate policy that lays out the ground rules of how it wants to function. It follows a portfolio and a competitive strategy with basic indications of where and how to do business, based on management systems such as the organizational structure or the controlling system, as well as the capabilities and combinations of personal skills and resources that result in specific actions (Muhlbacher et al, 2006:54). Internal environment is made up of these elements.

HEIs have the capabilities that determine their potential for international marketing success. It is a HEI for developing people that meets the challenges of nurturing innovation, fostering creativity, and enhancing technology. Each has its own competitive advantages and is able to differentiate itself from other universities.

2.5 THE INTERNET AS A GLOBAL RESOURCE

The internet as a communication tool has already become a valuable global resource with substantial additional room for growth. According to Hanson and Kalyansm (2007:14), approximately 15 per cent of the world’s 6.3 billion population is online. This means nowadays that the internet is part of our life; people can use the internet anytime and anywhere. Table 2.2 shows the top 15 countries for internet access. Nowadays the internet is a necessary tool for marketers who want to enter the global markets.
### TABLE 2.2: TOP OF 15 COUNTRIES FOR INTERNET ACCESS, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Internet users</th>
<th>per cent online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6,302,309,691</td>
<td>934 million</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>290,342,554</td>
<td>185.5</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,286,975,468</td>
<td>99.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>127,214,499</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>82,398,326</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,065,070,607</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>60,094,648</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Korea, South</td>
<td>48,289,037</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>60,180,529</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>57,988,353</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>180,032,604</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>7.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>144,526,278</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>32,207,113</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>104,959,954</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>19,371,984</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>238,452,952</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share of total</td>
<td>60.3 per cent</td>
<td>70.1 per cent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Hanson et al (2007:14)

Organizations develop numerous different ways in which the internet can be applied to support the marketing process. In this study, the internet is used as a communication tool, which enhances the chances of the connection between the international students and HEI. Internet-based media offer many opportunities for marketing products and services across the purchase circle.

### 2.5.1 The nature of the internet

In this section, the researcher is going to review some of the different definitions to help explain what internet is. According to Hamill (1997: 302), “the internet is a network of interlinked computers throughout the world operating on a standard protocol which allows data to be transferred between otherwise incompatible machines.” Reedy and Schullo (2004:107) describe the internet as “a worldwide
network of networks, enabling millions of smaller computers to share information with each other and to share various communications, databases, and transactions resources."

In this study, the internet is the application by which consumers collect information and are able to contact organizations. The study explores how the HEIs use internet technologies, websites and e-mail, to target prospective students also prospective students use the same technology in their decision-making process. The HEIs develop the websites so that international students may collect necessary information.

2.5.2 The benefits in marketing via internet

The internet brings a range of benefits for consumers. Table 2.3 defines the five Ss of e-marketing which suggest five broad benefits or reasons for adopting e-marketing which marketers can use to set objectives for e-marketing.

**TABLE 2.3 THE FIVE Ss OF INTERNET MARKETING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit of e-marketing</th>
<th>How benefit is delivered</th>
<th>Typical objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sell-grow sales</td>
<td>Achieves through wider distribution to customers you can’t readily service offline or perhaps through a wider product range than in store, or lower prices compared to other channels.</td>
<td>Achieve 10per cent of sales online in market Increase online sales for product by 20per cent in year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve-Add value</td>
<td>Achieved through giving customers extra benefits online or inform product development through online dialogue and feedback</td>
<td>Increase interaction with different content on site Increase dwell-time duration on site by 10per cent (sometimes known as “stickiness”) Increase number of customers actively using online services (at least</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Speak-Get closer to customers** | This is creating a two-way dialogue through web and e-mail forms and polls and conducting inline market research through formal surveys and informally monitoring chat rooms to learn about them. | Grow e-mail coverage to 50per cent of current customer database  
Survey 1000 customers online each month  
Increase visitors to community site section by 50per cent |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Save-Save costs**             | Achieved through online-mail communications, sales and service transactions to reduce staff, print and postage costs | Generate 10per cent more sales for same communications budget  
Reduce cost of direct marketing by 15per cent through e-mail  
Increase web self-service to 40per cent of all service enquiries and reduce overall cost-to-serve by 10per cent |
| **Sizzle-Extend the brand online** | Achieved through providing a new proposition and new experience online while at the same time appearing familiar | Improve branding metrics such as: brand awareness, reach, brand favorability and purchase intent |

Source: Adapted from Chaffery et al (2006:15)

Through internet marketing, international students and HEIs can benefit much more than before. Firstly; prospective students are able to search for information quickly with no time limitation. The internet is convenient. Secondly; HEIs also create benefits online or inform product online dialogue and feedback for international students. Thirdly; HEIs get closer to international students. They can carry out market research through surveys and by informally monitoring chat rooms to learn about them and also contact them online through PR. Fourthly; the internet saves a lot financially for both international students and HEIs through online mail instead of mail and phone calls.
2.5.3 Principle problems in marketing via internet

The internet creates several opportunities for marketers that can reach a range of new potential markets worldwide, where cultural, legal, and social systems differ from those in the local market. In the meantime, it also presents a lot of problems in this new environment. Palumbo and Herbig (1998: 256-260) state several main problems as follows:

- Cultures of different countries must be taken into account when marketing on the web. For example, language and the country’s images and colours have different meanings in every country, therefore when selling worldwide a HEI needs to be very careful when using these elements in international marketing.

- Customers show that the level of personal information and concern with privacy varies across countries. For international students especially, privacy is very important. When applying to HEIs to study, personal details and credit card information are two elements which must remain confidential.

- The security of financial transactions is one of the most common worries when creating efficient and trustworthy online commerce which occurs over the network.

- In some countries, especially developing countries, personal computers are still not affordable yet.

- Credit cards are the most useful tool as a way of payment by internet. However, their use and popularity are not equal across nations.

2.6 THE INTERNET USABILITY

The internet provides effective communications with foreign customers (actual and potential international students), which is critically important to successful
internationalization (Hamill, 1997:307). The internet provides various ways for example; for example, e-mail and websites to support or improve communications with the different actors in the HEI’s international network.

2.6.1 E-mail

According to Reedy and Schullo (2004:122), e-mail stands for electronic mail. It is designed for personal and business communications through the internet. E-mail becomes the most prevalent communications tool for exchanging messages at local, national, or international level. E-mail is a quick response vehicle particularly suited for acknowledging the receipt of a sales order or for responding to an information request. One of the purposes in this study is to find out the effectiveness of HEIs e-mail, and their response to an information request.

The importance of e-mail stems from several sources. According to Hanson and Kalyanam (2007:75), e-mail is the leading online communication method between consumers and organizations; it is the major driver of internet usage frequency; e-mail has evolved to include more functions and web-like capabilities, making it a more effective communication device. International students also use e-mail to contact a HEI for gathering information.

Most people’s first encounter with the internet is via e-mail which represents the most convenient way of communicating. In this study, e-mail is used as a communication tool for contacting the HEIs. It is easy, fast and convenient. Students don’t have to contact the HEIs during office hours, or call them in order to collect information. They can e-mail whenever they want to. E-mail provides international
students with a direct communication route that allows them get closer to more people than contact through the telephones or letters would.

2.6.2 Websites

Websites are mostly used as a business tool, and are designed to meet the needs of the organization and focus on supporting business goals. Websites’ quality influences its effectiveness and consumers’ purchasing decision. In this study, it is important to find out the quality of HEIs’ website in order to gauge whether it is effective or not. The quality of a website is evaluated by a number of different criteria (Thelwall, 1999: 152):

- Site visibility in search engines;
- Ease of use;
- Design quality;
- Ease of site maintenance and updating.

Visibility

The issue of visibility is the one that is easy for the inexperienced to ignore. According to Thelwall (1999: 152), a potential customer can arrive at a website in three ways: by typing in its address; by following a link from another site; or by following a link from a search engine. Some search engines such as Yahoo! have a large number of human site reviewers. For the NMMU internet to be effective for the students to use, the address of the site must be submitted in order to have it reviewed and registered so that is can be found in a search.
Usability

Web usability is the extent to which a product can be used by the marketers to achieve specific goals with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use (Karat, 1997: 33-8). It is as important an issue for a website, as it is for any piece of software to be user friendly and the website used for the purpose that the owner intended it. According to Hanson et al (2006:224), there are four categories:

- Fast response time: speed of response is an important part of visitor perceptions of quality of the site. Hanson et al (2006:225) state that it affects the capability of the site to achieve its goals of communication and dialogue. When viewing a site over the internet, users may surf elsewhere if it takes too long to appear on their screen.

- Effective navigation: effective navigation consistently ranks high among factors explaining website satisfaction and website usability (Hanson et al, 2006:225).

- Responsiveness to user goals and desires: Hanson et al (2006:226) state that web designers use virtual value activities to provide an organizing framework for creating valuable information. There are steps of virtual value for different visitor types: gathering, organizing, selecting, synthesizing and distributing. Customer-based brand equity adapts brand-building activities to different customer types, which can help guide managers in designing appropriate online content. In this research, NMMU can adapt the virtual value activities to develop its own brand equity and design appropriate online content. Higher interactively and quality content: web designers increasingly turn to multimedia to make a compelling experience for the web visitors (Hanson et al, 2006:229). Examples include film clips, pod casts, and flash presentations.
**Design quality**

Good website design will necessarily directly attract customers and also represent an opportunity to enhance the company’s image. The design must be appropriate to the goal of the site, and must be very easy for students to find out the information that is important. Avoiding design, content, and technology mistakes are what make a site worthwhile for visitors and improve the reputation of your institution.

**Maintaining a website**

It is important for marketers keep on updating the websites. For example, it is necessary to update the HEI’s website in order to attract international students’ attention as it contains the current events at the university, bursaries available at the HEI and the modules in which the students are interested. Thelwall (1999:149) states that uploading a page to the web server is not a costly or complex operation; it simply requires a computer with a modem, standard internet connection software and a file transfer program implementing the File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

**2.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented an analysis of secondary sources on the marketing environment facing HEIs when wanting to enter the international market. How is the internet used as an aid when HEIs recruit international students? At beginning of the chapter, the definitions of international marketing, the factors influencing entering the international marketing decision-making, and the marketing environment factor analysis were given. It also analysed the internet’s usability, which is divided into two sections, e-mail and websites.
Individual adoption of innovation and organisation and adoption of innovation will be introduced in Chapter 3. The factors that influence international students studying overseas will be analysed in Chapter 3. Innovation definition and the adoption process will be explained in detail.
CHAPTER 3
FACTORS AFFECTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON ENROLLING IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS VIA THE INTERNET

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 the research provided a review of international marketing and the internet as a marketing communication tool. Since the development of the internet, marketers found that the service of enrolling in HEIs via the internet plays an important component of international business. Internet marketing has many advantages as it is cost-effective, high-reaching and has a high response.

In this chapter, the researcher is going to provide some guidelines to marketers on what elements affect the international students’ choices on enrolling in HEIs via the internet. To address these elements, the following points are going to be identified. Firstly, the factors that influence international students in enrolling in HEIs via the internet will be analysed in the following categories; perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, consumer involvement, consumer innovativeness, opinion leadership, perceived risk and trust. Secondly, the topic of enrolling in HEIs via the internet will be defined as an innovation (new service) existing in the market. Thirdly, an innovation will be identified in detail - the categories of innovation, the characteristics of the innovation and the diffusion of innovation in the whole population. Lastly, the stages in consumer adoption of an innovation will be studied.
3.2 FACTORS DETERMINING CONSUMER ADOPTION OF THE INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES

The development of enrolling in HEIs via the internet is crucial to the success in adoption of the internet technologies. Kamarulzaman (2007:705) states that there are seven factors that determine the consumer adoption of the internet technologies; namely, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, consumer involvement, consumer innovativeness and opinion leadership, perceived risk and trust. These factors explain a substantial proportion of variances between behavioural intention and actual behaviours derived mainly from research into the purchase of technology related services (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989:982-1003). The conceptual framework also seeks to take advantage of validity and reliability of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use in order to improve explanation and predictive power (Taylor & Todd, 1995:145-77). The seven factors will be explained as following:
a) **Perceived usefulness**: Marketers should understand that consumers perceive e-commerce as useful because it makes life more convenience. From time to time, marketers expand the benefits by offering additional facilities and services such as online order tracking services, free trials, membership rates and last minute deals in order to expand perceived usefulness of e-commerce, which would eventually influence consumers’ decision to adopt.

b) **Perceived ease-of-use**: is defined as “the degree to which the prospective user
expects the target system to be free of effort” (David et al, 1989:985). In designing a travel website, marketers should promote the simplicity of using the internet to encourage adoption. Marketers can also develop ease-of-use, user-friendliness and ease-of-navigation in order to enhance consumer’s perception of the website’s ease-of-use (Kamarulzaman, 2007:713). Ease-of-use is a major consideration when the internet technology is selected for Higher Education Institution-wide use to recruit international students. As expected, institutions and students are able to use the internet technologies with little or no formal training or only short training sessions.

c) **Consumer involvement:** consumer involvement in online business could be enhanced by integrating online and offline marketing approaches. Marketing communications, ease-of-use, personalization and customization of website interfaces are vital, as they might lead to increased involvement levels and finally to the adoption of e-shopping (Kamarulzaman, 2007:711). The more consumers are involved in e-shopping processes and activities, the more trust they are likely to develop in online purchasing. Additionally, the more consumers that are involved with online business, the less risk they are likely to perceive in relation to this medium.

d) **Consumer innovativeness:** literature broadly defines consumer innovativeness as the desire to seek out arousal and novelty from new products (Hirschman, 1980:283-95). Shavinina (2003:324) defines innovativeness as inter-individual differences that characterize people’s responses to new things. The level of consumer innovativeness could presumably help marketers to identify early adoption of the internet technologies. According to Mowen (1999:31-45), consumer innovativeness can be categorized into three different levels: global
innovativeness, domain-specific innovativeness, and innovative behaviour. Measuring innovativeness can solve specific problems involving the spread of new services (Shavinina, 2003:323).

- **Global innovativeness**: is anchored in personality inventory that determines behaviour, specifically the adoption of new products (Leavitt & Walton, 1975:545-55). Shavinina (2003: 325) defines global innovativeness as a personality trait a ‘willingness to try new things’ related to other personality traits: risk taking, and openness to experience. Of the demographic variables, only youth may be related, only weakly related to any specific overt behaviour.

- **Domain-specific innovativeness**: aims to explicate the narrow facets of human behaviour within a person’s specific interest domain (Midgley & Dowling, 1993:611-25). Shavinina (2003:325) defines it as the consumers who want to be the first to buy new services. Related to consumer characteristics, marketplace knowledge, opinion leadership, price, insensitivity, higher levels of income and gregariousness may characterize consumer innovators.

- **Innovative behaviour**: the extent to which consumers adopt new services earlier than other members of their societies (Hirunyawipada & Paswan, 2006:195)

e) **Opinion leadership**: influences the adoption process by acting as a social role model whose innovative behaviour is imitated by others (Aggarwal & Cha, 1997:393). Opinion leadership is the process of one person receiving information from the mass media or other marketing sources and passing that information on to others. It functions primarily through interpersonal communications and
observation. International students who are likely to accept advice from friends or search for information from mass media have intention behaviour to use the internet as a tool to enroll in Higher Education Institutions.

f) **Perceived risk:** is defined as a consumer’s perception of the overall favourability of a course of action based upon an assessment of the possible outcomes and of the likelihood that those outcomes will occur (Mowen, 1987: 74). Perceived risk is usually measured as a multidimensional construct: physical loss, financial loss, psychological loss, time loss, performance risk, and social risk. When consumers have low perceptions of risk they have low involvement in terms of risk and therefore they will appreciate the perceived usefulness of the product more (Javenpaa, Tractinsky & Vitale 2000:45-71). According to Kamarulzaman (2007:714), marketers also could create many ways to encourage consumers in purchasing online, such as through web interactive features (e.g. audio, video, 3D pictures). These features could enhance interest and get people involved in online shopping by encouraging them to visit the website regularly.

g) **Trust:** Riegelsberge, Sasse and Mccarthy (2003:768) define trust as “a device to reduce complexity, a short cut to avoid complex decision processes when facing decisions that carry risk.” Online trust plays a key role in creating satisfied and expected outcomes in online transactions (Pavlous, 2003:101-34; Gefen & Staub, 2004:407-2; Wu & Cheng, 2005:937-54), where trust exists it increases consumers’ beliefs that e-vendors will not engage in opportunistic behavior (Gefen, Karahanna & Straub, 2003:51-90). Trust can help to mitigate customers’ worries about the risks and uncertainties of conducting complicated business online (Lee & Turban, 2001:75-91; Mcknight & Chervany, 2002:35-59) and
encourage them to participate in online activities. The more trust in online business, the lower customers’ risk perception will be. If the customers have low perceptions of risk related to e-shopping, they will appreciate the usefulness of online business more and as a result will be more likely to adopt online business (Kamarulzaman, 2007:711).

In conclusion, the following factors are important in influencing international students’ choices of enrolling in HEIs via the internet; namely perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, consumer involvement, consumer innovativeness, opinion leadership, perceived risk and trust.

3.3 THE NATURE OF INNOVATION

Making use of internet marketing is relatively new and HEI’s have to be innovative. It will serve a useful purpose therefore, to explore the nature of innovation to aid those who wish to be innovative in their internet marketing.

Hoyer and Maclnnis (2007:423) state that services can be innovations, as in the introductory example of broadband internet access and broadband-enabled cell phones. This research explores how international students use internet technologies, websites and e-mail, to enroll in HEIs which is a new service in the market. It changed the way we use services. International students no longer have to mail the HEIs to contact them to collect information. Chapter 2 also explained that the ways the new service changes how people use services. The diffusion of innovations help explain internet technologies use by students and international institutions.

An innovation is “an idea, practice or product perceived to be new by the relevant
individual or group” (Neal, Quester & Hawkins, 2004:471). Hoyer and MacInnis
(2004:471) describe an innovation as “an offering that is new to the marketplace.” An
innovation may be a completed new product that provides benefits never available
before, such as personal computers. Solomon et al (2008:245) state that an
innovation is anything that consumers perceive as new and different. In this study,
innovation is a service which is used by international students to enroll in HEIs via
the internet.

3.3.1 The categories of innovations

Innovations differ in their degree of newness, which depends on the target market’s
perception of the item. According to Solomon et al (2008:246), marketers classify
innovations into three categories or types of innovation based on their degree of
newness: continuous innovations, dynamically continuous innovations and
discontinuous innovations. However, it is better to think of these three types as
ranges along a continuum that goes from a very small change in an existing service
to a totally new service.

1) Continuous innovations: Solomon et al (2008:246) state that a continuous
innovation is a modification to an existing service. The consumer does not have to
learn anything new to use a continuous innovation. It means it is usually fairly easy
to convince consumers to adopt this kind of new service.

propose that a dynamically continuous innovation is a pronounced modification to an
existing service that requires a moderate change in an important behaviour of low or
moderate importance to the individual; for example, the digital camera, and personal
navigator.
3) **Discontinuous innovations**: Solomon et al (2008:249) propose that a discontinuous innovation creates major changes in the way the people live. It requires major changes of significant importance to the individual or group. To use a discontinuous innovation, consumers engage in a great amount of learning because no similar service has ever been on the market before.

In this research, the researcher proposed the service of enrolling in HEIs via the internet as a discontinuous innovation because this type of service changed the way the people shop and allowed more people to work from home or anywhere else. To start with consumers have to learn how it works and what benefit it has for people.

### 3.3.2 Characteristics of the innovation

Characteristics of the innovation can affect resistance, adoption, and diffusion. According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2004:494), characteristics of the innovation contain perceived value, benefits and costs which are explained in detail below.

- **Perceived value**: consumers perceive that an innovation has value which gives greater benefits or lower costs than existing alternatives. Services with high perceived value are more readily adopted by consumers than those with low perceived value (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004:494). Del Aguila-Obra et al (2002:391-401) propose that there are certain competitive advantages that can benefit the users who adopt and use the internet technologies.

- **Perceived benefits**: an innovation’s value to consumers is affected by its perceived relative advantage, that is, the extent to which it offers benefits superior to those of existing services (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008:494).
Perceived costs: The consumer always perceives two types of costs. One is the actual purchase cost. The higher the purchase cost, the greater the resistance and hence the slower the diffusion. The other cost is switching costs, which involves in changing from the current service to a new one. When the internet technologies are adopted by organizations and individuals, peoples' lives are changed. In some developed countries, the internet is almost free, and the new service is almost free when switching from the old service. In some developing countries, the internet is expensive, but compared to contacting by international mail or agencies, it is still much cheaper than the old service.

3.4 DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION

Diffusion of the innovation helps to explain the adoption of innovation. Hoyer and MacInnis (2004:491) state that diffusion is the percentage of the population that has adopted an innovation at a specific point in time. For example, the diffusion of cellphones in some developed countries, cellphones are used by more than half of the population; however, in some other countries the diffusion of cellphones is just beginning. Solomon et al (2008:256) propose that diffusion is how the use of a product spreads throughout a population.

3.4.1 Diffusion process

Diffusion process is the manner in which a new service is accepted by, or spreads through, a market. Consumers and business customers differ in how much they would like to try something new, lengthening the diffusion process by months or even
years. According to Neal et al (2004:476), diffusion process is classified into five categories; innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

- **Innovators**: the first purchasers of an innovative product or service are the innovators. They tend to be younger, better educated and more socially mobile than local peers as a reference group (Neal et al, 2004:476). They are the first 2.5 per cent of adopters. This segment is extremely adventurous and willing to take risks with new services (Solomon et al, 2008:260).

- **Early adopters**: make up approximately 13.5 per cent of adopters; buy innovative service early in the diffusion process but not as early as innovators. Hawkins, Best and Coney (2004:253) state that early adopters have tendencies to be opinion leaders in local reference group. Differing from innovators, early adopters are very concerned about social acceptance therefore they like to gravitate toward products they believe will make others think they are fashionable (Solomon et al, 2008:260-261). They are willing to take a calculated risk on an innovation but are concerned with failure.

- **Early majority**: they are socially active but seldom leaders, who are next to adopt an innovative service after the early adopters. They tend to be somewhat older, less well educated and less socially mobile than the early adopters (Neal et al, 2004:477-478). Hawbins, Best and Coney (2004:252) propose that early majority makes up roughly 34 per cent of adopters.

- **Late-majority**: roughly 34 per cent of adopters are older and even more conservative and typically have lower-than-average levels of education and income (Solomon et al, 2008:261). They often adopt in response to social pressures or a decreased availability of the previous service, rather than because of a positive evaluation of the innovation (Neal et al, 2004:478).
• **Laggard**: about 16 per cent of adopters are the last of the population to adopt a new service. Laggards are typically lower in social class than other adopter categories and are bound by tradition. By the time laggards adopt a service, it may already be superseded by other innovations (Solomon et al, 2008:261).

3.4.2 **Factors affecting the spread of the innovations**

According to Neal et al (2004:474) and Hawbins et al (2004: 249), researchers have identified 10 characteristics of innovations that affect the rate of adoption. These are type of group, type of decision, marketing effort, fulfillment effort of felt need, compatibility, relative advantage, complexity, observability, trialability and perceived risk. The last five are considered the most influential and are the most often quoted in the literature. Solomon et al (2008:262) argue that there are five characteristics of innovations that affect the rate of adoption; relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability.

1. **Type of group**: a group with young, highly educated, affluent members is more accepting of change than others (Neal et al, 2004:475). In this research, the research sample is focused on the students with higher education who are young, highly educated and are more accepting of the innovative service than other groups.

2. **Type of decision**: this type of decision refers to an individual versus a group decision. The fewer individuals involved in the decision, the more quickly the innovation will spread in the population (Neal et al, 2004:475). The internet service is only related to the person who wants to use it; therefore it involves one person’s decision, which will spread rapidly in the population.
3. **Marketing effort**: the rate of diffusion is heavily influenced by the extent of the marketing effort involved (Neal et al, 2004:475). That is, the rate of diffusion is not completely beyond the control of the firm.

4. **Fulfillment of felt need**: the more manifest or obvious the need the innovation satisfies, the faster the diffusion (Hawbins et al, 2004:250). The internet service offers a lot of features that satisfy the users much more than regular home computer users. The internet users can e-mail anytime and anywhere and collect information from all over the world.

5. **Compatibility**: a new service is consistent with existing cultural values, customs, and practices (Solomon et al, 2008:262).

6. **Relative advantage**: the degree to which a consumer perceives that a new service provides superior benefits (Solomon et al, 2008:262). The internet service changed people’s lives. People used to write letters and send hand picked cards to loved ones; these have become a thing of the past. Nowadays, people can go shopping online, pay bills, manage bank accounts or book a ticket. Everything can be done through the net.

7. **Complexity**: is the degree to which consumers find an innovative service or its use difficult to understand. The internet is a highly complex product. The internet is not difficult to use, but it is too complex to understand how it works.

8. **Observability**: the more easily consumers can observe the positive effects of adopting an innovative service, the more rapid its diffusion will be. It seems that the internet is a high observability innovation. Consumers benefit a great deal from using it.

9. **Trialability**: the ease of sampling an innovative service and its benefit. It is easy to sample the service and its benefit via the internet if consumers have
knowledge of computers, otherwise it is a little bit difficult to show the customers the internet, how it works and its benefits.

10. Perceived risk: the higher the degree of risk associated with trying an innovation, the slower the diffusion (Neal et al, 2004:475). Risk related to the internet is mostly financial risk. The internet users are afraid of losing bank account and personal details. Nowadays people around the world are all using the internet. Users only have the internet transactions perceiving e-commerce as high risk (e.g. internet purchase)

3.5 STAGES IN CONSUMER ADOPTION OF AN INNOVATIVE SERVICE

It is important for marketers to understand how a consumer or household makes an adoption decision of an innovation. Consumers pass through six stages in the adoption of an innovative service; from being unaware of an innovation to becoming loyal adopters. The stages through which the consumer passes before adopting an innovation; namely, awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, adoption, and confirmation are shown in Figure 3.2. The right marketing strategies at each stage help ensure a successful adoption.

a) Awareness: information about the existence of the innovation and its unique characteristics are the first step in the adoption process. Aggarwal, Cha and Wilemon (1998:365) state that inaccessibility or lack of information may cause the provider of an innovative service to miss a large segment of potential adopters. If the consumers are made aware of the new service, there is significant potential that they will become adopters.

b) Interest: during this stage, a prospective adopter begins to see how a new service might satisfy an existing or newly-realized need (Solomon et al, 2008:257). If
the consumers lack the knowledge and inability to appreciate the relevance of attributes and benefits of a new service, they do not actively search for information related to a new product (Aggarwal et al, 1998:365). Enrolling in HEIs via the internet is a complex service and for this reason it is generally consumers in well-educated situations who use the internet service. Therefore, in this study the researcher focuses on the international students who are well-educated and are therefore more likely to use the internet than others.

c) **Evaluation:** weighing the costs and benefits of the new service. Some potential adopters will evaluate an innovation positively enough to move on to the next stage. One of most difficult things for consumers is finding ways to evaluate the new service meaningfully (Aggarwal et al, 1998:365). Consumers have to overcome the functional, social, financial, and/or personal risk, and then create trust in the service to reach the action of purchase.

d) **Trial:** the stage when customers really experience or use the service for the first time. Marketers always stimulate trials by providing opportunities for customers to sample the product (Solomon et al, 2008:259). Sometimes even if the trial is satisfactory some potential adopters still won’t actually adopt the new service because it costs too much. In this research customers don’t have to worry about the cost of the service. In comparison to the old service, the new service is perceived to have a lower cost than old service.

e) **Adoption:** a prospective consumer actually buys the service.

f) **Confirmation:** after using the new service, customers weigh the expectation of the new service against the actual benefit and costs. Consumers can be become loyal adopters when they enjoy using the new services and have favourable experiences (Solomon et al, 2008:260). Nowadays, people use the internet
technologies as one of the tools of their everyday lives. They use it everywhere and any time.

**FIGURE 3.2**

**STAGES IN CONSUMER ADOPTION OF A NEW SERVICE**

Six stages

- **Massive advertising**
- May use teaser advertising
- Providing information to customers about how the product can benefit them
- Demonstrations, samples, trial size packages
- Making the product available, providing product use information
- Reinforcing the customer’s choice through advertising, sales promotion, and other communications

**3.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided an overview of literature, with the aim of providing a conceptual framework for the empirical study. The literature study focused on the factors that influenced the adoption of the internet technologies.

The internet technology as a new service was accepted by the students. The
research explores whether the internet is still accepted as a tool for international students to enroll in Higher Education Institutions via the internet. Firstly, factors influencing the adoption of a new service were proposed. Secondly, the researcher identified the definition of new service, its categories which were continuous innovations, dynamically continuous innovations, discontinuous innovations and its characteristics. Thirdly, diffusion of the innovation was explained, including the diffusion process, the factors influencing diffusion of innovation. Finally, stages in adoption of a new service were explained. The empirical findings and the verifying factors influencing adoption of the internet technologies are reported in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 give an explanation of a conceptual framework for the empirical study which addresses the research objectives. This chapter mainly solves the research problem which can be explained by a specific methodology, which provides a set of techniques and principles for systematically collecting, recording, analysing and interpreting data.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN
A good research design can ensure the research project is effective and efficient. A research design specifies the details of the procedures necessary for obtaining the information needed to structure and/or solve marketing research problems (Malhotra, 2004:74). Research design may be classified as exploratory, descriptive or causal research. The following sections will explain the three research design in detail.

4.2.1 Exploratory research
Burns and Bush (2003:122) define exploratory research as “most commonly unstructured, informal research that is undertaken to gain background information about the general nature of the research problem.” Malhotra (2004:75) states that exploratory research is used in cases when the researcher needs to define the problem more precisely and identify relevant courses of action, or gain additional insights before an approach can be developed. An exploratory study is used for any or all of the following purposes (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:77; Cant, 2003:28;
Malhotra, 2004:76):

- Formulating a problem for more precise investigation or for developing hypotheses
- Establishing priorities for further research
- Gathering information about the practical problems of carrying out relevant research
- Increasing the marketer's familiarity with the problem
- Clarifying concepts

In general, any problem about which little is known is appropriate to exploratory study. It is also the foundation for a good study. Exploratory research is used in a number of situations (Burns & Bush, 2003:122-123):

- **Gain background information**: when there is little background information, and the problem has not been clearly formulated, exploratory research may be used to gain much-needed background information.
- **Define terms**: exploratory research helps to define terms and concepts.
- **Clarify problems and hypotheses**: exploratory research can be beneficial in the formulation of hypotheses, which are statements describing the speculated relationships among two or more variables.
- **Establish research priorities**: exploratory research can help a firm prioritize research topics in order of importance.

The exploratory research methods are highly flexible, unstructured and qualitative (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 1998:73). There are a variety of methods available to conduct exploratory research; namely, secondary data analysis, experience surveys, case analysis, focus groups and projective techniques.
For the purpose of the study, it is important to start gaining information about the choices of HEIs using the internet (website and email) to recruit prospective international students and the factors influencing the international students using the internet as a communication tool to register at the HEIS. According to the above research, the information provides support to meet the research objective or assist in gathering current information necessary to conduct a descriptive or causal research design.

4.2.2 Descriptive research

Descriptive research generates data describing the composition and characteristics of relevant groups of units such as; customers, salespeople, organizations and market areas (Parasuraman, Grewal & Krishnan, 2007:64). Malhotra (2004:78) states that descriptive research is a type of conclusive research which has as its major objective the description of something – usually market characteristics or functions. A good descriptive study presupposes much prior knowledge about phenomenon studied (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:107). There are two basic descriptive research studies which are cross-sectional and longitudinal designs.

Descriptive studies are systematic, and fixed in format and structure. The research methods involved in this study are secondary data analysed in a quantitative, as opposed to a qualitative manner, surveys, panels, observational and other data (Malhotra, 2004:80). Descriptive research is essential in many situations. In this study, descriptive research is focused on describing the factors influencing the prospective students’
choices of enrolling in HEIs via the internet; namely, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, consumer involvement, consumer innovativeness, opinion leadership, perceived risk and trust.

4.2.3 Causal research
Causal research is a type of conclusive research where the major objective is to obtain evidence regarding causes-and-effect relationships (Malhotra, 2004:85). Parasuaman, Grewal and Krishnan (2007:73) proposed that causal method overcomes the lack of control suffered by descriptive research projects through collecting data in an environment in which the hypothesized causal variable is manipulated and the effects of other relevant variables are controlled. Causal research is appropriate for the following purposes, which are defined by Malhotra (2004:85) as follows:

- To understand which variables are the cause (independent variables) and which variables are the effect (dependent variables) of a phenomenon.
- To determine the nature of the relationship between the causal variables and the effect will be predicted.

Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003:42) state that causal research can be used to understand the functional relationships between the causal factors and the effect predicted on the market performance variable under investigation. According to the purpose of the study, causal study will focus on the relationship between the factors influencing the use of the internet to enrol in the HEIs and its adoption in the market.
4.3 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

After the research problem is defined and clearly specified, the research effort logically turns to data collection. During the data collection, there are two research methods often used; quantitative research and qualitative research. Cooper and Schindler (2006:214) state that qualitative research is “interpretive techniques that seek to describe, decode, translated, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain phenomena.” Burns and Bush (2003:204) define quantitative research as “research involving the use of structured questions in which the response options have been predetermined and a large number of respondents involved.”

In quantitative research methodologies, research methods are more directly related in descriptive and causal research designs than exploratory designs. Success in collecting primary data, scale measurement, questionnaire design, sampling, and statistical data analysis skills is the main goal of quantitative research (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2003:212). Qualitative research is often used in exploratory designs to gain preliminary insights into decision problems and opportunities (Hair et al, 2003:212). Qualitative research tends to focus on the collection of primary data from small samples by asking questions which use open-ended questions. The differences between the two research methodologies are summarized in Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.1 QUALITATIVE VERSUS QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sample Small number of nonrepresentative cases Large number of representative cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection</th>
<th>Unstructured</th>
<th>Structured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>Nonstatistical</td>
<td>Statistical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Develop an initial understanding</td>
<td>Recommend a final course of action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Malhotra (2004:137).

For the purpose of the study, quantitative research is appropriate to evaluate the factors influencing international students’ choices of enrolling in HEIs. This research is also collected data from a large number of international students at the NMMU.

### 4.4 DATA COLLECTION

In this section, the methods used in the quantitative research in the current study will be explained within the context of a literature review. Four types of survey will be discussed in the following study, which are personal interviews, telephone interviews and self-administered questionnaires.

1) **Personal interviews**

Personal interviews are distinguished by the presence of a trained interviewer who asks questions and records the subject’s answers. Personal interview has the ability to explore topics in great depth, achieve a high degree of interviewer control, and provide maximum interviewer flexibility for meeting unique situations (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:297). Personal interviews are classified as the door-to-door interview, the executive interview and the mall-intercept interview.

- **Door-to-door interviews**

  In a door-to-door interview the researcher interviews the consumers at their
homes. This was at one time thought to be the best survey method. It is a personal, face-to-face communication with the respondents, where the researcher is able to receive feedback from the consumers immediately (Mcdaniel & Gates, 2007:170). An interviewer is able to help the respondent skip through a relatively complex questionnaire and can explain terminology and instructions. A skilled interviewer can work wonders from sensitive data which can be accurately collected face to face.

- **Executive interviews**

  In an executive interview the researcher interviews businesspeople about industrial products or services at their offices. This is the industrial equivalent of a door-to-door interview (Mcdaniel & Gates, 2007:170). This type of interviewing is expensive and requires highly skilled interviewers as they frequently interview on topics they know little about. Executive interviews have the same advantages and disadvantages as door-to-door interviews.

- **Mall-intercept interviews**

  A mall-intercept interview is a face-to-face personal interview that takes place in a shopping mall. Researchers ask for respondents’ feedback on one or more products or services. The survey may take place in a common area of the mall or in the researcher’s on-site offices (Hair et al, 2003:260). This type of interview is more efficient when the interviewer comes to the respondent than the other way around. It always has high response rates, just slightly lower than a door-to-door interview. It costs less than door-to-door surveys with a similar degree of expense as the only travel costs for an interviewer are those to the mall.
2) **Telephone interviews**

Telephone interviews are question-and-answer exchanges that are conducted via telephone technology. It is cheaper, faster and more suitable for collecting data from large numbers of respondents than any other survey method (Hair et al, 2003:260). There are three basic approaches to obtaining telephone numbers when selecting respondents for telephone interviews; namely, a prespecified list, a directory or a random dialing procedure (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 1998:239).

3) **Self-administered surveys**

A self-administered survey is a data collection technique in which the respondent reads the survey questions and records his or her own responses without the presence of a trained interviewer (Hair et al, 2003:265). There are three types of self-administered surveys, namely computer-assisted self-interviews, surveys via the telephone and personal interview surveys (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:282-292). Self-administered surveys of all types typically cost less than surveys via personal interviews. Telephone and mail costs are lower if in the same general range.

In this study a self-administered survey was used.

4.5 **QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN**

A questionnaire is a method of collecting specific information about a defined problem so that the researchers can analyse and interpret the data in order to have a better appreciation of the defined problems (Chisnall, 2005:134). A good
questionnaire can engage the respondent and stimulate his/her interest in providing complete and accurate answers (Malhotra, 2004:278). A questionnaire is an important tool in conducting surveys and serves five key functions:

- It translates the research objectives into specific questions.
- It standardises questions so respondents respond to identical stimuli.
- It fosters cooperation and keeps respondents motivated.
- It serves as permanent records of the research.
- It speeds up the process of data analysis (Burns & Bush 2006:300).

The questionnaire used in the current study is directed at international students who are studying at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The three stages of questionnaire content are described as follows:

- The first stage: an introductory covering letter which gives the essential introduction of the research project and the research to the respondent and ensures the respondent of anonymity and communicates the instructions.
- The second stage: deals with the demographic information about the respondents. Which countries they come from and for what course they are registered at the NMMU.
- The third stage: here the overall plan of the research is defined and includes an outline of the main areas of questioning. The following sections will explain the details clearly.

4.5.1 Question structure

The questionnaire can be structured (researchers present the participants with a fixed set of choices) or unstructured (researchers do not limit responses but provide a frame of reference for participants’ answers) (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:398).
Unstructured observation is used for the research in which the formulation of the problem is not specific; there is more flexibility for the observers in terms of what they note and record. Unstructured observation is well suited for exploratory research (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:229). Structured observation is applicable when the research objectives are defined precisely enough to clearly specify the behaviours that will be observed and categories that will be used to record and analyse the observations. It can be quite precise (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:229).

Parasuraman et al (2007:285) state that the effort, time and space required to answer the unstructured observation obviously vary considerably. Starting an interview with an unstructured question is worthwhile if it will be easy to answer and aids the smooth completion of the rest of the interview. In doing so the respondents are more likely to form a favourable attitude towards the interviewer, and be more willing to answer the remainder of the questions. A trained interviewer must choose the type of the question intelligently in order to obtain the research objectives efficiently and correctly.

The questionnaires in the current study followed both the structured and unstructured approach. The questionnaires began with Section A which consisted of 4 multiple-choice questions and dichotomous questions, aimed at identifying the demographics information of the respondents (questionnaire directed at international students in NMMU). Question contents included gender, age, home country and major for registration at the university. Section B consisted of 25 Likert scale closed questions aimed at identifying the agreeableness of selected elements providing clues to the factors effecting the adoption of a new service. Respondents had to
indicate the level of the agreement of the statements with responses that ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Section C also followed a structured and unstructured approach, which used multiple-choice and dichotomous questions, aimed at the online service quality at the NMMU.

4.5.2 Question type

Generally, there are two main types of questions which are commonly used in a survey: open-ended questions and closed questions.

4.5.2.1 Closed question

Closed questions are structured questions which specify the set of response alternatives and the response format. A closed question can be multiple-choice, dichotomous or scaled question (Malhotra, 2004:290).

a) Multiple-choice question

Multiple-choice questions are an extension of simple alternative questions. Respondents are able to choose from a range of alternatives given, which are designed to have different shades of opinion or variations of the use of a product or service (see Figure 4.1). Alternatives must be mutually exclusive, so that respondents are able to differentiate between them without difficulty. Multiple answer lists generally include a coding (‘other’) for unusual answers, which should be qualified by interviewers (Chisnall, 2005:147).
Multiple-choice questions overcome many disadvantages which open-ended questions always have, because the interview bias is reduced and these questions are organized quickly. Coding and entering data into Excel are much less costly and time consuming. Also in self-administered questionnaires respondents answer the questions more easily if the majority of the questions are structured (Malhotra, 2004:291).

b) **Dichotomous Questions**

The dichotomous question is also a fixed-alternative question but one in which there are only two alternatives (Churchill & Iacobacci, 2005:246). The dichotomous questions are very easy to code and tabulate for the respondents and are also the most popular kind of survey question. An example of a dichotomous question used in the current study is:
Have you used the internet for information about different overseas Higher Education institutions before?

| A | YES | B | NO |

**c) Scaled questions**

A scaled question is one where the multiple choice alternative provided gives some idea of a progression in size or order of something (Ferreira, 2005:44). There are four kinds of ratings for scaled questions; graphic rating scales, semantic differential questions, staple scales and Likert scales.

- Graphic rating scales have a vertical or horizontal continuum and the respondent is asked to mark his response from the whole range e.g.

  Internet service quality:

  ![Graphic rating scale]

  Very good service   Very poor service

- Semantic differential questions have a series of pairs of opposite descriptions with a seven point scale in between. This type of question is useful in providing a graphical representation of the comparison of two or more brands when the points are joined up e.g.
Stapel scale is similar to the Likert scales except that the pairs of descriptions are replaced with a single phrase and there are ten scale positions e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet service quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likert scales are used to obtain people’s attitudes about something by asking them the extent of their agreement or disagreement with a series of statement. In the current study, 25 Likert scales questions are used in this research in section B e.g.

I am usually among of the first to try out a new service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.2.2 Open-ended question

Unstructured questions are open-ended questions that respondents answer in their own words. It is thought best to proceed from general to specific topics in constructing questionnaires, so it is better to start with an open-ended question which will give a sense of the respondent’s frame of reference (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005:243).

Unstructured questions are useful in exploratory research. Unstructured questions have a much less biasing influence on response than structured questions. Respondents can talk freely to express their views. Their opinions and explanations can provide rich insights to the interviewers (Malhotra, 2004:289). The major disadvantage of unstructured questions is that coding and tabulation of data is costly and time consuming. No open ended questions were used in this study.

4.5.3 Pretesting

The purpose of a pretest is to ensure that the questionnaire meets the researcher’s expectation in terms of the information that will be obtained. According to Ferreira (2005:50), a pretest is the cheapest insurance that:

- The data collected will be as useful as possible to answering the management problem.
- The target respondents will cooperate as fully as possible.
- The collection and analysis of the data will proceed as smoothly as possible.

Interviewers should make improvements to the questionnaire. The questionnaires which lack important variables, request for explanations, doubts, ambiguous, ill-defined, loaded, or double-barreled questions are noted to correct these deficiencies.
Effective pretesting demands that the researcher be open to criticism and be willing to pursue the deficiencies.

There are some research concerns about the questionnaire as a whole, such as the order of questions. Others concerns that should be pretested are the following:

- Flow of the questionnaire: the questions must appear in a logical sequence and be part of a coherent flow. Pretesting is to ensure that the transitions from one topic to another are clear and logical.
- Skip patterns: the skip questions are dependent on the answer to a previous question. Whether the skip patterns are followed by the respondent or by the interviewer, they must be clear and well laid out.
- Length: each section of the questionnaire should be timed to ensure that none of them is too long.
- Respondent interest and attention: capturing and maintaining the interest of a respondent throughout the entire questionnaire and should be pretested (AAker et al, 1998:325).

Fifteen NMMU international students were chosen on a convenience basis to take part in the pretesting of the questionnaire. After feedback, a few minor adjustments were made before the questionnaire was distributed to the sample.

4.5.4 Sampling design

Sample design is an integral part of the total research design and contributes significantly to its integrity. The success of research surveys rests largely on the quality of the sampling, and great care is needed at every stage in the development
of suitable samples. For the current study, the target population was focused on the international students at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Sampling techniques are mainly classified as nonprobability sampling and probability sampling. Nonprobability sampling does not use chance selection procedures. Rather, it relies on the personal judgment of the researcher (Malhotra, 2004:320). Usually used techniques are: convenience sampling, judgmental sampling, quota sampling and snowball sampling. Probability sampling procedures are those in which each element of the population has a fixed probabilistic chance of being selected for the sample. Commonly used sampling techniques are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling (Malhotra, 2004:320).

For the purpose of the study, convenience sampling and cluster sampling were employed. Cluster sampling occurs when interviews are concentrated in a relatively small number of groups or clusters which are selected at random (Chrisnall, 2005:110). Cluster sampling is much cheaper and quicker since the interviews are concentrated in a localized area which reduces travel time and expense. For example, the locations Annis Cove, Omega Lodge and Villages 3,5 and 6 are connected to the NMMU and are occupied by international students. A small number of groups can be selected here at random which is a common method to generate a cluster sample.

A convenience sample is one where respondent participation is voluntary or where the interviewer selects sampling units (Ferreira, 2005:93). Convenience sampling is the least expensive and least time consuming of all sampling techniques. The sampling units are accessible, easy to measure, and cooperative (Malhotra,
2004:321). For example, the international office at NMMU is also a place where the interviewer may select sampling units. This is also a method of generating a convenience sample.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis means placing the collected data into some order or format so that it takes on meaning. For the purpose of the study, four steps in data analysis were studied; namely, data preparation, reliability and variability analysis, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.

4.6.1 Data preparation

Data preparation is the processes that ensures the accuracy of data and their conversion from raw form into classified forms appropriate for analysis. The process of data preparation is tedious and boring, but it is a very important factor in the accuracy and usefulness of the entire project. The main stages are data validation, editing, coding and data capture (AAker, Kumar & Day 2007:432-433).

The first step is to determine whether interviews were conducted correctly and free of fraud or bias. Respondents are asked for their contact details (name, address and telephone numbers) not to analyse this data but to check that the interview actually took place. Data validation covers the following five areas which are fraud, screening, procedure, completeness and courtesy (Ferreira, 2005:98).

The second step in data preparation is to edit the collected raw data to detect errors and omissions that would compromise quality standards (Cooper & Schindler,
Each questionnaire is checked for legibility, understandability, consistency, and completeness before the data is captured on the computer. The editor is responsible for making sure the data are accurate, consistent with other data, uniformly entered, and ready for coding.

Coding is the process of assigning numbers and other symbols to answers so that the researchers can classify the responses into categories (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:509). Coding is vital if the data will be analysed by computer as a machine is unable to understand qualitative and descriptive answers. It is often helpful to prepare a codebook containing the coding instructions and the necessary information about the variables in the data set (Malhotra, 2004:422).

The last step is data capture which is the transference of data from acceptable data collection instruments/questionnaires into the computer. Data capture contains a few steps; namely, clearing the dataset, generating new variables and weighting and storing.

- Clearing the dataset: removing possible coding and data capture errors
- Generating new variables: adding data to be used in later analysis.
- Weighting: a process whereby numerical coefficients are assigned to each of the elements in a set to provide them with a desired degree of importance to one another.
- Storing: keep a master copy of the spreadsheet in case the original becomes corrupted.
4.6.2 Reliability and validity

It is important to ensure that the criteria of a well-designed research project are imbeded in the overall design framework of this study. Two basic sets of criteria are used to evaluate a well-designed research project (Sekaran 2003:202-203). According to Cooper and Schindler (2006:761), “reliability is a characteristic of measurement concerned with accuracy, precision, and consistency; a necessary but not sufficient condition for validity.” For the purpose of the study the internal consistency of the measuring instrument was determined by testing the interitem consistency reliability. The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha is used here for calculating.

“Validity is a characteristic of measurement concerned with the extent that a test measures what the researcher actually wishes to measure; and that differences found with a measurement tool reflect true differences among participants drawn from a population” (Cooper & Schindler, 2006:765). Researchers may assess content validity, criterion validity, or construct validity (Malhotra, 2004:269).

4.6.3 Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis simply describes the data by providing statistical measures like measures of central location or dispersion. Descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode), measures of dispersion (range and standard deviation), and measures of position (quartiles, deciles and per centiles) (Ferreira, 2005:111; Antonius, 2003:9).
4.6.4 Inferential analysis

Inferential analysis attempts to draw conclusions from the analysis e.g. drawing conclusion about the likely area in which the population parameter will fall, based on the value of the sample statistics. Sample statistics can be divided into two categories (Ferreira, 2005:111):

- Univariate analysis where only one question will be analysed at a time e.g. measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion.
- Multivariate analysis where two or more questions are analysed at a time e.g. cross tabulation, coefficient of variation and correlation and regression analysis.

4.7 SUMMARY

This chapter gives details about the research methods followed in this study. According to the exploratory and descriptive nature of the study, self-administered surveys are used to address the research problem. Structured questions including multiple-choice, dichotomous, and Likert scale questions are used in self-administered surveys. The findings from the empirical study will be discussed in Chapter 5.

For the purpose of the study, the target population is NMMU international students. Convenience sampling and cluster sampling were used to select a sample of two hundred respondents at four NMMU campuses. Four steps were followed to analyse the collected data; namely, data preparation, reliability and validity analysis, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 gives a description about the techniques used in the overall study, which are data collection methods and data analysis methods. This chapter will present the findings of the empirical study. Data analysis provides valuable insights and guides the rest of the data analysis as well as the interpretation of the results.

The chapter begins with a brief description of the demographic information collected from the international students, followed by a frequency distribution analysis obtained for the each variable in the data. This analysis produces a table of frequency counts, percentages, and cumulative percentages for all the values associated with that variable. It indicates the extent of out-of-range, variance or standard deviation, coefficient of variation.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The demographic details collected from international students, the country from which they come, age, gender, and the faculty they registered in are presented in the following figures. The data preparation is collected from Section A of the questionnaire.
5.2.1 Respondents by countries of origin

The NMMU is a University in Africa for Africa. Its international student body of more than 2000 comes mostly from other African countries (Postgraduate Prospectus, 2007/2008). International students come from different countries, e.g. Zimbabwe, Mozambique, America, China, Angola, Sudan, Angola et cetera, which are divided into four continents; namely, Africa, America, Asia, and Europe (See Figure 5.1).

**FIGURE 5.1 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN**

![COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN](image)

Source: Results obtained by analysis of respondents replies regarding countries of origin.

Figure 5.1 represents the percentage of international students per continent in the university. The finding above reflects that 75.5 per cent of respondents who participated in the survey were from Africa; 1.5 per cent of respondents were from European Countries; 11 per cent of respondents were from Asia; 8.5 per cent were from America.
5.2.2 Respondents by age

FIGURE 5.2 AGE CATEGORIES

Source: Results obtained from analysis of the respondents’ replies regarding age.

The finding above reflects that most international students in the survey are over 21, which makes up 67 per cent of the respondents. The second is the age category 18-20 which makes up 31 per cent of the respondents. Both under 18 and missing data account for 1 per cent of the total.
5.2.3 Respondents by gender

FIGURE 5.3 GENDER CATEGORIES

Source: Results obtained from analysis respondents’ replies of gender categories

The pie chart above illustrates that 58.5 per cent of the respondents were males and 41.5 per cent of the respondents were females.

5.2.4 Respondents by faculty in which they enrolled

NMMU offers seven different faculties; namely Arts, Business & Economic Science, Education, Engineering, the Built Environment & Information Science, Health Science, Law and Science. Table 5.1 illustrates the registered faculty distribution of international students. 7.5 per cent (N=15) of the respondents are Arts students; 28.5 per cent (N=57) of the respondents are Business & Economic Science students; 4 per cent (N=8) of the respondents are education students; 18.5 per cent (N=37) of the respondents are Engineering, & Built environment & information science students; 14 per cent (N=28) of the respondents are Health Science students; 5 per cent (N=10) of the respondents are Law students; 13.5 per cent (N=27) of the respondents are Science students.
### TABLE 5.1 Registered faculty distribution of students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACULTY</th>
<th>FREQUENCY (N)</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
<th>VALID PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Economic Science</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering, the Built environment &amp; Information science</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health science</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained from analysis of respondents’ replies regarding faculty in which they enrolled

### 5.3 MAIN FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS USE OF A NEW SERVICE

In this section, seven factors which influence customers use of a new service are discussed; namely, innovativeness, perceived usefulness, trust, perceived risk, consumer involvement, opinion leadership and perceived ease of use. Based on the data preparation, each factor will be analysed in the following section.
5.3.1 Consumer innovativeness

**TABLE 5.4 INNOVATIVENESS AS A MAIN FACTOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am usually among the first to try out a new service.</td>
<td>15 7.5%</td>
<td>32 16%</td>
<td>89 44.5%</td>
<td>47 23.5%</td>
<td>17 8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Source: Results obtained from analysis of respondents’ responses regarding innovativeness.

**FIGURE 5.4 INNOVATIVENESS AS MAIN FACTOR**

Hirschman (1980:283-95) defines consumer innovativeness as the desire to seek out arousal and novelty from new products. Kamarulzaman (2007:711) states that the relationship between consumer innovativeness and use explains that individual traits are important in an individual adopting new technology. Consumers who are
characterized by a high degree of innovativeness are usually very open to new experiences and tend to “make constructive use of information received” (Leavitt & Walton in Bauer et al 2005: 184).

Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4 illustrate that questions 1 to 2 were central tendency, as one does not know to which side their sentiments were inclined, whether positive or negative. Thirty-five per cent (35 per cent) of the respondents indicated that they tried new services before other people. Forty-one per cent (41 per cent) of respondents indicated that they have neutral opinion in trying new services before other people. Twenty-four (24 per cent) of respondents indicated that they disagreed with trying a new service before other people. Question 3 indicates by the high scores obtained that people agree new technologies do benefit the customers.

The analysis indicates that consumer innovativeness is an uncertain factor in influencing international students in using the internet to enrol in the HEIs. Thus, students with high level of education are expected to use the e-shopping medium and are more likely to engage in web features when logging on to the internet.

5.3.2 Perceived usefulness
Kamarulzaman (2007:713) states that consumers perceive the internet purchasing as useful for purchasing because it serves all aspect of purchasing convenience. Table 5.3 indicates that perceived usefulness is positively correlated with the use of applying to the HEI on the internet. High scores for the Questions 4 to 5 were obtained where respondents both agreed and strongly agreed to the question on perceived usefulness in using the internet. To have a better understanding of the
results, Table 5.5 and Figure 5.5 indicate that statements and questions are worded in such a way that perceived usefulness is significant as a positive point in the questions.

**TABLE 5.5 PERCEIVED USEFULNESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Surfing on the internet keeps me up-to-date with the latest information.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I like to search for information that interests me personally.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The internet leads to better communication between HEI and me.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The internet is a convenient way of connecting with HEI for international students</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results from analysis of respondents’ responses regarding perceived usefulness in using a new service.
FIGURE 5.5 PERCEIVED USEFULNESS

Nowadays, the data collected from international students shows that consumers perceive e-commerce as useful because it is more convenient. Most of international students perceive that it is useful in using the internet service.

5.3.3 Trust

Pavlous (2003:101-34); Gefen and Staub (2004:402-7) and Wu and Cheng, (2005:937-54) state that online trust plays a key role in creating satisfied and expected outcomes in online transactions. Trust can reduce the worries about the risk of losing personal information and bank account details as international students apply to a HEI via the internet.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE STRONGLY</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. I trust the website as a safe medium for financial transaction.</td>
<td>44 (22%)</td>
<td>39 (19.5%)</td>
<td>80 (40%)</td>
<td>24 (12%)</td>
<td>13 (6.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. One should be very cautious when transacting on the website.</td>
<td>13 (6.5%)</td>
<td>9 (4.5%)</td>
<td>35 (17.5%)</td>
<td>36 (18%)</td>
<td>107 (53.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I use the internet when I think it is safe.</td>
<td>8 (4%)</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
<td>43 (21.5%)</td>
<td>76 (38%)</td>
<td>53 (26.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I am prepared to give my personal information to HEI when I apply on the internet.</td>
<td>24 (12%)</td>
<td>31 (15.5%)</td>
<td>54 (27%)</td>
<td>62 (31%)</td>
<td>29 (14.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained from respondents’ analysis of their responses regarding trust

According to Table 5.6 and Figure 5.6 in question 8, a large number of respondents indicated that they disagreed that a website was a safe medium for financial transactions. From Question 9 to Question 11 the high scores obtained indicated that respondents agreed that people usually preferred to use the internet in a safe and protected environment. Trusting the quality and safety of a website is a very important factor for people when using the internet. In the case study, the analysis indicates that trust is uncertain as a response in influencing international students when using the internet to enroll in the HEIs.
5.3.4 Perceived risk

Mowen (1987:74) states that perceived risk is a consumer’s perception of the overall favorability of a course of action based upon an assessment of the possible outcomes and of the likelihood that those outcomes will occur. In the case study, perceived risk is focused on the financial risk and physical risk when the transaction is processed.
TABLE 5.7 PERCEIVED RISK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. The internet will lead to a loss of privacy for me because my personal information would be used without my knowledge.</td>
<td>11 (5.5%)</td>
<td>35 (17.5%)</td>
<td>63 (31.5%)</td>
<td>52 (26%)</td>
<td>39 (19.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Depending on the expected level of quality of the internet service performance, it is risky to use it.</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>31 (15.5%)</td>
<td>87 (43.5%)</td>
<td>56 (28%)</td>
<td>14 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. It is risky to apply to HEI online.</td>
<td>35 (17.5%)</td>
<td>54 (27%)</td>
<td>67 (33.5%)</td>
<td>28 (14%)</td>
<td>6 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results of the analysis of respondents’ replies regarding perceived risk

FIGURE 5.7 PERCEIVED RISK

Table 5.7 and Figure 5.7 indicate that high scores for Questions 13 to 14 were
obtained for the Neutral field. Question 12 indicates the respondents agree that there will be privacy loss because customers’ information will be used without their knowledge. Marketers should therefore create ways to reduce the perceived risk and encourage consumers to make transactions online so that more people may gain access to the internet. The analysis indicates that the perceived risk is uncertain as a response in influencing international students in using the internet to enroll in the HEIs.

5.3.5 Consumer involvement

TABLE 5.8 CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. I enjoy reading different information on the websites.</td>
<td>7 3.5%</td>
<td>4 2%</td>
<td>20 10%</td>
<td>78 39%</td>
<td>91 45.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I enjoy contacting people via e-mail</td>
<td>8 4%</td>
<td>10 5%</td>
<td>14 7%</td>
<td>62 31%</td>
<td>106 53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I enjoy all the applications (flash, 3D pictures, video) offered on the internet.</td>
<td>11 5.5%</td>
<td>7 3.5%</td>
<td>39 19.5%</td>
<td>55 27.5%</td>
<td>88 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I enjoy searching for information via the internet because it is convenient.</td>
<td>7 3.5%</td>
<td>8 4%</td>
<td>11 5.5%</td>
<td>75 37.5%</td>
<td>99 49.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained by analysis of respondents replies regarding consumer involvement
Table 5.6 indicates that high scores for Questions 15 to 18 were obtained in both the fields where respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This indicates a high level of consumer involvement amongst the respondents who participated in the survey. 84.5 per cent, 84 per cent, 71.5 per cent and 87 per cent of the respondents agreed that they enjoyed surfing on the internet.

The analysis indicates that based on the convenience of the internet, people are all highly involved in the online business. The analysis indicates that the consumer involvement is a positive point as a response in influencing international students in using the internet to enroll in the HEIs.

5.3.6 Opinion leadership

Opinion leadership is the process whereby one person receives information from the mass media or other marketing sources and passes that information on to others. It
influences the adoption process by acting as a social role model whose innovative behaviour is imitated by others.

**TABLE 5.9 OPINION LEADERSHIP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. I am often influenced by people’s opinions about new service.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I like to get others’ opinions before I buy a new service.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I feel more confident buying a new service when I have received other people’s opinions on it.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained by analysis of respondents’ answers regarding opinion leadership.

**FIGURE 5.9 OPINION LEADERSHIP**
Table 5.9 illustrates that high scores for Questions 19 to 21 were obtained in the field of ‘agree’. This indicates a high level of opinion leadership influencing the use of the new internet service. The analysis indicates that people are likely to be influenced by others’ opinions. It is a good idea to find out other people’s experiences before trying a new service.

5.3.7 Perceived ease of use

Perceived ease of use is defined as the degree to which the prospective user expects the target system to be free of effort. In the case study, international students all have a higher education and it is not difficult for them to access to the internet or the target system they require. Marketers of Higher Education Institutions also develop ease-of-use for the websites in order to enhance the students’ perception of the website’s ease-of-use.

**TABLE 5.10 PERCEIVED EASE OF USE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. I have a very good knowledge about how to surf on the internet.</td>
<td>9 4.5%</td>
<td>11 5.5%</td>
<td>34 17%</td>
<td>73 36.5%</td>
<td>73 36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I am satisfied with the speed of response which is perceived as quality of the website.</td>
<td>14 7%</td>
<td>36 18%</td>
<td>60 30%</td>
<td>67 33.5%</td>
<td>23 11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I like searching for information on the internet because it is effective.</td>
<td>6 3%</td>
<td>13 6.5%</td>
<td>30 15%</td>
<td>93 46.5%</td>
<td>58 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. It is easy to find</td>
<td>13 33</td>
<td>41 70</td>
<td>70 43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents obtained high scores in the category ‘agree’ from Question 22 to 25, which points to a high level of perceived ease-of-use of online business. The analysis indicates that the high level of perceived ease-of-use influences international students in enrolling in HEIs via the internet. The research finding showed by the high scores obtained by international students that they were easily able to access information from the website or were able to contact people via the internet.
5.4 NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

The research sample is collected from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, which has a large number of overseas students. From the research done at the international office results show that there were 2002 international students registered at the University in 2006, 2028 international students in 2007 and 1845 international students enrolled in 2008 with the NMMU education service provider.

The following questions show how international students apply for entrance to the university. Table 5.9 indicates that 143 international students, which is 70.9 per cent of the international students use the internet when searching for information about different overseas Higher Education Institutions. 29.1 per cent of international students do not use it at all. Table 5.9 indicates that 94.3 per cent of the respondents visit the NMMU website and 5.7 per cent of the respondents do not visit the website at all. 43.8 per cent of the respondents accessed the NMMU website through a search engine. 58.4 per cent of the respondents state that the NMMU website gives sufficient information.

TABLE 5.11 NMMU ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you use the internet for information about different overseas higher education institutions?</td>
<td>a* 141</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b 58</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you go to the homepage of NMMU’s website?</td>
<td>a 133</td>
<td>94.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b 8</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How did you find the NMMU’s website?</td>
<td>a 60</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b 13</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c 35</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d 20</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e 9</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Was the information posted on NMMU’s website sufficient for you to decide to enrol in the university?</td>
<td>a 26</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b 80</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c 31</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained from respondents’ analysis of NMMU.
Table 5.10 indicates that 63.4 per cent of the respondents e-mailed to NMMU to make further enquire and 36 per cent of the respondents did not e-mail for further enquiries. High scores were obtained where NMMU replied to the students within 3—5 days, 26.7 per cent of the respondents received a reply within 1—2 days and 19.8 per cent of the respondents received a reply within one day. 84.1 per cent of the respondents received a reply via e-mail from NMMU. 55.2 per cent of the respondents indicated that the University's e-mail response influenced their decision to enroll at this university.

**TABLE 5.12 NMMU ANALYSIS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Did you e-mail to NMMU to make further enquires?</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>87</th>
<th>63.4%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How long did it take for NMMU to reply to your enquiry?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How did NMMU reply to you?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Did the e-mail response influence your decision to enrol with this university?</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained from respondents’ analysis of teamwork

TABLE 5.11 indicates the key decision maker for the international students’ choices of studying overseas. 49 per cent of the respondents made the decision by themselves. 20 per cent of the respondents’ key decision makers were their parents. 5.5 per cent of the respondents’ key decision maker was an independent agency in their home country or other relatives or friends. 10.5 per cent of the respondents’ decision to study overseas depended on the government of the home country. 1.5
per cent and 8 per cent of the respondents’ decision makers are companies they work for or scholarships.

### TABLE 5.13 NMMU ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Who was the key decision maker for your choice of an overseas Higher Education Institution?</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>98</th>
<th>49%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Results obtained by analysis of respondents’ choice of NMMU as a Higher Education Institution.

### 5.5 SUMMARY

This chapter reported on the empirical findings of the research. The report was introduced with a description of the respondents’ demographics which included gender, age, the country they come from, course registered for, followed by an assessment of frequency distribution instrument. By conducting the factor analysis, the data was reduced into seven factors; namely, consumer innovativeness, perceived usefulness, trust, perceived risk, consumer involvement, opinion leadership and perceived ease of use. The analysis indicates that only consumer involvement, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and opinion leadership have positive points in influencing international students in enrolling in HEIs via the internet.
By analysing the data collected from the international students, most of the respondents indicated that they were likely to use the internet to apply to a Higher Education Institution. In the research completed at the NMMU, 70 per cent of the respondents indicated they would use the internet to apply to the HEI or use e-mail to make further enquiries.

Throughout the whole research, the analysis indicates that using the internet brings lots of advantages; people can contact each other at any time, they are able to search for information and contact friends and family. Students with a higher education are more likely to accept the new internet service provided by the international department.
CHAPTER 6
SYNOPSIS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION
The main objective is to determine the factors that influence the international students enrolling in a HEI via the internet. In Chapter 5, the results of the research were interpreted with the intention of presenting the findings of the survey conducted. This chapter briefly presented a synopsis of the previous chapters and gives conclusions and recommendations based on the empirical findings.

6.2 SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY
Chapter 1 began with a brief description of the research design of the dissertation. Firstly, the researcher presented the research problems, which contained the main problem and sub-problems, followed by the research objectives. Secondly, the research significance was outlined, followed by the literature review and the explanations of the main factors which influence international students enrolling at the HEIs via the internet. Important cores were identified and defined to ensure clarity of interpretation, followed by the research methodology which was introduced in the next section.

Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 gave an overview of selected literature related to the topic. Chapter 2 focused on who, what and how of international marketing by giving an overview of the concept of international business, and international marketing environment analysis which influences international business success or failure. Later in Chapter 2, internet marketing was introduced and the internet usability which
supports e-business was studied.

Chapter 3 provided the guidelines for marketers on what elements affect the international students' choices in enrolling in HEIs via the internet. The factors which address these elements are the following; perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, consumer involvement, consumer innovativeness, opinion leadership, perceived risk and trust. Secondly, the topic of enrolling in HEIs via the internet was defined as an innovation (new service) existing in the market. Then the categories of innovation, the characteristics of the innovation and the diffusion of innovation were identified, followed by the stages in consumer adoption of an innovation.

Chapter 4 gave an explanation of the methodology used in this study. Exploratory and descriptive research were introduced at the beginning of the study. The appropriate methods of the study were then introduced in the light of the requirements of the study and self-administered surveys and Likert scale questions are explained here. Lastly, the data analysis methods of the study were explored in terms of the different techniques being required.

Chapter 5 gave a description of the results and empirical findings of the study. It began with a brief explanation of demographic information collected from the international students, followed by a frequency distribution analysis obtained of each of the variables in the data. The methods were, table of frequency counts, percentages and cumulative percentages for all the values which were used to analyse the data.
6.3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 5 introduced the empirical findings of the whole study. The purpose of this chapter is to conclude with the remarks on the survey based on the finding of the literature and the empirical study, so far as to provide recommendations for the international students.

As discussed in Chapter 3, there are seven factors namely, perceived risk, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, consumer involvement, trust, consumer innovativeness and opinion leadership that influence the international students enrolling in the HEIs via the internet. Chapter 5 analysed to what extent these seven factors affect the use of the internet. Therefore analysis of the seven factors is critical because it may prove to be an extremely useful tool for marketing management to identify the service problems or service failure points.

Overall evaluation of the factors influencing the use of the internet for enrolling in the HEIs was determined largely by four factors; namely, perceived usefulness, consumer involvement, perceived ease of use and opinion leadership. These factors are explained in detail in the following section.

- **Perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use**

As predicted, both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use were positively correlated with the adoption of enrolling in HEIs via the internet. The relationship is expected, as many previous studies have found the same effects of perceived ease of use on perceived usefulness and behaviour intention (Kamruzaman, 2007:710). The results suggest that perceived usefulness is a major determinant
influencing the international students enrolling in the HEIs via the internet. E-service adopters use website resources that are perceived to be useful and easy-to-use interfaces. Both perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness generate favourable feelings toward using the internet, leading to a greater likelihood of adopting internet services. Thus, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness have been demonstrated to be fundamental determinants of e-service adoption behaviour.

- **Consumer involvement**

  The result of a positive direct relationship between consumer involvement and adoption explains that individual traits are as important as perceived usefulness for an individual in adopting a new service. The results indicate that consumer involvement is an essential contributor to the adoption of the new service.

- **Opinion leadership**

  This result is expected, as opinion leadership is found to have a strong correlation with the adoption of new service, which eventually demonstrates a strong effect on e-service adoption. Kamrulzaman (2007:711) states that since opinion leadership may be an indication of innovativeness, opinion leaders may be created from early adopters to persuade later adopters to try new service.

### 6.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

The empirical model resulting from the current research shows high validity and reliability for evaluating the factors influencing the NMMU international students in enrolling in HEIs via the internet. Its future applications are not limited to the NMMU,
but are appropriate for assessing the factors influencing the NMMU international students' choice in using the internet to enrol in HEIs.

This study targeted only 200 international students at the NMMU. It is recommended that further research which includes a large sample of international students be conducted. Therefore, further research can be focused on whether the factors influencing international students' adoption of the e-service differs from university to university. Further, a comparison of the choices of international students from different universities' in the adoption of e-service in enrolling in HEIs via the internet can be elicited from further research.
REFERENCE LIST


Commerce, 7(3): 101-34.


Republic of South Africa-Higher Education Amendment Bill. 2008

Undergraduate prospectus for international students: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University for tomorrow. 2007/2008


ANNEXURE – International students’ questionnaire cover letter

4 Gomery Place
Summerstrand
6001
Port Elizabeth
June. 2009

Dear Sir/Madam

This survey is conducted in fulfillment of a Master Degree in Business Administration for which I am currently enrolled at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. The purpose of the questionnaire is to find out the factors influencing the international students’ choice of enrolling at the Higher Educational Institutions via the internet.

It would be appreciated if you could complete the attached questionnaire, and your information will be treated confidentially. Please complete the questionnaire as honestly as possible and please ensure that you have answered all the questions.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Ning Yang
Section A: Demographics

1. Which country do you come from?
2. What is your highest qualification?
   a. under 18
   b. 18-21
   c. Over 21
3. What is your age range?
   a. under 18
   b. 18-21
   c. Over 21
4. What is your sex?
   a. male
   b. female
5. For what qualification are you registered?

Section B
Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement below. Note that 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 1 Innovativeness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I am usually among of the first to try out a new service.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I often try new services before my friends do.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New technologies on the website are beneficial for customers.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 2 Perceived usefulness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Surfing on the internet keeps me up-to-date with the latest information.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I like to search for information that interests me personally.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The internet leads to better communication between HEI and me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The internet is a convenient way of connecting with HEI for international students.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 3 Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I trust the website as a safe medium for financial transaction.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>One should be very cautious when transacting on the website.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I use the internet when I think it is safe.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I am prepared to give my personal information to HEI when I apply on the internet.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 4 Perceived risk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The internet will lead to a loss of privacy for me because my personal information would be used without my knowledge.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Depending on the expected level of quality of the internet service performance, it is risky to use it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>It is risky to apply to HEI online.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section C

1. Did you use the internet for information about different overseas higher education institutions?  
   - a. yes  
   - b. no  

2. Did you go to the homepage of NMMU's website?  
   - a. yes  
   - b. no  

3. How did you find the NMMU’s website?  
   - a. through a search engine  
   - b. through promotional materials  
   - c. through an educational portal  
   - d. through education agent’s website  
   - e. others, please specify  

4. Was the information posted on NMMU’s website sufficient for you to decide to enrol in the university?  
   - a. highly sufficient  
   - b. sufficient  
   - c. not enough  

5. Did you e-mail to NMMU to make further enquires?  
   - a. yes (go to question 6)  
   - b. no (skip from question 9)  

6. How long did it take for NMMU to reply to your enquiry?  
   - a. within 1day  
   - b. 1-2 days
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. 3-5 days</td>
<td>c. 3-5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Over five days</td>
<td>d. Over five days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 How did NMMU reply to you?</td>
<td>7 How did NMMU reply to you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. via E-mail</td>
<td>a. via E-mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. via fax</td>
<td>b. via fax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. via ordinary mail</td>
<td>c. via ordinary mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Did the E-mail response influence your decision to enrol with this university?</td>
<td>8 Did the E-mail response influence your decision to enrol with this university?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. highly influence</td>
<td>a. highly influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. influence</td>
<td>b. influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. no influence</td>
<td>c. no influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Who is the key decision maker for your choice of overseas higher education institution?</td>
<td>9 Who is the key decision maker for your choice of overseas higher education institution?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. self</td>
<td>a. self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. parents</td>
<td>b. parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. independent agent in home country</td>
<td>c. independent agent in home country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. other relatives or friends</td>
<td>d. other relatives or friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. scholarship from NMMU</td>
<td>e. scholarship from NMMU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. home country government</td>
<td>f. home country government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. other, please specify.</td>
<td>g. other, please specify.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME !!!