

# THE IMPACT ON STUDENTS PREFERENCES OF PROMOTIONAL MEDIUMS OF UNIVERSITIES: THE SAMPLE OF KARATAY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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**Abstract-** Owing to oppression of globalization and communication systems, the institutional publicity activities became more important now than 10 years ago. For the time being, 193 universities stand/take place in Turkey. Universities as a public institution, reserve more share to websites, social media and the other promotional formats. The aim of this research is to clear up the factors which affect student's preferences. In this research, 919 Karatay University's students are subjected to a survey. According to results, web sites and the social media pages are the most preferred formats of publicity in general. Students make their preferences regarding University selection considering score suitability, the quality of education and closeness of their home.

**Key words-** Service Marketing, University Choices, Institutional Advertising

## I. INTRODUCTION

Publicity is the movement of information which includes goods and services of an institution with its identity and tech opportunities in the cause of increasing public awareness and supporting of a subject (Demirtas, 2012, s. 213). Publicity of an institution gains public visibility or awareness for a product and service via the media such as TV, social networks, web-sites, newspapers, smart-phones and internet advertisements. The improvements of network fields lead to a tending toward internet and social media rather than TV. In the field where the developments in the media and international competition increase, universities begin to give significance to publicity more than before. Under the favor of education becoming widespread, now great universities can constitute new campuses in other countries. For instance, the countries like USA, France, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, England and Australia have colleges located in Dubai (French College, German University, Australia Wollongong, Dubai American College, Alain Technical University, Science and Technology University etc.). These colleges are preferred by community because of importance given to education. Afresh, Oxford is planning to establish new campus in Kazakhstan. At this stage, Turkish Universities such as METU and ITU do not fall behind and keep progressing by having semiprivate universities in Cyprus in order to become a brand and expand to world (Kilic & Bayraktar, 2010).

As of the date of May 2015, 109 public universities, 76 private universities and 8 junior technical college, in total 193 universities are located in Turkey (YOK, Universitelerimiz, 2015). According to pie chart below, there are % 57 of public universities and % 43 of private universities in Turkey. Istanbul University is the first public university established in 1933 and

the first private university is Ihsan Dogramaci Bilkent University established in 1984 (YOK, Universitelerimiz, 2015).

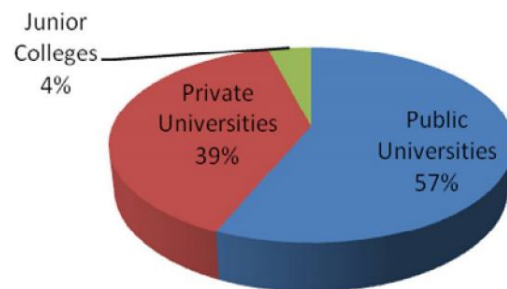


Chart 1: Universities in Turkey (YOK, 2015)

According to Table 1, there are 2.874.988 students in universities in total, % 87 of them study in public universities and % 13 of them are in private universities (YOK, 2014).

Table 1: Student Counts According to University Form

University Form	Female Student	Male Student	Total	Ratio
Public	1.143.121	1.374.619	2.517.740	% 87
Private	174.494	182.754	357.2248	% 13
Total	1.317.615	1.557.373	2.874.988	% 100

Source (YOK, 2014)

In order to complete the quota, Universities concentrate on publicities more and more everyday. Rifat Saricaoglu who is President of Association of Private Universities specifies that there are still 334.569 quota which is not full (237.500 in public, 97.009 in private) and clarifies that cost of one public student is 7000 TL and cost of one private student is 12000 TL. Therefore President Saricaoglu declares

that, private universities suffered 3 million loss in last five years in the consequence of central placement (Denge, 2012).

By reason of the fact that the communication in social media is becoming more popular everyday, universities reserve more share of their budget to a social media. A research examining this topic called Universities' Activities in Social Media have notable results. According these results, in last six months (July 2011-January 2012) universities increased their followers on Facebook from 177.000 to 357.000. On Twitter accounts, total followers scaled up from 23.000 to 70.000. The universities which have a Youtube Channel reached to 28 from 14. The most used platforms by universities in social media are Twitter and Facebook. % 32 of public universities and % 79 of private universities use Facebook as social media instrument. However, only 2 public universities and 10 private universities have their own phone app in the media where apps are widespread (Futurarts, 2012). There are some fields which universities use in order to publicity in below;

#### **1. Institutional Web Sites**

These web sites are the best fields where institutions reveal their identity to public. During the recent years, these web sites become more significant and they search for variable solutions in order to make their data more accurate for prospective students.

#### **2. Presentation in High Schools and Courses**

These are the activities which are performed by administrative personnel and faculty members. In this activity, faculty members present their faculties and opportunities with the help of conference, sample goods and films.

#### **3. Domestic and Overseas Education Expos**

Education expos are becoming a segment of their own in recent years in Turkey. Now, these expos are organized not only metropolis but small cities and overseas too.

#### **4. Social Media**

Presently, social media are preferred most by rising generation, hence universities share their ideas and experiences which are obtained in education expos, school visits etc. in Facebook and Twitter with prospective students.

#### **5. TV Programs**

Local channels and national channels put together promotional programs at the election period with intent to gain prospective students. In this shows, members of universities promote their faculties and offerings.

#### **6. Sponsorship**

Universities provide sponsorship to scientific and cultural activities with the aim of social awareness and advertising. In addition, universities constitute field of operation in order to gain academic staff.

#### **7. Openings, Conferences and Symposiums**

Besides educational services, universities offer researches and meetings on the purpose of advertising their name locally and internationally.

#### **8. Works for UG-G Students**

With regard to researches, gladness of under graduate and graduate students are as significant as other promotional activities for prospective students. In that case, quality of education, school resources socially and culturally, support of students clubs and rank of university internationally please continuing students and affect prospective's preferences.

#### **9. Advertisements**

Even though, it is illegal to advertise for universities in Turkey, they are allowed to introduce themselves in social media, billboards, newspapers and journals. Thus in this way, universities are recognized more in public.

#### **10. Brochures, Journals, Teasers and Printed Materials**

These materials are effective in promotion devoted to students in order to clarify students' activities, scholarships, campus offerings, clubs, fees, students' point of views and faculty' staff.

#### **11. University Meetings**

Most high schools in Turkey organize university meetings time to time to metropolises where most universities located. Every so often, universities support these meeting financially. Thanks to these meeting, prospective students have a chance to familiarize universities they would like to attend and acquire university experience for a while.

Some studies have been made previously. Horstschaer (2012) has made a study on German Medical Schools. He investigated the choices of candidate students who are gifted. Serban and Dumitrascu (2013) have made a study on German students who leave their region for university education. Aziz (2009) has made a study on public relation activities of foundation universities.

Demirtas (2012) has made a study on Aydin University's students about the factors which affect the student choices. Tekelioglu, Baser, Ortlek and Aydinli (2012) have made a study on foreign students about the factors which affect the student choices. The aim of this research is to clear up the factors which affect student's preferences.

## **II. METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The research was made with basis scanning type. The population in this research is Karatay University students and the sample is new students who registered in 2015. For this Research 1049 survey was distributed and 919 were seen fit to evaluate. The survey form created by researchers were used as a data collecting tool. According to chart 1 below, there are determinant mediums for Karatay University publicity. At the chart, with the share of % 35 website is the first tool, followed by % 26,87 of share for catalogs and brochures and with % 19,36 share Facebook and Twitter are third effective promotional tool for university' publicity. These results

acknowledge that social networks are growing into more effective tools for publicity.

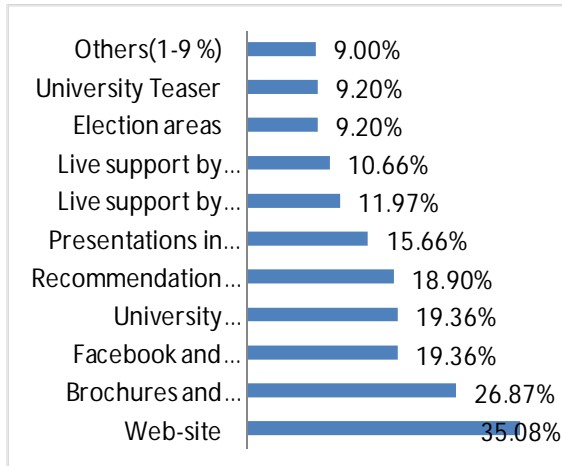


Chart 2: Effects of Mediums in University recognition

In chart 2, there are motives of prospective students with regard to decide on Karatay University. As these factors examined, with % 53,64 “exam scores suitability” leads forth. The second motive is the place “where university located” with % 44,72 and third motive is the “job opportunities” which are provided by university with share of % 35,58. The least motives of students’ preferences are “advice of guidance counselors” and “the amount of scholarship” with shares of % 9,49 and % 9,25. As seen, scholarships are not influential for candidates of university, nonetheless it is taken in consideration that scholarship is a tool in order to use steering candidates choices.

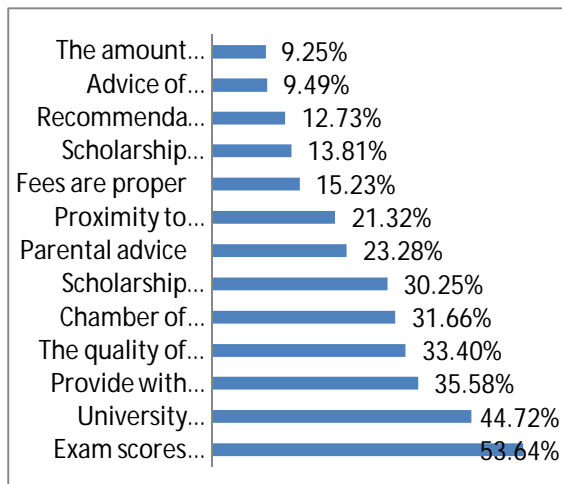


Chart 2: Motives of Students on Why They Preferred Karatay University

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Progression on communication and rapid variance in notion raise need of education more. At the same time, the question that: “where one can find proper

education” gain importance. In this day and age, educational establishments which offer high-class education are in the an endeavor to get more and qualified candidates. First public universities were established then followed by private universities and profit motive universities were constituted last. Today, the rapidly increasing number of universities heat up competition among them and tend them to generate more publicity activities in an attempt to gain more prospective students.

At the end of this research, it is seen that institutional web-sites, social media and brochures are the instrumentals of introduction of university. It can interpreted that this result is normal in today’s world where usage of internet is inevitable. These results match with Demirtas’s results in 2013. Likewise, internet and social media are the first motives for getting to know university in his research. It is estimated that universities go in for more promotion in social media.

In the research of Karatay University, exam score suitability, university placement and job opportunities are the most primary motivations for students to prefer university. Also in Demirtas’s research, these motives come up front for students to make a choice. Further more these findings coincide with Horstschaer’s research on German Medical Schools (2012). While in election process, German students attach importance to ratio of student-staff numbers, bed count in clinics and contentedness of students. Moreover students in Karatay University Medical School give more importance to contentedness, guidance, job opportunities and quality of education. In the past years, it was enough to attend to university for a student, however students tend to pick best option now due to rivalry, unemployment and increasing college numbers.

It does not matter how efficient advertisement is, the level of pleasure and qualified jobs of graduates affects publicity as much as advertisements. According to Communication of Integrated Marketing, if under-graduates, graduates and staff of faculty would make reference to same level of contentedness and same qualified education, the publicity is made instinctively without any extra effort or money.

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