The motivation and satisfaction of the students towards MBA at Karlstad University

Business Administration

Master’s Thesis-One year program (FEAD01)

15 ECTS

Academic Year Spring 2011

Thesis Advisors
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ABSTRACT

This study shows the motivation and satisfaction factors influencing international students to continue study Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the reasons of international students to select Karlstad University as their alternative. Theoretical framework had been collected form secondary data. The study had explained the main factors those lead students decide to study MBA at Karlstad University. The factor such as requirement of MBA increases because of globalization change. Organizations prefer efficiency business solving-problem skill, at the same time people need to improve their professional career. In addition to labor market and human need, secondary data did not provide other reasons affecting student’s decision making.

The study explains reasonable impacts on student’s decision making related to secondary data which are European education system, education system in Sweden, MBA in Europe, Europe and the world-wide boom in MBA program, trend Master of business administration toward affects labor market, human motivation theory, satisfaction measurement theory, and decision making/reasoning skill. To survey population sampling, interviews of ten international students were conducted as primary data. The result has both related and unrelated to the previous study.

The result indicated that the reason of respondent to continue study MBA was because they needed to improve their specific knowledge skill, career advancement, increased their value. This is the internal factor while external factor is labor market. While the factors leading students to choose Sweden for their higher education are free tuition fee, location and environment such as a place of famous business or cultural differences. On the other hand, they selected Karlstad University because of its marketing, for example, it provides specific programs and courses which match their requirements, its location is nice, and it has partnership in host countries.

Satisfaction aspect indicated that students were satisfied with the flexible education system, open class for discussion and non-focus on grade. At the same time, there were some unsatisfied points. There were problems about insufficient communication for international students, about teaching style that lacks of motivation, and about the support from teachers, these are what should be improved in the perspective of the students.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To complete the research, we have been supported from various people. Firstly, we would like to give special thank to supervisor who are encouragement and be our thesis advisor, Professor Inger Roos. We really appreciated their recommendation and suggestion during thesis process. Their act in response was really useful for us to conduct research; their faster approval had been provided and allowed us to collect data on time. Without this support we would not be able to solve problem efficiently.

Second, we thank you and appreciate to international students in Karlstad University who supported us very well for data collection, for spending time for our thesis interview. It was such a kind of excellent information which really had been valuable for this research.

Finally, we thank you for family who is often cheerful and always support us behind during conducting research until it is completely done.

Sineenat Suasungnern
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Education is an implement to development society and human conscious, in the era of globalizations, recently, strategy and innovation are changing and developed all the time, education seems to be even more essential to serve globalizations circumstances. Accordingly higher education is attractive from many applicants including general people and organization employees. Anyhow, the opportunity to study higher education would raise careers progress and also most of organizations prefer in high performance skill of human resources in order to enhance and drive competitive advantage.

In our perspective, changing circumstances especially knowledge and science innovation are affect to the education system consequently, people society need to improve themselves, as the reason, education institutions must develop and expand study program to conform with the requirement of labor market, push forward to students to realize of task, role regarding type of education and program study pattern that has been provided in education institutions is it consider to be for a time to develop or another reason to produce personals skill to society.

To be able to develop organizations, the drivers from good potential personal knowledge skills and people standard of living are considered of being a good position as well. It might be possible to explain that study program (focus on Master of business administration MBA) would be a part to produce high personal performance skill for economy and society. As the reason, according to MBA is more famous in this era, this seems to be interesting to study what are the motivation and satisfaction those lead students decide to study MBA in Karlstad university. We hope that the information of this research would be useful for the faculty and university to determine and adapt or develop policy plan to conform to the climate situation suitably in the future time.

1.2 Purpose of study

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate student's attitude towards their motivation that influences them to study MBA at Karlstad University and their satisfaction towards the university and MBA program. This research is studied in order to examine the motive factors affecting student’s decision to study MBA at Karlstad University such as labor market, their inner needs, their family demand, and so on, as well as to explore the demand and interest of
the students if there is something needed to be changed or improved. Furthermore, the research will study the relationship between general data from student’s perspective and theoretical data. In doing so, the study have to understand more about educational trends, labor markets, motivation theories and satisfaction evaluation in order to analyze this research.

1.3 Delimitation of term

The area and scope of this thesis focus on Master of business administration (MBA) perspectives of international students who study in Karlstad University, Sweden and investigate factor of students’ motivation and satisfaction both from free mover and exchange students. Due to the limitation of time, research data has been collected from the wide rank group of populations in order to reach convenient survey and smoothly approach. In this research, the group of population sampling will focus on a group of MBA international students who came from many continents around the world instead of only focus on European students. Culture differences unable to avoid in this research and it can be one factor that influence students’ motivation and satisfaction. The group population sampling ages are between 22-30 year olds. The motivation and satisfaction are shifting in every era due to the climate situation change, those things are more or less affecting to human motivation and interest.

In Addition, there are different experiences which consist of one semester exchange program, one year master program and two year master program in Karlstad University respondent. The results come from many diverse perspectives.

1.4 Definition of MBA

“Master of business Administration (MBA) is considered a professional Master’s degree rather than a traditional or academic Master’s degree. However, completion of a professional MBA dose not usually precludes admission to a PH.D. programs for research-oriented engagements. School that offer the MBA are usually known as either management or business schools” (Word iq.com 2008).

Pallab Dutta (2009) has described the definition of an MBA degree that, “The MBA (Master of Business Adminstration) is a master’s degree in business management and administration. It is generally a 2 year, full-time program taught in business schools of major universities and colleges. An applicant must pass the graduate Management Admission Test
(GMAT) for admission. The instruction is made up of theoretical and practical training, and degree holders can opt for specialization in marketing, finance, international business and human resource management. In recent decades, students are acquiring MBA degrees in techno-commercial management as well. Professionals with MBA degree is highly sought in the marketplace and generally lead challenging and fulfilling careers” (Dutta 2009).

1.5 History of Master of business administration (MBA)

Master of Business Administration (MBA) has begun in the 20th century in United State of America. There were two year postgraduate courses where applicants could admit directly without working experience after they graduated from Bachelor’s degree.

In year 1950, American MBA was seen as the second rate world business and school. In this situation, American took action by increasing standard of admission and teaching to American MBA programs. Understanding of management practices was conducted into the courses and followed by particular or further study (Jones 2003).

1.5.1 MBA establishment in Europe

According to Jones (2003), by the 1960, UK needed to decide its business schools. The report by Franks was recommendation. After that, two business schools were established; the Manchester Business School and London Business School. The other universities also followed and companies started to arrange management training for their employees. In France, MBA began in Henley Management college, Ashridge and Insead. The programs provided two-year courses with intensive 12 month programmers as well as the special MBA programs were introduced such as international business and finance. Since then, studying oversea has been growing with a choice of full-time fundamental or selecting to study in business schools that allow students to take at least one elective course in another country.

Master of Business Administration (MBA) allows students to work while studying at the same time, so called part-time MBA, this type of MBA is considered to be very preference and biggest growth. The average of part-time program is two and a half years along with working. That is a reason why many employers support the scholarship for many students for this type of MBA. Some MBA courses are provided for executives so the course schedules will be set in the evening and weekend, and some programs allow students to attend full-time of study and then return to their employers in the rest of time. In addition, the
explanation from association stated that MBA type of distance learning was taking between 10,000 and 15,000 people in UK.

Refer to the complex of economic changing, business schools need to adapt and monitor that they are providing graduate student’s skills which match the economic climate situation. Among the climate of globalization changes, in the opinion of writer suggested that business schools need to concentrate on “soft” skills such as ethics and increase focus on practical more than just put them purely academic skills. (Jones 2003)

1.6 Types of MBA programs

1.6.1 One-year and two-year full time MBA programs

Full-time MBA programs consist of one-year program and two-year program. For one-year program, it is appropriate for the students who have experiences in business field before. Because this program tends to focus on management skills, so the students are considered that they already have professional business and business networking skills. For two-year program, there are important intensive business courses in less time than taking cover during a part-time program. The two-year program requires a professional internship of school year, where students unable to build business contacts and classroom skills (MBA program.org 2010).

1.6.2. Part-time MBA programs

Part-time MBA programs provide an opportunity for adults who are working to be able to look for a new jobs or even promotions without giving up their jobs. Employers probably support fund to their top employees for MBA degree skills and tuition costs. This makes it easier for students to continue their Master degrees (MBA program.org, 2010).

1.6.3 Online MBA Program

Online MBA programs are suitable for the students who launch career or family role obligations. It does not only increase advance study to reach higher positions, but it is preference for employers to support fund to their employees for online MBA studies and obtain the promising employees. Therefore, this type of programs is appropriate for working parents and people who are available for only part-time. Online programs require self-patient
and self-spirit, so they are not suitable for people who have no motivation or efficiency to manage time (MBA program.org, 2010).

1.6.4 Executive MBA programs

Executive MBA programs are available at university campus and online business schools. These programs require two years of study. This type of programs is suitable for expertise managers or executives who need to increase their expertise of their existing knowledge. Some businesses prefer employees to reach MBA in order to complete their executive training, and the companies are also willing to support fund for tuitions. Campus executive MBA programs are available on weekend study time, while online courses meet on themselves, flexible schedules (MBA program.org, 2010).

1.6.5 Other Master’s degree in business

For professionals who are looking for advanced, particular training, there are some Master programs which are available both online and on-campus. The programs are provided in many disciplines such as accounting, informational technology and commerce, finance, health care, hospital administration, industrial administration and so on. This type of programs is provided to serve students to select full-time and part-time (MBA program.org, 2010).

1.7 Karlstad University Overview

Karlstad University is one of the newest universities in Sweden. It is a state university of Karlstad. The main objective of the university as defined in Mastersportal is “to focus on co-operation with organizations and individuals working in business and the public services, as well as maintaining a high standard of higher education and research” (Mastersportal 2011) and also to provide multidisciplinary programs for students both come from Sweden and other countries around the world as well as developing strong areas of research (KAU 2011).

Karlstad University provides four faculties consisting of a number of departments and subjects. These faculties are the Faculty of Technology and Science, the Faculty of Social and Life Sciences, the Faculty of Arts and Education, and the Faculty of Economic Sciences, Communication and IT. In addition, as the university combines education and research in the
fields of business and economics, media, communication and IT together, that leads to a close cooperation with commerce and industry, public agencies and organizations. Then, the faculty had established Karlstad Business School (KAU 2011). The following part we will mention about Karlstad Business School since this paper will focus on Master of Business Administration or MBA program.

1.7.1 Karlstad Business School

Before becoming Karlstad Business School, business and economy programs started in Karlstad in 1960 were originally established as a branch of University of Gothenburg. At that time, students studied basic courses in Karlstad and then continued to complete their degrees in Gothenburg. Then, after the programs had been developed, the students could earn a degree at Karlstad University College. In 1999, the Karlstad University was inaugurated after being approved by the Swedish Agency for Higher Education. Ten years later, the university continued to operate under the culture of daring to think new and the Karlstad Business School was created (Karlstad Business School 2010).

Karlstad Business School provides undergraduate programs, Master programs and courses, and postgraduate studies. For Master-level study, the school provides one-year and two-year of these five disciplines as follows: Accounting and Finance, Industrial Management, Marketing, Management, and Service Marketing and Management. At the same time, there are many individual courses offered to study both in full-time and part-time as well as opportunities for international students to attend exchange program and choose to study one or more terms in Sweden or abroad. Moreover, Karlstad Business School also provides space for professional skills which aims to create student’s ability to communicate, work in team, develop leadership quality, manage conflicts and plan a career. This practice is transformed from theories into practical activities such as meetings, mentorship, field trips, guest lectures, internship or working with an authentic problem for a degree project (Mastersportal 2011 & Karlstad Business School 2010).
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the part of theoretical analysis, we attempt to find down each point that might be a factor of young people motivation to continue higher education. Due to limited time, the data sources mostly come from online. We are showing the perspective of literature review toward the previous research and recently globalization change such as relationship between MBA and labor market. In addition, general satisfaction concept will also apply to thesis empirical study, refer to education institution is important organization, it is considered to be as service education where the places are provided and create people knowledge skills. Therefore, student’s voice can be once importantly implemented to access the solution and problem to education institution.

In this part, we will mention about the education system in Europe and Sweden, the information of Master of business administration in Europe, the trend of Master of business administration toward labor market, and human motivation, satisfaction measurement and decision theory as the theoretical framework.

2.1 The European Education System

2.1.1 European countries

The higher education systems in European countries normally have a three-cycle degree structure. The first step of studying in the university is a Bachelor's degree. It is the first cycle of the system. This means students have to complete the Bachelor’s programs before they can go further to next degrees. With Bachelor’s degree, they can apply for a Master’s program or the second cycle. And after they finish Master’s degree, they can be admitted to the third cycle or Doctoral program if they want (Qrossroads 2011). The structure of degree in Europe can be described in the picture below. (See Figure 2.1)

![Degree Structure in European Countries](http://www.qrossroads.eu/degree-structure-in-europe)

Illustrated by this degree structure, European countries design the programs following the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) endorsed by Bologna Process which aims to create a European Higher Education Area (Ross 2005).
According to the Bologna Process, it emphasizes on three main areas. The first area is the introduction of the three cycle system which is divided into Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral degree. The second is the quality assurance and recognition of qualifications, and the third area is the periods of study (Bradford et al. 2008).

The ECTS involves with all countries those are in the Bologna Process engagement. The European Communities (2004) defines the meaning of ECTS as follow:

“The European credit transfer and accumulation system is a student-centred system based on the student workload required to achieve the objectives of a programme, objectives preferably specified in terms of the learning outcomes and competences to be acquired.”
(European Communities 2004)

As well as the European Communities (2009) states about the ECTS in the ECTS Users’ Guide in more details as follow:

“ECTS is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer based on the transparency of learning outcomes and learning processes. It aims to facilitate planning, delivery, evaluation, recognition and validation of qualifications and units of learning as well as student mobility. ECTS is widely used in formal higher education and can be applied to other lifelong learning activities.”
(European Communities 2009)

According to the European Communities (2004 & 2009), ECTS was issued in 1989 and has been an accumulation system that is successfully implemented at institutional, regional, national and European levels with the purpose of facilitating the recognition of study abroad periods and enhancing the quality and volume of student mobility across Europe. Base on ECTS system, students are required to study fulltime with 60 ECTS credits per one academic year. Thus, according to the Bologna agreement, it states that the first cycle or Bachelor’s programs require 3 years fulltime with 180 ECTS credits, the second cycle or Master’s programs require 2 years fulltime with 120 ECTS credits, and the third cycle or Doctoral programs require 3 years fulltime with 180 ECTS credits. However, in some countries, the second cycle can be set at between 90 and 120 ECTS points with requirement of 180 ECTS points from the first cycle (Ross 2005).

The other key features of ECTS can be described in terms of the credit, student workload, and performance evaluation. ECTS credits can be acquired only when the students successfully complete the work required or achieve proper assessment of the learning
outcomes which are set to express knowledge and understanding that the students get. The
credits will be allocated to every element of a study program such as modules, courses, or
dissertation work, and also reflect the quantities of work required by each element in order to
achieve its specific objectives and this is necessary to complete a full year of study. About the
student workload, this refers to the time required for completion of all learning activities. The
students need to attend lectures, seminars, independent and private study, examinations, and
so on. Lastly, the performance of the students will be evaluated in ECTS grading scale which
ranks on a statistic basis. Grades are assigned among students with a pass grade as follows: A
is given to 10% of best students, B is given to next 25% of students, C, D, and E are given to
next 30%, 25%, and 10% of students in order. For the unsuccessful students, they will be
graded as FX and F while FX refers to ‘fail - some more work required to pass’ and F refers
to ‘fail – considerable further work required’. (European Communities 2004)

In this paper, we will specify toward the education system of Master level. Even
under the same ECTS system and degree structure, the European countries have various
patterns of education in Master level in the different zone. We will describe some of Master
education systems in some sample countries classified by their zones of location according to
the survey of Tauch & Rauhvarger (2002).

2.1.2 The Anglo-Saxon tradition

The Anglo-Saxon tradition which consists of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Malta,
they use two-tier system. In the United Kingdom, Master degrees of mainly 90 or 120 ECTS
credits can be awarded by individual institutions under the legal instruments. Short Master
degrees in all disciplines require one or two years fulltime study. For two-year programs, a
major dissertation or thesis may be required. Moreover, there are also long integrated Master
programs in various institutions especially in business administration, mathematics, sciences
and engineering. In Ireland, Master degree requires one to three years of study and there are
no long integrated programs (Tauch & Rauhvarger 2002).

2.1.3 Nordic countries

In the Nordic countries, Denmark have a two-tier system parallel to the traditional
one-tier system. While in Sweden, there is a two-tier model and Master degrees of 60 ECTS
credits are offered in all disciplines. Moreover, they offer a new type of professional Master
degree called ‘Magisterexamen med ämnesbredd’ as an important part of lifelong learning. In
Norway, there is a new degree system that can be offered in both universities and state colleges. They have an international Master and an experience-based Master (60-90 credits) in addition of the 120 ECTS Master. Finally, in Finland, new type of Master programs is a two-tier system which the Bachelor programs are the part of the five-year Master programs. However, the new Master programs such as business and arts, technology, veterinary and dentistry, are provided only at universities and normally take two years to complete (Tauch & Rauhvarger 2002).

2.1.4 Western and Southern European countries

In Western and Southern European countries, their education systems are also boosted by Bologna Process. For example, in Italy, there are two degrees to be awarded for the graduate level. The most important degree called ‘laurea specialistica’ will be awarded at a level of 300 credits so that it requires two years of study. In Greece, the universities provide one type of Master degree with 1-2 years of study after the Bachelor’s degree that takes 4-5 years of study. However, most students leave the system after their Bachelor’s degree and do not go further to their Master. In France, as the last sample, there are two different profiles of Master. These are research Masters and professional Masters. For the latter, it probably requires an internship. Moreover, there are some pilot projects which offer Master degree of 60 credits in addition to the existing level of 240 credits. Thus, it concludes that programs require 300 credits altogether (Tauch & Rauhvarger 2002).

2.2 The education system in Sweden

In addition to overall European education system, in this paper we will more concentrate on the education system in Sweden as this country is the main issue of this study. The Swedish system is in the responsibility of the central government, regional authorities and private interests. All higher education institutions are subject to the power of the Ministry of Education and the higher education is divided into undergraduate studies and postgraduate studies and research (EuroEducation 2005).

All higher education in Sweden is provided at state-run universities, university colleges and institutions of higher education. It is now divided into three cycles, according to the Bologna Process, they are the undergraduate or first cycle, the Masters or second cycle, and the PhD or third cycle. The first cycle of higher education starts when students complete their studies in secondary education. It consists of University Diploma with 2 years of study
or 120 credits, and Degree of Bachelor with 3 years of study or 180 credits. The second cycle consists of One-year Master degree with 60 credits and Two-year Master degree with 120 credits. Both of these degrees require students to complete a thesis. Lastly, the third cycle consists of Degree of Licentiate with 2 years of study or 120 credits and Degree of Doctor (PhD) with 4 years of study or 240 credits (Högskoleverket 2011). The details of Swedish education system can be illustrated as the picture below. (See Figure 2.2)

![Figure 2.2 The national qualifications framework in Sweden](http://www.hsv.se/images/18.25f5fc89120437ec9bb7ffe2375/svenska-strukturen-eng_stor.jpg)

Swedish higher education institutes also have a degree structure harmonious with the European standards. It uses a system of credits called ‘högskolepoäng’ or Higher Education Credits which can be compared with the ETCS. Under the Swedish system, one academic year of fulltime study requires 60 higher education credits which can be comparable to 60 ECTS credits. In consideration of grading system, the most common scale being used in Sweden is a three-grade scale which consists of U (Underkänd) or Fail, G (Godkänd) or Pass and VG (Väl godkänd) or Pass with distinction. At the same time, many universities in Sweden also use ECTS scale like an additional option as it will be used as a transfer scale only when students request it (Stockholm University 2010).

In the past, there are no application and tuition fees for both EU/EEA/Switzerland citizens and non-EU/EEA students as well as the students who come to Sweden as exchange students. However, by the introduction of fees, from autumn 2011 students from outside EU/EEA and Switzerland are required to pay both for application and tuition fees while students from EU/EEA and Switzerland, including students in an exchange agreement, can remain free education as before (Stockholm University 2010).
2.3 Master of business administration in Europe

During 1960, demand of higher education increased to serve economic development, not only the result employment option from statistic outcome but the result also came from social and cultural expectations. Even though economic and political factors have driven higher education toward several industrial developed in Western countries, there are national climate shifts in home politics, social and cultural backgrounds, particularities of national higher education function. In the period of 1980, economy, technology changes have influenced the demand for higher level training, this is becoming a globalization which totally different from in 1960 (Zgaga 2009).

Today, many factors such as “family, social, careers qualification and including modern societies who work in economy and public service are the majority concern to all young people decided to continue higher education” (Zgaga 2009). If higher education is able to improved employability and welfare then rectors need to play attention. Academic tradition would useless if education system did not serve society voices.

There are four modern theories on university and higher, roles and tasks of education institutions can be classify to undertake research and teaching are as follows:

1. To maintain and develop an advanced knowledge
2. To train young people for professional careers
3. To prepare them for a life as active citizens in a democratic society
4. To contribute to their personal growth.

And another reason from many writers has been argue that academic institution should be responsive to the society (Zgaga 2009).

Report applicants have shown that the trend of Master of Business Administration in European region is growing fastest. Most applicants come from China and India while European citizen applicants represent 36%. In era of globalization, Europe is becoming a famous location education which has been influence from graduates’ students who have study in Europe’s business school and including peoples who have an experience and also the affective from exposure (IB staff reporter 2011).
2.4 Europe and the world-wide boom in MBA program

The data presented in table 2.1 and table 2.2 has shown that MBA degree has increased from year 1998 - 2000, the numbers of MBA becoming a global degree. In Europe, MBA was raising during twentieth century in United Kingdom (Bykjeflot 2003). The MBA program information in table 2.1 shows that there were around 1000 MBA program from 1150 universities, 690 in Europe.

Table 2.1 Number of MBA program in February 2000 and increase from September 1998 (per cent of total).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>February 2000</th>
<th>September 1998</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>320 (15)</td>
<td>240 (15)</td>
<td>+25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Europe</td>
<td>345 (16)</td>
<td>208 (13)</td>
<td>+66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1000 (45)</td>
<td>880 (55)</td>
<td>+14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of world</td>
<td>535 (24)</td>
<td>272 (17)</td>
<td>+97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2200 (100)</td>
<td>1600 (100)</td>
<td>+37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Large 2000 and Wild 1998 at the MBA Program Information site)

There are 66 percents of MBA programs increase in the rest of Europe, 25 percents come from United Kingdom.

Table 2.2 Estimated number of MBA program and annual number of MBA graduate relative to population 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MBA program per mill estimate</th>
<th>Annual number of MBA Graduates per mill est.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Europe</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: MBA info.com, financial times)

In year 2000, the data from table 2.2 explains the amount of MBA graduates. It is still large number graduates populations in US and United Kingdom, on the other hand the rest of Europe is still far behind the US and United Kingdom in amount of programs and graduates populations. Unfortunately, the data also might be the consequence of delayed report. MBA programs have disappeared in the historical from 1952 to 1972 and also the mid 1980. The
early recognized were in United Kingdom and Southern European. The German speaking countries might a third wave with a growth in continental Europe (Bykjeflot 2003).

The previous research from Top MBA.com 2006 has analyzed MBA study motivation. The main motivators’ reason that applications take an MBA is for career development.

There are six MBA study motivation percentage as described as follows: (Table 2.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enable a career change</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve career prospects</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boost salary</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start own business</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn new skills</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve education</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Top MBA.com, 2004/5)

The research indicated that, in 2004 – 2005 MBA study motivation, people tend to improve their career and follow by learn new skills and career change. On the other hand, other important motivations for applicants are budget and study mode such as full time MBA still the most popular program. For the budget scholarships are provided by several organizations and many local banks have offered lower loans. The research applications perspective has giving percent rating selection business school, 1.International reputation 85% 2.Career placement record 81% 3.Return of investment 80% 4.Scholarship availability 75% 5.Specializations & teaching style 71% 6.Recent school ranking 65% 7. Quality of faculty research 59% 8. Profile of participants 55% 9.Location 50% 10.Course length and flexibility 45%. As the research result, the most popular selection is international reputations which match with the recruiters is an indicator of quality of a program (Bykjeflot 2003). This research is quite surprisingly for our thinking because it is quite unexpected that most applicants tend to focus on international reputation rather than seeking for the course area that
interesting to their option. Unfortunately, this research still corresponds with the trend labor of market in 2007 – 2010.

2.5 Trend Master of business administration toward affects labor market

According to Master of Business Administration becomes the most important in professional business education and resource toward internationalization and standardization in higher education, and as well trying to connect between firms and educational institutions. Have a look in European labor market, there has been growing faster demand for MBA and numbers of MBA programmers rather than USA and Great Britain (Bykjeflot 2003).

Table 2.4 Top ten subject areas for graduate study

(Source: QS Research 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Interest in 2007 (%)</th>
<th>Interest in 2006 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance, accountancy, management and economics (FAME)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International relations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and media</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and legal studies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subject areas of international students’ preference to continue Masters and PhD programs are related to employment opportunities after graduate. The table above is showing
the differences interesting subject by World Grad School Tour education fairs in 2006 and 2007 (QS Research 2008).

The data represents 55,000 students prospective subject interest, in year 2006 to 2007, the preference was reduce in subject of finance, accountancy, management and economics while other subjects was raising such as administration, biological sciences and psychology is becoming more popular. The said from MacDonald, director of QS World Grad School explain that, tend of international students in recent years prefer to study those subject because it would raise the opportunity for employment after graduation. For the countries where economy is growing faster, students from those countries tend to prefer to continue Master degree in order to serve more careers (QS Research 2008).

The alternative of particular subject is influenced toward universities offerings Masters Programs. From previous year, there is unaware demand of local or international labor market, therefore distinct area of Master programs has been designed and revised which direct collaboration of business or industry, the purpose is to producing labor skill in order to serve enter to specific market labor. The several academic driven by public policy, international relations, biological sciences and administration recently advantage from increasing international graduate student perspective (QS research 2008).

There are previous various surveys and school reports an average MBA salaries by region. (Figure 2.3)

Figure 2.3 The graph of MBA salaries by region
(Source: http://www.mbapursuit.com/mba-salary-trends)

The above graph represent salaries depend on various factors such as individual performance, functional area, sector, industry and so on. The results tell that, the regions of Western Europe and US offer high salaries. MBA is the demand in any region affecting toward to high salaries. Figure 2.4 represents an average picture of demand for MBA all over six major regions.
From the graph, highest demand for MBA related to the number of jobs will be US and Western Europe.

Same situation that factors of individual performance, pre-MBA salary, skill and so on might affect to the salary. Those graphs in our view can be explain that, MBA is the one affective factor that related to the salary which lead young people continue higher education (MBApursuit.com 2008).

The research confirms that 15-20 schools in Europe and North America prefer for international employee and MBA hiring (TopMBA 2011). Have a look in research 2010; the
most of employers seek for MBA graduates, leadership, and communication, interpersonal and strategic skill still standing in a good demand position, while marketing, sales and finance and consulting business are very preference for employer in 2010. In our view, the trends hiring MBA job also match with the current global situation, because good solving problem skill really more requires when MBA salaries increase approximately 5% in 2010 after world financial crisis happened in previous time, also the previous research opinion have describe that, in near future, employers perhaps increase the requirement MBA graduates in order to serve with climate change in global market (Gómez 2010). The demographics of employer respondents from previous research in 2010 present job and salaries trend there are 50% in Asia, Western EU 14%, Eastern EU 13%, US and Canada 8%, Middle East 6% (Gómez 2010), as the result Europe continent including Western EU plus Eastern EU still got high amount when compare to the most larger like Asia continent. This research can be explained that, higher education is more respond to the employer in European countries. The recruiter response by industry 2010 represent most top labor skill requirement, the previous research classify into 19 MBA programs, the result showed that there are Financial service and consulting stand on the high rank for recruiter respondents and followed by IT/computer service, manufacturing and pharmaceuticals (Gómez 2010). In this trend report in our view can be consider that the result between respondents of recruiter and trend job are match up with global climate change such as financial crisis affect the demand of financial service and consulting MBA skill.

The information from previous research describes that, management degree are more taking by students toward expect to their future career. The demand of employer considers being as a cycle which related to the global economy. Recently, companies around the world continue to growth and give attention to MBA qualification (Gómez 2010). Another important statement issued in the survey of QS Top MBA Jobs & Salary Trends 2010/11 stated that, “MBA is an effective path toward a significant career change, an MBA qualification is usually effective at bringing about a change in up to two of big variables – either in industry, function or geography – but rarely in all three. For example, without an MBA, it is almost impossible to change career to become an analyst at a leading investment bank, or a senior consultant at a top consultancy” (Quacquarelli 2010) from this statement, in our view, one of the motivation factors that mostly young people continue MBA degree is because the concerning of progression in future career. Unfortunately, the progression of
career not usually come from higher education, it depend on many factor and situation different toward job opportunity.

In this thesis, we did not find the previous deep detail related to the motivation unless the factor that improve their professional career and trend labor market as mention which lead student decided to continue higher education. The previous study has explained that, current influences on educational decision making, this approach is more challenge of multiple conflicting, the need for interviews with various individuals across each network (Heath et al. 2007).

2.6 Human motivation

Human motivation works as an internal factor that explains human real needs. Human motivation concept is used in this research in order to support internal factors as it is one of the factors influencing students to study MBA.

According to the Maslow’s theory of human motivation (Maslow 1943), he believed that man is a wanting animal and it is difficult that human will meet the stage of complete satisfaction because human need is unlimited. In the theory of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Maslow defined that when human is satisfied in one thing, he will demand to be satisfied in other things continuously. Maslow said that the desires of human have been innate carrying and these desires will normally step up from the basic need to the higher levels.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often described in the shape of a pyramid. The need in the bottom must be satisfied before a person can pass to more advance needs. This hierarchy of needs can be described in details as follows. (See Figure 2.6)

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](http://www.businessballs.com/maslow.htm)

The Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1943) explained the motivations of human ordering from the bottom to the top of the pyramid. The first motivation is
the physiological needs. These needs are the basic needs which are required for life existence such as the needs for air, food, water, and sleep. The satisfaction in this stage will trigger the needs in next steps. On the other hand, if physiological needs are not yet satisfied, individuals will be subject to them and other requirements in the hierarchy will not appear or become secondary needs. The physiological needs are important for understanding individual’s behavior as well as they are more influential than other needs and driving forces of these demands also happen to anyone prior than other requirements.

The second level is safety needs. These needs emerge when physical needs are met. The safety needs refer to that all of individuals are normally eager to be safe and they will find the way that they can gain the sense of security and stability in their lives. For that reason, people attempt to hedge themselves through all sorts of ceremonials, laws, disciplines, rules and formulas, in order to avoid something unfamiliar and strange that can be harmful for their lives.

The third level is the love needs. When both the physiological and the safety needs are satisfied, a person will come up to the love and affection and belongingness needs. People will desire for affectionate relations with the others such as family, friends, sweetheart, and also would like to be placed in group where they will not be left behind. The love needs can be both giving love to other people and receiving love from other people. The lack of these subjects is often a cause of mental stress and inability of self adjustment.

The fourth level is the esteem needs. These needs will occur after the needs in the prior stage are satisfied. According to Maslow, this level of need may be classified into two subsidiary sets. The first one is a desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence, and for independent and freedom. This can be defined as self-respect or self-esteem because it comes from inside of the persons themselves. The second one is a desire for reputation, recognition, attention, importance or appreciation. This is defined as respect or esteem from other people. Maslow also stated that people can return from the degree of requirement in the fourth level back to the third level if their demands for the third level or love needs are affected by something or lost immediately. However, when they can re-fulfill those lost needs they will turn back to the esteem needs again.

Lastly, the final level on the top of the pyramid is the need for self-actualization. This refers to individuals require to understand their true needs in order to achieve the peak of their potential or their target set. It is believed that a person who know what he want and can
achieve goals is the one who truly know himself (Maslow 1943). According to Maslow’s concept, people’s motivation is generally based on this hierarchy of desire. This would lead people to decide or choose the way that can fulfill their needs and make them satisfied.

Refer to education institution, the purpose of institution is not business organization where seeking to generate profit, but in contrast, education is institution where creates and provides human knowledge skill for the society. Therefore, the term satisfaction generally is a concept of how to build customer satisfaction meet with the high profit, such as value affect benefit divided by price which can be increase customer satisfaction, this will not directly mention in satisfaction concept in this thesis.

According to the Maslow’s theory of human motivation has described about motivation model. In addition, Maslow’s theory also has given the information which related to the human basic need and stage of satisfaction and researcher also attempt to find out the education system satisfaction.

2.7 Satisfaction Measurement

The satisfaction concept is another explanation to analyze international student perspective and requirement toward Karlstad University. This concept will be the one important implement to find out the solution and problem which come from international student’s perspective toward education institution. This can be used to update institution for future development to provide quality of people knowledge skill to serve society.

Satisfaction is to measure customer whether product or service meets with their expectations. Expectation usually comes from many features of product or service activities. Satisfaction measures about psychological of people toward experiences in product and service. Satisfaction measures emotion and it is the outcome of customer opinions toward product or service experience. Satisfaction and attitude concept are linked together. The satisfaction concerns to the human “post experience” which has been built by product or service quality or value (Smith 2007). As previous article has mentioned that, satisfaction concept is to measure that product or service meets expectation or not. It can be described that after student has an experience with education institution for a while, then students can perceive and recognize and they could have their opinion toward education service. Education service in the opinion of researcher is considered such as teaching, time learning schedule, education system, etc.
2.7.1 Satisfaction Measurement: Affective Measure of Customer Satisfaction

Product or service customer’s experience can be the outcome affecting customer perspective such as they like or dislike. Moreover, it is also to measure customer attitude that they are satisfied or are not satisfied with that product or service which they never have an experience with it before (Smith 2007). Even a lack of experience factor can be measured. Many new students who never have direct experience to those specific education institution, but it still can be measured their pros and cons attitudes.

2.7.2 Satisfaction Measurement: Behavioral Measures of Customer Satisfaction

Smith (2007) believed that, in this type, sometimes dissatisfaction is considered of being as a disappointment at the same time satisfaction is related to the positive attitude such as “it was a good choice” (Smith 2007). As mention from literature review, after “post experience” student perspective can be both positive and negative attitudes.

2.7.3 Satisfaction Measurement: Perceived Quality Measures

Overall quality, perceived reliability and product and service meet customer need are identifying perceived quality. The key point is quality because it can be predictor of customer satisfaction (Smith 2007). Though quality, education institution provides education service to create human quality skill. Therefore, education quality can be explained that it is the most important thing for education institution. Student voice can be the implement to develop the missing education institution.

Education institutions are considered of being an education service, in researcher perspective, as education institution produce human knowledge skill to society, for that reason education institution is great importance organization. To update current perspective situation, this research also attempts to find out attitude of international students satisfaction.

2.8 Decision making / reasoning skills

The literature review of decision making has described that, decision making is the method of what do people considering the possible result of different alternative (Beyth-Marom et al. 1991; Von Winterfeldt & Edwards 1986). Thinking system is a skill in decision-making process (Fischhoff et al. 1999). There are the basic processes which usually influence to decision-makers. These consist of: 1. listing relevant choices 2. identifying potential consequences of each choice 3. assessing the likelihood of each consequence actually
occurring 4.determining the importance of these consequences and 5.combining all this information to decide which choice is the most appealing (Beyth-Marom et al. 1991). Another important factor that is explained by previous literature review also focuses on cognitive, psychological, social, cultural and societal factors (Gordon 1996), these might influence people making decision. The mature of decision making process is related to the age and experience by people brain development and knowledge. And also family, peer group, religious beliefs, economic condition, and ethnicity are the social and psychological factors that lead to making decision (Gordon 1996).

Therefore, the data from previous article has explain that, factor of psychological, social, culture, age, experience, family, peer group, religious beliefs, economic condition and ethnicity might be the dynamic that influence people in making decision. Even the data is not directly identified the effective toward people in case of higher education decision making; unfortunately, it might be the other factor aspect.

In this research, we assume that the information, concept, and theory that we have described above are associated with our study as they might have an impact on the student’s decision, motivation, and satisfaction. Therefore, we attempt to find out the relationship between this knowledge and the result from student’s perspectives. In this case, we specify a group of international students who decided to study in Karlstad University as their options.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides the explanation of processes and methods that are applied in this research. It demonstrates all selected methods and the reason of selecting these methods. Moreover, it provides the validity and reliability of the study and research as well.

3.1 Research approach

According to Bryman & Bell has described that deductive theory represents the relationship between theory and research. This theory represents the basic researcher from theoretical toward area of interest. In summary a hypothesis will be found out by observations/finding (Brymen & Bell 2007).

Qualitative method, this method does not survey by using the number of figure or statistics to measure the result (Boeree 2005). Qualitative research concerns to the social science and it is the method to study and understand human behave such as attitudes, value, beliefs, etc. (e.g., why do patients prefer to be involved in decision-making about their treatment?) Qualitative methods help researcher to reach an answer to research questions and may give valuable data that have been lack by other method (RDSU 2007).

In this research, secondary data represents motivation and satisfaction factor theories and this research finds out worldwide perspective of employer and world climate situation that influence human motivation. Human satisfaction theory will describe affective of human need, deductive method will support this thesis to link the relationship between theory and the outcome. Collect data by interview face to face is an approach of this research, without measurement by using the result of number or statistic; qualitative methods will support us to study and understand the motivation and satisfaction factor influence human decision. Moreover, after survey by face to face interview, the outcome might be contrast with the empirical study.

3.2 Population and sample

Due to the limitation of time, research has been collecting data from the wide rank group of populations (International students) instead of only focus on European student perspective in order to reach convenient survey and smooth approach. In this research, the group of population sampling will focus on Master of Business Administration (MBA) international students who study in Karlstad University, Sweden, and investigate factor of
student’s motivation and satisfaction both free mover and exchange students. Culture difference unable to avoid in this research and it can be one factor that influence student’s motivation and satisfaction.

The group population sampling ages are between 22 - 33 years old. The interview has been surveyed on 10 international students who are studying in Karlstad University, Sweden. The data collect during the middle of April to the middle of May 2011.

In Addition, there are different experiences which consist of one semester exchange program, one year master program and two year master program in Karlstad University respondents. The results come from many diverse perspectives.

3.3 Data collection

Primary data is data created by the researcher, before setting the questionnaires or interview to reach primary data, the secondary data must be studies and found out what is the problem or area of interest of researcher (Rao 2008). Collecting data by interview is considered to be an importance in this research to analyze and answer research question.

Secondary data is secondary sources, internal or external. It is considered of being as the implement toward researcher to help organize primary data collection. The secondary data is the previous studies which discuss the previous solution and problem. It can be described secondary data and followed by the outcome of primary data (Rao 2008). Secondary data has been studied in the first part of this research in order to find out the problems and research question, moreover secondary data can help researchers reduce time in order to access the problem situation.

3.3.1 Interview questions

In the process of interview for this paper, we used Face-to-Face interview (Opdenakker 2006) approach because with this approach, we could get the feedback immediately. There was no time delay between questions and answers and we could see the reaction of the respondents directly. Moreover, because the Face-to-Face interview provided a close gap between interviewers and interviewees that we could talk face to face, so we could ask further questions that might be relevant to the topic or the answer that the interviewees had given and we could get more information from the interviewees.
In addition, we used the combination of structured interview and semi-structured interview (Kajornboon 2005) to conduct the interview. We asked the same questions to all respondents as well as used an interview guide so that we could control the topic and the scope of the interview. At the same time, the questions those we used were open-ended questions which allowed the respondents to reveal their general attitudes and opinions toward the questions. Therefore, additional questions could emerge when we felt that the respondents had answered some interesting point in order to know their thinking more deeply.

The interview questions consisted of two parts. The first part was personal data and general information of the respondents. This part started from the question number 1 to number 8. These questions asked about the respondent’s name, home country, age, study program, major of study, student status (free mover or exchange student), study experience if he or she has been studying abroad before, and student’s background in Bachelor’s degree.

The second part was motivation and satisfaction data. This part consisted of ten questions which linked to the concept of satisfaction. The questions asked for the respondents’ opinion toward their motivations or reasons why they chose to study MBA, in Sweden, and in Karlstad University. Moreover, the questions also asked for their feeling and satisfaction they have on their study experiences such as their expectation before they entered the university, the expectation after they have studied in the university, what they feel satisfied and dissatisfied on the education system provided by the faculty and the university, and what they would like to change in their studies here. (See the interview question in Appendix A)

3.4 Data analysis

As this research is the qualitative research and the data was collected from in-depth interview method, therefore the qualitative data analysis must be used. In this case, we decided to use the constant comparison method (Dye et al. 2000) to analyze data. The analysis followed Glaser’s steps of the constant comparison method. This means after collecting data, we will look for key words or key issues in the data or incidents from recording field into the categories for focus. Next step is to collect data that provide many incidents of the categories of focus and comparing the dimensions under the categories, then write about the categories that we have explored or attempted to describe for all the incidents in existing data and continue to search for new incidents. Next is to work with the data and emerging model to find basic social process and relationship and finally engage in sampling,
coding, and writing an analysis focusing on the core categories and make a conclusion (Glaser 1978).

3.5 Reliability and validity

Golafshani (2003) stated that the use of reliability and validity are ordinary in quantitative research and also important in qualitative research. In qualitative perspective, reliability is a concept to evaluate quality which has a purpose to generate understanding (Golafshani 2003) while validity concept is to evaluate the level of correlation between theoretical framework and empirical work in order to represent trustworthy thesis (Brymen & Bell 2007).

In order to create reliability and validity to this research, we tried to make sure that the questions we used for the interview were clear and understandable. We had two times of pilot interview to test the questions before conducted the real interview in order to verify that the questions were clear and easy to understand for all respondents. From the pilot interview, we could find some errors in the questions and get more ideas from the suggestion of the interviewee. This practice helped to correct the questions and avoid misunderstanding. In addition, in order to secure validity, we used information from various sources to set up the questions and to confirm findings.
CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL STUDY

This chapter provides the facts of the result obtaining from the respondents in the interview. The interview was conducted, during the middle of April to the middle of May 2011, on ten international students who are studying in Master of Business Administration program at Karlstad University. The results are divided into two parts; the first part is related to their personal information such as home country, age, gender, major, work experience, and previous background of study, the second part is related to their multiple perspectives according to the interview questions. To be understandable, the table of the respondent’s data will be put in Appendix B.

4.1 Part 1: Personal data and general information

**Home country:** The sample consists of ten respondents from nine different countries. Two of them come from Iran, and the others come from Thailand, China, Philippines, Vietnam, Pakistan, Germany, Turkey, and the Netherlands.

**Age and gender:** The respondent’s ages are between 23 to 32 years old. There are seven male respondents and three female respondents.

**Major:** Four of the respondents are studying in Service Management (40%), three of them are studying in Management (30%), the other three are studying in Finance and Accounting, Marketing, and Industrial Management (10% each). Considering on the year of study, half of them are studying in one-year program (50%) and the rest are studying in two-year program (50%).

**Student status:** Most of them applied to the university as free mover students (60%) while the rest of them are as exchange students (40%).

**Working experience:** Most of the respondents (80%) have been working before attending the Master’s program while 20% of them have no working experience before.

**Experience of study abroad:** Most of them (90%) have no experience of study abroad. There is only one person who have been studying abroad before.

**Background in Bachelor’s degree:** Most respondents (80%) have the background related to the business field from their Bachelor’s degree. These majors consist of Business Administration, Management, Commercial Management, and Marketing. There are only two
persons who have non-related business background because they graduated from Information Technology (IT) and Engineering.

4.2 Part 2: Motivation and satisfaction result

1. Why were you interested in MBA program?

As the present, MBA is more popular and most of the job descriptions prefer students who graduate in business fields, in the opinions of the applicants, they believe that Bachelor’s degree is not enough to apply for a job and graduating from business field provides more job opportunity than other fields. The respondents who did not have business background in their Bachelor’s degree explained their reason that they were interested in MBA because they expected to gain managerial skills to gain more competitiveness and chances in their career progress because their only specific skills in IT or engineering fields would not work well in the future. As Amir, an Iranian student said “…as my work experiences as an engineer, I found myself lack of some skill, so I tried to find something that related to management”.

Other respondents who had been studying in business programs before gave their reasons that they were interested in MBA because they wanted to improve their career advancement, to gain higher salary, to get higher position in the company, and to increase their values. As a Philippine student, Gian said that “MBA is needed for my career advancement, a lot of job promotion requires us to have Master program, even I have worked for many years but if I don’t have Master degree I cannot get higher position in the company, so I need MBA to increase my value”.

2. Why did you choose to study in Sweden while there are many countries that can be your choices?

The answers from the respondents towards their motivation to choose to study in Sweden are various. However, they can be categorized into the following groups of attitude.

- Free tuition fee: Most of respondents said that they chose Sweden as a best choice because the country provided free tuition fee. This is the first reason that attracted them to choose Sweden as their option to continue master program.

1 Amir Hassan Mohebbi, interview on the 27th of April 2011.
2 Gian Carlo De La Paz, interview on the 18th of April 2011.
- Interpersonal relationship: Some respondents chose to come to Sweden because of their relatives and friends. Some have relatives living in Sweden and some heard about their friends’ good experiences here so they decided to follow their relatives or friends.

- Location and environment attraction: Some students chose Sweden because of its location and environment. Chinese and Iranian described that they thought Sweden is a good place for study, it is quiet and safe.

- Business reputation: Some students chose to study in Sweden because of its reputation in business. The Philippine respondent explained that the Swedish well-known organizations such as Ericson, IKEA, H&M, motivated him to study here in order to find out what kind of business theories they have and how they become successful.

- Cultural differences: The European students from Turkey and Germany answered that they chose Sweden because they expected to have new experiences in cultural differences of Nordic countries. They perceived that Nordic cultures were different from European culture in their countries.

3. Why did you choose Karlstad University? What made it distinctive from your other choices?

Most exchange students answered that they chose Karlstad University because it had partnership with the universities in their countries. Thus they could access more information from the partner universities.

Some respondents especially those who are studying in Service Management and Industrial Management replied that they chose Karlstad University because it provided specific program which matched their requirement and they could not find it in other universities in Sweden. The Iranian student in Industrial Management stated that he tried to find some courses related to industry and management in all parts of Europe but could not find them elsewhere except Karlstad. The Dutch student stated that he heard that Karlstad University has been working well on Service Management so he chose to study here while the Philippine student also said that he heard a lot of good things about the business courses here, that was the reason why he chose Karlstad University.

Some students gave similar reason that they selected Karlstad University because of the location as a quiet place in a small town. They defined that they preferred the
environment in a small town than a big town, as well as, also wanted to save their living cost because the living cost in the small town might be cheaper and another reason is, in the small town, there is less competition than in the big cities.

4. **Is there anything else out of yourself that influence you to make such decision? e.g. parents, friends, etc.**

   Most respondents were influenced by labor market. They explained that most companies require higher skills especially in business field, so MBA could increase more chances to get a good job and meet wide rank of future career. Most of them stated that only Bachelor’s degree is not adequate for the present labor market because everyone got that degree and that pushes them to perceive by their own that they should continue Master’s degree in order to have a higher position in labor market.

   Most respondents made their own decision to continue their MBA. Interpersonal relationship does not much affect to their decisions to continue MBA. Just a small portion of respondents are influenced by their parents and friends.

5. **What did you expect before you came here?**

   Most respondents expected to study in good education system, good way of teaching, and good location of study. In the perspectives of Thai, Philippine and Chinese students, they have the same expectation that they need to learn new way of thinking, new concept and planning to improve their skills rather than studying based on theories. “We do things differently in Asia, I want to find out how the different things are done here” is one of expectations from Gian De La Paz, Philippine student. While another expectation of some respondents is to gain new experiences from different country and culture.

6. **After you have been studying here for a while, do you think what you have received from the program and the university meet your expectation?**

   The answers of the respondents in this question are expressed in both satisfied and unsatisfied opinions.

   For satisfied aspects, most respondents are satisfied with more relax style of teaching which provides them enough time to work on assignments, allow them to think more and

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3 Gian Carlo De La Paz, interview on the 18th of April 2011.
have ability to analyze, as well as the assignments activate them to read more books and articles. They also fulfill their expectation of learning new culture and different manner during the study. Moreover, they are satisfied with the facilities provided in the university as the German respondent, Reiner⁴ said that “It was such a good environment provided for students. I was shocked of surroundings and learning facilitation here”.

For unsatisfied aspects, some respondents described that there are some lessons do not meet their expectation. For example, according to Thai student’s opinion, Kirana⁵ stated that “I have found that the lessons here often focus a lot on theories. It is similar to the course in my home country. I wish I can think out of box of theories and be more practical”.

In addition, there are some problem about the facility and department planning which do not meet the expectation of the respondents. Most students found the problem of having too limited number of books in the library, as well as having the problem with the study schedule. “I have a problem from scheduling, when I apply for one course, I cannot know all schedules throughout the semester, and schedule is changing day by day, this very effected on me because I do not have ability to planning study” said from Amir⁶, an Iranian student who study Industrial management. While some students also mentioned about the overlap schedule of two subjects even both of them were mandatory.

Finally, most international respondents blamed that they often had a problem with unclear instruction because sometimes the information was not provided in English although it was an international program.

7. Does the course learning increase your knowledge skill?

The respondents perceived that learning from theories and case studies helped expanding their ideas because when they were working on assignments, they had to get deep into the materials before wrote it down and came up with their own ideas. Moreover, with a small class, they had an opportunity to discuss with classmates and got new additional ideas from them, as well as working on a group work. These also helped in raising their skills and

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⁴ Heinich Rainer, interview on the 18th of April 2011.
⁵ Kirana Sirisoontornkul, interview on the 20th of April 2011.
⁶ Amir Hassan Mohebbi, interview on the 27th of April 2011.
knowledge. “I like the process that teacher assigns us to do group work ... I have developed many things and I can see myself what is my missing point” said from the Iranian student.

However, there are some additional comments. Even they preferred the way of learning on theories and case studies but they suggested that it did not improve they curiosity completely because the case studies the teachers often used were too outdated. They stated that they wanted to learn more updated situation. “I observed the case study sometimes was so many year ago, so we came up with the recommendation that was no longer relevant. What I want to know is the recommendation about what they are doing right now” said from Gian ⁷, the Philippine student. Furthermore, some students from Iran, Vietnam and Netherlands described that they preferred to learn more practical such as actual case studies rather than theories.

Another point is that one-third of respondents stated that they needed teacher to pay more attention for them, for example, when they would like to ask questions or suggestions, to make them more understand about their studies.

8. What do you think is different between your previous study in your home country and here? e.g. education system etc.

A big portion of respondents described that studying in Sweden was different from their countries in terms of it provided more freedom to them to share ideas, show their thinking, their identities, and their personalities.

While Asian students had quite similar opinion towards strong point of education style in Sweden as they described that the education here was more flexible both in terms of scheduling, grading, and studying. With infrequent schedule, they did not have to attend class everyday that provided more time to spend on their assignments efficiently. Moreover, they said that education system here gave a chance for students to revise if they failed in the examination or assignments. Compared with their home countries, they had a lot of classes and much more workloads per week and if they failed in the examination, they had to repeat the whole subject in the next semester or if they had re-exam, they would get only half score to pass it. Moreover, they mentioned that in their countries, grade was really important.

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⁷ Gian Carlo De La Paz, interview on the 18th of April 2011.
because if they could not get good grade that meant it would be hard for them to find a good
job. That tensed them so much in their studies.

Furthermore, they pointed out that in Asian countries or even some European
countries like Turkey, there was a big gap between teachers and students. The relationship
between them was too formal. This different position affected students as they had less
confidence to talk or communicate with their teachers or even ask questions. In contrast, in
Sweden, there is no gap between teachers and students. “I feel that teachers look like a friend,
*it is easier to communicate with them*” said from Seren, a Turkish student. That encourages
them to feel free to ask questions, to share their ideas, and to discuss in class.

9. What is your expectation after you finish MBA from Karlstad University? Do you think
you can fulfill it with the experience from your study here?

All respondents wished to get a good job, to get higher salary and position in the
future career as well as to have more opportunities to choose the companies after they get
their Master’s Degree. Moreover, some of them expected change to work in different areas
and some of them expected to continue PhD. Some perspective from Philippine student,
Gian stated that “The knowledge I get from here would be useful for me because I work for
Asian company and what I have learned here is different, so that would be new thing for
them. I wish I could adapt to use a good point from study here to use in Asia.”

10. Please give some opinions about Karlstad University and MBA program. What has
been good and less good? Did you miss anything? What would you like to change in your
studies here?

From the international student’s perspectives, the result was issued in both good
points and weak points. Their opinions towards education system at Karlstad University point
out that they are satisfied with the teaching style as it can activate and improve them to study,
the open-ended assignments encourage them to study a lot on textbooks, articles, and other
materials to analysis and come up with their ideas and arguments. The general schedule is
well organized as they have to attend class two or three times per week, most respondents are
satisfied with that because it provides enough time for them to do things.

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8 Seren Urun, interview on the 28th of April 2011.
9 Gian Carlo De La Paz, interview on the 18th of April 2011.
For the weak points, in the perspectives of respondents, one-third of the respondents mentioned that the university lacked of promotion on its international program. For example, they commented that when they have group assignments, students are often strict to those who come from the same counties. Although as it is an international program, it would be good if the teachers set the groups of mix nationalities rather than let students choose their own groups so that the students will have a chance to learn some new style of study from their classmates from different countries and cultures. Furthermore, most non-Swedish students expected the university to provide more information in English because that would be more comfortable and easier for them to get access to the information.

The second point that some respondents thought it should be changed was too freedom education system. For example, there were too few classes, or there was no punishment for students who skip the class. They said that leded to lack of motivation to attend the class. Moreover, there were too less teachers so the students felt inconvenience when they needed help from their teachers.

Finally, some respondents suggested about the courses that it would be better if they had a balance between theoretical and practical practices because at the present, most courses tended to focus more on theories. And a few respondents did not prefer the way that the teachers sometimes opened more chances for students to speak because they wanted to listen to the teachers rather than the classmates.
CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

From the empirical results collected from the respondents who are studying MBA in Karlstad University towards their motivation that leads them to study Master’s Degree in Sweden and the university, as well as their satisfaction they have on the university, the results can be analyzed based on the theory framework into motivation aspect and satisfaction aspect.

5.1 Motivation aspect

In the motivation aspect, from the surveys of students’ opinions towards their motivation, it can be analyzed that there are two kinds of motivation related to their decision to study MBA in Karlstad University as following.

5.1.1 External Motivation

In this case, external motivation refers to the motivation from outside that influences student’s decision. From the analysis of interview results, the external motivations in this case can be categorized into four main groups as followings.

1. Labor market. The most important motivation that leads students to continue MBA is the labor market. The student stated that if they got MBA degree, they would have more opportunities in their career advancement or have more chances to find a good job because most companies prefer students who graduate from business field. This is consistent with the labor market trends. As MBA becomes the most importance in professional business education, the demand for MBA has been growing faster (Bykjeflot 2003, Agaga 2009, IB staff reporter 2011, QS Research 2008). The results indicate that labor market which requires more candidates from business field is still the main motivation of students to study MBA. They need to improve their knowledge and skills to survive in the capitalism world where the place matures with high economic competition and also to serve globalization change (Gómez 2010).

2. Free education. One important motivation for applicants to decide to study Master degree is budget as the outcome has shown that scholarship availability is 75% affecting people’s need (Bykjeflot 2003). Therefore, besides of being interested in MBA program, the major motivation that leads students to choose to study in Sweden is because of the country provides the education without tuition fees to both European and non-European students.
However, after autumn semester in 2011 students from outside European countries are required to pay both for application and tuition fees (Stockholm University 2010), the students tend to choose to study in more famous countries like USA or England rather than Sweden.

3. Location and environment. The previous research showed that location had an effect on applicant’s decision making. This aligns with the empirical result that in addition of free education, students choose to come to Sweden because they perceive that Sweden is a good, quiet, and safe country. It is a nice location to study and create senses of security. This point links to second level Maslow’s theory that people need safety (Maslow 1943). Moreover, the reason that they chose Karlstad University is because they prefer the university’s location in a small town which living cost is cheaper and there is less competition than other big cities.

4. University’s marketing. This aspect is specific to Karlstad University. It includes university’s reputation, provided courses and programs, facilities, and others about the university. In this case, the empirical result shows that the university’s marketing that affects student’s decision the most is the courses. They do not worry about the reputation or rating of the university as long as it provides the courses or programs which meet their requirement.

5.1.2 Internal Motivation

The internal motivation in this case means the motivation that comes from the real needs or inner desires of the students. From the empirical result, it shows that most of respondents decided to continue MBA by their own decisions whereas only a few of them were influenced by other people such as parents, friends, and relatives.

The major internal motivation that leads the students to study MBA is for career reasons. Most students, especially the students who did not have business background before, believe that if they study MBA, they would be able to improve their managerial skills and knowledge and also to increase their values that would lead to their higher position in the organization. The higher position would create their strength, their achievement, their reputation, and their importance. This result is consistent with the fourth level of Maslow’s motivation theory defined that people need self-respect or self-esteem both from themselves and from other people (Maslow 1943).
Another internal motivation is to be accepted by family members or friends. The students who have this kind of motivation just continue MBA following other people such as their brothers and sisters in order to be accepted by their family. Furthermore, some students continue MBA abroad in order to explore new society, learn different cultures, and gain new experiences. These are according to the third level of Maslow’s theory stated that people desire for affectionate relations with the others such as family, friends, sweetheart, and also would like to be placed in group where they will not be left behind (Maslow 1943).

5.2 Satisfaction aspect

Product or service customer’s experience can be the outcome affecting customer perspective such as they like or dislike. Moreover, it is also to measure customer attitude that they are satisfied or are not satisfied with that product or service which they never have an experience with it before (Smith 2007). In term of education institution, student is considered as a customer, even students did not have direct experience before, pros and cons attitudes is able to appear. This satisfaction theory has supported empirical result that before the students come to Sweden, at least they have an expectation in several aspects. From the survey, the students expected the most in study aspect such as the courses, the programs, and the education system. The following expectation is a chance to learn new things. Some of students had no expectation. However, after they have been studying here for a period of time, most students confessed that the overview of the university could meet their expectation.

According to their satisfaction, they tended to compare what they have experienced here with what they had experienced before in their countries. This aligns as Smith statement that satisfaction concerns to the human post experience (Smith 2007). The compare shows the distinct points of studying in Karlstad University towards the students’ opinions. These points can be classified into three main issues.

1. The first satisfaction that the students think of is open class. They are satisfied with the class in terms of they have freedom to think, to share ideas, to discuss with teacher and classmates, and to show their identities. This implies that the students have esteem need to which desires for confidence, independent and freedom (Maslow 1943) and they will be satisfied when they are provided with those characteristics.
2. The students are satisfied with *non-focus on grade education*. They are happy with the environment that grade is not important, but the importance is what is in their minds such as their ideas, their knowledge, and their creative thinking. With the Swedish grading system (Stockholm University 2010), three scales of grade which consist of U, G, and VG make the students not stress too much on grade and more enjoy of study.

3. The students are satisfied with *more relax and flexible education system*. For example, if they fail in exam or assignment, they have a chance to improve it. In addition, with one-year Master degree with 60 credits and Two-year Master degree with 120 credits (Högskoleverket 2011), their studies are not so tough and they are flexible to do other activities and enjoy their campus life.

After finish MBA at Karlstad University, all respondents replied that they would like to get a good job. This can be referred as a consequence of the needs of safety as they would gain sense of security and stability in their lives if they have a good job, on the other hand, it can relate to the esteem needs as they would gain reputation and recognition if they have a good job (Maslow 1943).

From the overall opinions about Karlstad University, all respondents said that they were satisfied with the university. However, they still had some suggestions on some aspects that they would like the university to change or improve. We gave them to talk freely whatever they would like to suggest or complain. From all suggestions collected from the respondents, they can be categorized into three main groups.

1. *Problem about insufficient communication for international students*. The international students feel like they are ignored because most information or announcement are provided in Swedish language so non-Swedish students are limited to get access to the information and may lose an opportunity.

2. *Problem about teaching style that lacks of motivation*. Although students are happy with the flexible class, they do not want too much freedom because that would decrease their intention to attend the class. They still need the teaching style that is able to stimulate and activate them to attend the class even that might create stress on them.

3. *Problem about the support from teachers*. The students need the teachers to be their advisors when they have problems with their studies. But in reality, there are too less teachers, on the other hand, the teachers have not enough time for their students.
From the suggestions of the students, it can imply that the students do not only expect for good education but they also expect for being concerned by the university. The international students would like to be treated equally as home students. They need the motivation and support from teachers whenever they have problem with their studies. As the students’ suggestions, as well as they did not complain anything about the facilities, it can imply that they did not focus on tangible characteristics but focus on the senses of being recognized, motivated, and supported. This is consistent with the hierarchy of needs after they have fulfilled the basic needs (Maslow 1943).

In summary, the students study MBA because they have been motivated inside by their real need of becoming more valuable person and they are also pushed by labor market considered as an external factor. While the reason why they choose Sweden and Karlstad University as their best choice comes from external factors such as free education, location, and university’s marketing and internal factor such as to gain new experience. After the students have been studying in the university, they are satisfied enough with the physical characteristics such as university’s facilities, education system, but they still require more psychological characteristics as they wish the university could provide such as student’s support.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Human motivation can come from external and internal factors. The external factors such as society, culture, experience, family, peer group, religious beliefs, economic condition and ethnicity as well as influence of media, new culture experience can influence people in making decision as well as the internal factors such as perspective and psychological need can also drive people to their decision as well. From the study, it can be concluded that the student’s motivation on studying MBA at Karlstad University comes from both external and internal factors. The external factors leading to their motivation include labor market as a major motivation that affects student’s decision in studying MBA, while other factors leading students to choose Sweden and Karlstad University are free education, location and environment, and university’s marketing such as education system, programs and courses, university’s reputation, and other facilities.

At the same time, the internal factor that affects the most on student’s decision to study MBA is their psychological need to be in progress, to have career advancement, to get higher position. These would lead them to be a valuable person and be accepted by other people. Another internal factor that influences them to come to Sweden is to learn different cultures and gain new experiences.

For the student’s satisfaction, it is general that each university has both strength and weakness. Faculty and program has been designed base on the characteristic, environment, and economic condition of each country. In the opinion of researcher, there are both pros and cons in each driver for education institution.

Due to the economic, financial situation, and other reasons in each place are different, there is no exact right or wrong in teaching and academic management style. Teaching and program design must be adapted and developed to match the country’s situation. In this study, we found the result that there is something related to the previous study and something contrast. It is the consequence of changing situation especially complexity and complicated of globalization change. Therefore, education institution must provide human skill related to the circumstances. The most important point is that program design, teaching styles and academic should suitable for the situation.

In case of Karlstad University, the students studying in MBA program are satisfied with the programs and the system provided by the university as they are opened, relax and
flexible, and not focus on grade. They prefer this style of education to other styles in their home countries. This might refer that the education style is the strength of the university. However, the findings show that there are something more than the education system that students concern for. The additional requirement of the students tends to be perceived as psychological needs. For example, they need to be more communicated, more supported, and more motivated in their studies.

In this study, student’s voices reflect from their perspectives. There are many aspects which come from many different cultures, backgrounds and experiences. Therefore, in the opinion of researchers, the best way is that the university should continue to improve the existing strong points as well as consider the suggestions or complains of the students for academic future plan. It is the task of education institution to create human knowledge skill for society.

Future Research

According to this research, researchers hope it can be developed to future research in terms of what and how the university should improve and develop to serve student’s requirement in the future. In case of new policy that requires non-European students to pay for tuition fees, that surely decreases the numbers of the students from outside Europe coming to study in Sweden since their main motivation to study here is the free tuition fees. As there are many countries and universities having more famous reputations in MBA field rather than Sweden and Karlstad University, if the students have to pay equally they generally tend to pay for the better ones. Therefore, it is a challenge for the university to learn the needs of these students and create the university’s strengths to attract their interests to study here even they have to pay.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Interview questions

Part 1: General information about the respondents

1. Respondent’s name
2. Home country
3. Age and gender
4. Major
5. Student status
6. Working experience
7. Experience of study abroad
8. Background in Bachelor’s degree

Part 2: The question about the motivation

1. Why were you interested in MBA program?
2. Why did you choose to study in Sweden while there are many countries that can be your choices?
3. Why did you choose Karlstad University? What made it distinctive from your other choices?
4. Is there anything else out of yourself that influence you to make such decision? e.g. parents, friends, etc.
5. What did you expect before you came here?
6. After you have been studying here for a while, do you think what you have received from the program and the university meet your expectation?
7. Does the course learning increase your knowledge skill?
8. What do you think is different between your previous study in your home country and here? e.g. education system etc.

9. What is your expectation after you finish MBA from Karlstad University? Do you think you can fulfill it with the experience from your study here?

10. Please give some opinions about Karlstad University and MBA program. What has been good and less good? Did you miss anything? What would you like to change in your studies here?
## APPENDIX B

### Figure B.1 Respondent’s information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Age/sex</th>
<th>One/Two year</th>
<th>Free mover/exchange</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Working experience</th>
<th>Experience study aboard</th>
<th>Bachelor background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kirana Sirisoontornkul</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>29/ female</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>exchange</td>
<td>Service management</td>
<td>4 year</td>
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<td>IT</td>
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<td>Gian Carlo De La Paz</td>
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<td>2 year</td>
<td>exchange</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>BBA</td>
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<td>exchange</td>
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<td>Management</td>
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<td>Amir Hassan Mohebbi</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>32/ male</td>
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<td>Industrial Management</td>
<td>8 year</td>
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<td>2 years</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figure B.2 Respondent’s home country

![Home country chart](image)
Figure B.3 Respondent’s age

![Age Pie Chart]

Figure B.4 Respondent’s gender

![Gender Pie Chart]

Figure B.5 Respondent’s major

![Major Pie Chart]
Figure B.6 Respondent’s student status

Student status

- Free mover: 60%
- Exchange: 40%

Figure B.7 Respondent’s working experience

Experience of study abroad

- Yes: 10%
- No: 90%

Figure B.8 Respondent’s experience of study abroad

Working experience

- Yes: 80%
- No: 20%
Figure B.9 Respondent’s background in Bachelor’s degree

![Pie chart showing Bachelor's background]

- Business Administration: 50%
- Information Technology: 10%
- Engineering: 10%
- Commercial Management: 10%
- Management: 10%
- Marketing: 10%