The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

A case study on which factors are used by the international students to select a foreign university for studying

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Abstract  

The result of the globalization is an intensification of the exchange of goods, capital, information and people between the countries from all over the world. Thus, to adapt to this process, the demand on the labor market changes, skilled people and international knowledge are required.  

During the last decade of years, we assisted to an increase of the High Education institutions, which offer to students the opportunity to study abroad. That becomes a strong competitive market. Thereby, we assist to an amplification of the student’s mobility because they are looking for living an unforgettable experience and improving their professional competences.  

Studies abroad require a lot of preparation. Students have to evaluate the alternatives offered to them, and according to different factors of selection, they will determine their final choice for their future university abroad.  

To attract international students, the universities need to develop marketing strategies. They have to give the most information possible to the student and work on its communication.  

Selecting a university to go abroad is an important decision that the student has to take. Quantitative and qualitative researches were conducted in this study. The primary data were collected directly at the university where the authors studied this year, through a survey and several interviews. This study contributes to the understanding of the student’s motivations to study abroad, and determine the different factors that they take into account to select their university.  

Key words:  

Acknowledgements:

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# List of Contents

## I. Introduction ................................................................. 1
1.1 Background.............................................................................. 1
1.2 Introduction to the problem .............................................................. 3
1.3 Problem discussion........................................................................ 4
   1.3.1 Development of marketing strategies........................................... 4
   1.3.2 Students’ Mobility ................................................................ 4
   1.3.3 New approach .......................................................................... 6
1.4 Research Questions ........................................................................... 7
1.6 Outline of the thesis ........................................................................ 7

## II. Methodology .............................................................................. 8
2.1 Research Approach......................................................................... 8
2.2 Case Study ....................................................................................... 9
   2.2.1 Definition of Case Study ............................................................. 9
   2.2.2 Type of case study ..................................................................... 10
   2.2.3 Case study a method choice ......................................................... 11
2.3 Research Method ............................................................................. 13
   2.3.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Researches ........................................ 13
   2.3.2 Interview and Survey ................................................................ 14
      2.3.2.1 Interview .............................................................................. 14
      2.3.2.2 Survey ................................................................................ 16
2.4 Strategy for data Analysis ................................................................. 18
2.5 Research Quality ........................................................................... 19
   2.5.1 Construct Validity ....................................................................... 19
   2.5.2 Internal Validity .......................................................................... 20
   2.5.3 External Validity ......................................................................... 20
   2.5.4 Reliability .................................................................................. 20

## III. Theory ...................................................................................... 21
3.1 High Education as a Business .......................................................... 21
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

3.2 7Ps of Educational Marketing ................................................................. 22
  3.2.1 Product ........................................................................................................ 23
  3.2.2 Price ........................................................................................................... 23
  3.2.3 Place .......................................................................................................... 24
  3.2.4 Promotion .................................................................................................. 24
  3.2.5 People ........................................................................................................ 25
  3.2.6 Process ....................................................................................................... 26
  3.2.7 Physical Evidence ...................................................................................... 26

3.3 Others Marketing Factors for the attraction of the students .................... 27
  3.3.1 Communication tools ............................................................................... 27
  3.3.2 Role of the Government ........................................................................... 28
    3.3.2.1 Financing ............................................................................................... 28
    3.3.2.2 Scholarship as an attractive factor ......................................................... 28

3.4 The Student Choice ...................................................................................... 29
  3.4.1 Marketing Approach ............................................................................... 29
  3.4.2 Student Choice Process ............................................................................ 30
    3.4.2.1 Needs and Motives .............................................................................. 30
    3.4.2.2 Information Gathering .......................................................................... 31
    3.4.2.3 Evaluating Alternatives ....................................................................... 32
    3.4.2.4 Decision and Enrolment ...................................................................... 33
  3.4.3.5 Post-Purchase Evaluation ..................................................................... 33

3.5 University perception .................................................................................. 34

IV. Empirical Data ............................................................................................. 35
  4.1 Interviews ...................................................................................................... 35
    4.1.1 First Interview ......................................................................................... 35
    4.1.2 Second Interview .................................................................................... 37
  4.4 Surveys .......................................................................................................... 39
    4.4.1 Results ...................................................................................................... 39

V. Analysis .......................................................................................................... 43
  5.1 Needs and Motives ...................................................................................... 43
    5.1.1 Professional Needs and Motives .............................................................. 44
    5.1.2 Personal Needs and Motives .................................................................. 45
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

5.1.3 Professional and Personal Needs and Motives ........................................ 46
5.1.4 Consequences on the university choice .................................................. 46
5.2 Programs and courses .............................................................................. 47
  5.2.1 Importance speaking English ............................................................... 47
  5.2.2 Large range of courses ..................................................................... 48
5.3 Government ............................................................................................. 49
5.4 Information and Communication ............................................................ 51
  5.4.1 The Role of Communication and Information for International Students ... 51
  5.4.2 Presentation of the communication tools ................................................. 54
  5.4.3 The different way to find information ................................................... 54
    5.4.3.1 Internet and social networks .......................................................... 54
    5.4.3.2 Home University and International Partners .................................... 55
    5.4.3.3 Previous Students ..................................................................... 56

V.I Conclusion .............................................................................................. 57
  6.1 Limits ...................................................................................................... 58
  6.2 Future Researches .................................................................................. 59
  6.3 Implications ............................................................................................ 60

VII. References .............................................................................................. 61

Annexes ........................................................................................................ 67
  Annexe 1: Survey Online part 1 ................................................................. 67
  Annexe 2: Survey Online part 2 ................................................................. 68
  Annexe 3: Survey Online part 3 ................................................................. 69
  Annexe 4: Survey Paper ........................................................................... 70
  Annexe 5: Results of the Survey part 1 ...................................................... 71
  Annexe 6: Results of the Survey part 2 ...................................................... 72
  Annexe 7: Results of the Survey part 3 ...................................................... 73
  Annexe 8: Results of the Survey part 4 ...................................................... 74
  Annexe 9: Results of the Survey part 5 ...................................................... 75
  Annexe 10: Results of the Survey part 6 ................................................... 76
  Annexe 11: Results of the Survey part 7 .................................................... 77
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad
Introduction

Background
Introduction to the problem
Problem discussion
Research Questions
Purpose of the study
Outline of the thesis
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

I. Introduction

1.1 Background

High Education has known a revolution for 50 years due to different transformations. This dynamic process is still progressing today. However, the changes that you can notice nowadays are less considerable than the ones which happened during the 19th century. The Research institutions have advanced, first in Germany, and then everywhere, to radically transform the nature of university in the world. Changes of High Education, at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, are also very important because of the global dimension, the mass education and the increasing number of students (UNESCO, 2009).

Nowadays, we assist to the increase of the education demand with an international dimension. That is the result of the expansion of the free circulation of capital, goods and services. International skills are more and more important, because of the intensive interdependence of the worldwide economies. That is why, international companies are looking for collaborators who are familiar with foreign languages and possess intercultural skills to work with international partners. The authorities and people expect more and more about High Education to spread students’ job opportunities and allow them to understand better languages, cultures, and business practices in the world (OECD1, 2009).

Studying abroad is one of the most efficient ways for students to answer to these expectations and thus, to improve their possibilities for their future job. By the way, several countries of OCDE, especially countries which belong to European Union, have established policies and programs (ex: ERASMUS) in order to stimulate this mobility to create intercultural relations and build social networks which could be useful in the future. During these last years, the rise of the “knowledge economy” (Ben, 1973) resulted on an intensification of the Educational Institutions, from all over the world. Thus, it appears a strong competition between these countries which want recruiting international students in their establishment. In fact, they are interesting on a young and high skilled workforce which represents an advantage for the economy ‘serenity of the host country (OECD, 2009).

For the High Education institutions, they need to enter in international activities to establish or preserve their reputation, in a world where the education competition is intensive. For them, the recruitment of foreign students brings consequences on the way of how teaching. Program’s courses and pedagogic methods must be adapted to the international skills expectations because cultural and linguistic diversity are more and more important (James and Philips, 1995; Oplatka, 2002). In fact, High Education institutions require the presence of

foreign students, and that is why they want to offer a formation of quality in order to differentiate themselves of their competitors.

To sum up, the situation of the High Education has radically changed at the end of the 20th century. The challenges that universities face are the internationalization of formations, the development of the new technologies (Okuno-Fujiwara and Nakaizumi, 2001), the mass education, the increasing number of students and the movement to the privatization of the education sector.

Nowadays, High Education is not only defined as an academic role, but also as an important part of the economic environment (Polanyi, 2006). The government exercises a pressure on the High Education and formation are turned to its economic utility, and its impact is more and more important. Universities react like real companies, service providers and try to attract and to satisfy the needs of their consumers. This change results in the implementation of different management tools, especially the management and the marketing.

For the last decades, there is a strong competition between the High Education institutions. This phenomenon is caused by the fact the increase of the number of High Education institutions and students. Moreover, nowadays, most of them are going abroad to study. The international student mobility has significantly increased and takes a place more and more important in the High Education. Between 2000 and 2011, the number of students who study abroad has doubled. Today, around 4.5 million of students follow a formation in a country where they are not national citizen (OCDE, 2013).

The different reasons of students for the choice of their destination are very different: language, quality of formation, country, scholarships, adventure, culture shock…. In this report, we will conduct an inquiry to international students who have chosen to study in Sweden in order to determine all the reasons that have the students to go in a foreign university.

According to UNESCO, the favorite destination is the USA, followed by United Kingdom, France, Australia and Germany. However, since few years, we can notice that China wins more success for the students. This enthusiasm is due to the economic dynamism of Asia, but also to its cultural wealth.
1.2 Introduction to the problem

The politics of the High Education leading by the North and South countries try to answer to several missions in a context of globalization and strong competition. Thus, due to this competition on a global scale, attract international students is one of the pillars of the political influence of the countries such as the USA, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany and much more. New players entered on the international scene of high education (government, international companies...). Emerging countries (for example China) make education and research a national priority and in turn aspire to establish international universities and consequently, attract foreign talent.

The globalization process results on an interaction between countries from all over the world. We have to face to an international integration of goods, technology, labor and capital. Thus, due to this process, the demand of skills on the labor market has changed: high-skilled labor is more and more requested to the detriment of the less skilled. Furthermore, the labor market asked for international skills and experience, such as speak foreign languages, adaptation, know how to do business in others countries etc., in order to improve their productivity and do exchange with their partners. That is why, every year, students are more numerous to go abroad, to benefit of the economic and personal advantages. The universities have to adapt their marketing strategies if they want to attract a lot of international students. Being an international university represents an advantage, because it favors the reputation of the institution and improves the quality of the service that the university delivers to students. It proves that the institutions succeeded to adapt to the new trends of the labor market that students take a lot in consideration.

Face to a stronger competition in High Education sector, where more and more institutions propose to international students the possibility to welcome them abroad, students need a lot of preparation to select their future university. For that, through this report, we would like to analyze the different criteria that students take into account to choose their future university. Thus, we will study the student choice process theory, which are the different steps of reflection done by students, which will determine their final choice. First of all, they will define their needs and motivations, and after they will gather information during their researches and evaluate alternatives between universities in order to select the best one which will answer to their needs and expectations.

To achieve this goal we need to know exactly what the reasons and motivations of the students to go abroad are, that after, will define their selection criteria. For that we have chosen to do surveys among students to have directly relevant testimonies and different opinions to use in our analysis.

Furthermore, in order to bring an added value to our report, we decide that it could be interesting to have the point of view of one university, Halmstad University of our case study, to understand how it adapts to the demand of international students, what are the different marketing strategies that can be used by it to attract them. This part is a support to the main
research which concerns the point of view of the international students. Thus, for this part we decided to interview Mr. Ulf Ivarsson, senior adviser for strategic internationalization, from the Department of Strategic Support of Halmstad University. These information are important for the report and the analysis because they show the different challenges faced by students and universities and how these one respond to it.

1.3 Problem discussion

1.3.1 Development of marketing strategies

Previously, we saw that nowadays we need to face to an intensification of student mobility and institutions which are able to welcome international students. Thus, this is a dynamic and strong competitive market which brings a significant economic value for individual higher education institutions but also for wider national economies. Indeed, institutions and national country are looking for skilled labor to develop their knowledge economy. That is why the recruitment of international student has become a central position for higher education strategists and decision-makers.

In order to fulfill a successful recruitment of international students in this competitive market, institutions react like real companies by developing marketing strategies. In general, marketing strategy refers to a company’s plan that distributes resources in favor to generate profits by positioning products or services and targeting specific consumer groups. Marketing strategy is focus on long-term company’s objectives and develops marketing programs to realize the company’s goals (Kotler and Keller, 2006). One of the marketing strategies is the marketing-mix process which allows understanding the needs of the costumers and its goal is to create customer value. “The marketing-mix is the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market” (Kotler, 1995).

The traditional marketing-mix is composed of the 4PS: Product, Price, Place and Promotion. However, some people did not agree with the fact that this process is adapted for provide a service. That is why, Ivy (2008) proposes to include People, Physical evidence and Process factors. We can admit that Educational Institutions provide a service: transfer knowledge to students who will enter later on the labor market. Kotler (1995) adapted the traditional marketing-mix of service to the Education. Each factor is developing in order to reach its determined objectives.

1.3.2 Students’ Mobility

The using of the marketing in the sector of the high education is a very interesting topic to study because the education evolves continually. The international student mobility is an important phenomenon has increased in the 1990s with the globalization of economies and societies. Many changes have taken place during this time. Nowadays the universities can share information, knowledge, technics, and experiences to work together. This is also true
for the students. Thanks to the social networks and the forums, they can share their own experiences and tell what they think about this or that university. To try to understand how the marketing can interact between universities and students, certain people already did some researches about it.

The following graphics come from the French website myeurope.info. They show us how the number of Erasmus students increases and which are the country that receive the students. These information are very precious for the universities because they can use it to adapt or improve their strategy of communication with the students.

The improvement of the way of travelling has generated a “student flow” in the world. Now the students go abroad to live another experience and to see different things. A lot of newspaper, such as the Times, L’Etudiant or the Washington Post, did some surveys to identify what are the key reasons of the students to go abroad. They interviewed students, parents, teachers, professionals and after all did statistics to obtain a global view of the “student’s flux”. Thus, they identified the main reasons of the students to go abroad (new experiences, learn a new language, meet people...), they also identified the best destination for the students (USA, UK, China, France...) and they draw a general list of what students have to do to go abroad.

These journalistic surveys are just a part of the researches about our topic. It just covers the part about the students and their motivations for going abroad. Concerning the marketing used by the universities, this is more difficult to find information because there is less research about it.

However, we had a look on some works about that, indeed we have read a survey made by Vuilletet (2005). In his report, he talks about the difference between the welcoming policies for the international students. He explained how the student’s mobility is a consequence of the globalization and why it is a real issue for the countries. He also studied the different
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

factors of attractiveness and he explained the advantages that can benefit students and government.

Furthermore, on the website blog.noellevitz.com, Manton (2007), a person who worked for 25 years in higher education marketing, published some advices, address to the universities, about what they should do to attract students. Therefore, we learn that to attract more students universities have to start with a strong list of students who could be potentially interest by the university; then, conduct more than one campaign of communication to reach students; after, create offers that compel response to open a dialogue with students; then, make the university creative as unique as their campus; and finally use technology strategically (social networks, databases, mailing...).

Still about the same topic, there are some researches about the universities from Quebec because in this country the universities face to a student’s attendance falls. Bilodeau (2008) published the work of Lacasse (2006), a Professor of Management of International Affairs, on the web site of the University of Laval (in France) which explains the difficulties that meet the universities from Quebec to attract the international students. More precisely, Lacasse (2006) explains that these universities have to face this problem because of a lack of common strategy between state and universities. These researches are relevant because they show us the role of the government on the marketing of the university.

Thus, in order to answer to the research question, we decided to demonstrate thanks to the results of our survey, the theory of the Student Choice Process. In fact, this is a theory which presents the different steps that a student think about it before selecting a university. It exists five different steps: the needs and motives of students, the collect information, the evaluation of the alternatives, the final decision and the enrolment, and finally the post-purchase evaluation. Our study is principally based on this theory.

1.3.3 New approach

Students mobility is a phenome which becomes bigger and bigger. Universities adapt their strategies to attract international students. Both are working together on a context of globalization. Exactly like a company needs to know its customers in order to satisfy them, universities must understand the student’s needs to propose them the best solution, because students are looking for that. Regarding to the precedent parts, we saw that previous researchers looked for the different strategies which are used by the universities to reach international students. We also saw different aspects of the student’s mobility and why it became more important. Most part of the research regarding the international students are focus on why they go abroad to study, what are the advantages for them, what are their favorites destinations; but also, how universities manage international students, why is it a real issue for the educational institution, etc… However, we did not find researches focus on how students decide to go to a university and not another. We think it could be interesting to determine on which aspects students are basing their choice of foreign universities.
1.4 Research Questions

Research question: Which factors are critical for students’ choice of foreign studies?

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to investigate the expectations and desire of the foreign students concerning the choice of their university abroad.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This study is divided into seven parts, including the references list. In addition, you will find an appendix part with all necessary documents such as documents with figures of our investigation of our case study, in Halmstad University.
Methodology

Research Approach
Case Study
Research Method
Strategy for data Analysis
Research Quality
The goal of this section is to develop the method that we have chosen to perform this report. It is divided into five big parts in order to have a global view on the key points to follow when doing a thesis.

II. Methodology

2.1 Research Approach

The research approach is the way how people decide to conduct their researches on a topic. It exist several types of approaches but the two mains are: deduction approach (testing theory) and induction approach (building theory). However, we can identify another one which is a research approach that consists into combine both precedent approaches (Saunders et al, 2009).

The deduction approach is based on scientist principles; the demarche follows a structured reasoning. The main goal with this research approach is to move from the theory to the data. In fact, a deductive approach studies the theory around the topic concerned, and then tries to confirm or refute it by using empirical data. The way to collect the data, when following a deductive approach, is to do quantitative research (see 2.2.1 Qualitative and quantitative researches).

On the contrary, the induction approach is based on a more psychological approach; the reasoning does not follow a strict and structured reasoning during all the research, it has a more flexible structure to permits to change of way of researches if necessary. Furthermore, the goal of this kind of approach is not to generalize the results, because normally each demarche is unique. The principal goal of this approach is to search new information in order to build new theory. To do that, this method uses qualitative research method to collect information (Saunders et al, 2009).

John W. Creswell (2002) suggests that, probably, the most important is the nature of the research topic. For example, a topic which has a lot of literatures from which we can define a theoretical framework and a hypothesis lends to itself more readily to the deduction approach. Whereas, for the researches about a new topic on which there are just few existing literatures, it is perhaps more appropriate to work with an induction approach to generate data and analyze it, and then have a reflection on what theoretical ideas the data are suggesting.

According to our research question, which is focus on the criteria used by students to choose a university abroad, the purpose of our report needed a deductive approach. We wanted to confirm the theory according to the results of our empirical data, define exactly the different student’s factors of selection for a university. That is why we decided to use this approach as a guideline for our report.
However, we decided to use a method to collect the data that comes from inductive approach: the interview. It was a method choice we found relevant, because it allowed us to access to the information we needed. It was a good way to have a better understanding of the student’s motivation to choose a university in another country. Thanks to the interviews, it was easier to build our survey because we learned a lot of interesting information.

2.2 Case Study

2.2.1 Definition of Case Study

Case study is a qualitative and descriptive methodology which it is used as a tool to study a specific fact in a complex phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). This “case” is understanding like an integrated system and which is in functioning. That is why, it requires an analysis to understand, interpret and to rebuild this system. In others words, a study case is the story of something unique.

Case study is the study in-depth about on or just few research subjects that it allows to obtain a large and detailed knowledge of it. It is based on the idea that if we study carefully all the unit of one universe, we will be in the conditions to know some general aspects of this one; at least, we will have a viewpoint which will orientate a posterior research.

Case studies, even if they allow to elaborate generalizations, possess their strength in the capacity of producing interpretations, which can be spread to a comparative and posterior study. Their interpretations are elaborated through a progressive process about the definition of significant subjects, collect of the data, interpretation, validation and writing of the case.

We can also take as an illustration, the definition of study case of Robert K. Yin who has given: “The case study research method is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple source of evidence are used” (Yin, 1984, p.23).

The case study methodology may be used for a variety of purposes: it may provide the baseline measurements of a particular issue or event in a specific context, provide a glimpse into the process of change within an individual or community as part of monitoring efforts, and it can also be a method of project evaluation. A key attribute of the case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what results.

Case study examines typically the effect of all variables to furnish a complete agreement of an event or a situation. This kind of complete agreement is reached by a known process under the name thick description, it means that it involves a detailed description of the studied entity, the conditions where it is used, features of people concerned by it and the nature of the community where it is situated. Stake (1995), and Yin (1994) identified at least six sources
of evidence in case studies. The following is not an ordered list, but reflects the research of both Yin (1994) and Stake (1995):

- Documents
- Archival records
- Interviews
- Direct observation
- Participant-observation
- Physical artifacts

### 2.2.2 Type of case study

It exists four case study strategies, which are divided into two dimensions:

- Single VS Multiple case
- Holistic VS Embedded case

Case studies can be either single or multiple-case designs and these methods involve collecting and analyzing information from either one or several cases. Single cases are used to confirm or challenge a theory, or to represent a unique or extreme case (Yin, 1994). Single-case studies are also ideal for revelatory cases where an observer may have access to a phenomenon that was previously inaccessible. Single-case designs require careful investigation to avoid misrepresentation and to maximize the investigator's access to the evidence.

These two studies method can be holistic or embedded. A case study is holistic when it is realized through a qualitative approach that relates a phenomenological and narrative description. An embedded study is usually not only limited in a qualitative analysis, and it involves more than one unit which is analyzed (Yin, 2009).

Moreover, there are several natures of case study. Yin (1984) defines three different categories: exploratory, explanatory and descriptive case studies.

- An exploratory case study is used in order to observe any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher. Thus, it allows the researcher to have a better understanding, may test the feasibility of a more extensive study, or determine the best methods to be used in subsequent study. That is why, exploratory research is employed for broad focus and rarely to answer to specific research issues.
- An explanatory case study examines the data deeply in order to explain the phenomena in the data. The objective of this study is to present data bearing cause-effect relationships —explaining how events happened and are connected.
- A descriptive case study presents a complete description of a phenomenon within this context.
2.2.3 Case study a method choice

We decided to choose a case study as a method research because it represented several advantages in order to answer to the research question.

Firstly, the case study’s approach is a method comparatively flexible of scientific research. Because of its project’s conceptions want to highlight the exploration than the prescription or the prevision, researchers are comparatively more free to discover and work on questions because they emerge of their experiences. Besides, the structure less strict of case study allows to researchers to start by large questions and after reduce their approach during the progression of the experience rather than to try to predict each possible result before that the experience begins.

Secondly, the research of the data is often realized through the context and the situation in which the activity takes place (Yin, 1984). Investigators will observe the subject in his environment. This would contrast with experiment, for instance, which deliberately isolates a phenomenon from its context, focusing on a limited number of variables (Zaidah, 2003). Trying to understand as much as possible theme about one or a little group of subjects, studies are specialized in “deep data” or “thick description”. This emphasis can help to establish the link between the abstract research and the concrete practice, allowing to researchers to compare their observations directly.

Thus, we decide to use a case study because it is an appropriate method for answering “how”, “what” and “which” as well as “why” research questions. Hence, a case study is of particular interest if the aim is to gain a rich understanding of the research context. Consequently, this research strategy is adapted to insure a better comprehension because it incorporates empirical tested data, which later on is linked with theory and real life aspects. According to the research question of this thesis, we want to determine the decisive factors that students select to choose their future university. We are ourselves expose to this problem: we needed to study abroad and thus, orientate to our favorite foreign university. Indeed, by our own experience and by the fact that we are surrounding by international students, we were directly in the field, in the perfect environment to collect and analyze deeply the data. It is easier to get concrete information and to understand the student’s choice process.

That is why the category of case study, which corresponds to the best method to answer to the research question, is the descriptive study case with combined embedded design. Indeed, through surveys, a quantitative approach (see 2.3.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Researches and 2.3.2.2 Survey), we obtain figures and facts which allow to establish and describe exactly the main factors taken into account by students. Moreover, throughout the qualitative research, the study extent to the strategies of universities, when institutions know the desire and expectations of international students, how they proceed to attract and manage international students.
Despite these advantages, case studies have also received criticisms. Firstly, case study is often criticized as being too subjective. Likewise, “investigators who do case studies are often regarded as having deviated from their academic disciplines, and their investigations as having insufficient precision (that is, quantification), objectivity and rigor” (Yin 1989). Opponents cite opportunities for subjectivity in the implementation, presentation, and evaluation of case study research.

Then, case studies are also accused of a lack of rigor because of the approach relies on personal interpretation of data, so it could be difficult to prove the validity or to solve the problem. This is a simple method, however, there is a risk to do a generalization while the research is based on only few subjects (Eisenhard, 1989).

Yin (1994) proposed three remedies to counteract this: using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having a draft case study report reviewed by key informants. That is why, we try to interrogate students from different nationalities, to have a deeply overview of the students ‘desires. Furthermore, in order to fight against these criticisms, we receive the help of our supervisor and our opponent group, which allow having different point of views, opinions, and thus contributing to a greater objectivity.

2.2.4 Selecting Case Universities: Halmstad University, Sweden

To ensure the relevant empirical data was collected, we needed to reflect on where, when and whom we interviewed and observed. We should focus on case that are rich on information, consequently, we can contribute to the deeper understanding of what they aim to achieve (Merriam, 2009).

We have determined to be focus on the example of Halmstad University, in Sweden. Firstly, this university represents a relevant profile, this university is well-ranked, it belongs to the top 30 in Sweden, and has an international reputation because it welcomes students from all over the world. In 2015, there are 350 international students in Halmstad University, 200 from Europe and 150 outside.

Secondly, we study here this year. Thus, it is easier to find information and to be directly in contact with international students who possess different points of view about the reasons of their selection of this university. Ourselves, we are students and we needed to study abroad during one year. We had different needs, expectations, desire, preferences. We have confronted with a large list of different countries to go, and we decided finally to study in Halmstad University. It is important for us to discuss in this report our own experience which is directly linked with our topic.
Moreover, it is easier to interview employee of the university to understand the different strategies that universities develop to attract the foreign students in a competitive market. They obtain a concrete example which reinforces the validity of their study.

2.3 Research Method

2.3.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Researches

From Sharan B. Merriam, it exists two different ways to do research: qualitative research and quantitative research. Each of these methods possesses its own advantages and limits; that is why it can be relevant to combine the both methods, because they are complementary. Anyway, in function of what we want to reach through our research question, it is important to choose the best method to answer to the research question.

The qualitative research is intended to interpret the information collected. The aim is not to “quantify” information in a table, but to draw reflection and conclusion according to the data collected. A qualitative research wants to answer the questions “Why?” and “How?”. It is used to generate leads and ideas, then to formulate hypothesis. The advantages of the qualitative research are that this technic is very useful when a topic is too complex to be answer by a simple “yes or no”. Furthermore, a qualitative research does not need an important number of information collected. Of course it is important to have information, but the aim of this method is to draw a conclusion by interpreting the data collected and for that you do not need to have a large panel of information such as for the quantitative research method. However, the qualitative research method has some disadvantages. In fact the qualitative data cannot be analyzed mathematically such as for the quantitative research. It means that you cannot provide precise facts or indisputable results with this method. The qualitative data are more open to personal opinion and personal judgement. This method allows us to do observations. Finally, any qualitative research is generally unique and so cannot be generalized like with the quantitative method. This method cannot draw general conclusion. However, Robert K. Yin (2009) said that it is possible to generalize our results with other similar situations by an analytic generalization if the qualitative research was done in a proper way.

Contrary to the qualitative research, the quantitative research is intended to formulate a final and indisputable conclusion of the data collected. Quantitative method is a research method more experimental, more scientific. It is based on statistical and mathematical analysis tools. With this method, the goal is to explain and predict phenomena through measurable variables concepts. For example, counting and measurement are banal types of quantitative methods. The results of the research should be numbers and most part of the time they are presented in the form of a table or graph. This technic has the ambition to validate or to reject a hypothesis, not to formulate one such as with the qualitative research method. Normally, a quantitative research should answer to the question “How much?” (Bryman & Bell, 2005). Like the qualitative research, the quantitative research possesses some advantages and disadvantages. Because both technics are complementary, the advantages of one are the
disadvantages of the other. Thereby, quantitative research is a good way to finalize results and prove or disprove a hypothesis, and so at the end provide a definitive answer. In addition, a statistical and mathematical analysis of the data collected offers a complete and concrete answer. Afterward the results can be legitimately discussed and also published (Bryman & Bell, 2005). Therefore, normally quantitative research should filter out external factors such as socio-cultural factors or political factors, so like that the results are impartial. About the disadvantages of this method, quantitative research usually requires knowledge in statistics, so the analysis can be difficult for the non-mathematicians. Furthermore, this method is not always relevant because for some sector (such as human nature, psychology or anthropology) you cannot answer by a simple yes or no.

The reason why we decided to explain qualitative and quantitative research approach is because we have chosen to uses both methods in our collect of data. We decided earlier that the deductive approach would be our approach, but we still needed to perform interviews in order to have a global view of the problem and so to understand better the problem.

We think it was the best way to answer to our research question. As we said earlier, these two kinds of research approach are complementary, that is why we thank that using both could help us to find information of quality and relevant, because the two methods can cover correctly our topic.

Both methods are interesting and relevant for our thesis because we needed different approaches to collect information. The qualitative research method permits to have deeper analysis and to explain theory or idea that cannot be properly explained, and this is what we needed to have a better image of situation; whereas the quantitative research method offers figures and facts, in other words, concrete results (Bryman & Bell, 2005), and since the beginning of our work we were looking for concrete results: we want to identify exactly the motivations and the main factors of selection of international students. We needed a large number of different opinions, and surveys were the best tool to collect these data. That is also why we took the deductive approach as main approach.

2.3.2 Interview and Survey

2.3.2.1 Interview

According to the different methods, we decided to choose several ways to collect our primary data. One of these ways was the interview. It exists several kinds of interview: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interview and depth interviews (Saunders et al., 2009).

- **Structured interview**: this is an interview where the person interviewed just has to answer to the question already prepared and planed by the interviewer.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

- **Semi-structured interview**: the interviewer prepared some questions to have some repairs, but the dialogue is still free.
- **Unstructured interview**: no question from the interviewer to redirect the interview. This is like an open dialogue.
- **Depth interview**: this is an interview designed to probe feelings or behaviors which are not usually tapped by the other kind of interviews.

To answer the best to our research question, we decide to follow a semi-structured interview because we think that was the best way to reach this information we needed. Indeed, with this method we can have an open discussion but in the same time some questions about the necessary points that we need to know.

An interview is a good way to get information because the interaction with people makes the information flux more accessible. This is an interesting social time within people are talking and exchanging information. The main goal of our interview was to advance in our research; that is why our interview was a research interview. A research interview is a kind of interview with a scientific approach. This interview was an important element of a methodological process (Jean-Pierre Deslauriers, 1988).

The following schema sums up the different kinds of interviews, including the one we have chosen: research interview, which is an important element of scientist approach of this report.

To do our interview we decided to take notes and in the same time to record the interview. We thought that was the best way for us to collect the maximum of data. In fact, we could take notes of the key elements of the conversations and talked freely without be worried to forget important information. This is the big advantage with the recording of the interview; the interviewers have the possibility to listen again the interview and so to pay more attention to the little details that they could miss. One other advantage of recording an interview is that everybody can listen it after. It means that everybody can judge and give his own opinion about the conversation. It gives to the interview an impartial aspect (Saunders et al., 2009).
For our thesis, we decided to interview the staff of Halmstad University (our case study) in order to get some information about their way to manage their marketing strategy to attract international students and because currently we study on this campus so for us it was easier. After all, it was also a “strategic decision” because we wanted also to perform a survey for the international students, in order to answer to our research question, to know what the criteria could be for them when they go abroad to study. Thereby, it was easier for us to write our questionnaire after the interview, because like that we could cover everything that concerns the marketing strategy used by the university to reach the students and then look if it was an efficient strategy or not.

Thus, we interviewed Mr. Ulf Ivarsson, senior adviser for strategic internationalization, from the Department of Strategic Support. We contacted Mr. Ivarsson by mail and he had the kindness to accept to meet us to do our interview. It was also very enriching to interview the department of Strategic Support and Strategic Internationalization of Halmstad because the university has an excellent national level and an international recognition. Instead of doing only one interview, we performed two interviews to cover all the questions we have prepared for Mr. Ivarsson. We built our question around the marketing strategy of Halmstad University. The goal of the interview was to know more about how Halmstad University attracts international students: what is the global strategy to reach the international students? What are the different communication strategies? Which students are targeting and why?

### 2.3.2.2 Survey

Another way that we chose to collect our primary data was the survey. Like for the interview, it exists diverse ways to perform a survey: surveys and panels.

- **Survey:** a survey is a basic method of observation on a precise population. People answer to a questionnaire and then the results are collected and presented as figures after a statistical analysis.

- **Panel:** this is the same principle as for a survey, but repeated several times (for example, ask the opinion of the people about the government every month).

There are three categories of questions: open-questions, close-questions and preformed-questions. The open-questions are used to collect opinion and complex data; the close-questions are used to collect simple information which can be quickly analyzed; the preformed-questions are questions that already proposed different answers; for example: what do you prefer between this, this and that? (Alexandre Chirouze, 2004)

We decided to do a survey because we did not need to ask again our question, so just a unique survey was enough. We also decided to do a questionnaire with preformed-questions because it was easier after for us to do a statistical analysis. To build this survey, firstly, we need to define the words population and sample. A population is defined as a set of elements; an element is defined as a basic unit that comprises the population. For example, the whole population of a country, and the statistic element is the person; the whole production of a
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

factory, where the statistic element is the product… A sample is defined as a subset of the population. The goal of the sample, thanks to the results of the survey, is to build conclusions which are representative of the population. Thus, to do our survey, our population is students from all over the world, who want or already studied abroad. And our sample is the international students in Halmstad, because this is our study case. We wanted to have a global view of what are the different student’s criteria to select their university abroad, how the marketing strategy of the university was perceived by them; that is why it was more relevant to perform this study with the international students of Halmstad University, because they are directly concerned.

Quantitative researches are legitimate because they obey to the law of large number. This is a real advantage because this kind of studies touches, normally, an important number of people, so it is possible to generalize the findings. In addition, surveys appeal to mathematical law; it means that they provide accurate results. However, the key issue of a survey is not really the number of person questioned, but the questionnaire itself. In fact, in a quantitative study with preformed-questions, people are forced in the answers to the questions put to them. Therefore, a time of preparation and reflection is necessary to build the questionnaire. In addition, it is important to think about all the features of the questionnaire, because for example the length can influence the number of people who would accept to answer it (Stéphane Wahnich, 2006). So it was essential for us to pay attention to every detail if we wanted that the survey provides relevant answers.

In this thesis, we decided to work on a study case that it means to be concentrated on Halmstad University, in Sweden, to have a concrete example and collect primary data. We have chosen to create a questionnaire that we sent to international students who went to Halmstad during the year 2014/2015. Through this questionnaire, students had answered a same set of questions, in an anonymous way. To complete our questionnaire, we send a copy by e-mail and we share this document in Facebook, a social network, where most part of the students use. Moreover, Halmstad University and the Students’ Association have their own page on this social network, so it was quite easy to gather people. However, face to a lack of answers, we needed to do door to door in a student residence to obtain more results. In total, there are 105 students who answered it. This number can seems low to build an analysis, but we have no choice, our sample is very small, it concerns only international students from Halmstad University. In 2015, there are 350 international students in Halmstad, and there are less students in the second semester, period of the thesis, so our proportion of results was not so bad.

At the beginning of the questionnaire that you will find at the end of the thesis (see annexes 1 to 7), in the annexes part, we asked some questions about the students, to identify him and establish his profile: nationality, studies programs, how many times they are present in Halmstad University.
In a second part, we wanted to know what are the majors reasons that a student want to study abroad, and then, to identify the different factors that they take into account to choose their future university abroad. We decided to use rating questions, where the respondent is asked how strongly she or he agrees or disagrees with a statement or a series of statements thanks to a five point numeric rating scale.

After that, we orientated the questionnaire more about Halmstad University. We wanted to know where they find the information about the university, and then, what are the three major reasons that determined their choice. At the end, we asked if they are satisfied about their year abroad, and if they have some recommendations about the university can improved, because students are the first concerned by the services proposed by the institution. We know that the word of mouth is a simple, free and efficient tool of communication and testimonies of previous students to promote Halmstad University. That is why, we finished the questionnaire by this question, to know if the students will help the institution to recruit new subjects.

2.4 Strategy for data Analysis

The data analysis integrates the examination of the data, testing them or combining them to reveal some evidence, and everything in order to answer the research question (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) also said that there are three main different strategies to analyze evidences; first it is by using theoretical propositions, then by focusing on rival explanations, and finally by generating case descriptions. For our thesis, we decided to mix both approaches (induction and deduction) and so to use qualitative and quantitative research. Consequently, this is normal to have to distinct ways to analyze and interpret our data. Analyzing data is complex and important process which requires some technical knowledge. According to the kind of research approach chosen, we must adapt or analyze.

The analytical process of the qualitative data appears differently than the one for the quantitative data. As it is explain by Saunders “Qualitative data refers to all non-numeric data or data that have not been quantified”\(^2\), it means that qualitative data need more personal reflection to be analyze. Normally, with qualitative data, we are supposed to develop theory from the data collected. Also, the qualitative research includes induction approach and deduction approach so we can use both approaches to analyze data (Saunders et all, 2009).

There are three main ways to regroup qualitative data:

- Summarizing of meanings (condensation)
- Categorization of meanings (grouping)
- Structuring of meaning using narrative (ordering)

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\(^2\) Saunders et all (2009), Research Methods for Business Students Fifth edition , p.480
Of course, all of these technics can be used together or individually; it just depends of how we want to interpret or data. These different approaches to regroup qualitative data allow us to interact with them in order to understand them, integrate related data from different notes and transcripts, identify the key elements and the main themes or patterns, develop and test theory found, and finally draw and verify conclusions (Saunders et all, 2009).

About the analytical process of the quantitative data; this one needs personal reflection to be analyzed because the process is more scientific. By the process of analyzing data, we are supposed to confirm or refute a theory, contrary to the qualitative research. The graph and the tables give data and then we just need to interpret them by using statistical tools such as the mean, median or interquartile. The analysis of quantitative data allows us to explore, describe, present, and examine the relationships tendencies within the data. After all, we can draw conclusions and suggestions to answer to our problem. However, Saunders (2009) specifies that everything depends of our research question and the data we have collected, and also of the scale we have chosen (for example, region, national, and international). These different factors must be taking into account when analyzing the data.

2.5 Research Quality

The objective of the research design is to try to solve to the initial research question, building an argument and proving that the evidences are correct. Without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction and thus loses its utility. Hence, a great deal of attention is applied to reliability and validity in all research methods.

The quality of the research can be confirmed thanks to logical tests. It exists several means, such as data collection or data analysis (Yin, 2009). Data analysis and testing will include four criteria: construct validity, external validity, internal validity and reliability (Yin, 2009).

Construct validity testing will confirm that research data collection is based on a logical process that maintains consistency from the research question to conclusions. The test for external validity will ensure that the research findings are applicable outside the confines of the selected case study, while the internal validity test will evaluate the evidence for pattern matching and establishing causality. The test for reliability verifies that the research procedures and findings can be replicated by other parties (Yin, 2009).

2.5.1 Construct Validity

Construct validity refers to the extent to which a researcher can claim that accurate inference can be realized from the operationalized measures in a study for the theoretical constructs on which they were based. It is concerned with generalizing from the specificities of a study to the broader concept that the study attempts to measure and draw conclusions. A study is considered to have construct validity if the researcher can demonstrate that the variables of interest were properly operationalized (Trochim, 2006). Yin (1994) proposed three methods
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

to increase construct validity: using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having a draft case study report reviewed by key informants.

In our study, we used these methods to build a strong argument. Firstly, more than one source was used in this report, because our study is based on two a deductive approach, but we also used interviews to have the point of view of the educational institutions, so there are two actors which were involved, international students and universities. Secondly, during all the report, we met our supervisor several times, thus, he followed our progression of the study, and like that, he ensured that our argumentation is logical. Lastly, we interviewed Mr. Ivarsson, Senior advisor for Strategic Internationalization Department of Strategic Support, key informant that gives us valuable data.

2.5.2 Internal Validity

Internal validity is a major concept mainly in explanatory cases seeking to establish causal relationships between concepts (Yin, 2009), and describes the extent of coherence of the predicted relationships between concepts (Meyer, 2001). Qualitative research allows flexibility and reactivity in collecting data through exploration of understandings. It reduces ambiguity and contradiction in data enabling to discover reasons for predicted relationships.

This study was realized to ensure an internal validity thanks to the collect of theoretical frameworks through reviewed articles, interviews about our topic. Moreover, this study was conducted by two authors that is why, there is an exchange of ideas, opinions and thus, it reduces the subjectivity.

2.5.3 External Validity

A researcher cannot often work with the whole population of interest, but instead must study smaller sample of the population in order to draw conclusions about the larger group from the sample is drawn. External validity refers to the extent to which case study’s case findings are generalizable.

We decided to be concentrated on only one study case with Halmstad University. However, all the universities around the world, which propose an international program, are confronted to the same problem: attract new students. According the theories founded and interviews, we can say that their strategies and tools marketing are quite similar. That is why, we generalized the data.

2.5.4 Reliability

We can define the reliability as the degree to which the “process of the study is consistent and stable over time across researchers and methods” (Meyer, 2001). Approach reliability is
conducted to minimize the probability of biases and errors in studies (Yin, 2009). Reliability may be achieved with case protocols or case study databases.

It is a sensitive issue for qualitative research, since differences are inevitably expected when cases studies are replicated by several researchers. In order for researchers to repeat the case and find the same conclusions, Kirk and Miller (1986), postulate the need to document the procedures.

With the objective to increase the reliability of this study, we recorded the interview; by this way, they had the possibility to reanalyze the conversation, to not forget important information or to prove the validity of the data.

Moreover, during all the writing of this thesis, the report was submitted by a peer examination. First, supervisor is following the progress and controls our findings. And then, we met with other students groups who are not involved in this project, and give us an impartial point of view about our research findings.

Furthermore, we worked with the triangulation of data, which is the process to occur when multiple theories, materials, or methods are used. Thus, to increase the reliability of our information, we worked with several theoretical approaches to interpret and support data, used primary and secondary data, investigated interviews and surveys. Multiple sources provide verification and validity while complementing similar data.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

Theory

High Education as a Business

7Ps of Educational Marketing

Others Marketing Factors for the attraction of the students

The Student Choice

University perception
In this section we are going to show and illustrate the different theories that we found about marketing in high education and international students. In a first part we will have a look on the several theories found on the marketing in the universities; then we will focus on the theories about students and how they choose foreign universities.

III. Theory

3.1 High Education as a Business

Craven and Duhamel (2000) demonstrate that the Education sector reacts like a real firm which offers its own products and services. That is why we need to adapt a business approach concerning the operating of educational and marketing programs. Richmond talks also this idea in is his book, *The Education Industry* (1969), and he submits how institutions have to favor their services, management practices and marketing. He was criticized for the title of his book, but he explained it by comparing a traditional industry and academia. For both of them, their objective is to satisfy the human needs, by the sale of goods, services or knowledge.

Thus, we consider that universities offer a service to the students: transfer knowledge that students need for their future job. We can define a service as an activity, benefit or satisfaction offered for sale that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. The service’s features require a particular marketing strategy (Stanton, 1974; Anderson et al., 1993; Kotler et al., 1995).

In general, services are intangible (Bateson, 1977; Berry, 1980; Lovelock, 1981, Shostak, 1977) because they are not physical objects but performances. That is why, most part of services cannot be measured, tested and checked in advance of sale to confirm its quality. Moreover, it means also that for services, production and consumption are inseparable (Carmen and Langeard, 1980; Gronroos, 1978; Regan, 1963; Upah, 1980). Secondly, services are heterogeneous because their performances vary often from producer to producer, from customer to customer. It depends of the quality of the personnel of the firm.

Besides, if we want to adapt this definition for Education system, we can say that the knowledge transmitted is inseparable from the teacher to the student. Heterogeneity and intangibility depend of the capacity of the teacher and the equipment used. Concerning the perishability, the lecture is directly consumed, there is no possibility for the lecture to be stored for a later use.

For students, intangibility represents a high risk because it disturbs the communication of the services delivered to the customer (Rathmell, 1966). Consequently, the decision process is influenced by indirect means of service evaluation. Thus, students judge theses notions based on the image of the institution and the country of destination. For this reason, communication...
process plays an important role for the marketing strategies with the objective to attract international students.

Thus, High Education has to build a marketing approach that it is adapted to the special features of the service. For the first theory, we will develop the model of the 7Ps Educational Marketing (Enache, 2011; Ivy, 2008; Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011). This concept is based on the marketing-mix method adapted to the High Education sector, which comparing to the classical business method, define the marketing approach to attract and satisfy the needs and expectations of international students (Oplatka, 2009).

### 3.2 7Ps of Educational Marketing

To establish marketing strategies, you need to develop and coordinate the factors of the Marketing Mix (Hawkins et al, 2001; Kotler and Fox, 1995; Ivy, 2008). This process refers to the decisions of the organizations which answer customer’s needs and bring customers value. The traditional marketing mix is composed of four elements: Product, Price, Place and Promotion. However, previously, we have already demonstrated that High Education offers a service, which corresponds to the service marketing mix. Thus, the traditional marketing mix is not appropriate for the services (Ibid, 1995). Ivy (2008) proposes to include People, Physical Evidence and Process elements to the classical marketing-mix, to have more efficiency for the services strategies marketing. All these factors are linked and are influenced between each other.

![7Ps of Educational Marketing](http://www.marketing-made-simple.com/)

Kotler and Fox (1995)\(^3\) has developed a version of the marketing mix but adapted to the Educational Institutions. We will discuss about this model.

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3.2.1 Product

In the traditional marketing mix, the product plays an important role. Concerning the educational marketing, this element stays an essential factor, however, it is completed by the six others factors of the marketing mix.

The product strategy can be represented by two different views. We can admit that the product can refers to educational service and the consumer is the student. On the other hand, we can consider that the product is the student who will be offered to the labor market. However, the result of the strategy will be the same, because the demand of the student and the labor are similar. Nowadays, to find a job, the student will adapt its demand according to the labor market.

Thus, the university will be focus on the student’s and labor market’s demand, and will try to answer the both. The fundamental decision that High Education institution needs to make is what programs and services they will offer to the students. The product strategy of the institution will define its identity, position and how customers will correspond to the institutions.

Moreover, programs have to face also to the demand of the labor market and thus, will be focus also on the knowledge needed in order to successfully start a career. In fact, High Education prepares, trains students to enter to this market. This product strategy will increase the student’s and companies’ satisfaction.

For example, due to the globalization, more and more international skills, such as languages, how doing business in others countries etc., are demanded by the firms. That is why, since few years, you notice that educational institutions adapted their programs, and thus, improve the quality of their services.

Quality of the High Education institution is very important for the consumer satisfaction. However, this perception of quality depends of people because they possess different and specific needs.

Product strategy is one on the first step and easiest step to start an efficient educational marketing mix strategy.

3.2.2 Price

The second factor of the marketing mix is the price. In general, the price element refers to tuition fees, and any monetary related issues. Joyner (1996) noticed that the number of universities which use tuition as a basic revenue is increasing. For example, Kotler (1999) shows that if you increase the price of 1%, it will result on a profit of 28, 7% for an organization.

Price factor plays an important role and influences the strategy marketing because students and their parents are directly concerned about the financial implication for the admission in a university (Connor & Institute for Employment Studies, 1999; Pugsley, 2004). That is why,
decision makers, when they setting price, need to understand how student perceive price and the importance of price in selection institutions. Moreover, according to Cosser and Du Toit (2002), to establish the pricing strategy and to attract the most students, you need to know the cost of the production of the service, compare with the competitors’ price.

Furthermore, the pricing decision plays also a role for the image and to identify the position of the university. In fact, a higher cost of the tuition fees for an educational program can show that the university is better, or that the program is new or rare on the educational market. Thus, a student is ready to pay a higher price for a more prestigious university or well-known by the companies.

Another strategy could be the scholarships offers. Universities can attract clever students by offering financial benefits.

3.2.3 Place

Place factor refers to the place where the product or service is sold and the distribution channels (Brassington, 2006). It means that for the Education, it refers to the geographical location of the institution, the accessibility, the atmosphere. However, it is not only restricted to physical and geographical location of the institution, because nowadays, with the development of the new technologies, we can overcome these limits.

The place strategy possesses two perspectives. First, if we consider that the product is the educational service, the place strategy will try to find the most efficient process to transfer the knowledge to the students. Second, if we consider that the product is the graduate student, the place strategy will try to create an efficient place for the student on the labor market.

In the first case, the new technologies play an important role. Today, we notice that there is an evolution of the way of teaching thanks to the new technologies. (Ibid, 2008; Pratminingsih and Soedijati, 2011). Students can get relevant information through many sources. Web sites, e-mail, video and telephone based conferences are examples of this new way of teaching (Ivy, 2008). Thus, students don’t need to be physically on the campus to learn anymore. These innovations represent a competitive advantage for the High Education institution which used these tools to improve their teaching (Pratminingsih and Soedijati, 2011).

In the second case, the link with the economic sector is more and more important. If the university study and take into account the needs of the actual economy, the place strategy will be successful. If not, the knowledge that students learn will not be relevant to the needs of the labor market or the society.

3.2.4 Promotion

Promotion could be the successful key of educational the marketing mix. In fact, communication concentrates the most part of the efforts of the marketing strategy of the
institutions (Oplatka and Jane, 2004). Palmer (2001) and Kelly (1989) divide promotion into four elements: advertising, sales promotion, public relations and personal selling. For each element, there is a lot of possibilities of tools for the institutions to communicate with their customers, such as Web-advertising, which is efficient. Promotional activities are more successful when they are targeted.

Firstly, institutions have to present and explain the educational product to potential customers, who are students. Here, the most efficient channel of communication is the Web site (Enache, 2011). It allows to inform students and conduct them to the next step of the inscriptions, so it is a good way to enroll new students. Institutions need to deliver a clear message, and thus, they use slogan which are important because they communicate to the public a summary of the identity of the school.

Another important category is the public opinion. Thus, universities will highlight the benefits that they offer to the potential students and to the whole society. Public Relation can become an interesting tool. However, television and press advertising is less common in the educational sector (Bell and Rowley, 2002).

We will present you quickly different tools that private schools use for their communication strategy:

- **Public Relation:** Public Relation can be represented by several activities, such as media relations, interviews (Friedman et al., 1996). The role of the Public Relation is to improve the marketing effort of the institutions. The objective is to inform public about the success of the school. The most popular kind of Public Relation, which is not a media, is the association of parents (Symes et al, 1994). Public Relation is very useful for the institutions, because they create a positive image, mentality.

- **Exposition:** Exposition allow to present the characteristics and achievements of the school to the students and their parents.

- **Brochure:** Brochure is the most used between all the different elements of advertising. They are often the first contact with students and institutions, and can create a favorable image of the school in student’s mind.

This is the image of the institutions which influences the promotion strategy. The objective of the institutions is to build and to maintain a good reputation, to attract easier new students (Enache, 2011).

### 3.2.5 People

As we already explain, the educational service is inseparable and variable, so it is strongly influenced by the people who are teaching. Thus, “people” factor refers to all teaching and administrative personnel, and a relationship with the costumer is built (Kotler and Fox, 1995).

The administrative staff plays an important role when they have to understand their needs and convince the potential student, this is the enrolment process. After the admission of the
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

student, administration personnel are responsible of the issues unrelated to knowledge transfer.

Concerning the teaching staff, they are the essential factor to realize a successful service. If the university engages prestigious teachers, so the institution can know important benefits such as an educational service of quality, a better image and reputation of the university, and satisfaction of students and the society (Enache, 2011).

The people strategy is the most important element for educational strategy marketing. An efficient personnel, answer to the expectations of the market, allow to a university to start to build a powerful marketing mix (Enache, 2011).

3.2.6 Process

Process refers to the way how an institution does business, and concerns “all the administrative and bureaucratic functions of the university which are registration, course evaluation, examinations, result dissemination and graduation” (Ivy, 2008). Social events or entertainment belong to the process strategy (Pratminingshi and Soedijati, 2011).

The enrollment is an important part of the process strategy, potential student become registered student, so they become consumer. If the process strategy is associated with the people process, the university could improve the image and reputation, which could attract more students. A successful enrollment process results on prepared students who have taken the advantage of knowledge transferred. Thus, they will effect on the quality of the educational product (because it is inseparable and variable) and the results of the institution (lower dropout rate, faster labor market integration) (Enache, 2011).

3.2.7 Physical Evidence

Physical evidence includes “location, design, aesthetics, functionality and ambient conditions of the classrooms and buildings, equipment in the classrooms and laboratories, library facilities, dress code of students and teachers etc. It contributes greatly to the image of the institution” (Gibbs and Knapp, 2002).

Physical evidence plays an important role because it shows what the service offer, this is a kind of proof, due to the intangibility of the educational product. Moreover, Kotler and Fox (1995) believe that this factor will give the first image of the university in the student’s mind during their visit. To attract new students, the campus and equipment need to satisfy the expectations of these potential consumers.

In a competitive market, the marketing mix process allows to understand the needs of the consumers, even if they have a different point of view of the quality of the services, and thanks to the marketing tools, it can reach the fixed objectives. Concerning the High Education, marketing shows that it offers a system which allows to understand, analyze and change the market forces that are present in the environment. With the 7Ps educational marketing, a
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

university is able to create a coherent and efficient marketing mix, and thus, is able to success its objectives.

3.3 Others Marketing Factors for the attraction of the students

Previously, we saw that High Education delivered a service which can be managed thanks to the Educational marketing Mix to maximize profits. Comparing the traditional marketing mix, three new factors were added to adapt this concept to a service. Thus, Information Technology (IT), image and reputation were identified as linked to factors place, promotion, people and process (Gomes and Murphy, 2003). We will develop these concepts because they play an important role in the student’s decision process.

3.3.1 Communication tools

Due to the globalization, the way of how marketers compete in the educational sector has changed. The innovation and improvement of technology has an essential impact in the educational marketing (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003). Using ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in High Education (Mazzarol et al., 2003; Verbik and Lasanowki, 2007) allows education marketer to consecrate a greater importance on marketing communications (Gutman and Miaoulis, 2003). IT, in general, is a factor which allowed to influence and develop the High Education industry and allowed the growth of High Education worldwide (Knight, 2004). More and more public or private institutions use the E-commerce to attract and enroll foreign students (Kleen and Shell, 2003). Due to a competitive market, institutions improved a lot on the recruitment and online customer service process towards foreign students.

Firstly, Gomes and Murphy (2003) explain that internet plays an essential role in the High Education industry. It allows to customize information following the different targeted cultures, including both verbal and nonverbal content (Usunier and Lee, 2009). ICT becomes an important tool because they lead to a lower cost strategy and risk to new markets. Internet has two different roles in educational process: on one hand, it helps students’ decision and give them information, and on the other hand, thanks to IT, the High Education Industry develops an e-business activities (Ibid, 2003). Consequently, nowadays, different universities have the ability to offer websites and databases for foreign students (Altbach, 2004).

Website and email create opportunities because with these tools, we can communicate with the worldwide potential students without meeting them face to face. Nowadays, universities are present on the social networks (ex: Facebook, Twitter, Myspace...), where potential students can discover the institution. Universities organize on it also chat room with current students, like that potential students and parents can ask questions. For the advertising of the school on the website, we can also see different videos on Youtube, online games etc. The goal is to be present on the internet, to make know the school for the potential students.
High Education institutions need to be present all over the world to success to attract international students. Another means to help the institution to be well-known is their participation in different salons, expositions and thanks to the article published in specialized newspapers, pedagogical journals. They need to transfer a unique and clear message to the students thanks to a slogan for example, like that students will keep it on mind.

### 3.3.2 Role of the Government

#### 3.3.2.1 Financing

High Education is divided into two important parts: on one hand, University College which train to precise professions, such as manager or engineer. On the other hand, these are universities. The most part of the universities belong to the public utility. High Education institutions are directed by the State which decides what the degrees that the students can obtain are. However, universities can organize formations, with specific degree. Universities choose civil servant teachers, but this is the State who pays the salary of these personnel civil servant.

Public universities have to offer scientific, cultural and professional formation, welcome and orientate students. They have also develop basic and applied research. (OECD)

Concerning Sweden, the majority (80%) of the universities ‘resources come from the public money. Each institution receives a basic endowment a year (basanslag) for the formation and the research. The endowment of formation is measured by the number of student (ETP) and the number of credits ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) taken by students. Since 2013, institutions can receive a quality bonus (kvalitetsanslag) if their formation evaluation by UKÄ (Swedish Higher Education Authority).

Public spending for the High Education represents around 75 GSEK (8 G€), that is 19% of the total public spending and around 1.8% of the Swedish GDP (SCB, Statistics Sweden).

#### 3.3.2.2 Scholarship as an attractive factor

Some countries obtain a governmental help more important than others. Thus, they can consecrate a bigger part for the scholarships, which becomes an attractive factor for international students.

We can take the example of Germany. German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is in Germany one of the essential factors of the mobility of students. Its goal is to promote the academic cooperation abroad, thanks to students, teachers or researchers exchange. These programs are for all the countries and for all the subjects, and Germans and international people can benefit from it. They are just selected on excellence academic and scientific criteria. Between 2005 and 2010, the DAAD’s budget for the scholarships for German students, increased from 65 to 109 million euros (included scholarships of the European mobility), so around 68% of rise. For this same period, the number of students who benefit it
increased of 25%. DAAD managed in total, 250 different programs where 73 660 students benefit it in 2010, with 42 047 international students and 31 613 Germans (http://ressources.campusfrance.org/, 2013). Scholarships are a success to attract international students.

European Students benefit also of the scholarships from European Commission, which is Erasmus (European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students). This is the exchange program for students, teachers between European universities. In 2013, around 270 000 European Students studied abroad thanks to it. Moreover, in 2014, a new program appeared: Erasmus+. Its goal is to reinforce competences and employment, and also to modernize Education, formation. This program is for seven years, with a budget of 14, 7 million euros, so it is an increase of 40% compared to the level of actual expenses, so it shows the desire to the European Union to invest in this sector. Erasmus+ will offer more than 4 million European students to go abroad (http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_fr.htm, 2015).

Concerning to the students who are not European, government of each country consecrates a part of the budget for scholarships. However, students are selected according to their level of formation, programs and they need to have an excellent school record.

3.4 The Student Choice

3.4.1 Marketing Approach

As we already saw in the first part concerning high education as a business, we must have a different look on students and universities. To try to understand how they interact together, we must see them like companies and customers and so in our case, the students are the customers of the universities which are the companies that offer a service. According to Peters and Austin (1985), in a company’s activity, the most important is the customers because they allow the company to continue to do its activity. Therefore, the main purpose of a company is to satisfy its customers in order to create a customer loyalty (Kotler and Fox, 1995).

In order to satisfy its customers, a company must understand what is motivating them, by what they are interest. If a company can answer to some basic questions such as “what do customers want to buy my product/service?” or “What is the value that they accord to my product/service?” , it is easier for it to reach the customers. In other words, if universities can know what motives students they will improve their marketing strategy to have more chance to attract students. For example, if a university is searching for students who are interest by the universities with a high ranking, its first argument for its communication strategy will be its very good ranking of the last years.

Whether for big companies or international universities, the key point to reach customers/students is to know exactly what they want. Students have a need; it is up to universities to propose the best solution that can answer this need.
3.4.2 Student Choice Process

There a lot of people who made theories to explain how students choose a university, and even if they do not always agree, everybody is affirming that students follow different steps before choose a university. We consider that there are five steps in the student choice process, but first off all what do we call “student choice process”? In fact this is just the process that directs student’s choices to decide which university they will go. So this process is divided into five steps in this order: the needs and motives of students, the collect of information, the evaluation of the alternatives, the final decision and the enrolment, and finally the post-purchase evaluation. The following schema shows these different steps.

3.4.2.1 Needs and Motives

Before explain how needs and motives influence the student choice process, we think that is important to remember what a need is. According to Maslow (1943), a need is a feeling of lack, dissatisfaction or privacy that pushes a person to act in order to fill the lack and so to satisfy the need. Maslow divided needs into five categories: physiological need, safety need, love/belonging need, esteem need and finally self-actualization. Each need represents a level in his model and to pass from a need to another, the precedent one should be fill. For example to answer to a need of esteem, people answer first to the need of belonging.
Now we know a little bit more about needs, but how do they influence students during the student choice process?

In fact, this process starts with needs that come from the students: this is the starting point. Indeed, at the beginning, students realize that they need to think about their future, about what they will do in their life, who they want to become and what they want to accomplish. In the pyramid of Maslow it is representing by the second, the fourth and the last need that people want. Safety because students want to do studies which will give them a good job to earn a money to live; esteem because a lot of students really want that people be proud of them; and self-actualization because every student wants to become someone and accomplish something, this is a human goal. However, sometimes what motives them is not always their personal opinion. That is true, sometimes students choose to continue in a special kind of studies just to stay with friends or also because this is the studies that their parents want for their children (Mullen, 2009).

3.4.2.2 Information Gathering

After students realized that they need to pursue their studies in the high education, they begin to search for information about universities. This is the second step in the student choice process. Collect information is the only way for students to have a better view of their possibilities when searching for universities. In fact, when students collect information they are just trying to identify the different option they can choose for their future.

It exist different ways to collect information; Kotler & Armstrong (2008) defined two main ways for information gathering: personal information and non-personal information. Each one of these ways can be also divided into more specific ways to collect data such as “non-personal non-marketer controlled” which concerns information from medias.

When a student wants to gather information about universities, he begins by using his personal information. The personal information are any kind of data which come from the private circle of the students, so family, friends or also teachers. This is information are often
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

determinant for doing the final choice decision, because students trust family and friends while they have more difficulties to trust an institution that they do not know. For universities, this is a real issue because they need to convince students that they can trust them and it is not always easy (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

After personal information, students look for non-personal information. These information represent all the data that do not come from the private circle of the student, but on the contrary, they come from outside of this circle. These sources of information regroup media, conferences, websites, other students, prospectuses or advertisements. Mostly, they are more precise and more relevant than information provided by the private circle of the student. Indeed, these information come directly from universities while information from private circle are often just opinions or personal views (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008).

So with these two main ways to gather information, students can obtain a lot of data about universities and then they acquire an important decision power because information allows them to make choice. The goal of universities is to try to influence the student choice towards them.

3.4.2.3 Evaluating Alternatives

At this level of the model, students have enough information about universities and now they just need to decide which one take. But before, they need to evaluate the different alternatives they have in order to select the best choice for them. Usually, students make a list with every university they retained, and they are looking for reduce the number of option at one or two (Kotler & Fox, 1995).

To reduce the number of option that they have, students can use different processes. For example they can go directly to the university. This is probably the best way to realize how the university is, because like that, students can talk directly with teachers and other students, they can have a preview of the student life on the campus. Most part of the time, a visit to the university is crucial in the choice of students; that is why universities employ a lot of energies in order to make a good impression and attract students (Kotler & Fox, 1995). Of course this is much more difficult for international students to come to visit a university abroad.

Students also use personal criteria to select universities. Sometimes all universities are very similar in terms of programs and quality of teaching; so in these conditions, students can use some basic criteria of selection in order to choose one university. These criteria can be the
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

location of the university (country, city, climate), the language because if you are an international student you need to go to a university where people can speak at least English.

This step of the student choice process is the one which is the most linked to the marketing mix because students evaluate alternatives by relying on criteria which depend of universities and their marketing mix. So, the more universities add value to them through their marketing mix, the more chance they have to attract a lot of students.

3.4.2.4 Decision and Enrolment

This is during this step of the model that students make the final decision. Contrary to the step before (Evaluating alternatives), here the point is not to understand how students choose universities, but how they choose the university. How do they take the final decision?

In fact, mostly they take the decision according to what they felt about the different universities when they did their investigation. Because they are mainly guide by their feelings, students still have doubts when they make the final decision. In addition, they perceive a risk about their decision because they are at a high level of involvement and risk in this kind of decision is important (Kotler & Fox, 1995).

To avoid this difficulty, they will continue to search for more information. Thereby, when they will conclude their decision, they will try to collect information through the documents given by the university. They pay particularly attention to these information so universities must stay convincing until the last moment.

In the same context, universities are very careful for choosing the staff members who will represent the institution during this moment. These people have a crucial role in the marketing mix of universities because they are the first and the last to talk with students (Stott & Parr, 1991). Usually, students talk with these persons about their needs and what afraid them, so this is very important for universities to have staff members who are capable to provide right answers to the students.

3.4.3.5 Post-Purchase Evaluation

The post-purchase evaluation is the five and last step of the student choice process and this step is very determining for universities. In fact, during and after their studies, students are not anymore potential customers, but users. Thus, they have now a personal experience of the services offer by their own university (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Naturally, they ask themselves to try to know if they made the right decision, if the service provided was good or not, if they have regrets or not...

This is vital for universities to produce satisfied students, because at the end a student, who says that his university is good, is more convincing than a simple prospectus (Kotler & Fox, 1995). It is mean that the marketing efforts from universities must not be only for attracting students, but also to make them satisfy of the choice they made. A university which satisfies students increases its chances to keep its students for the next year (Dennis, 1998).
3.5 University perception

The precedent graph comes from the Council of Independent Colleges which made this survey. What do we learn from it?

In fact, this graph shows us how alumni (alumni are the former students) see the quality of education according to private college/university and public college/university in 2003. The conclusion that we can draw is that alumni think that private universities offer better services than public universities.

This is not necessarily true, but most part of people thinks it is. People think that because they pay, they will have a service of better quality. Sometimes yes, but sometimes no. However, here the point is not to know if public universities are less good than private universities; no, here the point is to realize how much the image returns by universities is important.

We saw this point when we talked about the post-purchase evaluation of the student choice process (3.3.3.5). The perception of a university is a crucial factor to attract students because with a bad image, students will not apply for it (Dennis, 1998). Thereby, this is a real issue for public universities because they can suffer of this stereotype, whereas private universities can enjoy it. For public universities, this inequality can be filling by using a lot of communication with students and families in order to convince them that the services offer by the public universities are also very good. On the contrary, the private universities can use that as an important argument to demonstrate the quality of its services in order to convince and reach more students (Dennis, 1998).

Even if it is not always true, students and family pay attention to private and public universities and so have a different perception of both, at the expense of universities. That plays an important role in the student choice process and universities must take into account this characteristic because this is often a criteria for students.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

Empirical Data

Interviews
Surveys
The goal of this section is to present our empirical data that we have collected in order to perform our thesis. The first part is dedicated to the information gathered with the interviews, and the second part is for the information collected through our survey.

IV. Empirical Data

4.1 Interviews

In this section we will transcribe the different points we discussed with Mr. Ivarsson. In order to do that, we will cover the different questions we saw in a chronologic time.

4.1.1 First Interview

We had a first interview with Mr. Ivarsson on April 07, 2015 at 14.30 at the university. During this meeting of 30 minutes, we talked about the global strategy of Halmstad University to reach international students.

We began the interview by introducing ourselves and then we opened the discussion by a general question “Do you have a precise way to attract international students?”. To answer this question, Mr. Ivarsson decided to explain the context of high education in Sweden. He specified that the international aspect was very new in Sweden, “in 2006, the government proposed to take more students from abroad”. He also explained us what were the barriers against the internationalization of the Swedish universities. In fact, the main problem concerns the number of sits in universities. He told us there were 42 institutions in Sweden and some like Lund University are totally full, and here is the problem. As in a lot of countries, the Swedish people have to pay taxes and a part of the taxes are used to finance education. People want their own children benefit of the Swedish education, and not international students, because they pay for it. People complain about that because some universities are full and cannot accept all Swedish students because they reserved sits for international students. However, this is a different with Halmstad University. Indeed the university “does not have this problem and so can take international students because it does not prevent Swedish students to join Halmstad University” according to Mr. Ivarsson.

Then, after explained the background, Mr. Ivarsson defined one of the main goals of Halmstad University concerning international students. Thereby, he told us that an important goal was “to create more program more global with an outcome for the Swedish students, who are not leaving the country, to be able to understand different culture, different way of thinking and different perspectives”. Halmstad University wants to create an international environment because the outcome is very beneficial for Swedish students. The university needs international students to create this atmosphere.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

However, the university needs to face a economic issue. Mr. Ivarsson explained us that international students from Europe come to Sweden for free, but they generate costs for the university; even if students from Sweden can go abroad in Europe for free too, Halmstad University has always “a problem of balance between incoming students and out coming students”. It means that the university has more extra-costs and this is a problem, especially now because the Swedish government decided to decrease the budget for universities since 2006. Thereby, Mr. Ivarsson told us that the tendency was to decrease the number of students incoming in order to try to counterbalance.

What Mr. Ivarsson wanted to make us understand is that the “strategy of recruiting” is very dependent of the context. If the university has an important budget and a lot of free sits, it will go abroad to recruit international students; if not, the university reduces the tendency of the international students. However, Halmstad University still has some predefining goals. For example the university has the volume of international students wished, “200 international students... with 15 from Brazil, 50 from China...”. Moreover, Halmstad University adapts its communication strategy according to the country where it is recruiting; he specified that “the best way we found to find international students is to work directly with the partner, [...] we do a sort of business to business, [...] mass communication campaign, mass media... it does not work for us”. For example, in China, Halmstad University works directly with the partner universities, whereas in India it uses agencies to make their promotion.

After that, we asked Mr. Ivarsson if the reputation and the image of the university were two factors important to attract international students. He told us they were good factors and they were taken into account by the partners. Consequently, our next question was “do you have any problems to attract students?”. He said “no we do not have problem to attract international students. Our main problem is that we do not propose enough cursus and courses in English”. The staff of Halmstad University is trying to improve this point in order to propose new offers to the partner universities. In addition, Mr. Ivarsson specified “there are not so many theories which apply to our way of communication” and that means Halmstad University has a particular way do to its promotion to attract international students, “we do our business to business”.

We were also curious to know if the university worked with the students and the alumni to attract international students because we saw in the theory part that was an important point. Mr. Ivarsson told us they do not use them but they should. However, he pointed out that for the moment they attract enough international students, and furthermore, the university is in a mature phase, “we know our partners, we know what they want and they know what we want... so we always get a deal to satisfy everyone”. But he also specified that if one day they do not reach the number of international students they wanted, they would probably begin to work with the student union in order to attract more students. That could be a good solution.
To conclude the interview, Mr. Ivarsson made us understand that Halmstad University does not have a marketing department, “we do not have a marketing department but we have an information department and this is really different, [...] we are doing information and not really marketing”.

At the end of this interview we decided to meet again in order to talk more about the different strategies adopted by Halmstad University to reach international students according to their home country.

4.1.2 Second Interview

After the first interview, we decided to meet again in order to complete our information. We wanted to learn more about the difference of strategy between the exchange students from Europe who can come for free, and the students from other countries, such as China, India or Brazil, who needs to pay to come to study to Halmstad University. We had our second interview on April 15, 2015 at 14.00 at the university. The meeting lasted 45 minutes.

We began the interview by this way: “Last time… you talked about the strategy of B to B (Business to Business) with your partner from India, China, Brazil and more generally from outside Europe. You also talked about the strategy and the politics to accommodate the European students who come for free… What we would like to know is how do you adapt your strategy according to the country where the students come from?” To answer to this question, Mr. Ivarsson decided to explain us the different stages of Halmstad University. To make this part of the conversation easier to understand, we decided to sum up the information of Mr. Ivarsson on the following schema.

![Diagram showing the stages of Halmstad University from 1987 to 2015]

- **1987**: Creation of the Halmstad University.
- **2000**: 5,000 students (4,700 Swedish, 300 international).
- **2005**: 6,000 students (700 international students).
- **2010**: 6,700 students (400 in exchange, and 300 from Europe, so for free).
- **2015**: 4,900 students (350 international students in exchange; 200 for free, the 150 other had to pay a tuition fee).

Lost 1,600 students
With this schema we can see the evolution of Halmstad University since its beginning. Then we have learned that the university had an important growth until 2010. After, there were less students, some programs closed, the university received less money from the government and the number of international students decreased.

After explaining the “story of Halmstad University”, he explained us why they need to have different strategy adapted to each country with which they are working.

As we already learned in the first interview, students from Europe are coming for free, and the other need to pay. Halmstad University cannot support too many exchange students anymore because the government decreased the money it gave. In order to compensate with the international students who come for free, Halmstad University deals directly with the non-European universities in order to have students who pay to come. Thereby, Halmstad University with its partners (20 partners in China, 3 partners in India, 6 in Brazil, etc...) and so uses a strategy of B to B. Thanks to this strategy they learn a lot about the other universities and so they make deals to have students and to send students, “we know our partners and this is necessary because they are our customers and when you are doing business you need to know your customers to know what they want and what they can offer [...] and this is why we always get the international students we want... because we negotiate with our partners”.

Mr. Ivarsson told us that Halmstad University has to face to a dilemma: have more international students but do not lose money. The University of Halmstad sends fewer students than it accommodates and so it creates more cost to support. Because of the budget which is decreasing, the university closed some programs. The remaining international programs are full of students. Mr. Ivarsson explained they need to open more programs in English in order to have better services; they also need to create more international programs (8 new programs) for Swedish students to make them go abroad and so to allow more international students to come for free.

Finally, Mr. Ivarsson came back to the information department of Halmstad. He told us that was all they need to have international students, “We got students anyway. [...] Every student has the legal right to apply to our university so we just provide information and we collaborate with our partners and sometimes we organize small events”. According to Mr. Ivarsson, Halmstad University is looking for all kind of students but still under the pressure of the difficult finances. As he told us during our first interview, everything has to be balance: the budget, the European students who come for free, the non-European students who need to pay to come, the number of Swedish students who go abroad, the number of programs in English, the free seats. This is in this complex context that Halmstad University is trying to continue its internationalization.
4.4 Surveys

4.4.1 Results

In this part, we will not present you all the results which come from our survey. We will show you only some of them which are the most relevant for our following analysis. If you desire more details, you will find all the statistics of the tables and graphs in the annex part, at the end of the report.

- **Nationality**

In the interview, Mr. Ivarsson explains that the approach to attract international students is different. That is why, we decide to divide the results of our survey into two distinct parts: Students who come from Europe and Students who come from outside Europe. 56% of students who answered to our survey come from Europe.

- **How important were these aspects to go abroad?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Whole International Students</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learn a new Language</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover a new culture</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the value of the CV</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build its independence</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn in another way (discover new pedagogic methods)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that these factors are very important for a student to decide to study abroad. The percentage for each factor is quite high, except for the last factor which is learn in another way. It means that these factors are the objective that the student wants to execute thanks to this experience.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

- **Degree of importance of factors taken into account for the choice.**

In the survey, there is a question where we propose several factors divided into 3 parts (Educational Factors; Practical Factors and Cultural Factors), and the student has to determine their degree of importance on a scale from 0 to 5, 5 being the most important. There are the factors the most relevant for their final choice of university:

![Decisive factors for the student's choice](image)

You need to read the graph in this way: For 105 international students, 62% of them evaluate that discover a new culture is a factor of degree of 4 or 5.

- **Why did you finally decide to study in Halmstad University?**

Concerning this question, we propose to the student several reasons, and he has to choose only 3 main factors which were decisive choosing Halmstad University. There are 3 reasons that are emphasized. For the 105 international students, 45% of them came in Halmstad because of an exchange possibility and because they were interested in Sweden, by the culture, the way of life... However, the first reason for the 105 international students is to improve their level in English for 49% of them.

When we compare the European students and No-European students, we can say that European follow the same logic that you explained above. Nevertheless, the No-European students are more torn. Indeed, the two first reasons for them is the exchange possibility and the fact they are interested in Sweden (39% of the 46 interviewed no-European students for each factor). However, concerning the third reason, there are 3 different factors which are in the same position for 33% of the 46 interviewed no-European students for each factor: to improve their level in English, because there are specific degree/ field of studies/ courses or Programs in Halmstad University, and because they wanted to discover the European lifestyle.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

- Where did students find information about Halmstad University?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Found Information</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>69/105</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home University</td>
<td>59/105</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends recommendations</td>
<td>16/105</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Exchange Students</td>
<td>39/105</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies</td>
<td>4/105</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For 105 international students, they found information on:

You need to read this table in this way: For 105 international students, 66% of them found information about Halmstad University on internet.

Are they satisfied by their international experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's satisfaction</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are they going to promote and recommend Halmstad University to potential international students when they will come back at home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' Promotion</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

Analysis

Needs and Motives
Programs and courses
Government
Information and Communication
This section will develop and explain the key points around our topic. In the analysis, we will use the knowledge and reflection we developed during the theory part and the empirical data part. We need these data to explain our problem and to try to find a solution to answer to our research question.

V. Analysis

5.1 Needs and Motives

We already talked about needs and motives (see 3.4.2.1 Needs and Motives) in the theory section of this report. We wanted to begin our analysis by this special point because we thought it was the starting point of our research question.

As we defined in the introduction, students use some criteria to select a university abroad. These criteria can be relative to the study they want to do or where they want to study. It does not matter. The most important is that each student possesses his own criteria of selection. The criteria are personal. According to the goal of students, they will not have the same criteria because they do not have the same project.

However, sometimes, students cannot follow their criteria. In fact, in some situations, there is just one unique solution for students who have a precise and specific project for their studies. This case is very rare and particular, but in these conditions, students have to take the only option they have. For example, in France, students who want to learn how make stained glass (the color glasses in a church) must go to Chartres (a French city) because this is the only place in France where they can study this specific handworker.

The criteria used by students answer to the needs and motives of students. Every student has needs and motives. Concerning the studies, this is linked to what they want to do in the future and how they want to arrive there.

From what we just said, we decided to divide the needs and motives into two categories: the personal and the professional.

The personal needs and motives represent the particular and special needs and motivation of someone. It can represent all the needs and all the motives without restriction. Concerning the students it can be something such as “I want to become a scientist... I want to study in the same school than my friends... I want to study in Canada because I would like to discover this country... I want to go abroad to meet new people”.

The professional needs and motives are exactly like the personal ones but with one difference: the needs and motives must only concern the professional aspect. For the studies it can be “I need to do this university in order to learn this job... I need to go in this country if I want to work there later... I need to do this school before doing this one...” These needs and motives are the ones linked to our professional life.
Now, we are going to develop and explained why each of these needs and motives is determinant for students to decide where they will go abroad. In order to do that, we will analyze separately the personal and professional needs and motives.

When we prepared our survey for the international students, we took some factors they needed to evaluate (from 1 to 5 with 5 the maximum for the importance of the factor). The following table is regrouping these different factors by kinds of needs and motives. So, what we will do is to show the respective importance of each factors for the students and why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Needs and Motives</th>
<th>Personal Needs and Motives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reputation of the university</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Large range of courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Degree of recognition</td>
<td>• Infrastructures of the host city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Quality of life in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Geographic proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discover a new culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Infrastructures of the university</td>
<td>• Modes of financing to come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language(s) spoken</td>
<td>• Cost of the life and education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classification of needs and motives by kinds

5.1.1 Professional Needs and Motives

Let’s start by talking about the professional factors. As we said earlier, the professional needs and motives are relative to all the needs and motives which concern the professional aspect of someone’s life. For our survey we identified three true professional needs and motives: reputation of the university, large range of courses and degree of recognition.

The analysis of the results of our survey showed that students are looking carefully to this kind of needs. Indeed, for the international students who answered to this survey (105 students), 45% of them find that the reputation of the university is very important when going abroad; 42% of the students are looking a lot for the large range of courses; and finally 53% think that the degree of recognition is very important.

For almost all these factors, more than half of the students think they are very important. It means that professional aspect is very important for the students when they go to study abroad. As we said in the theory section concerning the student choice process, everything starts with a need. Students need to prepare their future. For most part of the students, they are very serious concerning their studies because they know they are in an important part of their life. With the time, students become more and more mature and they want to find their way and that is why they are looking for good universities, in order to reach their goals.
However, when students go abroad, the professional needs and motives become more “technic”. In fact, going abroad to study adds more difficulties for the students because they need to look carefully what are the offers of universities. Students need to select the universities which are proposing the programs they need. Then, they need to compare universities in order to select the best. The degrees of some universities have no value for other countries sometimes, which is why students must pay attention to every detail.

Halmstad University has perfectly understood that. When we had our interview with Mr. Ivarsson, he explained us that one of the big issues for the university is to answer to the need of Swedish students and international students by offering programs and degrees which answer to their needs.

To sum up about professional needs and motives, we can affirm these factors are very important for the international students when they go abroad to study because students are aware that they are building their future professional life.

**5.1.2 Personal Needs and Motives**

Now we are going to talk about the personal needs and motives which are also very important for the international students. As we said before, contrary to the professional needs and motives, the personal ones are concerning every kind of motivations and needs. For our survey we identified four which are: infrastructures of the host city, quality of life in general, geographic proximity, discover a new culture.

For these factors, the results we got are: 40% of the students were interesting by the infrastructures of the host city; 64% of them were looking carefully for the quality of life in the host country; 26% thought the geographic proximity was an important factor; and finally 70% of the students went abroad to discover a new culture.

Except for the geography proximity, these factors are all important for the international students to go to study abroad. This is very relevant for our thesis to know what role plays the personal needs and motives, because it is very influential for students... but why?

As we explained earlier, students follow their needs and concerning the studies, students have not only professional needs, but also personal needs. They are in a part of their life where they have enough experience and resources to discover the world. According to the Erasmus documents (2013), students consider the year abroad as a very good way to discover the world, to meet new people and new culture and to become more mature. During their studies, students know that they will not only build their professional future, but also who they will be later, and this is by these personal experiences they will build themselves.
5.1.3 Professional and Personal Needs and Motives

The last kind of needs and motives we identifies is the ones which are in the same time professional and personal. If we did not succeed to put them in just one category it is because they can be used in both, it just depends of the student.

The needs and motives we identified in both kinds are: infrastructures of the university, modes of financing to come, language(s) spoken, cost of the life and education. We think that they are belonging to both kinds because they are relative the professional aspect of going abroad and to the personal aspect. For some students it was important to speak English because they wanted to improve this level for this language. For other students it was just because they wanted to communicate without difficulties.

These factors just complete the two other categories. The results we obtained for them are: 23% of the students were looking for good infrastructures of the university; 35% of them said that the modes of financing to come was very important; 63% were careful to the language(s) spoken; and finally, 46% of the students thought the cost of the life and education was an important factor.

Between all these factors, the most important is the language spoken and we think this is normal, because when students go abroad they want to have the possibility to communicate without problems. They want that for professional and personal reasons.

5.1.4 Consequences on the university choice

Professional and personal factors impact the selection of the university by the students. The professional needs and motives are making the students look for the universities and what they propose, while, on the other hand, personal needs and motives are making the students look for what they will get personally from this experience abroad.

(Free pictures from internet, Google Picture [https://www.google.se/search?q=année+à+l%27étranger](https://www.google.se/search?q=année+à+l%27étranger))

Universities can make efforts in order to answer to the professional needs of students, but they cannot do anything to answer to the personal needs because they do not depend of them.
There is no factors more determinant than the other. In fact, it just depends of the student. Each student has his priorities and his needs. However, to sum up everything we saw on this part concerning needs an motives of students, we can say that (according to our theories and our survey) some of the factors the most important for the students to go abroad are: degree of recognition (53%), to discover a new culture (70%), language(s) spoken (63%).

5.2 Programs and courses

In the Educational marketing-mix, the product element is an essential factor that the students take into consideration. Indeed, this strategy can be represented into two different points of view: the product can refer to the Educational service and thus, the consumer is the student or the product could be the student who will be offered to the labor market. In fact, the institutions need to adapt their offer according to the demand of students, who possess different needs and expectations in function of the demand of the labor market. These factors are decisive for the student’s choice.

On one hand, the student demands more courses in English, to get international skills, required for the labor market. Then, they want to have choice to satisfy their professional and personal needs.

5.2.1 Importance speaking English

The influence of the multilingualism in the business is more and more important in a globalization context of the actual economy. Indeed, the linguistic diversity and the fact that companies decide to invest in linguistic formations allow them to do the difference. Thus, companies are looking for more and more international skills, such as languages, how we do business with a foreign country... In fact, English is the language in more than 75 different countries from all over the world. English wants to be the first foreign language the most spoken on a global scale. With more than one billion of people speaking English, it means that one human out of four speak English. It is an indispensable language. English is a language very influential because it possesses an important place in the business world. This language is requested in almost all the possible sectors. By the way, English is one of the first languages in the Internet world. More than 50% of the websites are written in English, it always maintains the primordial place of the language on a global scale.

Consequently, with the evolution of the professional needs, the mastery of English constitutes an undeniable added value. Speaking English allows maximizing the probability to get a job. For the professionals, learning English is a real perspective of evolution for their career. Moreover, the mastery of English opens several doors in the professional domain. A job-seeker bilingual will have more opportunities to get a job than another candidate who speaks only Italian for example. For recruitment consultants, being bilingual or polyglot is synonym of versatility. Thus, improving the English level is one of the factors which increase the value of the CV. 66% of the students, who answered to our survey, evaluate it for a degree of
importance of 4 and 5. It means that it is an essential factor which will play an important role for their professional career.

Thus, the students understood well this evolution; they demand more courses with an international aspect. Improving their level in English is one of the three major reasons why they have chosen Halmstad University for 49% of them. Sweden is renowned for its good level in English. Most part of the population, less for the “older” generations, speaks well English. They begin to learn it when they are young.

For several years, Sweden understood the importance of the multilingualism with the widespread learning of English allowing to the Swedish society to acquire the characteristic of bilingual. The multilingualism is nearly traduced exclusively by English which represents 89% of the foreign languages the most spoken in this country, far ahead of German and French which represent respectively 30% and 11% (Premat, 2011). That is why in the sectors of the High Education, Research or Business, English interferes in growing tendencies.

Thus, Halmstad University is not an exception and tries to adapt its offer to this demand. According to Mr. Ivarsson, there are not enough cursus and courses in English for international students. However, they are granting a petition to solve this problem, to propose new offers to the partner universities, in order to satisfy even more international and Swede who also want to benefit to these international skills.

5.2.2 Large range of courses

According to the theory, we show that the programs and courses are the product that the universities have to “sell” to the students to attract them. Thus, the universities need to propose a large range of courses or programs to satisfy the needs of the students which are different.

From what international students said, the large range of courses and programs is a factor of a degree of importance of 4 and 5 for 42% of them. It means that it represents an essential element that they take into account during the Evaluating Alternatives process where the student analyze the different criteria, offers that the university propose to them to make his final decision.

On one hand, it exist the fact that there are some specific programs that not all the universities can propose. Thus, according to the formation of the student, he will have more or less choice between the universities which offer it. This is a first and mandatory selection, where the student can closes door of countries that he wanted to go, but he favors his professional needs (see 5.1.1 Professional Needs and Motives).

On the other hand, specific degree represents a competitive advantage compare to the others universities. To explain it, we will talk about our own experience, because we are directly concerned about it. We come from France, and we study in the same university. We needed
to study abroad for our second year of bachelor, and our university has a lot of partners from all over the world, thus we had a large choice. However, Halmstad University was one of the two universities to propose to the international students to obtain a diploma after the writing of a thesis at the end of the year. This element was decisive for us; it was one of the most important motivations to study in Sweden. This opportunity means that at the end of our bachelor, we will obtain a double diploma, which will increase even more the value of our CV. It can help us later when we will look for a job. This specific course represents an efficient marketing strategy managed by Halmstad University.

Moreover, the Swedish educational system allow to the students to choose the courses that they want to follow. It is not the same case in all the others countries. For example, in France, according to your formation, programs that you decide to study, courses are decreed; you do not have the choice. This liberty represents another motivation for the students.

Furthermore, students are curious to discover new pedagogic ways teaching in foreign countries. It represents a factor with a degree of importance 4 and 5 for 45% of the international students. Moreover, Sweden is famous for the quality of its Education, the reputation of the country and the university about it, is an essential factor taken into account for 45% of the international students. Indeed, Swedish universities are renowned for their investigate research and independent thinking, and this reputation is cemented with rigorous quality control on the national and institutional level. The Swedish higher education system is ranked second in the world and first in relation to GDP. Swedish High Education is different because of the independence of the students, they take themselves the responsibility of their studies, it means that they have less lecture courses than the European average and they work a lot alone or in groups. Moreover, students maintain with their teachers informal and relaxed relationships. Thus, Sweden is one of the international leaders of the High Education.

5.3 Government

In Sweden, as we explain in the theory part, the financing of the High Education institutions is being in charge by the government. The financing is increasing constantly since 1995 and it is reaching around 1, 9% of the GDP (Pechar & Andres, 2011). However, what it important is not the level of financing but more the financing mechanisms and governance. First of all, for the programs of first and second university cycle, benefits are based on the number of students and their realizations, such as the number of degree and credits obtained. Secondly, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (HSV) evaluates the quality of the teaching and the government allocates a bonus to universities which receive the best popularity. Thirdly, the doctoral education and the research receive a common financing, based on the degree and the cost of the research, more than 10% given in function of two indicators of quality: publications and quotations, and the financing of research obtained by external
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

Moreover, institutions can also ask for special fund when they create programs or when they have to buy specialized equipment. Universities acquire more autonomy. In order to face to an increasing student population (44% of rise between 1990 and 1994), universities created new courses and increased of 25% the proportion of teachers and reduced the proportion of administrative personnel of 4%, centralizing the management in the office of the vice-chancellor. While the university council was previously considered as the principal interlocutor, now, it belongs to the “triangle of the power”, in which it is responsible of the creation of programs and establishment of standards of quality, while the regional directions manage the research and teaching, and the Council, in which one there are members selected by the State, is responsible of the planning, employment, admissions, benefits of resources (NAHE, 2012).

Sweden performs in the rankings because it excels in research. Even if the collaboration between universities and companies are quite rare, Sweden is ranking the third worldwide place in terms of expenses in research and development in percentage of GDP, namely 4.3%. Sweden is also one of the first country in the domain of research in biology and medicine. These ranks are the results of numerous initiatives. First, 52% of all the research and development is realized by the universities. Even if the Swedish companies assume 78% of the expenses of the research and development, more than 80% of the research is financing by the State and is realized by the universities (NAHE, 2012).

Thus, the role of the government represents an important factor for the international students. Indeed, thanks to the financing of the State, it will determine the number of programs, courses and invest in infrastructures and equipment of the institution. We already explain previously that the programs and courses are one of the most important factor taken into account by the students. According to our survey, for the whole international students, 27% of them consider that the quality of the infrastructure and equipment of the university represents a factor with a degree of importance of 4 over 5. It is always more enjoyable to study in an establishment which is modern and well-maintained. Moreover, in the domain scientific, medicine and in information technology, equipment is indispensable. The quality of the equipment and laboratories that the university has, is the reflection of the dynamism in research of its professorial corps.

Swedish universities are renowned for their investigate research and independent thinking, and this reputation is cemented with rigorous quality control on the national and institutional level. Sweden is one of the international leaders of the High Education, which attracts lot of international students.

However, since autumn 2011, the government decided to settle tuition fees to the students who are not citizen of the UE, except Switzerland. They think that the Swedish High Education needs to be competitive by its quality and its good conditions of studying, not only by the fact that it was free. Thus, according to the Directive of the High Education, the fall of international students in Sweden is spectacular since 2011. Sweden counts only 1.600 no European
students, it means that 80% less than the 7.600 students before the tuition fees. The principal concerned students are Asian and African, which can explains the 2/3 of the decline of the number of students in Sweden since 2011.

To help foreign students, Sweden distributes scholarships, financing by the government. One quarter of foreign students received a scholarship in autumn 2011. These scholarships cost to the State, 160 million of krone (around 18 million of euros) a year, according to a councilor of the Education ministry.

Scholarship is a factor where the degree of importance differs a lot between the European and no-European students. Indeed, European students are being in charge by the European Commission, with the exchange programs Erasmus (European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) if they go to study in a European country. Thus, these students pay nothing to their new university. That is why, 17% of the European students evaluate that the scholarship factor represents a degree of importance of 5 against 22% for the no European students. Indeed, when you do not receive any scholarship, studying abroad can represent an important investment, several thousand euros. That is why, due to the heavy budget, you can close some doors of different universities. However, some scholarships are available for a certain number of students according to different criteria, such as the student’s academic performance, some programs may have specific scholarships connected only to the program or the subject area... It represents a precious help for the student. Thus, scholarship becomes an attractive factor for the international students.

However, the European students generate a cost for the university. According to Mr. Ivarsson that we interviewed, he explained that Halmstad University has always “a problem of balance between incoming students and out coming students”. It means that the university has more extra-costs and this is a problem, especially now because the Swedish government decided to decrease the budget for universities since 2006. Thus, in order to compensate with the international students who come for free, Halmstad University deals directly with the non-European universities in order to have students who pay to come, to rebalance.

5.4 Information and Communication

5.4.1 The Role of Communication and Information for International Students

The key element to make people and institutions interact is the communication. Basically, communication is just the process used to exchange information between one sender and one receiver. Information is just the message which is given in the communication process. Information can be text, music, picture, movie, graph, speech, gesture, etc. The following schema is really simple, but it represents information on the basic communication process.
Because of the globalization, communication and exchanges of information are more and more important. Information is what makes the world working. Information is more powerful than money. Information is essential. Nowadays, we live in a world where information is present in every society, every company... generally, in everybody’s life. That is why communication has been developing for a very long time ago. The mastering of communication is essential for each kind of institutions that want to control its information.

This is in this context that international students from today are living. Now, students have access to an unlimited quantity of information. The development of the Internet, and more recently of the social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, makes the students connected to the rest of the world. Students have a free access to information and they use this new advantage in order to gather the data for which they are looking for.

In the survey we made for our work, we designed one specific question to know exactly where the students got the information relative to Halmstad University. After the statistical analysis of the answers collected, we saw that 66% of the students, who answered to our survey, found the information about Halmstad University on internet. This result confirms what we just said before. Nowadays, students are searching for information through internet and this is even more true regarding the international students.

We also designed another question in our survey, but this one was relative to which services (in general) could be improved by Halmstad University. Thereby, according to the students the first service which should be ameliorated is the information service. Indeed, students who came to Halmstad University would like to have an easier access to information regarding the selection of courses, the admissions, the scholarships, or also the accommodations.

What we learn from this information is that students have a high expectation concerning the information. They think they can find all the information they want, but if it is not the case they will be frustrated and that can influence their decision choice to select a university. Regarding to the universities abroad and the international students, this problem is even more important because the students cannot (or rarely) come to visit directly the universities which interest them. So if they do not succeed to have all the information they need, they will doubt and at the end they are not sure to stay on their initial choice. Students do not like to have a lack of information.

On the student choice process, one of the steps is the evaluation of the different alternatives (see 3.3.2.3 Evaluating Alternatives). As we explained during the theory part, during this step,
students are listing the advantages and the disadvantages of each university they selected. They are looking for the best option; it means the university which has the most advantages and the less disadvantages for them. The lack of information can also play on that by reducing the option for which the students have less data.

This is a true issue for the universities to give all the information that the students want. Halmstad University has perfectly understood that. As we said in the empirical data part concerning the first interview (see 4.1.2 First Interview), Mr. Ivarsson explained us that the university does not have a concrete marketing service, but an information department. Mr. Ivarsson also told us that the university is working with its partners in order to give all the information which can interest the foreign students according to their home country. This technique of communication is very precise and permits to the university to attract more easily the international students.

Thanks to our study case concerning Halmstad University, we can say that information is essential for international students, but it is not enough. Indeed, the way how the students obtain the information is also very important, that is why communication is an important part of the student choice process. Because of how information is communicated, students will have more facility to find it. If the students got easily the information from a university, they will be more susceptible to pay more attention to it. On the contrary, if they are looking for a university but they do not find information on it because of a bad communication, they are more apt to just give up and come back to another university. The way how a university communicates is primordial when they are searching for international students, because it can impact a lot the final decision of the students.

As international students, we can say that was very important for us to access without problem to the information about universities. To go abroad for one year is an incredible experience but it requires a lot of preparation. It would be very annoying if we had a lot of problems to find the data which were interesting us. Hopefully, nowadays the international universities, such as Halmstad University, have perfectly understood the importance to have a good communication; thus, we obtained quite easily the information we needed.

Information and communication are two aspects very linked to each other. International students are expecting good ways of communication in order to find easily information concerning foreign universities. As Mr. Ivarsson told us and as we saw with our survey, the access to the information can be determinant to go in a university and that is why universities are very careful to their communication strategy.

Students need information when they go abroad because they go to something totally new for them. They need to have some data which will help them to know what they have to do and how. This is just through the information they found that they can evaluate the foreign universities. Thereby, the information has to be provided without difficulties to attract them.
5.4.2 Presentation of the communication tools

Tool of the globalization, the new technologies of information and internet simplify communication on the planet. Since the 1990s, we are face to the expansion of internet. It is, at the same time a communication tool and a work tool which disrupts the economic world on a global scale but also in a national scale, with an incredible speed. Thus, internet is constituent of the globalization process.

Thus, internet allows the free circulation of information. Universities create more and more their own website, which is the most efficient, easiest and fastest communication tool for the students to get information. Moreover, for the universities, this communication tool is free, so it is really interesting. The objective for the universities to create their own website is, in a first time, to present themselves: their programs and courses, campus; and then to make students want studying in their establishment. In fact, their website highlights the attractiveness of the university.

In addition to the economic advantages, Internet favors the social and cultural development. Indeed, Internet plays principally on the exponential rise of the communication tools. From now on, it is so easy to have foreign contacts, because Internet wants to eliminate the borders in terms of multimedia. It allows to create new relationships and new communities. Thus, the universities are connected with each other, they can transfer all the information to the potential students who will study to one of the partners of the university. Universities create an authentic international network with their students. This network allows to the student to have a lot of choices for his future university abroad. And between universities, they conclude contracts and make business to business.

5.4.3 The different way to find information

According to the results of our survey that we distribute to international students who went to Halmstad University this year, there are three major means of communication that they used to get information: internet, the home university and thanks to the previous students. In this part, we will develop how these communication tools do to transfer information to the students.

5.4.3.1 Internet and social networks

Previously, we explained that universities create their own website; thanks to that the student can have an overview of the service deliver by the university. For example, on the website of Halmstad University, you can get information about the different programs and courses, have a presentation the different activities that you can do in the university, do a virtual tour of the campus, like that the student can have an image of it, because, it is very difficult for him to visit the campus when you live abroad. Having
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

an idea of the campus is very important, because it contributes to the image of the university and this is the first representation of the university that the student will keep in mind. You will find also information about the country and the city where you will live, to discover and understand what is waiting for you. It is important for the student to be prepared to this new experience. Thus, the website has to deliver the most information possible to convince him during his evaluating alternatives process, to help him during his admissions and escort him throughout his international sojourn.

Moreover, Universities are more present on the social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter etc. to engage the community directly. These social networks give to the universities an opportunity to reach and touch a bigger audience, where people are connected each other on the social network. Universities are constantly exploring new ways to use social media to attract potential students. Their principal role is also to gathering information, to educate and provide a glimpse into what the institution is like. However, apart from sharing news and information, the social networks is used also to show the student’s life and faculty work. Current students can share pictures or videos on YouTube for example. Furthermore, social media allow to have discussion. Universities use them to engage the public. During these forums, current and potential students can ask questions and begin a conversation.

To sum up, internet and social media are very important during the gathering information process realized by the international students. According to the results of our survey concerning Halmstad University, internet is the first source of information because 66% of the 105 international students interviewed, said that they used it to get information about the university.

5.4.3.2 Home University and International Partners

All the universities which receive and send students from all over the world possess partners, and an international network. Between each other, they make business to business: it is the most efficient way to get international students. Indeed, at the beginning, the university possesses a predefining goal about the volume of the number of international students that they desire. For example, they decide that they want 15 students from Brazil, 50 from China… In 2015, Halmstad University receives 350 international students. After that, they sign contracts about it. Normally, the universities do exchanges of students between them, but concerning Halmstad University, Swedish students are not interested about studying abroad, so the exchange is practiced in only one way.

Thus, the university is charged of promoting its partner university and gives students the desire to go studying there. For that, all the universities which practice international exchange possess an international department where the student can get the information of each university’s partners. Professors and previous students can also promote them. Moreover, the home university can also welcome professors who come from the partner university, to present his institutions and to answer to the questions of the students.
Home university has to help and escort its students to this international experience that is why it represents an important and a serious source of information for the students. Consequently, according to the results of our survey, this is the second source of information for 56% of the 105 international students interviewed.

5.4.3.3 Previous Students

The last important source of information is the previous students who already studied in the university’s abroad. Potential students take a lot in consideration their opinion about the university, because, concerning Halmstad University, 37% of the 105 international students used this alumni association to get information.

In fact, students do not have the same point of view than Home University, or teachers when they promote a university. They were directly consumer of the service that the university delivers. That is why international trust more them. Previous students pass a subjective opinion. Moreover, they can give practical advices, such as accommodation, way of life of the countries and speak about their personal experience.

For example, if we take our own case, our home university organized a meeting between the previous students who studied in all the partner of our university. It was a real exchange of information, and thanks to their testimonies and their enthusiasm, they give you the desire or not to go to the concerned university.

Thus, the promotion of the previous students play an important role, and the university has to satisfy the needs and expectations during all the sojourn of the international student, in order to attract potential students when he will speak about the university.

Concerning Halmstad University, 94% of the international students were satisfy of their experience abroad and 91% of them will promote the university to potential students. It is a high score; it means that the university can count on students to spread a favorable reputation thought all over the world, to continue to attract new students.
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

Conclusion

General Conclusion
Limits
Future Researches
Implications
In this chapter, we conclude and present the answers to the research question. Firstly, we present general conclusions regarding the “which” aspect of the research question. Secondly, the limitations of the study are described. Thirdly, the authors propose suggestions for future research, and finally, implications for practitioners and academics are described.

V.I Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to identify the expectations and desire of the foreign students concerning their international experience, in order to determine the different factors that they take into account for choosing their university abroad. So, the research question was: Which factors are critical for students’ choice of foreign studies? To answer to this question, firstly, we decided to develop theories about the 7 PS Educational Marketing, the Student’s choice process, the communication tools and the government’s role.

Then, in order to answer to the question, we decided to be focus on a study case of Halmstad University, using a qualitative research with the interview with Mr. Ivarsson, to have the point of view from the university, to get relevant information about their strategies to understand the student’s motivation when they have chosen this university. However, our dominant research is quantitative with the surveys of the international students of Halmstad, to directly get their opinion about this topic, where they are the main actors. These two kinds of research approach are complementary; it brings an additional credibility on the quality and relevance of received information. The results that we obtained helped us in our analyzing. Indeed, it allows us to identify the different important criteria of their choice.

By working in relation with our theory part and our empirical data, we succeeded to draw conclusions and then to establish a list of the different important factors for the students to select a university abroad:

- **Personal and professional needs and motivations**
  They influence the choice of students. Personal needs are heading by the heart, they want to live an amazing experience, while professional needs are oriented by the reason, and it is their future which is involved.

(The percentages represent the proportion of students who think the factor is important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Needs and Motives</th>
<th>Personal Needs and Motives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the university (45%)</td>
<td>Infrastructures of the host city (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large range of courses (42%)</td>
<td>Quality of life in general (64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of recognition (53%)</td>
<td>Geographic proximity (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Discover a new culture (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructures of the university (23%)</td>
<td>Modes of financing to come (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language(s) spoken (62%)</td>
<td>Cost of the life and education (46%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classification of needs and motives by kinds
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

- **English courses**
  Students are looking for English courses and international skills, required by the labor market. It increases the value of their CV. Sometimes, universities offer specific programs which represent a competitive advantage for the students.

- **Government**
  The role of the government represents an important factor for the international students. In fact, thanks to the financing of the State, it will determine the number of programs, courses and investments in infrastructures and equipment of the institution. Moreover, studies are expensive, that is why scholarships represent an attractive factor for students who are not from Europe and so, do not benefit from the Erasmus help.

- **Communication tools**
  Several kinds of tools are used by the universities to communicate and give information to students. Information is crucial for students when they go to study abroad. They need to get the most information possible to evaluate the alternatives after. If they face to a lack of information, they can give up a university and come back to another one, because a year abroad requires a lot of preparation.

From all these conclusions, we are able to elaborate a general overview. Indeed, we identified different factors which are playing an important role during the student’s choice process. First of all, students have personal motivation; they are oriented by personal needs and motives, they are looking for what they can get from this experience abroad. Thereby, the university has to highlight the advantages for the student’s life in its communication.

On the other hand, students are motived by professional reasons. Thus, the services provide by universities for the student are essential. Students are looking for a teaching of quality. The students want courses and programs which are adapted to demand of the labor market.

On this context, the government plays an important role. In fact, it finances the universities and so allows the diversity of programs and courses. Moreover, the government can help students by offering scholarships, which is very important when students have to pay for education alone.

In order to attract more international students and facilitate them in their collection of information, universities must give to students the most information they can (example: highlight their advantages which could interest students). After that, students will evaluate all the opportunities that they can get, and will determine their final decision.

### 6.1 Limits

The main limit of this report was the generalization of our findings and conclusions. There are several reasons which explained that:
First, during this research, we were focus on the international students from Halmstad University. Thereby, the generalization of the findings was difficult because the conclusions we drew were relative to a specific sample. The critical factors used by international students to go abroad might be different in another country or university.

Second, the way how Halmstad University is attracting international students is a limit for our research because it is very specific. So once again, it was difficult to generalize our findings. We cannot draw a general conclusion for every international university according to what we had learned with the case of the university of Halmstad.

On the same way than the precedent limits, Sweden is a country which proposes a very high and unique teaching experience for international students. Because of that, students who decided to go to Sweden to study do not have necessarily the same profile from those who go to another country. Once again, the specific case of Sweden, as destination to study, made difficult the generalization of the conclusions we drew.

Regarding the theoretical part of this report, it was not easy to find a lot relevant theory about how students select a university to go abroad. Consequently, we did not succeed to have a lot of theories for this aspect of the report. The number of answers to our survey is also a limit. Indeed, we had difficulties to collect the minimum required to make a survey. Thus, even if our results are concrete and sure, it was challenging to draw general conclusion; because the number of students who answer to the questionnaire cannot represents every international students.

There is a limit concerning the interviews. In fact, we only had the possibility to meet one member of the information department of Halmstad University. We learned a lot if relevant information for our thesis, but we think that could be also interesting to have the point of view, or the explanation, of another member of this department from Halmstad University.

### 6.2 Future Researches

For the future researches, we recommended to study the factors taken into account by international students based on a study case with a university which is not European. Indeed, according to the results of our surveys, we did not notice that there is a difference between the European and no-European’s motivations to select Halmstad University. However, choosing a university which is not belonging to Europe, allow to compare if there is any difference between the students’ motivations or new factors which appears that students use to select their university abroad.

Secondly, our study is focus on the students’ choice. However, there is another different angle that could be interesting to deal with. In fact, future researches can work from the point of view of the universities, with for example of research question: What are the different...
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

strategies marketing that universities develop to attract international students? In our study, we begin to do the link between Halmstad University and international students, thanks to our interviews with Mr. Ivarsson. He explained us that the university practices business to business with its partners, and has only an information department. It could be relevant, to do a research based on a study case with a University which possesses a marketing department and develop an important marketing and communication strategy, such as universities from England and Netherlands which are high developed on this domain.

6.3 Implications

This study has shown that there are different factors which influence the student choice to select a university abroad. It has an important impact regarding the academic researches within internationalization. The previous researches concerning this topic were more focus on universities and on the aspect “why and how go abroad to study”. Indeed, in a context of globalization, it is more important to have an international experience and that is why, mostly, the goal of the previous researches was to make students want to go abroad. Our study goes farther than that. Of course this is important to want to go abroad to study and to give reasons why, but it is also very important to know how to select a foreign university. The implications from this study are that, future researches concerning international studies, should take into account the factors we determined to select a university abroad. Even if these factors are concerning Sweden and precisely Halmstad University, they show the different aspects which are very important when students go to study abroad. According to their goal, their culture, their social experience and their surroundings, students decide to go in a university or another one. This is fundamental for the academic researches concerning the international students to know how they choose to go studying in “this” university and not “that one” and why, because it explains a part of the student’s mobility.
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Halmstad University – 2015
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Annexes

Annexe 1: Survey Online part 1
Annexe 2: Survey Online part 2
Annexe 3: Survey Online part 3
Annexe 4: Survey Paper
Annexe 5: Results of the Survey part 1
Annexe 6: Results of the Survey part 2
Annexe 7: Results of the Survey part 3
Annexe 8: Results of the Survey part 4
Annexe 9 Results of the Survey part 5
Annexe 10: Results of the Survey part 6
Annexe 11: Results of the Survey part 7
Annex 1: Survey Online part 1

L’Oréal

*Obligatoire

What is your nationality? *
Quelle est votre nationalité ? Cuál es tu nacionalidad ? Qual é a sua nacionalidade?

Gender ? *
Genre ? Género ? Sexo ?
- Woman (Femme; Femenino)
- Man (Homme; Masculino)

How old are you? *
Quel âge avez-vous ? Cuántos años tienes ? Qual sua idade?
- Less than 15 (Moins de 15 ans; Menos de 15 años)
- 15-30
- 31-50
- 51 and more (Plus de 51 ans; más de 51 años)

Do you know L’Oréal? *
Connaissez-vous L’Oréal ? Conoces L’Oréal ? Você sabe alguma coisa sobre a marca L’Oréal?
- Yes
- No

Have you already buy L’Oréal’s product? *
Avez-vous déjà acheté des produits L’Oréal ? Has comprado alguna vez algún producto de L’Oréal ? Você já comprou algum produto de L’Oréal ?
- Yes
- No

How often do you buy a product from L’Oréal? *
A quelle fréquence achetez-vous des produits L’Oréal ? Con que frecuencia compras productos de L’Oréal ? Qual a frequência com que você compra um produto da L’Oréal?
- Several times a month (Plusieurs fois par mois; Varias vezes al mes; Várias vezes por mês)
- Once a month (Une fois par mois; Una vez al mes; Uma vez por mês)
- Once every two month (Une fois tous les deux mois; Una vez cada dos meses; Uma vez a cada dois meses)
- Less often (Rarement; Raramente)
- Never (Jamais; Nunca)
Annexe 2: Survey Online part 2

Which kind of products do you buy the most? (No more than two categories) *

- Luxury (Lancôme, Yves Saint Laurent...) (Produit de Luxe; Productos de lujo; Produtos de Luxo)
- Consumers Products (L’Oréal Paris, Garnier...) (Produits de Grand Public; Productos de Gran Consumo; Produtos de Grande Público)
- Dermatology (Vichy, La Roche-Posay...) (Produit de dermatologie; Productos dermatológicos; Produtos Dermatológicos)
- Products for professionals (L’Oréal Professionnel...) (Produit pour Professionnel; Productos profesionales; Produtos para Profissionais)
- Natural products (Body Shop) (Produit Bio; Productos Naturales; Produtos Naturais)

How much do you spend a month for body care products (cosmetics, shampoo, perfume...)? *

- 0-20 € (R$ 0,00 a R$ 70,00)
- 20-40 € (R$ 70,00 a R$ 140,00)
- 40-60 € (R$ 140,00 a R$ 210,00)
- 60-80 € (R$ 210,00 a R$ 280,00)
- 80+ € (mais que R$ 280,00)

How do you know L’Oréal group? *

- TV advertising (Publicités à la télévision; Publicidad en la televisión; anúncio de Tv)
- Billboard (Panneau d’affichage; Cartelera; outdoor)
- Website (Internet)
- Thanks to a muse (Grâce à leur égérie; gracias a una musa; através de propaganda de celebridade)
- Autre: 

How important is the brand image for the purchase decision? (on a scale from 0 to 5, 5 being the maximum). *

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
Annexe 3: Survey Online part 3

Are you satisfied of the quality of L’Oréal’s products? on a scale from 0 to 5, 5 being the maximum). *

Etiez-vous satisfaits de la qualité des produits de L’Oréal ? (sur une échelle de 0 à 5, 5 étant le maximum).  
Estás satisfecho con la calidad de los productos de L’Oréal ? (en una escala de 0 a 5, siendo 5 el máximo).  
Qual é o seu nível de satisfação com a qualidade dos produtos da L’Oréal ? (Em uma escala de 0 a 5, sendo 5 o máximo).

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
### Annexe 4: Survey Paper

#### What is your level of studies?
- Undergraduate
- Bachelor
- Master
- Doctoral
- Internship
- Other: __________________

#### How important were these aspects to go abroad? (1 to 5)
- Learn a new language
- Discover a new culture
- Increase the value of your CV
- Build its independence
- Learn in another way

#### How these factors were important to choose Halmstad University? (1 to 5)
- Host Country
- Distance with home country
- The city
- Cultural aspect
- Reputation of university
- Programs and courses
- Testimonies of alumni

#### What was the degree of importance of these factors? (0 to 5)
- Reputation of the university
- Large range of courses
- Degree of recognition
- Infrastructures of the university

#### Why did you finally decide to study in Halmstad University? (Three reasons maximum)
- Because of exchange possibility
- Live in another country
- Interested in Sweden
- Improving English
- Good reputation about Education
- Specific Degree/field of studies/Courses/Programs...
- Because I like the city of Halmstad
- The city has a good location
- To meet friends from all over the world
- Because I got a scholarship
- Recommended by professors, friends, previous students
- Other: __________________

#### In general, are you satisfied by your international experience?
- Yes
- No

When you will come back at your home country, are you going to promote and recommend Halmstad University to the potential international students?

- Yes
- No
Annexe 5: Results of the Survey part 1

- What do you study?

![Graph showing studies]

- What is your level of studies?

![Graph showing studies]
Annexe 6: Results of the Survey part 2

- For how long do you study in Halmstad University?

![Bar chart](chart)

- How important were the following aspects on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 is the most important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Europe</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn a new Language</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover a new culture</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the value of the CV</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build its independence</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn in another way (discover new pedagogic methods)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outside Europe</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn a new Language</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover a new culture</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase the value of the CV</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Build its independence</td>
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<td>17%</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn in another way (discover new pedagogic methods)</td>
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<td>11%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Whole International Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn a new Language</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discover a new culture</td>
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<tr>
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<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn in another way (discover new pedagogic methods)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</table>
Annexe 7: Results of the Survey part 3

- How these factors were important to choose Halmstad University on a scale from 1 to 5? (5 is the most important)

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<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance between the host country and home country</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural aspects of the host country (language, way of life, history...)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the University</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs and courses offered</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Testimonies of students who studied in the interested country</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance between the host country and home country</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural aspects of the host country (language, way of life, history...)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the University</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs and courses offered</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testimonies of students who studied in the interested country</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Whole International Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance between the host country and home country</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
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<td>28%</td>
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<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural aspects of the host country (language, way of life, history...)</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the University</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs and courses offered</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testimonies of students who studied in the interested country</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annexe 8: Results of the Survey part 4

- About the following factors, what was their importance for you? (0 means this is not important at all and 5 very important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Whole International Students</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the university and the host country</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large range of courses</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of recognition</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the infrastructures and equipment of the university</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practical Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of the life and Education</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the infrastructures of the host city (accommodation...)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modes of financing of the student mobility (scholarship...)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality in life in general</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language(s) spoken</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The geographic proximity of the host country and the home country</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery of the new culture (way of life, organizations, history...)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Factors</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the university and the host country</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large range of courses</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of recognition</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the infrastructures and equipment of the university</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practical Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of the life and Education</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the infrastructures of the host city (accommodation...)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modes of financing of the student mobility (scholarship...)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality in life in general</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language(s) spoken</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The geographic proximity of the host country and the home country</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery of the new culture (way of life, organizations, history...)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annexe 9: Results of the Survey part 5

Outside Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Factors</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the university and the host country</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large range of courses</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of recognition</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the infrastructures and equipment of the university</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practical Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost of the life and Education</th>
<th>2%</th>
<th>9%</th>
<th>4%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>35%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the infrastructures of the host city</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Modes of financing of the student mobility</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Quality in life in general</td>
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<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Cultural Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language(s) spoken</th>
<th>2%</th>
<th>4%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>39%</th>
<th>24%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The geographic proximity of the host country and the home country</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery of the new culture (way of life, organizations, history...)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Where did you find information about Halmstad University?

For 59 European students, they found information on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>43/59</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home university</td>
<td>37/59</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends recommendations</td>
<td>8/59</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous exchange students</td>
<td>31/59</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies</td>
<td>0/59</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For 46 non-European students, they found information on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>26/46</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home university</td>
<td>22/46</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends recommendations</td>
<td>8/46</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous exchange students</td>
<td>8/46</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies</td>
<td>4/46</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For 105 International students, they found information on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>69/105</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home university</td>
<td>59/105</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends recommendations</td>
<td>16/105</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous exchange students</td>
<td>39/105</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agencies</td>
<td>4/105</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Halmstad University – 2015
Annexe 10: Results of the Survey part 6

- Why did you finally decide to study in Halmstad University? (Three reasons maximum)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main reason to choose Halmstad University</th>
<th>European students</th>
<th>Non-European students</th>
<th>International students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Because of exchange possibility</td>
<td>29/59</td>
<td>18/46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of the European lifestyle/Live in another country</td>
<td>10/59</td>
<td>15/46</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested in Sweden (Culture, people, lifestyle…)</td>
<td>29/59</td>
<td>18/46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving English</td>
<td>36/59</td>
<td>19/46</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good reputation about Education</td>
<td>13/59</td>
<td>3/46</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Degree/field of studies/Courses/Programs…</td>
<td>19/59</td>
<td>15/46</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because I like the city of Halmstad</td>
<td>2/59</td>
<td>0/46</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The city has a good location</td>
<td>4/59</td>
<td>3/46</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To meet friends from all over the world</td>
<td>14/59</td>
<td>10/46</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because I got a scholarship</td>
<td>3/59</td>
<td>7/46</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended by professors, friends, previous students…</td>
<td>5/59</td>
<td>2/46</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In general, are you satisfied by your international experience? Did Halmstad University answer to your expectations?

Student's satisfaction

- Yes
- No

Halmstad University – 2015
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad

Annexe 11: Results of the Survey part 7

- Why?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education level, way of teaching</td>
<td>Difficulties to get a job for no Swedish speakers students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large range of courses</td>
<td>Poor accommodation facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving English</td>
<td>Low efforts from some teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good equipment and infrastructures of Halmstad University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet people from all over the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build its independance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover and learn new cultures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- What services of the university could be improved?

Here, we just sum up the major recommendations that students advise for the university’s services.

- A better information service (website, courses, admissions, scholarships, accommodations, Swedish life, jobs...)
- Translate in English all the website, courses’ instructions, career boards...
- Increase interactions between the university and industries
- Offer Swedish course for a duration more than one year
- Propose more activities on the campus
- Organize a better introduction week for spring term.

- When you will come back at your home country, are you going to promote and recommend Halmstad University to the potential international students?

![Pie chart showing students' promotion]

Yes  No
The criteria used by students to select a university abroad
Nicolas LEVESQUE, a french student from NEOMA Business School based in Rouen in Normandie. The thesis was realized during the second year of my cursus. I spent this year in Sweden, with the Erasmus program.

Caroline MALLARD, also a french student from NEOMA Business School based in Rouen in Normandie. The thesis was realized during the second year of my cursus. I spent this year in Sweden, with the Erasmus program.