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Marketing Mix as Factors Impact on Student's Enrollment in Private Higher Education in Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary contexts, marketing has emerged as a key element to contribute the success of private higher education (PHEs). The purpose of this research to explore the components of the Marketing mix and their impact on student's enrollment in private higher education in Cambodia (PHEs). Various sampling techniques, including purposive, simple random, and quota sampling, were used in this quantitative study, resulting in a participant of 600 students enrolled in diverse majors across three universities, from their studies in year1 semester2 to year 4. In order to investigate the relationship between the components of the marketing mix and student's enrollment, this research utilized adaptations of CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) and SEM (Structural Equation Modeling). The results indicated a notable and positive connection between the components of product, price, promotional, people, and process with the rates of student's enrollment. In contrast, the aspects of placement and physical evidence did not show any significant impact. The findings contribute to existing literature by offering insights rooted in buying behavior theory. Consequently, it is recommended that universities tailor their marketing strategies to align with their specific contexts, with an emphasis on optimizing pricing and promotional efforts to bolster their student recruitment endeavors based on their financial capacities.

Keywords: *Buying Behavior Theory, Higher Education Institution, Marketing Mix, Student's Enrollment*

INTRODUCTION

A fundamental instrument that underpins the advancement of human resources is education. Educational institutions must engage in ongoing improvements to elevate both the quality and standards of their offerings. This is essential to effectively address the evolving needs of students and to stay aligned with the dynamic demands of the modern age (Anane-Donkor & Dei, 2021). Higher education plays a pivotal role in the development and enhancement of the national brand's significance. As competition among educational institutions continues to escalate, these organizations encounter substantial challenges in attracting and retaining top-quality students and outstanding academic personnel (Huong & Khoa, 2019).

A significant increase in student's enrollment is evident, rising from 28,080 in the year 2000 to 223,221 by 2010 (Sok & Bunry, 2021). Notably, in the 2020-2021 academic year, there were 201,900 enrolled students, with 155 of these being international students. Nonetheless, during the COVID-19 was decline in undergraduate enrollment for the academic year 2019-2020, while there was a notable uptick in doctoral program enrollments during the same period (Heng & Sol, 2021). The gross enrollment rate for the 18 to 22 age group also rose from 6% in 2006 to 10% in 2018 (Hul, 2022), though it still falls short of the Ministry of Education youth and sport's target of 23% (Heng & Sol, 2021). Factors contributing to the low enrollment rates include the limited number of universities in provincial areas, complicating migration to urban centers, and language barriers hindering rural students' access to higher education offerings (Chantrea et al., 2024).

To be successful, higher education institutions must understand not only the delivery of education but also the means by which the services of higher education are managed and marketed. Marketing has become a panacea for both profit and non-profit organizations. This marketing approach to organizational management recognizes that customer satisfaction leads to better utilization of organizational resources. In higher education, market research is applied to past products or courses. Recruiting efforts are therefore made on the basis of only an institutional image. With their research and educational functions emphasized, non-professor education cannot be considered equivalent to traditional market products. As such, the questions to ask are: What are the problems and challenges with student enrollment and studying in private higher education institutions? What factors affect the student's choice in private higher education institution enrollment? What specialized marketing strategies are applied in the Cambodian private higher education institutions to attract their marketable students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The significance of service quality in higher education institutions is becoming increasingly prominent, as highlighted (Dicker et al., 2019), as it serves as a crucial factor influencing customer satisfaction, as noted by (Rafik & Priyono, 2018). According to (Piercy et al., 2016) suggested the marketing mix, a fundamental principle in contemporary marketing practices. This marketing mix represents a collection of strategic marketing instruments that businesses utilize to elicit the intended reactions from their target audiences. It encompasses all the actions a company can take to sway the demand for its offerings. The marketing mix comprises four key components: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion.

In the field of marketing, a fundamental strategy known as the marketing mix is utilized, encompassing several key components. These components assist in determining how to effectively position offerings in the marketplace, whether they comprise tangible products or services such as educational programs. Traditionally, conventional marketing focuses on the 4P, such as Product, Price, Place, and Promotional, as highlighted by (Barusman, 2019). However, in the context of the service industry, this mix frequently requires modifications, although some elements remain relevant (Anane-Donkor & Dei, 2021). To put it differently, essential elements such as the product itself, its pricing, and the distribution channels, along with promotional activities, will play a crucial role in influencing sales growth (Méndez, 2016). The marketing mix is recognized as a significant tool for successfully advertising products and services to prospective consumers by conveying their value effectively (Ashraf & Bhalla, 2018). By employing this framework, marketers can enhance their understanding of the various strategies at their disposal for reaching their target audience with their offerings. According to Larimo et al. (2018) identify four essential elements that influence high school students' decisions regarding their choice of university. These factors include the availability and effectiveness of information and advertising, the institution's reputation linked to employment opportunities, the students' personal preferences and motivations, as well as considerations related to tuition fees and the quality of infrastructure provided by the universities.

Student's Enrollment

According Kotler and Keller (2016) Consumer behavior involves an exploration of the ways in which individuals navigate the process of satisfying their needs through the acquisition of goods, services, concepts, or experiences. It seeks to understand how these choices contribute to fulfilling the desires and requirements of people within a society, ultimately leading to a sense of satisfaction. Decision making is broadly seen as a problem-solving process undertaken by applicants in the process of making choices by prospective students. Models of decision making have been developed around what is commonly called the purchase behavior of

consumers. Purchase behavior is generally seen as encompassing a series of stages including need arousal, information search and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and the post purchase feeling (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In general, the consumer's purchase decision is to buy the most preferred brand, but two factors can be between the intention and the purchase decision. Consumer purchasing decision making is an integration process that combines knowledge to evaluate two or more alternative behaviors and choose one of them (Gain et al., 2017). The pre-search behavior stage involves early thoughts about their future where students passively register the existence of information about PHEIs to which they are exposed. In the search behavior stage, applicants have already made a short list of potential providers and begin using a variety of sources of information to make up their minds while looking for data relating to a wide range of decision criteria. In the application stage, students submit their applications to the selected institutions. The choice decision stage involves the acceptance of the offer by the student. Because acceptance is often non contractual in education, students tend to make multiple offers. Institutions which maintain dialogue with those it has offered places help to seal a psychological bond between the applicant and the institution. Finally, the applicant turns up for registration, but often some turn the offer down after a few days in the institution. This equates with the early post purchase feelings applicants often have at the time of committing themselves to the institution. Many universities put up exciting fresher's weeks with a variety of support services marketing to the needs of students as far as possible. According to Lovelock and Wright (2016) defines that purchasing decisions are part of consumer behavior, namely the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations choose, buy, use and how goods, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires.

Product

The product within a marketing mix refers to the item or service that is offered for sale to consumers. It embodies the essence of the offering, encompassing its features, benefits, and overall value perceived by potential buyers (Lukić & Lukić, 2016). According to Semaun (2019), a product in the context of education is defined as the educational services provided to students, allowing them to engage in their areas of interest as well as their chosen majors or study programs. The ability of universities to thrive and outperform their competitors, both domestically and internationally, hinges on several key factors. Chief among these is their capacity to maintain a strong reputation and deliver high-quality education. Furthermore, universities must ensure that they offer promising career prospects for graduates, enabling students to foresee a successful future post-graduation. Additionally, a diverse range of concentration options is crucial, as it allows students to tailor their education to their specific aspirations and career goals. In a rapidly evolving educational landscape, these elements are essential for attracting and retaining a talented student body, ultimately ensuring the university's long-term success and

prominence. Universities increasingly recognize the importance of offering a diversified range of concentration options to accommodate the unique skills and interests of potential students. As highlighted by Effendi et al. (2022), this approach not only empowers students to select paths that resonate with their individual strengths but also enhances their overall educational experience. Moreover, the insights from Maisah et al. (2020) emphasize that newly admitted students benefit from the availability of various majors. This diversity allows them to explore different disciplines, ultimately leading to informed decisions that can greatly influence their academic journey and career trajectory. The ability to choose from a spectrum of programs is crucial, as it aligns educational pursuits with personal aspirations and job market demands.

Price

The price, commonly understood as tuition, reflects the financial cost of enrolling in a particular program at a specific institution. The term “price” refers to the monetary amount that a customer is required to pay in exchange for a product and stands as the singular variable with significant consequences for revenue generation. Within the realm of higher education, this price component of the marketing mix is primarily shaped by the tuition fees or charges associated with obtaining a degree at a university (Lukić & Lukić, 2016; Samani et al., 2017). Furthermore, price can serve as a distinguishing factor among different services, influencing how customers perceive the value they receive. The interplay between price and quality is a critical consideration within various subsets of service pricing. Thus, the pricing strategy not only impacts the financial returns that a university realizes from its student enrollment but also significantly influences students' perceptions regarding the quality of education provided (Omingo & Mberia, 2019).

Promotional

Promotion encompasses a range of activities including public relations, sales, advertising, and sales promotions. When a specific institution of higher education aims to attract more students than its competitors, it must implement corporate advertising strategies or engage in promotional initiatives designed to foster a connection between itself and potential students. Publicity plays a crucial role in enhancing media exposure for these institutions, increasing their visibility, which in turn can boost the confidence and perceptions that prospective students and the broader community hold towards them (Kanoga, 2016). Advertising serves as a remarkably influential tool in the realm of marketing. According to Stead and Hastings (2018), it presents a strategic means for organizations to effectively convey their messages to vast audiences. A variety of advertising mediums are available for organizations to choose from, including print advertisements in magazines and newspapers, as well as broadcasts on radio and television, not to mention online advertising through the Internet. The most successful advertising

campaigns typically adhere to the established framework known as AIDA, which encompasses the stages of attention, interest, desire, and actions (Tanca & Ünal, 2018).

Placement

According to Albrecht et al. (2023), the concept of “placement” encompasses the various activities undertaken by a company to ensure that its products are accessible to target consumers. This understanding highlights the importance of a well-thought-out place strategy in marketing. Krezel and Krezel (2017) elaborates on this by defining location as the process of selecting and managing the channels through which products or services are distributed, ultimately catering to the needs of the target market. Furthermore, Tjiptono (2015) describes location as encompassing a range of marketing efforts aimed at streamlining and facilitating the distribution of goods and services from producers directly to consumers. From these definitions, it can be deduced that location is a critical decision-making factor for a business, requiring the proper selection of operational sites. This factor considers the geographical location of institutions and their accessibility. Proximity to a university can significantly influence prospective students' choices (Lockhart, 2016).

People

Individuals engaged in the educational sphere consist of those dedicated to the mission of providing equitable educational services. This includes various roles such as administrators, principals, teachers, and support staff. These essential educational resources play a pivotal role in facilitating the delivery of educational services to students, who are regarded as the consumers or clients of these offerings. Beyond the presence of skilled and approachable lecturers, it is equally important for both administrative and non-administrative personnel to exhibit reliability and friendliness in their duties. Consequently, fostering a culture of friendliness among all members of the school community becomes crucial. This supportive environment aims to cultivate a conducive learning atmosphere, which, in turn, inspires students to actively pursue and expand their knowledge (Hasanah, 2020).

Process

The concept of a process is characterized as an organized sequence of activities aimed at delivering services from producers to consumers. Within the realm of educational services, this process can be understood as an educational methodology that facilitates the execution of teaching and learning activities, ultimately leading to the cultivation of desired outcomes or graduates (Machali & Hidayat, 2016). When universities successfully achieve high levels of customer satisfaction among their students, it is anticipated that this will enhance the students' loyalty to the institution. The measure of student loyalty can be observed through various indicators, including the regularity with which they attend lectures,

the constructive feedback they provide to the institution, their propensity to recommend the university to others, their decision to remain at the university rather than transfer elsewhere, their resistance to the appeal of competing institutions, and their efforts to maintain positive relationships with the university (Maisah et al., 2020).

Physical Evidence

The choice of higher education institutions (HEIs) by students is increasingly influenced by physical aspects that extend beyond academic reputation and curriculum. Factors such as location, favorable learning environments, opportunities for recreation and sports, cleanliness, safety, and the vibrancy of campus social life significantly impact students' decisions. According to Garwe (2016), these elements not only enhance the overall educational experience but also serve as crucial differentiators when selecting an institution.

According to Garwe (2016), students often prioritize institutions located near their hometowns to minimize transportation costs, which further emphasizes the importance of the physical aspects of an HEI. The convenience of proximity can reduce financial burdens and improve accessibility to educational resources. Thus, institutions must recognize the importance of fostering an appealing physical environment to attract and retain students, as these aspects significantly contribute to their overall satisfaction and academic success. Creating a positive and engaging campus atmosphere can therefore be considered a strategic advantage in the competitive landscape of higher education. It also has things like buildings to live in (hostels), equipment, computers, a library, sports, food, and other things for people to use. This element is physically visible (Mukherjee & Shivani, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

In developing the conceptual framework for this study, a methodical and detailed selection of relevant models was undertaken. Each model chosen was specifically aimed at illuminating the various marketing mix elements that affect student's enrollment in private higher education (PHEs) in Cambodia. This framework delineates eight variables, categorizing them into independent and dependent types. The independent variables comprise product (PRD), price (PRI), promotional (PRO), placement (PLA), people (PEO), process (PRC), and physical evidence (PSE), while the dependent variable is student's enrollment (SE). The study further investigates the causal relationships among these variables to elucidate their collective influence on enrollment in private higher education institutions.

Research Hypotheses

In order to explain the student's enrollment, hypotheses were proposed, in which independent variables adopted from marketing mix.

- H₁: Product has significant impact on Student's Enrollment
- H₂: Price has significant impact on Student's Enrollment
- H₃: Promotional has significant impact on Student's Enrollment
- H₄: Placement has significant impact on Student's Enrollment
- H₅: People has significant impact on Student's Enrollment
- H₆: Process has significant impact on Student's Enrollment
- H₇: Physical evidence has significant impact on Student's Enrollment

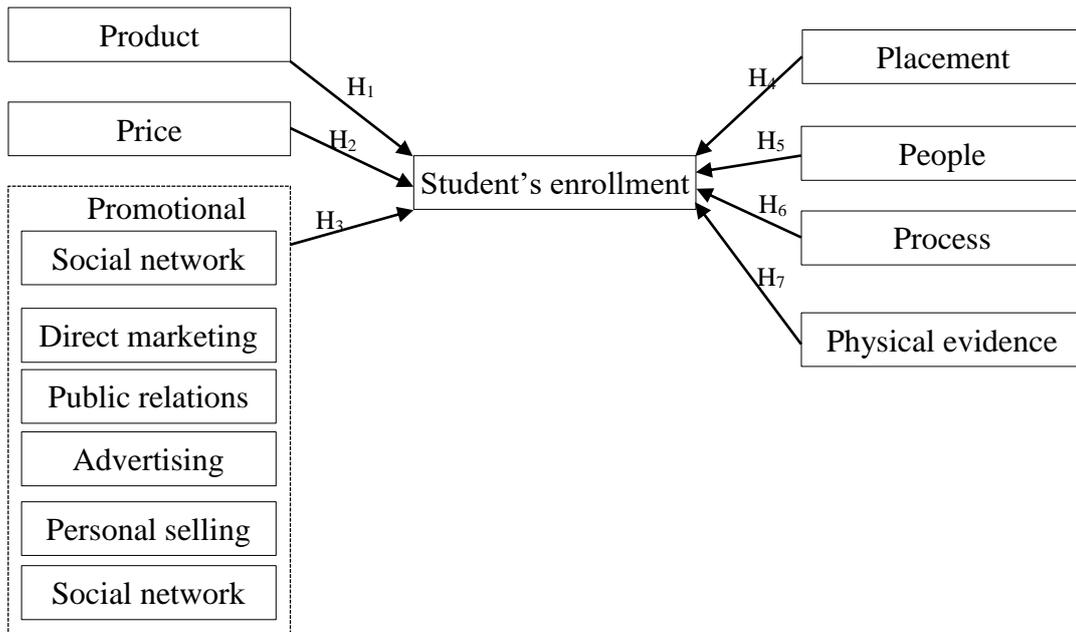


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Source: Constructed by researchers based on Donkor & Kyei (2020); Hung (2020); Omingo & Mberia (2019); Pokhrel et al (2016)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Data collection and sampling is an essential step in implementing any study's framework and is part of the research proposal. The decision regarding the number and characteristics of the factors that the author wants to assess in the research and the inner or foreign environment will influence the research outcome. The research employed a quantitative approach alongside a multi-stage sampling technique for the selection of the university and the collection of primary data. A specifically prepared questionnaire served as the inspection instrument for the study. The survey conducted among a group of students enrolled in the year 1 semester 2 to four years of their studies at a private university, which is specifically located in Kampong Cham province, Prey Veng province, and the city of Phnom Penh in Cambodia. This instrument was structured into three distinct sections. The initial section

included screening questions aimed at identifying respondents. The second segment featured items utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. The scale spans from strong disagreement positioned at one end to strong agreement at the opposite end, thereby encapsulating a wide array of sentiments. This comprehensive approach aids researchers in interpreting the collected data with greater precision, intended to assess 8 specific variables. In this final section, demographic profile was gathered from participants. Questionnaires were first distributed to a selected group of 600 individuals, and the data gathered were later analyzed using SPSS23 and AMOS23 software.

Population

The number of participants or observations in a study is called the sample size. Sample size impacted two statistical properties: the first was the accuracy of our calculations, and the second was based on the ability of the consideration to draw conclusions from the chosen sample size (Andrade, 2020). According to Barnsbee and Nghiem (2018), The audience population represents a distinct group of individuals that researcher intends to explore and examine, seeking to draw meaningful conclusions from their findings. In this study, the focus is on undergraduate students from their second semester of the first year to the fourth year across three universities in Cambodia.

Sampling Technique

This approach entails selecting the sample incrementally through multiple stages. The initial stage incorporated purposive sampling methods to identify a suitable university within Cambodia. Data collection for the survey commenced in November 2023 and extended through February 2024. Moreover, a purposive sampling method was utilized to identify students from a curated list of enrollments in diverse academic disciplines at the selected universities. This strategy was intentionally aimed at individuals who were at least in their second semester up to the fourth year of their specific academic programs.

Table 1. Measurement and Questionnaires Development

Constructs	Questionnaires Items	Adapted from experts
Product	PRD1	(Pokhrel et al., 2016)
	PRD2	
	PRD3	
	PRD4	
Price	PRC1	(Hung, 2020; Wulandari, 2020)
	PRC2	
	PRC3	
	PRC4	
Promotional	PRO1	(Omingo & Mberia, 2019)
	PRO2	
	PRO3	
	PRO4	
	PRO5	
	PRO6	
	PRO7	
Placement	PLA1	(Echchabi & Al-Hajri, 2018; Hung, 2020)
	PLA2	
	PLA3	
	PLA4	
	PLA5	
People	PEO1	(Effendi et al., 2022; Hung, 2020)
	PEO2	
	PEO3	
Process	PRC1	(Echchabi & Al-Hajri, 2018; Proboyo & Soedarsono, 2015)
	PRC2	
	PRC3	
Physical Evidence	PSE1	(Donkor & Kyei, 2020; Pokhrel et al., 2016)
	PSE2	
	PSE3	
Student's enrollment	SE1	(Hung, 2020)
	SE2	
	SE3	
	SE4	

Source: Processed Data by Researchers

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile

The analysis of 600 participants in this research reveals a significant gender disparity, with a predominant female representation at 74.3%, amounting to 446 individuals, contrasted with a male representation of 25.7%, which corresponds to

154 individuals. Age distribution among respondents indicates that the majority, 93% (558 respondents), fall within the 18-21 age bracket. In comparison, those in the 22-25 age range constituted 6.2% (37 respondents), while individuals aged over 25 comprised 0.8% (5 respondents). An examination of the respondents' academic year, 33.3% (200 students) are studied in year1, 25% (150 students) are studied in year2, 16.7% (100 students) are studied in year 2, and 25 % (150 students) are studied in year 4. An educational level 12.3% (74 students) were engaged in associaiton degree, whereas a substantial majority of 87.7% (526 students) are engaged in bachelor degree programs. An investigation of the respondents choose skill reveals that a significant portion, 18.7% (112 students), choose management, followed by 34% (204 students) are in accounting, 29.5% (177 students) in finance and banking, and 17.9% (107 students) are in other skills.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Constructs	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Association
Training and Development (TD)	5	.808	Very Good
Leadership (LS)	8	.904	Excellent
Performance Appraisal (PA)	4	.801	Very Good
Organizational Development (OD)	5	.853	Very Good
Employee Performance (EP)	9	.908	Excellent
Organizational Effectiveness (OE)	5	.890	Very Good

Source: SPSS Processed Data by Researchers (2025)

Internal Consistency Reliability

In assessing the internal consistency reliability of the measurement model, it is generally accepted that a benchmark of 0.70 for both Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability (CR) serves as a standard for determining quality (Hair Jr et al., 2021). An analysis of Table 3 shows that the CR values for the first-order constructs range from 0.813 to 0.909, which comfortably exceeds the minimum requirement. Additionally, the results displayed in Table 3 further support this conclusion, as the Cronbach's Alpha values also exceed the 0.70. This demonstrates that the selected items adequately represent their respective constructs, indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency reliability (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is considered adequate when the average variance extracted (AVE) for a construct is equal to or exceeds 0.50, as noted by (Hair Jr et al., 2021). In addition, the skewness and kurtosis measures are contained within the

acceptable limits of -2 to +2, thus confirming the presumption of normal univariate distribution (George & Mallery, 2019).

Table 3. Internal Consistency Reliability

Demographic	Category (n=500)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	390	78.00
	Female	110	22.00
Age	Less than 30 years old	83	16.60
	Between 30 and 40 years old	248	49.60
	Between 41 and 50 years old	122	24.40
	From 50 years old up	47	9.40
Marital Status	Single	112	22.40
	Married	377	75.40
	Divorced	5	1.00
	Windowed	6	1.20
Educational Background	Lower than Bachelor's degree	157	31.40
	Bachelor's degree	266	53.20
	Master degree	77	15.40
Working Experience	Less than 1 year	32	6.40
	1 year to less than 5 years	82	16.40
	5 years to less than 10 years	130	26.00
	From 10 years up	256	51.20
Functionality	Senior Officials	19	3.80
	Departmental framework	14	2.80
	Implementation framework	147	29.40
	Executive framework	320	64.00

Source: SPSS Processed Data by Researchers (2025)

The assessment of discriminant validity involved calculating the AVE (square root of each Average Variance Extracte), following the methodological framework. It is established that the values of each variable must exceed the covariance relationships among the model's variables. In the present study, the correlation coefficients between paired variables were found to be less than the square root of the AVE for the corresponding structural variable. This observation provides evidence that supports the presence of discriminant validity, as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

	PRD	PRI	PRO	PLA	PEO	PRC	PSE	SE
PRD	0.847							
PRI	0.054	0.813						
PRO	-0.047	-0.066	0.781					
PLA	0.001	0.071	-0.014	0.795				
PEO	-0.055	0.026	0.246	-0.045	0.775			
PRC	-0.028	-0.02	0.104	0.044	-0.122	0.797		
PSE	-0.036	0.026	-0.114	0.066	-0.059	0.081	0.822	
SE	0.111	0.09	0.301	-0.021	0.246	0.152	0.03	0.822

Source: Processed Data by Researchers (2025)

Notes: The diagonally listed value is the AVE square roots of the variables

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

CFA is a statistical technique used to assess the convergent and discriminant validity within the measurement model. This method provides a systematic approach to verify whether the constructs in the model are accurately represented and distinct from one another. The results from CFA, depicted in Table 2, reveal that every measurement item linked to each variable shows statistical significance and acceptable factor loadings. This finding confirms the presence of discriminant validity, as elaborated in Table 3. According to Feng and Harring (2020) CFA assesses whether the observed variables align with their corresponding latent constructs.

Additionally, the research utilized first-order factor analysis to determine the weighting factors and evaluate the goodness-of-fit indices. The investigation incorporated a comprehensive total of eight distinct measurement frameworks: product, price, promotional, placement, people, process, physical evidence, and student's enrollment. This meticulous classification is systematically outlined in Table 5. The data exhibited in Table 5 indicates that all indices satisfied the defined criteria, suggesting that the research hypotheses are appropriately congruent with the study. The reported values included CMIN/df = 1.998, GFI = 0.914, AGFI = 0.897, NFI = 0.923, TLI = 0.955, CFI = 0.960, and RMSEA = 0.041.

Table 5. Confirmatory Factory Analysis Result

Goodness of Fit Indices	Criterion and Sources	Statistic Value
CMIN/DF	< 3.00 (Hair Jr et al., 2021)	928.270/ 467 = 1.988
GFI	≥ 0.85(Kline, 2023)	0.914
AGFI	≥ 0.85 (Kline, 2023)	0.897
CFI	≥ 0.95 (Kline, 2023)	0.960
NFI	≥ 0.90 (Kline, 2023)	0.923
TLI	≥ 0.95 (Kline, 2023)	0.955
IFI	≥ 0.95 (Kline, 2023)	0.960
RMSEA	≤ 0.05 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.041

Source: Processed Data by Researchers

Structural Equation Model (SEM)

The Structural Equation Model (SEM) articulated by Mueller and Hancock (2018) represented that a statistical methodology that integrates factor analysis with regression analysis, thereby employing multivariate modeling techniques. After conducting a thorough series of analytical procedures within the SEM framework, modifications made to the model led to significant insights concerning student enrollment in Phnom Penh city, Kampong Cham province, and Prey Veng province. These findings remain to the acceptable standards specified in Table 6. The overall model fit indices were as follows: CMIN/df = 1.994, GFI = 0.913, AGFI = 0.899, CFI = 0.958, TLI = 0.954, and RMSEA = 0.041.

Table 6. Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Goodness of Fit Indices	Criterion and Sources	Statistic Value
CMIN/DF	< 3.00 (Hair Jr et al., 2021)	967.332 / 485 = 1.994
GFI	≥ 0.85 (Kline, 2023)	0.913
AGFI	≥ 0.85 (Kline, 2023)	0.899
CFI	≥ 0.95 (Kline, 2023)	0.958
NFI	≥ 0.90 (Kline, 2023)	0.919
TLI	≥ 0.95 (Kline, 2023)	0.954
IFI	≥ 0.85(Kline, 2023)	0.958
RMSEA	≤ 0.05 (Pedroso et al., 2016)	0.041

Source: Processed Data by Researchers

Research Hypothesis Testing Result

These results imply that the various sets of items accurately represent a singular underlying construct, thus providing evidence for both discriminant validity and model fit. Analyzing the research hypotheses revealed several significant relationships. An analysis of Hypothesis 1 (H₁) revealed a standardized path coefficient of 0.133 (t-value = 3.183***), indicating a significant relationship

that substantiates H₁. Hypothesis 2 (H₂) was assessed next, yielding a standardized path coefficient of 0.097 (t-value = 3.332***), which also reflects a substantial correlation, thereby affirming H₂. When investigating Hypothesis 3 (H₃), centered on the relationship between Promotional strategies and Student Enrollment, a noteworthy standardized path coefficient of 0.257 (t-value = 6.15) was obtained, reinforcing H₃ through the identification of a strong association. Conversely, Hypothesis 4 (H₄) demonstrated a standardized path coefficient of -0.025 (t-value = -0.586***), indicating a non-significant relationship and warranting the rejection of H₄. In the case of Hypothesis 5 (H₅), a standardized path coefficient of 0.206 (t-value = 4.881) was found in relation to People and Student Enrollment, signifying a pertinent connection that corroborates H₅. Similarly, Hypothesis 6 (H₆) produced a standardized path coefficient of 0.153 (t-value = 3.5***), denoting a significant link with Student's Enrollment and thus supporting H₆. Lastly, Hypothesis 7 (H₇) recorded a standardized path coefficient of 0.062 (t-value = 1.46***), revealing no substantial correlation with Physical Evidence and Student's Enrollment, which results in a lack of validation for H₇. A comprehensive summary of these hypothesis testing results is included in Table 7.

Table 7. Hypothesis Result of the Structural Model

Hypotheses	Path	Standardized Path Coefficients (β)	t-Value	Test Results
H ₁	PRD→SE	0.133	3.183	Yes
H ₂	PRI→SE	0.097	2.332	Yes
H ₃	PRO→SE	0.257	6.15	Yes
H ₄	PLA→SE	-0.025	-0.586	No
H ₅	PEO→SE	0.206	4.881	Yes
H ₆	PRC→SE	0.153	3.5	Yes
H ₇	PSE→SE	0.062	1.46	No

Source: Processed Data by Researchers

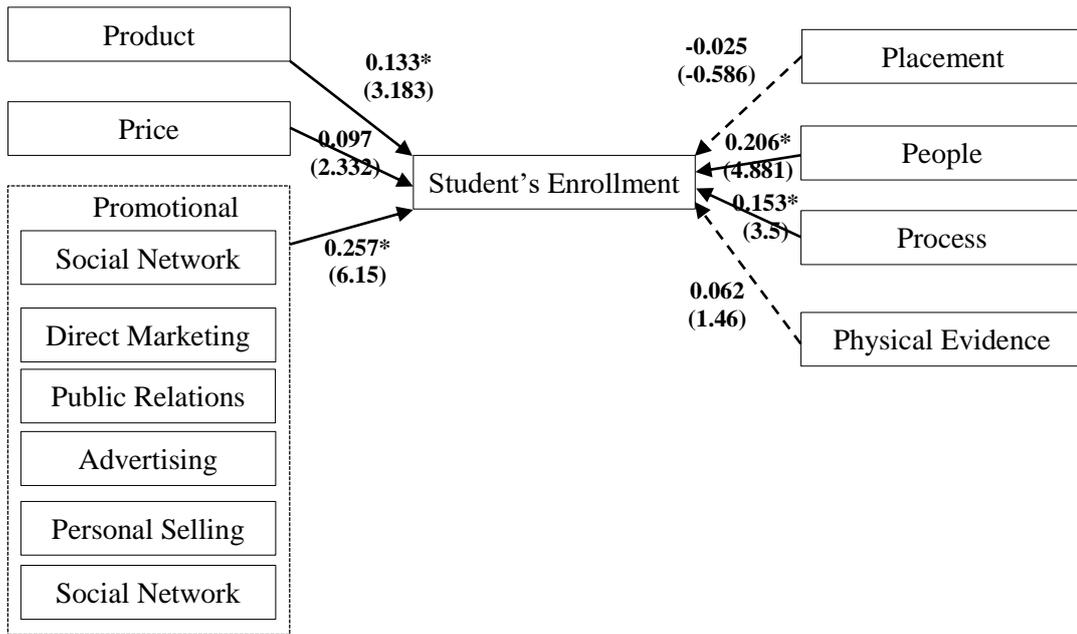


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

Source: The Result of SEM Based on Researchers' Data

CONCLUSION

This study provides significant understanding regarding the elements that influence enrollment at private universities in Cambodia. The primary objective of the research was to analyze various facets of the marketing mix. This encompassed a comprehensive investigation of product attributes, pricing methodologies, promotional strategies, distribution methods, the responsibilities of personnel involved, the procedural frameworks employed, and the physical evidence underpinning these components. The emphasis was placed on comprehending the impact of these factors on student enrollment at the Western University Kampong Cham branch, Angkor City Institute in Prey Veng province, and Western University in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. An extensive survey comprising 600 questionnaires was administered to a diverse group of students, encompassing individuals from the second semester of their first year to those in their fourth year, and representing a variety of academic institutions. The research utilized a conceptual framework grounded in theoretical models and statistical methods, incorporating the marketing mix components to formulate and test specific hypotheses. Additionally, the integrity of the research was ensured through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which established the validity and reliability of the findings, while Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze the relationships and influences among the measured variables. The results indicated a significant correlation between the five identified determinants of student's enrollment—

curriculum product, price, promotional, people, and process—aligning with findings from prior studies.

LIMITATIONS

This research faces several challenges, primarily due to its brief timeline and the narrow selection of factors under investigation. Conducted as a cross-sectional study, it was limited by the short duration, which restricted the potential for extensive data gathering, thorough interpretation, and detailed analysis of the findings, as noted by (Saunders et al., 2019). Had the research been approached as a study over a more prolonged period, it could have provided richer insights into students' enrollment concerning private higher education institutions (PHEIs), as suggested by (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). Within this analysis, three key influencing variables and one moderating variable were identified, with the anticipation that they would significantly affect university students' enrollment concerning PHEIs. Nonetheless, other important factors that could also play a pivotal role in this decision-making process—including the influence of parents, the quality of educational facilities (Qasim et al., 2021), and geographical context (Nuseir et al., 2021)—were not included in the study.

RECOMMENDATION

The ideas presented in this study inspire a more exploration in various avenues, particularly when considering the previously noted constraints. To begin with, it would be prudent for upcoming research to adopt a approach, extending beyond the narrow 10-week span analyzed in this study. A more extended investigation could provide deeper insights into the choices made by university students regarding Private Higher Educational Institutions (PHEIs), as highlighted by (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). Furthermore, future studies should take into account a broader range of influential elements that could significantly shape students' enrollment for PHEIs in Cambodia. These influences might include the input from parents and peers, the quality of educational resources accessible, or even geographical factors. In addition, examining aspects such as students' ambitions for their future careers or their sense of job preparedness could reveal crucial insights. Given the increasingly competitive landscape of the job market, which is shaped by the rapidly changing economy, it is vital to ensure that the institutions chosen by students facilitate a seamless transition into the professional world, a point underscored by (Hidayat, 2018).

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