

FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENT COLLEGE CHOICE BETWEEN IN-STATE AND OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS

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Student enrollment decisions are complex and involve a variety of issues that institutions can study to target prospective students; therefore, colleges and universities are paying greater attention to the factors that influence college choice (Chapman, 1981; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). What factors influence college choice? How do the influences of these factors differ between in-state and out-of-state students? Through the use of a survey instrument, this study explores the actions and attributes of institutions that students find desirable as well as identified populations that institutions can target through recruitment efforts. As a result, several implications for the student affairs profession, particularly marketing and enrollment management units, have been determined.

Introduction

To better address the needs of students, colleges and universities are paying greater attention to the factors that influence college choice (Chapman, 1981; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). Student enrollment decisions are complex and involve a variety of issues that institutions can study to target prospective students.

Hossler and Gallagher (1987) present a three-stage model of college choice that is a developmental process of enrollment decisions. The first phase, predisposition, involves the decision to continue with education; search is the information gathering, application, and admission stage; and choice is the final stage when a student makes the decision to enroll. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that contribute to first-year students' decisions to enroll at a large, public, Research I university in the Midwest. Additionally, the study looks at the influence of location and the differences in the influential factors of in-state students' and out-of-state students' decision to enroll at the institution. The study utilizes a survey instrument that measures selected background characteristics, institutional characteristics, and college recruitment efforts, as well as other factors that may influence the college choice process. The convenience sample consisted of first-year students enrolled at the institution being studied.

This study seeks to answer two research questions: What are the factors that influence college choice? How do the influences of these factors differ between in-state and out-of-state students? This study explores the actions and attributes of institutions that students find desirable as well as identified populations that institutions can target

through recruitment efforts to further influence the choice process. As a result, several implications for the student affairs profession, particularly marketing and enrollment management units, have been determined.

Literature Review

Student college choice is defined as: "a complex, multistage process during which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education beyond high school, followed later by a decision to attend a specific college, university or institution of advanced vocational training" (Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989, p. 234). College choice is dependent upon an interactive set of factors involving student background characteristics and external influences which include significant persons, institutional characteristics, and communication from institutions (Chapman, 1981; Grace, 1989). As competition for college students becomes more intense for higher education institutions, college choice factors have gained interest as a way to assist marketing and admissions offices identify methods that might influence the decision of prospective students (Grace, 1989; Hossler et al., 1989; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987).

College Choice Models

Several college choice models view the decision-making process as developmental, moving students from a "broad conception of higher education and the opportunities open to them" (p. 31) to enrollment in a single institution (Dixon & Martin, 1991). Combined models of college choice that attempt to describe the process of student decision-making have been presented in multiple forms with stages ranging between three and seven categories. These models produce overlap in several categories, with the three-stage model identified as a "simplified" version of other models (Hossler et al., 1989). Hossler and Gallagher (1987) proposed a three phase model which has been the framework for many research studies surrounding the student choice process (Dixon & Martin, 1991; Martin & Dixon, 1991; Weiler, 1994). The model begins with the predisposition phase in which students determine whether or not to continue their education beyond high school (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). At this stage, student achievement and ability, level of educational aspiration, parental income, parental education, and parental encouragement are important influences (Chapman, 1981; Hossler et al., 1989). The second phase in which students gather information about institutions, decide to apply to certain schools, and are admitted is called search (Hossler et al., 1989; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). In the final stage of this model, choice, the students decide on a particular college or university to attend. The student choice process is strongly impacted by background characteristics such as ability, parental encouragement, and socioeconomic status (SES) (Hossler et al., 1989). Additionally, institutional characteristics such as financial aid, cost, academic quality, location, and

communication efforts from the college or university are influential in the choice process (Chapman, 1981; Hossler et al., 1989; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987).

Empirical Research

Methodologies in college choice studies have varied among researchers. Demographic studies, questionnaires, interviews, and instruments designed specifically to measure choice influences are prominent in the available literature. Research studies on college choice have focused on private institutions, public institutions, selective schools, colleges with open admission, differing student ability, religious affiliation, and racial or ethnic influences. With this variety of research, some conclusions have been drawn about influential factors in the choice process.

Student background characteristics

Hossler et al. (1989) and Chapman (1981) identify SES, ability, ethnicity, and parental levels of education as significant correlates of student choice. Past research has shown that gender differences are not significant in the choice process (Galotti & Mark, 1994; Stewart & Post, 1990). A student's SES has been shown to have a strong correlation with decisions in the choice stage, specifically in terms of institution selectivity (Hossler et al., 1989). Ethnicity, conversely, has been shown to have only a moderate influence on the choice process (Hossler et al., 1989). While research has shown that some significant differences may arise surrounding financial concerns in the choice process, overall "it seems that minority students attend [a college or university] for the same reasons that nonminority students attend" (Stewart & Post, 1990, p. 158). Student academic ability also strongly influences choice. Research indicates that higher ability students are often more selective, more autonomous in their decision-making, and have greater self-esteem about their success in institutions (Galotti & Mark, 1994). Parental levels of education relate moderately to choice and are shown to be more influential than race or gender among college choice variables; thus, influencing students to choose more selective or private institutions (Hossler et al., 1989). This level of influence may be related to the "significant positive correlation between parental education and family income" (Galotti & Mark, 1994, p. 605).

Influence of significant persons

In the choice stage, the influence of friends and family is important (Chapman, 1981). Parental encouragement is a strong correlate of college choice and often reflects student choices of four-year and more selective institutions (Hossler et al., 1989). Guidance counselors, coaches, teachers, and other adults have some influence on student choice, and friends, classmates, and peers are shown to impact a student's enrollment decision (Chapman, 1981; Galotti & Mark, 1994). Additionally,

research by Kellaris and Kellaris (1988) indicates that personal recommendations from respected individuals are important factors in the enrollment decision.

Institutional characteristics

Cost, financial aid, location, and academic quality are very influential in the student choice process (Chapman, 1981; Hossler et al., 1989). Costs and financial aid are often cited as considerations for student enrollment decisions. These considerations are more pressing concerns for students from underrepresented populations and a lower SES status (Stewart & Post, 1990); although in general, students "tend to enroll at the school with the lowest net costs" (Coccarri & Javalgi, 1995, p. 30). Location also has a moderate influence in choice with a majority of students attending institutions close to home (Chapman, 1981; Kellaris & Kellaris, 1988). Weiler (1994) noted that students' choice is based primarily on the "fit" with a desired institution, therefore, the location of an institution is often related to other institutional characteristics at which the student is looking (p. 644). Finally, academic quality is one of the characteristics that influences student choice. The academic programs of institutions are related to student perceptions of success after graduation and often have the largest influence on the choice stage (Chapman, 1981; Hossler et al., 1989). Academic quality is such a strong factor that it can impact other choice determinants. For example, if a student perceives an institution to be strong academically, then location can become a smaller part of their decision.

College recruitment efforts

College recruitment efforts are actions of the institution to communicate with students including campus visits, brochures and other written materials, telemarketing, and contact with admissions personnel or other university representatives (Chapman, 1981; Kellaris & Kellaris, 1988). Kealy and Rockel (1987) asserted that "there is an indirect but important link between college recruitment efforts and a student's college choice" (p. 701). The growing use of marketing approaches by institutions of higher education is a reflection of increased competitiveness for students (Chapman, 1981). Students note recruitment efforts by the institution as very influential in their choice process (Hossler et al., 1989). Galotti and Mark (1994) discovered that marketing materials are the most often consulted source of information with the exception of parents and friends. "The campus visit ranks first in perceived importance" and assists students in developing their impression of the institution which is extremely important in the choice process (Kellaris & Kellaris, 1988, p. 191).

Student college choice is a complex process that is comprised of a variety of factors (Dixon & Martin, 1991; Hossler et al., 1989). Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) model is a useful tool for understanding the stages of college choice. Problematic to the study of college choice is the

influence of individual student desires and characteristics which are not always prescribed into models of choice (Weiler, 1994). However, the conceptual models of college choice have allowed researchers to examine general factors that influence student enrollment decisions. Research seems to indicate that student background characteristics and external influences (including significant persons, institutional characteristics, and college recruitment efforts) are influential in student college choice (Chapman, 1981; Dixon & Martin, 1991; Galotti & Mark, 1994; Hossler et al., 1989; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). As competition for students continues to rise, further exploration into the choice process is necessary and can assist institutions in shaping their marketing and admissions strategies to meet student choice needs (Chapman, 1981; Hossler et al., 1989).

Methodology

Sample

This study was conducted at a large, public, residential, Research I institution in the Midwest. Approximately 30-35% of the student body, predominantly first-year students, resides in 10 residence halls. A convenience sample of 120 first-year students was used. The respondents were 35% male and 65% female, of which 96.7% were Caucasian, 1.7% African American, 0.8% Asian American and 0.8% Hispanic. Due to the demographic concentration of first-year students residing on campus, the sample was taken from various floors at a single residence hall. Smith Quadrangle (a pseudonym) was chosen because of the number of in-state and out-of-state students in residence. Smith houses approximately 1,400 students, over 90% of which are first-year students. This quadrangle has a high level of demand among entering first-year students, especially with out-of-state students from the East Coast and Greater Chicago area. Time constraints and the inaccessibility of university records required a convenience sample for this study. An application for human subjects approval was submitted and approved in order to insure that the methods in this research study adhered to the guidelines set forth by the institution studied.

Procedures

Participants in this study were given a survey that measured factors influencing student college choice. Likert scale items, multiple choice items, and open-ended questions for follow-up comprised the majority of the instrument. For Likert items, a scale of five to one was provided to allow respondents to determine the level of agreement or importance regarding an individual statement. A selection of five represented strong agreement or an important factor in college choice, while a selection of one represented strong disagreement or a low level of importance. The survey was used to examine: student background

characteristics, the influence of significant persons, institutional characteristics, college recruitment efforts and their impact on student choice. Further comparisons between in-state and out-of-state students were drawn.

The survey instrument was pre-tested by 10 students, demographically representative of the final sample population. The pretest was used to determine clarity, and the respondents' understanding of the instrument. The instrument was distributed to residents of various floors at a single residence hall. Each floor was surveyed separately at meetings coordinated by a student-staff member in Smith Quadrangle. At each meeting, procedural directions for completing the survey instrument were given followed by an opportunity for students to complete the survey individually. Students were informed of the confidentiality of their responses to the instrument, given contact information should questions regarding their participation arise, and allowed an opportunity to ask questions about the instrument. Additionally, students were notified that their participation in this study was voluntary. Upon completion, the researchers collected the surveys. The survey results were entered into Microsoft Excel databases and placed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences program to compute a more sophisticated analysis. The measures of central tendency helped narrow the areas of inquiry through scores of unusual variance. Data were analyzed using independent t-tests at the $p < .05$ level.

Limitations

First, a convenience sample was taken from a single residence hall. The use of this convenience sample from one residence hall at one university prohibits the overall generalizability of results to other institutions. Second, the sample was predominantly (96.7%) Caucasian. This limited any insight to be gained concerning the college choice process for students of color. Third, a large percentage (72%) of the population was reportedly from households with income levels of \$80,000 or above. The low number of respondents from lower income levels and underrepresented groups may have skewed the results on questions related to financial matters, such as availability of financial aid and cost of tuition.

The high number of business students (47%) also created a limitation. This number may have influenced results regarding "Academic Quality", degree attainment expectations, and "Job Opportunities for Graduates." A final limitation concerned the instrument's ability to measure all factors that influence college choice. Weiler (1994) contended that the influence of individual student desires and characteristics were not always prescribed into models of choice. The survey used in this study could not address all of the factors that may influence a student's decision to enroll at a particular institution. The research team

wished to include the impacts of marketing efforts on the college choice process in the study, however, the body of literature available was not adequate to support and frame the research.

Results

Student Background Characteristics

Student background characteristic results coincided with Astin's (1993) assertions that out-of-state students attending higher education institutions have parents with higher income levels, more educated parents, higher educational aspirations, and higher academic achievement.

Parental income

In-state students' average parental income placed one income bracket lower than out-of-state students did; however, they received less financial aid than out-of-state students. Approximately 62% of in-state students and 80% of out-of-state students reported parental incomes of \$80,000 or above, which placed 72% of the overall sample in the highest two brackets. This is demonstrated in Table 1.

Parental education

Parental education levels were placed higher for out-of-state students. For mother's education, in-state students averaged lower attainment rates than out-of-state students ($M=0.72$, $SD=.83$, $M=1.32$, $SD=1.11$, respectively). Mothers of in-state students did not average attaining a Bachelor's degree, while out-of-state students' mothers averaged attaining at least a Bachelor's degree. The means of in-state students' mothers' attained education level were found to be significantly lower than that of out-of-state's ($\alpha=.002$, $p<.05$). In-state students responded that 52% of their mothers had attained only a high school degree as compared to 26% for out-of-state students. No mothers of in-state students attained a professional or doctorate level degree (e.g. Ph.D. or Ed.D.), while 11% of out-of-state mothers had achieved this level. The graphic representation in Table 2 illustrates the absence of high-level degree attainment for in-state mothers, as compared to the majority of degrees at the high school level.

For father's education, in-state students again reported lower levels of degree attainment than out-of-state students ($M=1.26$, $SD=1.32$, $M=1.84$, $SD=1.09$, respectively). An independent t-test found in-state students' fathers' educational attainment level means to be significantly lower than that of out-of-state students' ($\alpha=.011$, $p<.05$). In-state students responded that 39% of their fathers had attained only a high school degree as compared to .01% for out-of-state students. Only 13% of fathers of in-state students attained a professional or doctorate level degree as compared with 23% of out-of-state fathers. A graphical display of the results, as illustrated in Table 2, shows the disparity among in-state students' parental education levels.

Degree attainment

In-state students scored higher on the level of degree attainment aspirations than out-of-state students ($M=1.02$, $SD=.74$; $M=1.11$, $SD=.77$, respectively). Both groups expected to attain at least a Bachelor's degree, which is reflected by the median falling within the Master's degree range. Even though their parents attained such degrees at significantly lower rates, in-state students aspired to professional and doctorate degrees with an equal or higher frequency than out-of-state students. The median of this item fell squarely within the master's degree range.

Grade point average (GPA)

In-state students reported lower average GPAs during high school than out-of-state students ($M=0.84$, $SD=0.95$; $M=0.72$, $SD=.68$, respectively). Both of these averages translated to an "A" (3.5-4.0) average. Even though the scores were high, careful examination showed that 79% of in-state students reported grades in the two highest levels as compared to 91% of the out-of-state students.

Goals and Aspirations

Participants answered six questions about their personal academic goals and aspirations. Out-of-state students averaged slightly higher scores. The high mean is reflected in Table 1 with the other Likert scale ratings.

Influence of Significant Persons

Participants answered eight questions as to the influence of significant persons. Regarding the overall influence of significant persons, in-state students averaged higher scores than out-of-state students. When asked to respond to, "Other members of my immediate family attend or have attended [the institution]," comparing the means ($M=2.29$, $SD=1.82$; $M=1.52$, $SD=1.33$, respectively) was found to be statistically significant ($\alpha=.009$, $p<.05$). The higher scores from in-state students in this section signified a greater effect on the college choice process from the influence of significant persons than for their out-of-state counterparts as illustrated in Table 1.

Institutional Characteristics

Reputation

Participants answered six items regarding the institutional reputation and an additional item, "The fraternity and sorority system at [the institution] was an important factor in my decision to attend [the institution]." This item regarding the fraternity and sorority system was found to be significant ($\alpha=.000$, $p<.05$) as a comparison between the two groups. In-state students averaged significantly lower scores than out-of-state students ($M=1.79$, $SD=1.20$; $M=2.67$, $SD=1.40$, respectively) as shown in Table 1.

Importance of factors in college choice

Thirteen questions were used to determine the importance that different institutional characteristics played in the college choice process. Students were asked to rank twelve items from very high to very low importance: "Location, proximity to or from hometown," "Access to Faculty," "Diversity of the Student Body," "Recruitment Activities," "Cost of Tuition," "Variety of Majors," "Availability of Financial Aid," "Prestige of Degree," "Job Opportunities for Graduates," "Academic Quality," "Size of the Institution," and "Intercollegiate Athletics." The last question in this section asked the students to choose the two most important factors from the ranking items listed above. The four highest ranking factors for in-state and out-of-state students (as measured by a rating of 5 on the survey) were 1) "Academic Quality," 79% in-state, 68% out-of-state; 2) "Job Opportunities for Graduates," 59% in-state, 55% out-of-state; 3) "Prestige of Degree," 57% in-state, 52% out-of-state; and 4) "Variety of Majors" 46% in-state, 55% out-of state.

Ranked as one of the least important factors, an independent t-test indicated statistical significance for "Cost of Tuition." The mean of in-state students were much lower than those of out-of-state students, showing cost of tuition was less important for in-state students ($M=2.98$, $SD=1.48$; $M=3.80$, $SD=1.26$, respectively).

College Recruitment Efforts

Students answered seven questions regarding recruitment efforts by the institution. An independent t-test revealed statistical significance between in-state and out-of-state students for "A campus visit was important in my decision to attend [the institution]." In-state students averaged nearly a full quality point lower than that of out-of-state students ($M=2.98$, $SD=1.48$; $M=3.80$, $SD=1.26$, respectively).

Campus visit

Students were asked whether they visited the campus during their college choice process, how they visited, and what they did and did not like about the visit. An independent t-test for "Recruitment Activities" found statistical significance ($\alpha=.007$, $p<.05$) between the in-state and out-of-state means ($M=3.11$, $SD=1.15$; $M=3.65$, $SD=1.00$, respectively). Notably, 95% of out-of-state students and 93% of in-state students made a campus visit. Based on averages, 47% of out-of-state students visited through an admissions sponsored visitor program as compared with 41% of in-state students. In-state students reported visiting 31% of the time because of friends, while only 23% of out-of-state students visited because of friends. These percentages are represented graphically in Table 3. The aesthetics of the campus were overwhelmingly mentioned as an aspect that the students liked most about their campus visit. Both in-state and out-of state students mentioned aesthetics on approximately 63% of the surveys. Residence halls and food were frequently mentioned as aspects liked least.

Discussion and Implications

The results of this study demonstrate that many factors are influential in the decision-making process of both in-state and out-of-state students. The following discussion examines the results; draws conclusions from those results; and provides suggestions for various campus units. The implications mentioned throughout the discussion center around college recruitment efforts, enrollment management efforts, and forms of information produced by areas such as marketing services.

Student Background Characteristics

There is a great disparity among the average parental income levels between in-state and out-of-state students. Although, there are in-state students in some categories with higher incomes, the means show much higher income levels overall for out-of-state students. In fact, there were no out-of-state students in the lowest income bracket (below \$20,000) and less than 10 in the second two (\$20,000-\$39,999; \$40,000-\$49,999). This difference impacts mobility in terms of visits to and enrollment in the institution. There is greater mobility for out-of-state students to enroll in out-of-state institutions because they have the economic means and resources. (Astin, 1993; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). The results of educational achievement, as measured by high school GPA, also impact mobility. Out-of-state students averaged higher GPAs than in-state students; thus, giving the out-of-state students fewer restrictions and more selectivity in choosing an institution (Galotti & Mark, 1994).

When compared with out-of-state students, in-state students' goals and aspirations ranked slightly higher in terms of degree attainment. These results were surprising as the researchers expected out-of-state students to have higher degree attainment aspirations based on previous research. Hossler et al. (1989) also asserted that out-of-state students tend to have higher degree aspirations, because on average they come from higher income levels and their parents have higher levels of education. The overall results on this item may possibly be attributed to the potential misunderstanding of what a professional degree is, as some professional degrees may be viewed as equal to or offered in conjunction with bachelor's degrees (e.g. teachers certifications, R.N., etc.).

Institutional Characteristics

The results in the institutional characteristics section clearly show that "Academic Quality" is ranked highest by both groups of students. The results of out-of-state student rankings substantiate previous research, which states that academic quality is consistently ranked first among other institutional characteristics (Hossler et al., 1989). Surprisingly, in-state students also ranked academic quality as the

number one institutional characteristic, rather than issues of tuition and availability of financial aid, which are typically ranked highest by this group (Hossler et al., 1989). This is likely due to the number of high-income level students in our overall sample. It is worth reiterating that out-of-state students ranked cost of tuition just slightly above a three in importance, while in-state students ranked the same characteristics at almost a four, making the difference between the two statistically significant ($p < .05$). Cost of tuition received the lowest ranking of all 12 factors for the out-of-state students.

Another significant result is that the third highest ranking overall factor for both groups was job opportunities for graduates. This is important information for admissions and academic departments in recruiting prospective students. When selecting a college or university, students look at schools and assess the job placement rates, or at least look closely at the kinds of opportunities the institution may afford them in the job market after graduation.

The category, issues of reputation, consistently ranked the highest for both groups of students in the three choice stage categories measured: institutional characteristics, influence of significant persons, and college recruitment efforts. Along with the high rankings given by both groups of students for "Academic Quality" and "Prestige of Degree," these results show the importance students' place on the reputation and prestige of the institution as a whole. Enrollment management and marketing areas can use this data when assessing strategies for recruitment and retention.

As mentioned in the results section, there is statistical significance in the rankings of the importance of the fraternity and sorority system at the institution. Out-of-state students ranked this item more favorably than their counterparts. This may be a point for further analysis in Smith Quadrangle. Although out-of-state students ranked the importance of the fraternity and sorority system higher than in-state students, this factor still was ranked in the lower two quartiles for both groups.

Out-of-state students are shown to be more confident in their choice overall, and what they will accomplish in the future. This confidence is shown by the difference in rankings by out-of-state students on the following two statements: "If I could go to school anywhere I applied, I would still attend [the institution]," and "I am attending [the institution] while I figure out what I really want to do with my life."

Influence of Significant Persons

The category, influence of significant persons, ranked lower than issues surrounding reputation of the institution for in-state students. However, their visitation patterns suggest they underestimate the influence of significant persons in their college choice. More than half of

in-state student visits are with family or friends. The number of questions pertaining to others that attended the institution show that out-of-state students rank the influence of significant persons lower than any other Likert scale grouping. This may be attributed to out-of-state students' lack of familiarity with the institution. These students often do not have the connection of family tradition or friends at the institution. Chapman (1981) and Hossler et al. (1989) speak to the influence of parental modeling, which encourages students to attend more selective and four-year institutions.

College Recruitment Efforts

The results of the college recruitment efforts section illustrates several topics worth mentioning. First is the low importance level of the video for both in-state and out-of-state student groups. The results however, were slightly more positive when asked if students gathered important information through the World Wide Web. As the internet grows in its use as a source for college information gathering, institutions should consider the development of an interactive CD-ROM, which would allow students to access specific web pages directly. Enrollment management services may want to evaluate the cost benefit ratio of any new video or CD-ROM project for the future.

Another point of interest for enrollment management or marketing staffs is the importance of printed materials in the choice process, especially for out-of-state students. Both groups of students responded positively to the item, "The brochures, view books, letters, and printed materials I received were important in deciding to come to [the institution]." More important is the high level of agreement with the statement, "Compared with other institutions I was considering, I received all the information needed to make a decision to attend [the institution] in a timely fashion." This speaks positively to the institution's direct marketing efforts. This also suggests that printed materials continue to make more of an impact on choice, in spite of the multimedia resources available. Out-of-state students ranked the importance of the campus visit in their decision-making process significantly higher than in-state students, as stated in the results section. This disparity is most likely explained in the context of familiarity. Out-of-state students are less likely to be familiar with the institution and the region. The number of students who visit the campus, 93% for in-state and 95% for out-of-state, supports the research stating the importance of a campus visit in the college choice process (Kellaris & Kellaris, 1988).

With more than 50% of in-state students visiting the campus with friends or family, college recruitment areas should introduce new or strengthen existing programs which facilitate this form of campus visits. Such programs may include: sibling visitation weekends, host programs, and other activities on campus that provide visitation opportunities for

high school- aged friends of current students, especially those targeted at current first-year students. These visits also aid in the transfer of information about the institution to prospective students.

Conclusion

Despite its limitations, this research should provide enrollment management and marketing divisions useful information regarding the factors that influence college choice. Institutions can focus recruitment efforts on those factors that appeal to both populations, but train admissions personnel to recognize the differences between in-state and out-of-state student preferences. This effort leads to a more successful recruiting effort; meeting the needs and interests of prospective students, while allowing them to make an informed choice regarding their entrance into an institution of higher education.

Table 1. Frequencies and Means of Variables between In-State and Out-of-State Students

Variables	In-State Students	Out-of-State Students
	Mean/Freq.	Mean/Freq.
Parental Income		
Below \$20,000	1	0
\$20,000-\$39,999	3	1
\$40,000-\$59,999	2	5
\$60,000-\$79,999	11	5
\$80,000-\$99,999	7	10
\$100,00 or Above	21	33
Educational Achievement by GPA		
C (1.5-1.99)	1	0
B-/C+ (2.0-2.49)	2	1
B (2.5-2.99)	9	5
A-/B+ (3.0-3.49)	9	33
A (4.0-3.5)	25	25
Likert-type Scale Ratings		
Reputation	3.50	3.64
Greek Importance**	1.79*	2.67*
Goals and Aspirations	3.95	3.99
Influence of Significant Persons	2.68	2.40
Family Attendance Tradition***	2.29*	1.52*
Information Gathering/Recruitment	2.70	3.11

* $p < .05$, ** $\alpha = .009$, *** $\alpha = .000$

Table 2. Frequencies and T-test Results of In-State and Out-of-State Students

Variables	In-State Students	Out-of-State Students
	Freq.	Freq.
Parental Levels of Education		
Mother**		
High School	28*	16*
Bachelor's Degree	13*	21*
Master's Degree	18*	13*
Professional	0*	3*
Doctorate	0*	4*
Father***		
High School	21*	4*
Bachelor's Degree	11*	23*
Master's Degree	15*	21*
Professional	2*	7*
Doctorate	5*	7*

* $p < .05$, ** $\alpha = .002$, *** $\alpha = .011$

Table 3. Percentages of Visit Types Within Residency Groups

Variables	In-State Students	Out-of-State Students
Visit Type		
Admissions Sponsored	41%	47%
Family	22%	19%
Friends	31%	23%
Other	6%	11%

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ASIAN WOMEN AND ACADEMIC CONFIDENCE

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Through qualitative analysis, this study attempts to understand the perceived academic confidence among Asian, international, female, university students. Results revealed that perceived academic confidence is relatively high; however, multiple barriers are found to create unique challenges for social integration on campus, thus influencing the college experience for this population. Finally, implications for student affairs practitioners are discussed.

Introduction

Institutions of higher education are a part of the growing global community in which cross-cultural exchange has become commonplace. With increasing numbers of international students flooding American colleges and universities to pursue their education (Hayes & Lin, 1994), it has become imperative for these institutions to explore and understand the multiple stressors that exist in this population's experience (Adelman, 1988; Boyer & Sedlacek, 1988; Cross, 1995; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Lin & Yi, 1997). International students have unique adjustment and transition issues that impact their academic confidence and achievement (Boyer & Sedlacek, 1988; Hayes & Lin, 1994; Lin & Yi, 1997). The examination of international students from South and East Asian nations is particularly critical since they constitute approximately one-half of all international students in the United States (Lin & Yi, 1997). Perceived academic confidence has been shown to be a strong predictor of academic persistence and achievement, thus, it is essential to explore these perceptions among Asian international students in order to improve strategies to help them persist and succeed (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Boyer & Sedlacek, 1988; House, 1992; House & Prion, 1998; Smedley, Myers & Harrell, 1993).

This qualitative study examines the perceptions of academic confidence among female, Asian, international students at a large, Midwestern, public, Research I institution. The authors explore three research questions:

- 1) Does having an Asian international and female identity influence perceived academic confidence?
- 2) What are the cultural barriers and social adjustments involved in these students' transition to higher education in the United States?
- 3) What role do campus environments play in the support or development of their academic confidence?