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BRAND OF EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AS A KEY FACTOR FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

Abstract. *This paper summarizes the arguments and counterarguments within the scientific discussion on the issue of brands of European Higher Education Institutions as a key factor for foreign students. The globalization of education processes and the creation of a united European education area have increased foreign students' interest to study in Europe. Increasing unemployment, poverty, inconsistency in education, economic problems, political instability, low job opportunities, and unsafe environment are the undeniable reasons for young students to explore higher education opportunities in foreign countries. The main purpose of the research is to describe the factors affecting foreign students' choice of European Higher Education Institutions and provide information on the factors, which are of great importance. For achieving the aim, the previous research and scientific literature are studied, and a survey is conducted using a questionnaire. Investigation of the topic of brands of European Higher Education Institutions as a key factor for foreign students in the paper is carried out in the following logical sequence: the study of previous research and scientific literature and analysis of the survey results. Methodological tools of the research methods are the creation of a database of respondents, a survey on the factors impacting the choice of Higher Education Institutions in Europe by foreign students and analysis and interpretation of the survey results using nonparametric tests. The object of research is the field of Higher Education in Europe, and the subject of the research is consumer choice in Higher Education in Europe. The paper presents the results of an empirical analysis on brands of European Higher Education Institutions as a key factor for foreign students. It showed that four groups of factors – regional, political financial, and educational – play a significant role in the choice of European Higher Education Institutions by foreign students. The research empirically confirms and theoretically proves that the most significant role in the choice of Higher Education Institutions in Europe for all level of students – Bachelor's, Masters and Doctors - play educational factors, the least significant role – political factors. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test show that there are statistically significant differences in the assessment of the role of factors in choosing the place of studies in Europe in different levels of study programs. The results of the research can be useful for decision-makers in Higher Education Institutions in Europe when working out different student attraction strategies, thus increasing the number of students and competitiveness.*

Keywords: foreign students, globalization, Higher education, International Business Administration, students' choice.

Introduction. In the EU-28, there were 19.8 million tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-8) students in 2017 (Tertiary education statistics, 2018). Out of them, there were 1.7 million (8,6 %) students from abroad

who were undertaking tertiary level studies across the EU-28 in 2017. (Tertiary education statistics, 2018). The globalization of education processes and the creation of a united European education area have increased foreign students' interest to study in Europe. Challenges in the labour market in European countries urge them to count foreign student attraction as a possibility for solving an ageing population, maintaining the welfare system, and attracting a skilled workforce. Despite this, the number of foreign students is not significant in Europe. Some countries have introduced research about foreign students' attraction and retention (Arvalstu studentu piesaiste un noturēšana LatvijA, 2018) to solve labour market challenges in Europe. However, there is not enough research about the factors influencing foreign students from third countries' choice of HEI in Europe. There are many overlapping definitions of «international» and «foreign student». Since 2015, UNESCO, OECD and EUROSTAT have agreed on a definition of «international mobile student». An international mobile student is an individual who has physically crossed an international border between two countries to participate in educational activities in a destination country (UNESCO glossary). The main aim of the research is to identify factors affecting foreign students' choice of higher education institute («HEI») in Europe and provide information on the factors, which are of great importance. The research has emerged due to the lack of studies analyzing the factors affecting «third-country national» foreign students to choose European HEI and the personal engagement of the authors with the organizational, teaching and study process in international programs. Being actively involved in organizing, teaching, and studying, the authors are interested in delivering relevant knowledge on the essential factors for international students choosing an HEI in Europe and for HEI to working out different student attraction strategies, thus increasing the number of students and competitiveness. The current research is the continuation of the research «Analysis of the Factors Influencing Foreign Students to Choose European Higher Education Institutions». The research mentioned above exhibited the created questionnaire on the factors, an organized expert group from HE field and the survey evaluated by the experts. The research questions are:

1) What are the factors influencing foreign students' choice of HEI in Europe?
2) Which factors are of great importance?

Previous studies have identified many factors contributing to a student's decision to study at HEI. However, the extant literature focuses on student perceptions of choice factors in the selection mainly of local HEI. There is some research about Indonesian, Taiwanese and Malaysian students considering factors choosing an HEI at an oversea university in Australia, New Zealand or the United States. Although the literature provides some understanding of factors, it raises concerns about the different factors of student choice for students from different countries. Therefore, this research will explore the main factors for Pakistan students choosing HEI in Europe. The students from Pakistan are chosen because the authors have a good connection with Pakistani students' community in Europe. The research is based on the data collected by means of the survey distributed among the Pakistani students studying in Europe, where 205 responses were obtained. Having analyzed four major groups of factors -regional, political, financial, and educational, out of each group the most influencing factors were detected. The factors which are of great importance were highlighted. Limitations of the research:

1) in this particular research, the Authors are interested in «third-country national» internationally mobile students. According to Council Directive 2004/114/EC «third-country national» means any person who is not a citizen of the European Union (Official Journal of the European Union (2004));
2) the foreign students only from Pakistan are analyzed;
3) calculations were done by four groups of factors. For calculations, the level of the study program (Bachelor, Master, or Doctor) is used as a grouping feature.

This study contributes to a variety of factors that influence the selection of HEI by international students. Exploration of this area is expected to develop an understanding of the theoretical aspects of

selecting to study abroad and practically implement an understanding of the growth of the HE sector in general.

Literature Review. A lot of the reforms, social, cultural transitions and economic restructuring have been seen across the world during the last time due to the globalization and Informational Technologies development. These changes develop innovative tools, equipment, processes, systems, policies for each European country to stay competitive. The same things happened in the HE sector. Challenges in the labour market in European countries urge them to fight for foreign student attraction. HEI's putting more effort into marketing to identify, communicate and attract new students from foreign countries. Marketing in the HE field has been done for decades. There is a lot of research about potential benefits from marketing in the field of HE marketing worldwide from the late 90s (Kotler and Fox 1995; Hoyt and Brown, 2003; Bragg, 2007; Ivy, 2008; Datar et al., 2010). HEIs should use a marketing framework and should satisfy the need of its customers by adding value to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and survive (Hoyt and Brown 2003). At the same time, HE marketing as a service is sufficiently different from the marketing of products (Nicholls et al., 1995). The unique difference which highlights the strength of HEI should be developed and showed to the potential students as a reason to choose HEI. «Branding is a very common issue for Higher Educational Institutions like other profitable organizations over the last few years» (Alam at al., 2019). There are researches about how university information sources influence advice-seeking attitude, intention, and behaviour between students (Ng et al., 2020). Marketing role for student recruitment emphasized several researchers (Ivy, 2001; Goff et al., 2004; Judson et al., 2004; Tapp et al., 2004; Cubillo et al., 2006, Blanco at al., 2019). The variety of factors influencing student choice of HEI is wide. The researches who studied student decision-making inquire about the influence of different factors – financial, geographic, reputation, personal, influencers. Kusumawati et al. (2010) added that even more - factors have a different level of importance for each country and each student.

Some researchers found that it is a belief of better education in a foreign country over the home country that lead the students to study in another country (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). It is the most frequently mentioned reason causing students to choose international education (Mazarrol and Soutar, 2002; Oliveira and Soares, 2016). The lack of good HEI due to economic and political conditions is the main motivation for African students for choosing UK universities (Maringe and Carter's, 2007). Students believe that they will have better job opportunities after getting an education abroad and than leaving the home country (Maringe and Carter, 2007, Blanco et al., 2019, Carstensen et al., 2020). Taking into account these issues, there are a lot of influencing factors for studying abroad - the perception of higher quality overseas education, HEI quality in the home country, influencers, personal development, possibility to get better job. Political stability often is mention as a very important factor when students are choosing the studying country. By political stability, students mean the safety within a country. For example, Chinese student's parents especially consider crime levels (Bodycott, 2009). The location and proximity of the studying country also have a big impact on students' choices (Wu's, 2014). Students preferred countries with a lower cost of living and tuition fees and do not choose countries with extreme weather conditions (Wintre et al.,2015). The very often mentioned factors for choosing the country were to study are the costs, cultural diversity, political stability and location, the image of country (Mazarrol and Soutar, 2002; Wintre et al., 2012; Cheng et al., 2013; Oliveira and Soares, 2016). Important factors affecting the choice of HEI are the reputation of the HEI, programs offered, campus facilities and environment, teaching quality, and employability after graduating. The meaning of the reputation of the HEI is the recognition nationally or internationally and its ranking (Ancheh et al., 2007, Briggs, 2006). This factor is mentioned in several papers as one of the most important when choosing an HEI (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Maringe and Carter 2007; Kaur, 2016). Chinese students grant high importance on university and course ranking (Wu, 2014). The offered programs by HEI and courses and recognition by future employers also play a big role in students' choice (Wu, 2014). To summarize the literature study about factors affecting different countries

students choosing the HEI abroad, the authors concluded that factors mentioned are pretty the same, but they are grouped differently.

Methodology and research methods. For achieving the aim, the previous research and scientific literature are studied, and a survey is conducted using a questionnaire. The data was collected from Pakistani students studying in Europe. 205 responses were obtained. Investigation of the topic of brands of European HEI as a key factor for foreign students in the paper is carried out in the following logical sequence study of previous research and scientific literature and analysis of the survey results. Methodological tools of the research methods are the creation of a database of respondents, a survey on the factors impacting the choice of HEI in Europe by foreign students and analysis and interpretation of the survey results using nonparametric tests. In the previous research, the authors compared factors influencing regular customer choice (factors affecting customer behaviour) and factors influencing student as a customer choice for choosing HEI. Moreover, they came up with a compilation of the top five factors' groups – regional, political, financial, educational, influencers - and the factors in each group. Experts from the HE sectors and foreign students who evaluated the questionnaire made some suggestions and factors to add. The authors on purpose leave more factors in each group to better understand which factors are the main ones. Further on these five factors' groups for choosing HEI are matching with factors from the literature and scientific research works done by various authors before. These top factors are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Compilation of Factors influencing students' choice about HEI identified by authors and factors from previous researches

Factors influencing student choice identified by the authors	Matching factors influencing students' choice in previous studies	Researchers
Regional: 1. Proximity to home country 2. Weather should be similar to home country 3. Locals are tolerant towards other religion 4. Locals are tolerant towards other race 5. The local politics should not be a threat to international students 6. Good Medical facilities 7. Crime index of the country 8. Locals can converse in English 9. Locals are friendly towards foreigners 10. Family and/or friends already living in that region	1.Proximity to home 2.Geographic location; 3.Crime level	Raposo and Alves, 2007; Dawes and Brown, 2005; Wu's, 2014 Wagner and Fard, 2009; Beneke and Human, 2010; Mazarrol & Soutar, 2002; Wintre et al., 2012; Cheng et al., 2013; Oliveira & Soares, 2016; Bodycott, 2009
Political: 1. Duration of the visa process must be quick 2. Legal part-time job opportunities 3. Job seeking visa after education 4. Work permit options after completion of education. 5. Permanent Residence options are available	1.Employment prospects; 2.Employability; 3.Political conditions; 4.Better job opportunity; 5.Political stability	Wiese et al., 2009; Vevere, V., & Mons, A.,2020; Mazarrol & Soutar, 2002; Oliveira & Soares, 2016; Wu, 2014; Maringe & Carter, 2007; Mazarrol & Soutar, 2002; Wintre et al., 2012; Cheng et al., 2013; Blanco at al., 2019; Carstensen at al., 2020 Oliveira & Soares, 2016
Financial: 1. Living expense of that country must be affordable 2. Cost of visa 3. Travel for visa approval (if the embassy is not in your region) 4. Tuition fee for the program 5. flight ticket and related travel expenses	1.Cost of living, cost of education;	Guibourg, 2011; Cubillo, Sánchez and Cervino, 2006; Ahmad & Hussain, 2017; Sojkin et al., 2012; Wintre et al.,2015

Continued Table 1

		Govan et al., 2006; Hoyt and Brown, 2003
6. Availability of Educational Loans in the home country 7. Family is sponsoring my education 8. Economic growth of the country	2. .Financial aid or packages that include scholarships and grants	
Educational: 1. Ranking of the university 2. Reputation of the university 3. Accreditation of the program 4. Facilities in the campus 5. Educational qualification and work experience of teaching staff 6. Accreditation of the university 7. Accommodation facilities provided 8. Scholarship opportunities 9. Internship opportunities 10. Programs are taught in English 11. Admission process is easy	1.Quality of education; 2.Range of study programs/courses offered; 3.Institutional characteristics, recognition; 4.Reputation; 5.Beliefe of better education level	Ahmad & Hussain, 2017; Sojkin et al., 2012; Sojkin et al., 2012; Vevere, V., & Mons, A.,202; Tavares et al., 2008; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Maringe & Carter 2007; Kaur, 2016 Hoyt and Brown, 2003; Wiese et al., 2009; Beneke and Human, 2010; Ancheh et al., 2007; Briggs, 2006 Mazzrrol & Soutar, 2002; Oliveira & Soares, 2016
Influencers: 1. Family 2. Friends and/or relatives 3. Social Media 4. Education Fair 5. Advertisements 6. Agents and / or Agency 7. Self-interest	1.Parents; 2. Friends, peers, relatives, teachers and other influential people; 3.Information provided by HEI; 4.The motivation of studying, personal development	Moogan and Baron, 2003; Raposo and Alves, 2007; Pimpa and Suwannapirom, 2008; Wagner and Fard, 2009); Blanco at al., 2019 Usunier and Lee, 2009; Alam at al., 2019; Ng at al., 2020. Sojkin et al., 2012; Vevere, V., & Mons, A.,2020; Ahmad & Hussain, 2017

Sources: developed by the authors.

Based on this table the author's created the questions for questionnaire. The authors' group together factors in four groups - regional, political, financial, educational - and compare the factors inside each group and the most influencing factors in general. The group about influencers were not interpreted using nonparametric tests. It would require another approach, because of two issues - Pakistan is very much a family-oriented culture, and a lot of information from social media should be explored. It could be studied as separate further research. The questionnaire consists of a few sections:

1. Respondent profile. The author's used several, namely, age, gender, marital status, previous qualification.

2. Information, on which study program student, has chosen (Bachelor, Master or Doctoral).

3. Information to what extent do the Regional factors mentioned in the questionnaire affect student choice of HEI.

4. Information to what extent do the Political factors mentioned in the questionnaire affect student choice of HEI.

5. Information to what extent do the Financial factors mentioned in the questionnaire affect student choice of HEI.

6. Information to what extent do the Educational factors mentioned in the questionnaire affect student choice of HEI.

Sections c-f are designed based on literature review, and questions are created from Table1 factors. In the questionnaire, there yes/no questions and for evaluation of some statements, respondents are

offered to use a 5-point Lykert type scale. The opportunities for evaluation vary from 1 – not important till 5 – very important. The authors developed the following research hypotheses:

H1: All factors in the top four factor groups – regional, political, financial, educational - play the same role in the choice of the place of studies from European HEI.

H2: All sub-factors in each of the top four factor groups play the same role in the choice of the place of studies from European HEI.

According to the selected data from the respondents profile the percentage of respondents according to the age group is as follows: 18-25 years of age group had the maximum number of respondents with a percentage of 46.3%. The next age group was 26-35, making up to 31.4% of respondents and the least number of respondents were from the age group of 35 to 40, making up to 19.5%. 81,4 % of students have work experience, and only 18,6 % didn't have any prior work experience. It means that potential students usually start studies after some years of job, they know the field where they want to study. Possibly they pay for their studies by themselves. 60.5% of the respondents were females, and 39.5% were males. 62.90% of the respondents were married, 36.1% of the respondents were unmarried, and 1% of the respondents are divorced. These figures show that often married couples decide to go to Europe to study together. It can lead to the suspicion that they possibly do not want to study but only stay in Europe.

Only 19,7% of students have visited Europe before. From the survey respondents 22 members have applied for studies in Latvia, 15 members have applied for Demark, 13 for Germany, 11 for Estonia, 9 for Spain, 8 for Finland, 6 for England, 6 for Italy, 4 for Iceland, 3 for Poland, 2 for Holland, 1 for Hungary.

The research shows that 45.90% have applied for Bachelor's level of education. One third (36,1%) of students have a Bachelor's level of education completed. They wish to receive a Master's degree in Europe. That means that the marketing campaign should be addressed either for school graduates or students with a Bachelor's degree. The families and friends have a strong influence on the potential students in Pakistan. Information from social media cannot be taken 100% true in Pakistan. But its influence cannot be ignored. Education fairs are the platforms to meet various countries' HEI representatives. It is a source of accurate information. The potential students actively search for information about HEI, the process to get in onto the HEI, countries where to study from an independent and experienced source. There are working educational agencies and individual agents. The level of their services is not very high in Pakistan.

Results. The descriptive statistics results of online surveys are analyzed, interpreted, and graphically presented. Each factor is analyzed separately. Regional factors: it is shown that the minimum and maximum values of ratings received are between the range of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high) for Regional factors. The graphical presentation above (Figure 1) shows that a total of ten factors were studied. The mean values range from 3.91 to 4.39. The value of the standard deviation ranges from 0.561 to 0.901. The highest mean value of 4.39 is scored for the factor «Crime index of the country». The lowest mean value of 3.91 is scored for the factor «Weather should be similar to the home country». Therefore, the weather does not play a significant role in the choice of destination. The highest standard deviation is scored of 0.901 for the variable «Proximity to the home country». It indicates that the opinion of the respondents is more spread out.

The graphical presentation above (see Fig. 2) shows that 5 variables were studied. The mean value ranges from 3.88 to 4.27. The standard deviation values range from 0.563 to 0.78. The highest mean value of 4.27 has been scored for the variable «Permanent Residence options are available». This indicates that the majority of students agree on it. And the lowest mean score of 3.88 has been scored for the variable «Duration of the visa process must be quick». It indicates that students do not consider this fact as important. The above graph (Figure 3) shows a total of 8 variables studied. The mean values range from 4.07 to 4.42. The highest mean score of 4.42 has been obtained for the variable «Travel for visa approval (if the embassy is not in your region)».
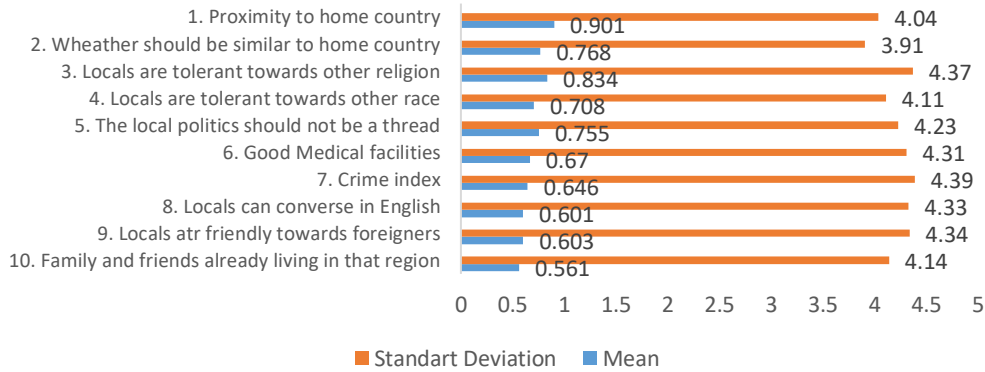
Figure 1. Descriptive Statistics Results for Regional factors from Online survey
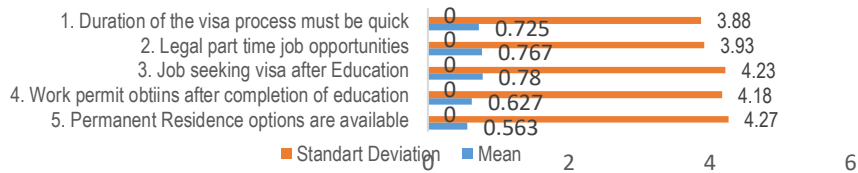Sources: systematized by the authors.

Figure 2. Descriptive Statistics Results for Political factors from Online survey
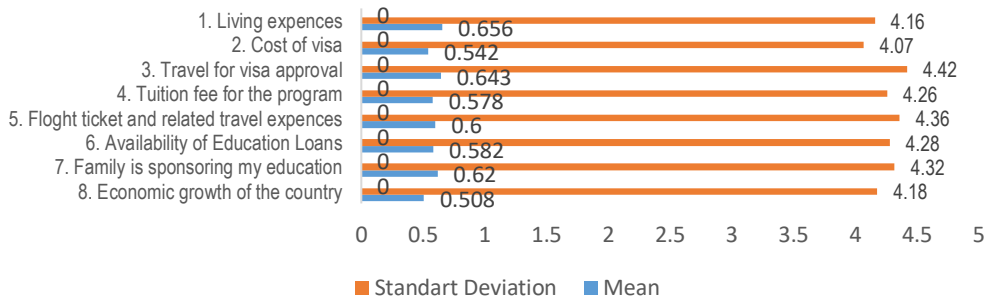Sources: systematized by the authors.

Figure 3. Descriptive Statistics Results for Financial factors from Online survey
Sources: systematized by epy authors.

The majority of the students agree that if the embassy is not in the region, travel for a visa is a significant financial factor. The low mean score of 4.07 has been scored for the variable «Cost of visa». It could show that students understand that they have to pay for the visa only once. The standard deviation values range from 0.508 to 0.656. The highest standard deviation with a score of 0.656 has been scored for the variable «Living expense in the country» indicating that people have varied opinions on this. The lowest standard deviation has been scored for 0.508 for the variable «Economic growth of the country», indicating that students have agreed on it.

Figure 4. Descriptive Statistics Results for Educational factors from Online survey
Sources: systematized by the authors.

The above graph (Figure 4) shows that a total of 11 variables were studied. The mean scores range from 4.09 to 4.45. The lowest mean score of 4.09 has been obtained for the variable «Ranking of the university». It indicated that Pakistani students do not think that the ranking of the HEI is unimportant to study abroad. The highest mean of 4.45 has been scored for the variable «Scholarship opportunities». It clearly shows that scholarship is significant for students. The standard deviation scores range from 0.508 to 0.619. The lowest standard deviation scored is 0.508 for the variable «Admission process is easy» and it is closer to the mean value. The highest standard deviation has been obtained for the variable «Facilities in the campus» with a score of 0.619. It shows that students vary in their opinion regarding facilities in the HEI campus to be considered a priority. To sum up, the results of descriptive statistics, considering all the four factors - Regional, Political, Financial, Educational - the mean values range from 3.87 to 4.49 and the ratings received range from 1 to 5.

Table 2. Summary of Mean values in Descriptive Statistics Results from an online survey

No.	Factor	Highest Standard Deviation scored for the variable	Lowest Standard Deviation Scored for the variable	Score range	
				Lowest	Highest
1	Regional	Crime index of the country	Weather should be similar to home country	3.91	4.39
2	Political	Permanent Residence options are available	Duration of the visa process must be quick	3.88	4.27
3	Financial	Travel for visa approval (if the embassy is not in your region)	Cost of visa	4.07	4.42
4	Educational	Scholarship opportunities	Ranking of the university	4.09	4.45

Sources: developed by the authors.

The above table shows that the highest mean value of 4.49 has been scored for the variable «Availability of Educational Loans in home country» belongs to the Financial factor. And the lowest mean of 3.87 has been scored for the variable «Weather should be similar to the home country» belonging to the Regional factor. It could be concluded that students think more about financial aspects before choosing HEI.

Table 3. Summary of Mean values in Descriptive Statistics Results from an online survey

No.	Factor	Highest Standard Deviation scored for the variable	Lowest Standard Deviation Scored for the variable	Score range	
				Lowest	Highest
1	Regional	Proximity to home country	Family and/ or friends already live in that region.	0.561	0.901
2	Political	Job seeking visa after education	Permanent Residence options are available	0.563	0.780
3	Financial	Living expense of the country	The economic growth of the country	0.508	0.656
4	Educational	Facilities in the campus	The admission process is easy	0.508	0.619
5	Personality	I need family and/or friends around me	I can manage my stress level	0.516	0.695

Source: developed by authors.

The highest standard deviation with a score of 0.914 for the variable «Proximity to the home country» belonged to the Regional factor. Herewith, the least standard deviation has been scored for the 0.359 to «Reputation of the university» belonging to the Educational factor. It could be concluded that the students have a similar opinion than the Educational factors are more important than the Regional factor.

1. A nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis H test allowed testing the hypothesis that all factors in the top four factors groups and all sub-factors in each of the top four factors groups play the same role in the choice of the place of studies from European HEI. This test is based on the average ranking comparison.

2. Assessment of regional factors (RF1-RF10).

Table 4. Assessment of regional factors

Regional factors	Program					
	Bachelors		Master		Doctoral	
	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank
RF1	Kruskal-Wallis H: 67.197; p=0.000	406.19	Kruskal-Wallis H: 29.002; p=0.001	29.002	Kruskal-Wallis H: 13.161; p=0.155	216.07
RF2		358.82		263.27		176.16
RF3		554.45		372.84		239.27
RF4		407.42		299.51		201.59
RF5		490.65		318.08		215.51
RF6		465.36		350.18		246.68
RF7		562.36		336.59		239.58
RF8		458.21		363.40		225.76
RF9		526.70		320.68		229.16
RF10		419.78		278.06		210.66

Sources: developed by the authors.

The study shows that in the group of regional factors with a probability of 95% it can be stated that Bachelor programs (p = 0.000) students and Master's programs (p = 0.001) students evaluate differently the regional factor. Bachelor's students give a more important role in the following factors:
- Crime index of the country (Mean Rank= 562,36).
- Locals are tolerant towards other religion (Mean Rank= 554,45).
- Locals are friendly towards foreigners (Mean Rank=526.70).

Master's program students consider that the most important factors are:

- Locals can converse in English (Mean Rank= 372,84).
- Locals are tolerant towards other religion (Mean Rank= 372,84).
- Good Medical facilities (Mean Rank= 350,18), but the factor «Proximity to the home country» (Mean Rank = 29.002) is considered to be the least important.

3. In doctoral study programs, students assign a higher role to the factor «Good Medical facilities» (Mean Rank = 246.68) and the factor «Locals are tolerant towards other race» (Mean Rank = 239.58). However, it is concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in the assessment of regional factors considering that the p-value of the Kruskal-Wallis H test is p = 0.155.

4. Assessment of political factors (PF11 - PF15). Respondents' answers show a statistically significant difference in the assessment of political factors in all programs. The factor «Job seeking visa after Education» received the highest rating for the Bachelors' students (Mean Rank = 265.51) and Master's students (Mean Rank = 176.50). At the same time, doctoral students rated the factor «Permanent Residence options are available» (Mean Rank = 120.89) as more important.

Table 5. Assessment of political factors

Political factors	Program					
	Bachelors		Master		Doctoral	
	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank
PF11	Kruskal-Wallis H: 36.092; p=0.000	186.43	Kruskal-Wallis H: 14.910; p=0,005	136.83	Kruskal-Wallis H: 9.485; p=0.05	98.15
PF12		205.17		143.23		97.15
PF13		265.51		176.50		123.48
PF14		242.09		173.39		112.84
PF15		265.81		172.55		120.89

Sources: developed by the authors.

5. Evaluation of financial factors (FF16 - FF23). The answers of the respondents show a statistically significant difference in the assessment of political factors for students of Bachelor's programs and students of Master's programs. The factor «Travel for visa approval if the embassy is not in your region» and factor are the most important factors choosing the studies for Bachelor's programs and Master's program students. Doctor study program students as the most important factor mentioned «Availability of Educational Loans in the home country» and «Travel for all approval if the embassy is not in your region». However, considering that the test p = 0.089, it can be concluded that these differences are random.

Table 6. Assessment of financial factors

Financial factors	Program					
	Bachelors		Master		Doctoral	
	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank
FF16	Kruskal-Wallis H: 26.785; P=0.000	324.35	Kruskal-Wallis H: 26.834; P=0.000	239.28	Kruskal-Wallis H: 12.386; p=0.089	179.41
FF17		328.91		210.07		140.72
FF18		423.33		298.57		195.45
FF19		376.43		265,38		169.91
FF20		412.46		285.60		174.57
FF21		381.26		241.94		197.52
FF22		388.70		281.47		176.33
FF23		336.22		226.16		178.09

Sources: developed by the authors.

6. Assessment of educational factors (EF24 –EF34). Respondents' answers show a statistically significant difference in the assessment of educational factors in all programs. Bachelor students rated higher such factors as «Accommodation facilities provided» (Mean Rank = 744.50), «Internship opportunities» (Mean Rank = 530.49) and «Facilities in the campus (latest technology used for teaching, library, cafeteria, etc.)» (Mean Rank = 530.49). Master's students rated higher such factors as «Scholarship opportunities» (Mean Rank = 385.64) and «Educational qualification and work experience of teaching staff» (Mean Rank = 380.41). Doctoral students as the higher-rated factors mention «Facilities in the campus (latest technology used for teaching, library, cafeteria, etc.)» (Mean Rank = 277.52), «Accreditation of the university» (Mean Rank = 272.45) and «Scholarship opportunities» (Mean Rank = 272.45).

Table 7. Assessment of educational factors

Educational factors	Program					
	Bachelors		Master		Doctoral	
	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank
EF24	Kruskal-Wallis H: 53.993; p=0.000	381.52	Kruskal-Wallis H: 33.493; p=0.000	273.67	Kruskal-Wallis H: 32.875; p=0.000	203.70
EF25		363.29		301.89		187.89
EF26		420.,93		342.02		210.68
EF27		517.62		376.77		277.52
EF28		439.35		380.41		210.95
EF29		509.32		401.34		272.45
EF30		744.50		345.36		258.40
EF31		483.95		385.64		272.45
EF32		530.49		367.89		270.70
EF33		486.96		377.22		249.61
EF34		494.62		319.64		253.13

Sources: developed by the authors.

7. All factors together. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test show that:
- there are statistically significant differences in the assessment of the role of factors in choosing the place of studies in Europe in all levels of study programs;
- factors related to education play the most significant role in the choice of the place of studies in Europe in all levels of study programs

Table 8. Assessment of all factors

Factor groups	Program					
	Bachelors		Master		Doctoral	
	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank	Tests statistics	Mean Rank
Regional factors	Kruskal-Wallis H: 32.582; p=0.000	1527.63	Kruskal-Wallis H: 9.453; p=0.024	1089.59	Kruskal-Wallis H: 16.569; p=0.001	740.09
Political factors		1365.02		1006.43		671.26
Financial factors		1531.87		1088.67		742.72
Educational factors		1617.13		1118.56		793.89

Source: developed by the authors.

Conclusions. The aim of the paper «to describe the factors affecting foreign students to choose European HEI and provide information on the factors, which are of great importance» was achieved. The first hypothesis of the research «All factors in the top four factor groups – regional, political, financial, educational - play the same role in the choice of the place of studies from European HEI» and the second hypothesis of the research «All sub-factors in each of the top four factor groups play the same role in the choice of the place of studies from European HEI» were rejected. There are Limitations of the research - the author's are interested in «third-country national» internationally mobile students; the foreign students only from Pakistan are analyzed; for calculations, the level of the study program (Bachelor, Master, or Doctor) is used as a grouping feature. The author's findings correlate with the authors of previous researches to a great extent. Moreover, they provide information on the factors affecting foreign students to choose European HEI and which are of great importance to foreign students. The results of the paper should be used for HEI decision-makers working out different student attraction strategies, thus increasing the number of students and competitiveness. Four groups of factors – regional, political financial, and educational- were analyzed. The research shows that the most significant role in the choice of the place of studies in Europe for all level of foreign students plays educational factors, the least considerable role – political factors. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test show that there are statistically significant differences in the assessment of the role of factors in choosing the place of studies in Europe in different levels of study programs. From Regional factors for Bachelor's students, the most critical factor is «Crime index of the country», for Master students – «Locals can converse in English», for Doctoral students – «Good Medical facilities». In case of political factors for Bachelor's and Master students, the most critical factor is «Job seeking visa after education», for Doctoral students – «Permanent Residence options are available». From Financial factors, for Bachelor's and Master students, the most important factor is «Flight ticket and related travel expenses», for Doctoral students – «Availability of Educational Loans».

This study contributes to a variety of factors that influence the selection of HEI by international students. Exploration of this area is expected to develop an understanding of the theoretical aspects of selecting to study abroad and practically implement an understanding of the growth of the HE sector in general. Based on the same survey, the authors are planning to continue the research about the students' choices from the next countries and then to compare the results.

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Бренд Європейських закладів вищої освіти як ключовий фактор залучення іноземних студентів
У статті досліджено специфіку формування та промоції бренду закладів вищої освіти (ЗВО) в Європі серед іноземних студентів. Авторами зазначено, що глобалізація та створення єдиного європейського освітнього простору спровокували зростання рівня зацікавленості іноземних студентів до навчання в європейських ЗВО. Встановлено, що загострення економічних проблем, зростання рівня безробіття та бідності, політична нестабільність, низькі можливості працевлаштування, а також загострення екологічних проблем є головними причинами пошуку можливостей вступу до іноземних ЗВО. Головною метою статті є визначення факторів, які впливають на вибір іноземних студентів вступати до ЗВО Європи. Для досягнення поставленої мети, аналіз здійснено в наступній логічній послідовності: 1) систематизовано попередні наукові напрацювання з досліджуваної проблематики; 2) проаналізовано результати опитування респондентів. Методологічним інструментарієм даного дослідження є створення бази даних респондентів; дослідження факторів, які впливають на вибір іноземних студентів навчатись в європейських ЗВО; аналіз та інтерпретація результатів опитування за допомогою непараметричних тестів. За результатами емпіричного дослідження встановлено, що бренд європейських ЗВО є головним фактором, який впливає на вибір іноземних студентів. Авторами виокремлено чотири групи факторів, які мають статичтично значущий вплив на вибір іноземних студентів європейського ЗВО, а саме: регіональні, політичні фінансові та освітні. Емпіричні результати засвідчили, що головну роль при виборі Європейського ЗВО для студентів усіх освітніх рівнів (бакалавр, магістр та доктор філософії) відіграє якість освітніх послуг. При цьому найменший вплив мають політичні фактори. За результатами тесту Крускала-Уолліса встановлено, що існують статистично значущі відмінності в силі впливу факторів на вибір місця навчання в Європі для різних рівнів навчальних програм. Результати дослідження можуть бути корисними особам, які приймають рішення щодо формування стратегій залучення іноземних студентів та зростання конкурентоспроможності ЗВО.
Ключові слова: іноземні студенти, глобалізація, вища освіта, бізнес-адміністрування, вибір студентів.