

ATINER's Conference Paper Proceedings Series

MED2020-0179

Athens, 18 May 2020

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favor of Foundation Universities Providing Paid
Education in Turkey**

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Athens, 18 May 2020

ISSN: 2529-167X

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ABSTRACT

Especially after 1980, Turkey has transitioned from social economic approach to a neo-liberal economy. In this context, privatization in Turkey's economy has become widespread and many sectors held by the state have been opened to non-state capital owners. Privatizations were implemented in many areas in the 1990s, especially in media sector, and the state and private equity started to provide certain services for the community. In this process, capital owners were allowed to invest in areas such as media, health and education, and the number of businesses with private capital increased in these sectors. One of these sectors was the education sector. Especially in the eighties, there has been an increase in the number of privately owned colleges and high schools. Similar developments have occurred in higher education universities. Those who want to establish a privately owned university in Turkey have started to achieve these demands through a foundation. The establishment of privately owned universities under the foundation structure was first seen in 1984. Bilkent University, which is in Ankara, has become Turkey's first non-state — with a private capital — foundation university. In the nineties, businessmen invested their capital in foundations. These foundations used this capital to open new universities. With this application, there has been a significant increase in the number of privately owned universities in Turkey. With rapidly increasing numbers in the 2000s, foundation universities, which provide paid education, have resulted in a competitive structure in the education sector. By 2020, it is announced that there are 129 state-affiliated universities in Turkey, while there are 78 privately owned foundation universities. In this study, a research was conducted on how state universities and private universities compete to attract students. Based on the survey administered to students, who preferred foundation universities that provide paid education, it was questioned what criteria were efficient in the decisions of students in preferring the foundation universities that provide paid education. As a result of the research, it was determined that the most important reasons for the university preferences of the candidate students were, respectively, the location of the university, tuition fees, scholarship opportunities, quality of education and opportunities for business life. The majority of students preferred the foundation universities; however, they stated that the promotion and advertisements of these universities did not have an impact on their preferences. On the other hand, it was revealed in the research that the media that is most effective in university preference is television ads and social media ads.

Keywords: Education, University, Advertising, Media, Turkey

The Concepts of University and Higher Education

Universities assume an important role in providing a social service in the context of producing information to meet the qualified manpower needs of countries. The word university, derived from “Universitas” (in Medieval Latin it means community, congregation and entirety), stands for organizations, which undertake the functions of producing qualified and high level knowledge, raising qualified and high level people, contributing to the development of science and protecting and extending scientific knowledge (Durmuş, 2017). The Turkish Language Society defines university as “*an educational institution that comprises organizations and departments such as faculties, institutes, colleges doing and publishing high quality scientific research and that have scientific autonomy and public legal personality*”.

The expectations from universities are that, besides assuming a role in raising scientists and researchers using their technological infrastructure, they put forward proposals for the solutions of the problems of the regions they are in (Özcan and Çakır, 2016). Also, universities are expected to produce common projects with the regional non-governmental organizations to support solving social problems and become the flagship of development. Being an integrated part of the society and city, they belong to, they are requested to increase the quality of the labor market (Uysal and Çatı, 2016).

With their contribution to the development of human capital, universities contribute to economic and social growth and development. Therefore, they undertake a significant role in the development of the society and the region they are located in. Universities are the basic source for employment with the qualified employees they put forward to the labour market. They also provide cultural, physical and sports infrastructure, provide prevalence of the entrepreneurship ecosystem with collaboration with the industry and with the education and opportunities they offer. Accordingly, they avail social advantages such as providing the establishment of new businesses (Sungur, 2015).

The traditional functions of universities such as producing and spreading knowledge and raising students fall behind in the developing social structure and do not meet the necessities of the current era. In the Internet era, knowledge can be produced and spread incredibly fast. Thus, besides the traditional function of producing knowledge, universities have started producing technology in their region and using this technology with industry and also producing technology for industry. As a matter of fact, large industry institutions and holdings have established foundation universities to their names to meet their employment needs from their own universities. This is an outstanding example to show how universities become integrated with the society and industry (Özer, 2011).

The Development Process of the University Concept

It might be pointed out that universities went through three phases in the development process in the historical process. The first-generation universities are the Medieval universities that were established with the aim of transmitting the existing knowledge from generation to generation rather than producing knowledge. The second-generation universities continued their activities, adding the aim of research to transmitting the existing knowledge. These universities are also called Humboldt Universities and they predominated higher education until mid-20th century. The third-generation universities have additional features together with those of the second-generation universities. Currently a fourth-generation university is recognized: Modern Universities (Enterprising University Model) (Özdemir, 2016).

First-Generation Universities

The origins of the first institution that can be called a university go back to Platon's Academia in B.C. 4th century. However, the past of the first-generation universities that can be named as university in today's meaning is based on 900-1000 years ago. The universities established in Paris, Oxford and Cambridge following the Bologna University founded in Italy at the end of 11th century are the first representatives of the current universities. Europe's oldest university is Bologna University and Santo Tomas University (Asia, 1611), Harvard University (United States of America, 1636) Sydney University (Australia, 1850) are the first universities established in their continents (Konan and Yılmaz, 2017).

The development of the Medieval Latin society brought a type of administrative structure along. Universities established in the Medieval Europe formed their infrastructure, curriculum and principles and rules for scientific development and thus, they differentiated from the church, cathedral, and convent schools dominant in that era. Until the 12th century schools of such religious institutions gained recognition; however, from 12th century onwards the effectiveness of these schools decreased. The factor that was influential in this decrease was the change in mentality that aimed at the belief that books were an instrument for knowledge to be produced and expanded rather than objects required to be protected as per the Christian belief (Çiftçi, 2017).

In the 17th century university education had become a privilege that could only be reached by a handful of wealthy and noble people. In the 18th century Napoleon closed almost all universities in Continental Europe and changed them into governmental institutions. This caused strong reactions by the academic community and with Wilhelm von Humboldt's attempts the Humboldt Universities, a different type of a university model, came forward that would be named after him in the next era.

Second Generation Universities (Humboldt Universities)

Humboldt Universities that are also known as the German University Model turned towards modern research and aim of research with their students and assistant professors, who had more responsibilities. The base of their research was empiricism, verification, or falsification. To a certain extent Humboldt Universities became the stronghold of pure science, in other words, of science for science. These universities continued their activities with the aim of scientific development and the system of professorship became established and expanded through these universities (Wissema, 2014).

Second generation universities considered scientific research their reason for being. The structure of these universities was a mono-discipline faculty system and they worked on their own. Admission to such universities was rather difficult for students and only very bright students conforming to the school's admission criteria were accepted. Thus, the right for education in such universities was in the monopoly of an extremely limited group only. Such universities are a reason for national pride. Therefore, they published only in the national language of that country. Humboldt Universities that operated with the financing of the government also accepted individual donations (Wissema, 2014).

At Humboldt Universities science had become a type of professional career and changed into a bureaucratic and systematized structure. In mid-19th century in Germany science was done in a group of university lecturers and students. Research had become a compulsory part of professorship. In such universities empiricist scientific research were organized at institutes affiliated to universities and became a continuous and bureaucratic activity. At Humboldt Universities systematic education and distribution of work became standardized and changed into an activity, in which the growth of scientific knowledge was significant rather than individual interest. However, as in these universities research was more prominent than raising students and lecturers, the master – apprentice relationship was never broken down and at whatever age the students were, they carried out their research activities as a subordinate of the professor and in the professor's name (Ben-David, 2011).

Third Generation Universities (Modern Universities)

As a by-product of the German antipathy that came about with the Second World War, the German University Model was gradually abandoned at the end of the war and this model was replaced by the British – Anglo Saxon model. The Anglo - Saxon model is the decentralization (decreasing or limiting the powers of the state) model. This university model is widespread in Britain, Canada, Australia and Ireland, which were part of the United Kingdom and in this model, universities are administered by interim committees. The committees are managed by the board that is comprised of people who are not members of the university. In these universities there is no rule for the rector to be a member of that university or be a professor. The board only undertakes the

management of the university and does not intervene in academic issues (Erdem, 2006).

Third generation universities have some other features in addition to those of the second-generation universities. For example, research is either transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary. These universities carry out their activities in collaboration with the industry, research and development companies, investors, and other universities. Thus, they are a kind of network university model. They operate in national and international arenas and they compete to incorporate the best students and academicians into their institutions. These universities also produce mass education programs and at the same time they attempt to meet the needs of high - level scientists. As the medium of instruction is mostly English, it is aimed that besides research and education, knowledge is used as well.

The New University Model: Enterprising Universities

This type of universities started in the 1800s with the MIT and Stanford academicians rendering consultancy services to the industry. Currently Cambridge is the most important representative of these universities, which aim at contributing to regional welfare and peace on the condition that this does not pose an obstacle to their traditional research function. In this manner, the financing field expands by the help of contractual research and patent activities and new enterprises are formed by the academicians, technicians and students. These types of universities are based on commercialization and commodification and they are called the new type of enterprising universities (Sakinç and Bursalıoğlu, 2012).

Together with their academicians and students the enterprising universities research, produce and implement innovations to use in their work. This type of universities is particularly common in the USA and they act to gain profit. As the Cold War ended and the world went under the American hegemony, they became widespread in the whole world. These universities were developed to meet the needs of the industry and they continue their activities to provide profit maximization. Therefore, the student – university and university – society relations are shaped in line with this aim. Along with the foundation of the Turkish Council of Higher Education, this model has started to be adopted in our country as well and the professorship model has been replaced by field and department of fields.

The American University Model is neither completely centralized nor decentralized. These types of universities are strong in management and they continue their activities with the aims of implementing source saving and cost strategies to increase their income sources, of developing a complicated way for school fees and support and of entering the commercial life (Çetin, 2007).

The Universities of Turkey

The history of the universities in Turkey's current borders could be extended to Çifte Medrese and Karatay Madrassa founded in Kayseri in 13th century in the era before the republic. However, the first examples that could be called modern universities are Imperial School of Naval Engineering, established in 1773 and changed into Istanbul Technical University (İTÜ) in 1944 and Darülfünun, established in 1869 and changed into Istanbul University in 1933 (Sargın, 2007). The autonomy of Darülfünun by breaking up from the Ministry of Education in 1925 is the first revolution in the field of universities in our country. As in 1946 the Law of Universities no. 4936 passed, universities were defined as entities with general autonomy and legal entity and their corporate status was specified (Gül and Gül, 2014). Until this date universities were mostly located in Istanbul and Ankara. Between 1950-1982 universities moved to Anatolia from Istanbul and Ankara and started to expand there. In the context of university establishments, the first wave was realized in 1981 and the second wave in 1992 when many universities were founded on the same day. After 1994 foundation universities started to be established. The fourth wave in terms of universities was experienced between 2006-2008 and 49 more new universities were founded. Currently there is a total of 206 universities, 129 of which are public, 72 of which foundation and 5 foundation Vocational Higher Education Schools. 7.74 million of students are studying at these universities at all levels.

Table 1. *Number of Students Studying at Universities in Operation in Turkey (2018-2019 Academic Year)*

			Associate's degree	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Total New Registration		Male	323.867	343.398	77.837	745.102
		Female	325.738	359.056	62.381	747.175
		Total	649.605	702.454	140.218	1.492.277
	Total	Male	1.410.461	2.379.422	274.633	4.064.516
		Female	1.418.969	2.041.277	215.740	3.675.986
		Total	2.829.430	4.420.699	490.373	7.740.502
Public	New Registration	Male	297.609	306.979	64.225	668.813
		Female	294.975	318.889	49.851	663.715
		Total	592.584	625.868	114.076	1.332.528
	Total	Male	1.340.660	2.193.173	226.439	3.760.272
		Female	1.345.198	1.848.596	180.608	3.374.402
		Total	2.685.858	4.041.769	407.047	7.134.674
Foundation	New Registration	Male	26.258	36.419	13.612	76.289
		Female	30.763	40.167	12.530	83.460
		Total	57.021	76.586	26.142	159.749

	Total	Male	69.801	186.249	48.194	304.244
		Female	73.771	192.681	35.132	301.584
		Total	143.572	378.930	83.326	605.828

Source: <http://istatistik.yok.gov.tr>

According to the statistics of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (YÖK), a review of the total ratio of students applying to universities and admitted shows that in 1980 the number of university applicants was 466.963, but only 41.574 of these students could be placed in universities and that the ratio of all students placed to the total applicants is 8,9%. In 2018 the number of total students who were placed in universities is 36%. The number of applicants was 2.381.412 and 857.240 of these students were placed in universities.

Table 2: *Number of Applicants for Higher Education and Number of Applicants Placed in Turkey by Years*

Years	Total Applicants	Total No. Placed	Ratio (%)
1980	466.963	41.574	8,9
1990	892.975	196.253	22
2000	1.407.920	414.647	29,5
2010	1.587.866	763.516	48,1
2011	1.759.403	789.169	44,9
2012	1.895.478	865.631	45,7
2013	1.924.547	877.787	45,6
2014	2.086.115	922.275	44,2
2015	2.126.681	983.090	46,2
2016	2.256.367	961.864	42,6
2017	2.265.844	825.397	36,4
2018	2.381.412	857.240	36,0

As can be observed at the table, in twenty-eight years the ratio of applicants placed in universities in Turkey reached 36% and more than 850 thousand candidates became university students. It is a frequent area of research in literature what the students' criteria for university preference are. Thus, universities can find out the issues they need to attach significance to in order to include successful students in their institutions.

As of 2020, in Turkey a total of 227 higher education institutions, 129 of which are public, 78 of which are foundation universities (on private equity) are in operation. According to the data of the Turkish Council of Higher Education (YÖK), a total of 170.561 university instructors are working (Posta,2020).

Review of data reveal that as of January 2020, the number of students in higher education in Turkey reached 8.076.615, including open university. With this figure, Turkey ranks first in the area of higher education in Europe. The demographics of these students show that 3.887.135 female and 4.189.480 male university students are studying at universities in 2020. The distribution of these students in public and foundation universities is specified as 7.445.530 students in public and 619.793 students in foundation universities (DHA – State News Agency, 2020).

University Preference and Preference Models

When the topic is considered from the perspective of the candidates, it is revealed that the issue for preferring a specific university is the primary point of challenge for the students at their decision-making process. Therefore, research have been carried out and are still in progress in the whole world, particularly in the USA, to identify the influential factors on students' university preferences and various models are being developed due to the results of these researches.

In general terms, the decision models have been developed to explain the factors that specify the choice of a person when that person has various alternatives (Uusitalo, Lehtikoinen et al., 2015). These models attempt to explain the influential factors on the consumer preferences, however, as university students are not exactly considered consumers, it is rather difficult to explain these factors impacting their university choices with traditional decision models. Many factors that are involved in the issue such as material, moral and future-directed ones complicate the decision-making process for the students. The university preference models may be categorized as economical, sociological, and mixed models.

- ✓ **Economical Model:** This model evaluates the university students rationally and puts forward the idea that in university preference, students make evaluations regarding cost calculations and from the alternatives, they try to choose the alternative with maximum benefit. Thus, these models do not take the students' cognitive situation into consideration. Economical models are criticized as they work on benefit maximization in candidate students' preferences and disregard the factors that could impact the preference (Vrontis, Thrassou and Melanthiou, 2007).
- ✓ **Sociological Model:** The sociological model puts forward the idea that in university preference sociological factors are influential. The variables such as the level of interest of the students in higher education or in the field, gender and the economic level of themselves and their family are taken into consideration. This model views the issue from a wider perspective than the economic model; however, it may not prove to be on the right lines to make explanations connected to solely sociological reasons as individuals may also make preferences that do not correspond

to the social environment they live in (Vrontis, Thrassou and Melanthiou, 2007). Therefore, the need for a mixed model that considers several factors into consideration in university preference has arisen.

- ✓ **Mixed Models:** These models take into consideration both the rationalistic approach and also the sociological approach and address university preference from a much wider perspective. Therefore, it might be pointed out they provide a better explanation than the other models. The mixed models that are prominent in literature are those of Chapman (1981), Jackson (1982), Hossler and Gallagher (1987), Perna (2006) and Vrontis, Thrassou, Melanthiou (2007).

Chapman Model: The Chapman Model is of importance in that it is the first model, in which the consumer purchase decision behavioral theory was first applied on university preference. The model puts forward the idea that the candidate students are aware of their individual characteristics and make a final decision, evaluating the external factors as well. In making this decision internal factors such as the student's academic performance at high school and their willingness to study at the university are listed under three headings.

- (1) Constant features specific for the university such as the university fee, location and the department the student wishes to study at,
- (2) Communication attempts of universities with the candidate students,
- (3) External factors such as friends, parents and other significant people for the student are stated to be influential.

After all these factors are evaluated, the phases of application, preference and registration are processed (Chapman, 1981). The Chapman Model is of importance as it is one of the first studies that evaluates economical, sociological and psychological factors together.

Jackson Model: Jackson (1982) put forward a three-stage model comprising the preference stage, exclusion stage and evaluation stage. The model postulates that at the preference stage the student's past academic performance and aims are taken into account and at the exclusion stage factors such as the location of the university and university and living costs are regarded and elimination takes place. At the final stage students consider getting a job and beginning to work instead of going to the university and/or other alternatives (getting married, joining the army etc.).

Hossler and Gallagher Model: This model develops the Chapman (1981) and Jackson (1982) models and puts forward that a three-stage preference is made. It has been developed in three stages as awareness of studying at the university, seeking information and decision making. At the first stage of the model the students firstly decide whether they will continue their further studies at the university. At this stage their academic performance level at the high school and the socio-economic features of their family step in. At the information collection stage students collect information about alternative universities. At this stage while they are collecting information about the

universities, universities carry out marketing activities to give information to the students. The decision – making stage is an interactive stage between the student and the university, to which the candidate has been accepted. At this stage the potential opportunities provided by the university that can impact the decision directly (scholarship, credit, free accommodation etc.) are brought to the attention of students (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987).

Perna Preference Model: This model consists of four stages from outside to inside. The first stage is the social, economic, and political environments. At this stage, the impacting elements are the public factors such as demographic changes, macroeconomic conditions, changes in the university placement examination system. The second stage is the higher education environment. At this stage, the interaction between the universities and the students and the information they provide and the opportunities the university provides, and its location are taken into consideration. The third stage of the model considers the high school environment and the social environment. At this stage, the orientation and guidance of the high school guidance counsellors and knowledge on the universities that students receive become involved in the issue. The fourth and final stage of the model refers to the habitus concept, which is the complete adjustment competence of the individual to the situations in the social world s/he lives in and his/her demographic characteristics and cultural and social capital. Thus, it emphasizes the personal traits of the individual (Perna, 2006).

Vrontis, Thrassou, Melanthiou Model: The most current model developed for developed countries takes into consideration individual (language, religion, race, gender, socioeconomic conditions, life style, personality traits etc.) and environmental determining factors (economic conditions, cultural status, financial support, effective individuals etc.) and the features of the higher education institution (size, location, public/private university, accommodating preferred department, acceptance conditions, tuition fee, scholarship and credit opportunities etc.) and activities and also the education quality and curriculum of the student's high school in university preference (Vrontis, Thrassou and Melanthiou, 2007).

Factors Impacting University Preference

The university preference models that have been developed to specify what impacts university preference and what does not and what impacts various factors at what extent state the principal factors influencing university preference. In general terms these factors might be grouped as the location of the university, the desired academic program and its quality, the reputation of the institution, the advertising and promotional activities of the institution, the size of the campus and its facilities, tuition fees and scholarship opportunities, opportunities for careers, recommendations of influential people and demographic characteristics. At recent researches, the factors that are effective on university preference are listed as follows:

- ✓ ***Location of the University:*** The city where the university is located is one of the basic criteria taken into account by the students at the stage of preference. For example, the tendency for preference for students with limited economic opportunities may be the city of the family or a city very close to the city of the family; however, for students with better economic opportunities big cities may be a reason for preference (Fırat and Kömürcüoğlu, 2015; Akar, 2012; Kozak and Coşar, 2009; Demirtaş, 2012; Polat, 2012; Dunnet, Moorhouse, Walsh and Barry, 2012; Özcan, 2016; Ceylan, Köse and Aydın, 2017; Apaydın and Kapucu, 2017).
- ✓ ***The Desired Academic Program and its Quality:*** Another basic criterion for students for their university preferences is whether the university has their desired academic program or not. The existence of the student's desired academic program at the university may provide the fact that the student prefers that university among its alternatives. On the other hand, while making preferences among different universities with the same program, the quality of those universities and of the particular program can be determinative (Ancheh, Krishnan and Nurtjahja, 2007; Kozak and Coşar, 2009; Türemez and Ündey-Kalpaklıoğlu, 2010; Demirtaş, 2012; Yakar, Odabaş and Gündeğer, 2016; Çatı, İştari and Özcan, 2016; Tuncalı-Yaman and Çakır, 2017).
- ✓ ***The Reputation and Recognition of the Institution:*** The reputation and recognition of the universities to be preferred can come to the forefront in students' preferences. Particularly for students who will choose universities abroad the ranking of the universities among the best universities of the world can be a reason for their preferences. A similar criterion can be effective for preference for domestic universities. Especially in countries, where the number of universities is considerably high, the academic recognition of the institution and the prestige of being a graduate of that university can be a reason for preference (Ancheh, Krishnan and Nurtjahja, 2007; Türemez and Ündey-Kalpaklıoğlu, 2010; Dunnet, Moorhouse, Walsh, Barry, 2012; Ağaoğlu and Yurtkoru 2013; Özcan, 2016; Çatı, İştari and Özcan, 2016; Tuncalı-Yaman and Çakır, 2017).
- ✓ ***Advertising and Promotional Activities:*** As the preference period approaches and within that period, particularly foundation universities carry out advertising and promotional activities through television, radio, internet and social media. Considering the fact that today's university age young people belong to generation Z, they have been born into the internet and grown up with it and research all information from the internet, the internet sites of the universities is the first resource that the university candidates refer to. Also, the visits of the university representatives to high schools or introductory visits from high schools to universities are considered part of the promotional activities of the universities (Türemez and Ündey-Kalpaklıoğlu, 2010; Demirtaş, 2012; Apaydın and Kapucu, 2013).

- ✓ ***Campus Size and Facilities:*** Factors such as the size of the university campus, its location, facilities in the campus, dormitories and other accommodation opportunities, sizes and quality of classrooms can be preference criteria for the candidate students (Ancheh, Krishnan and Nurtjahja, 2007; Polat, 2012; Ağaoğlu and Yurtkoru, 2013; Özcan, 2016; Çatı, İstar and Özcan, 2016; Tuncalı-Yaman and Çakır, 2017).
- ✓ ***Tuition Fees and Scholarship Opportunities:*** Another important criterion is the tuition fee and financial opportunities for the student such as scholarship and/or credits (Ancheh, Krishnan and Nurtjahja, 2007; Dunnet, Moorhouse, Walsh, Barry, 2012; Ağaoğlu and Yurtkoru, 2013; Çokgezen, 2014; Apaydın and Kapucu, 2017).
- ✓ ***Career Opportunities:*** The current most important problem is youth unemployment. For example, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute TÜİK) data, as of March 2019 the youth unemployment ratio is 25,2%. An important criterion for students is the time to find a job and job opportunities after they graduate. Besides, while job opportunities are significant for those students, who want to enter business life directly after they graduate, a different career life will come into prominence for those students, who want to continue their studies in graduate or post-graduate work to become university academicians. Thus, career opportunities is a significant preference criterion both for undergraduate students to go into business life immediately after they graduate and for those who want to continue in graduate or post-graduate studies (Ancheh, Krishnan and Nurtjahja, 2007; Demirtaş, 2012; Dunnet, Moorhouse, Walsh, Barry, 2012).
- ✓ ***Recommendations of Influential People:*** Recommendations and opinions of family and friends may be an important criterion for young people at the stage of preference, who feel a need for being convinced. Significant figures in the student's life such as parents, siblings, relatives, friends and teachers are guiding factors for the students' university preferences (Demirtaş, 2012; Polat, 2012; Ağaoğlu and Yurtkoru, 2013; Yakar, Odabaş and Gündeğer, 2016; Özcan, 2016; Apaydın and Kapucu, 2017).
- ✓ ***Demographic Characteristics:*** Factors such as the socio-economic conditions, the education level of their families and gender of the candidate students can also impact the students' preferences (Shank, 1998).

Previous Research regarding Factors Impacting Students' University Preferences in Turkey

There is a wide number of studies in domestic and international literature that have been made to put forward the factors impacting university preferences. This part of the study addresses the findings of the research in literature.

Ağaoğlu and Yurtkoru (2013) performed a study with 2216 students studying at Marmara University with the aim of specifying the students' university and program preferences. According to the findings of the research, social and sports activities, international recognition, research opportunities, the recognition of the university, family and friends, public universities and low tuition cost are definitive in the university preferences of the students.

Ceylan, Köse and Aydın (2017) performed a study with 200 students preparing to enter the university in Uşak with the aim of putting forward the idea whether the impact of university and city characteristics in university preference differentiates according to gender. According to the findings of the study, while the level of importance for the characteristics of the city does not display any differences, the recognition of the university, the perception of security of the city and social life are the most important factors impacting university preference.

Yakar, Odabaş and Gündeğer (2016) performed a research with the Hacettepe, Siirt and Aksaray universities' students with the aim of comparing the reasons for university preferences of the students. The study was carried out with a total of 863 students from three universities and the findings reveal that for students studying at Hacettepe University the education quality is the most important criterion for preference whereas for students studying at Siirt and Aksaray universities recommendations of family and friends were more important.

Demirtaş (Demirtaş, 2012) investigated the impact of the promotional activities of foundation universities on student preferences specific at Istanbul Aydın University students. The research was conducted with 550 students studying at the said university and the findings show that the most important preference criteria are job opportunities provided as a university graduate, friends' recommendations, quality of the academic staff, advertising and proximity of the university to their homes.

Polat (2012) conducted a research with a total of 290 freshmen students of Kocaeli University Teacher Training Faculty with the aim of specifying their reasons for preference for university and department. The findings of the research have put forward that the factors of family and teacher recommendations and their help played the most prominent role in university preference. In addition to this, other criteria for preference are the city where the university is located, the socio-cultural facilities of the university and the unofficial information about the school.

In his research Çokgezen (2014) investigated the factors that impacted the university preferences of students studying at the department of economics and put forward that the city of the university and the size of the city, the academic performance and the language of instruction at the university were determining the university preferences. Also, it was specified that for students at public universities the tuition fees were important and students at private universities attached greater importance to academic performance.

Türemez and Ündey-Kalpaklıoğlu (2010) investigated the impact of public relations on the preferences of foundation universities of university candidates

specific to candidates living in Istanbul Taksim, Fatih, Beşiktaş and Bakırköy regions. The findings of the research reveal that the most significant criteria are the recognition of the university, what they promise, corporate social responsibility awareness and quality of education. It was determined that the internet and television commercials, fairs and introductory visits to the university campus were effective on these criteria.

Shank (1998) investigated the effect of gender on university preference with 183 students studying at a large – scale university at a mid – west states of the USA. The findings of the research display that male and female students take different characteristics into account at their university preferences and both genders show differences in their preferences while attaching importance to a different source. In summary, gender in university preferences was found to be a determinant per se.

Ancheh et al. (2007) conducted a research in Malaysia to specify the effective criteria on students' university preferences following the university reform in the country. The findings of the research reveal that for students studying at public universities in Malaysia “the recognition of the institution and the quality of education”, “the characteristics of the institutions”, and “the future job opportunities” were important in their preferences. For students studying at private universities in Malaysia the determining criteria are low cost, the campus environment and tuition fees.

Dunnet et al. (2012) conducted a research to determine the impact of the high tuition fees on students' university preferences. The findings show that for students with university – graduate parents is less important than for those students whose parents are not university – graduates. Other effective factors are the recognition of the department, the recognition of the university, the collaboration of the university with private sector, distance and university entrance conditions.

Özcan (Özcan, 2016) carried out a research with 1112 university students in order to determine the factors effective on students' university preferences. The findings have revealed that the factors effective on university candidates' preferences are the reputation and brand value of the university, the opportunities offered, to what extent the university meets the basic needs, the guidance of the students' high schools, the effect of family and friends and sports and cultural opportunities.

Apaydın and Kapucu (2017) conducted a research with 1044 freshmen students studying at Akdeniz and Eskişehir Osmangazi Universities with the aim of determining the reasons for preference of public universities in Turkey. The results of the research display that the financial possibilities offered by the university, close friends, cost of education, information about the university, the effect of the high school education and the city, where the university is located are important factors for the university preferences of undergraduate students.

The results of the studies conducted by Kozak and Coşar (2009) with the aim of determining the effective factors in university preferences of university

candidates reveal that quality of academic education, the location of the city, quality of life in the city play important roles on university preferences.

Çatı, İřtar and Özcan (2016) researched the factors impacting students' university preferences with 1112 university students. The findings of the research display that there are four basic factors that impact students' university preferences, and these are the prestige of the university, the opportunities the university provides, campus facilities and social opportunities.

Tuncalı-Yaman and Çakır (2017) investigated the factors impacting university preferences in a comparative study in terms of public and foundation universities. The study involved 296 students and the findings show that students preferring foundation universities consider the presence of their most desirable department at the university, the academic reputability of the school and campus facilities as the most important factors for their preferences.

Table 3. *Research on Factors Impacting University Preference*

Researcher	Date	Location	The Desirable Academic Program and its Quality	The Reputability of the Institution	Advertising and Promotion	Size and Facilities of the Campus	Tuition Fee / Scholarship Opportunities	Career Opportunities	Recommendations of Important People	Demographic Characteristics
Shank	1998									X
Ancheh, Krishnan and Nurtjahja	2007		X	X		X	X	X		
Kozak and Cořar	2009	X	X							
Türemez and Ündey-Kalpaklıođu	2010		X	X	X					
Demirtař	2012	X	X		X			X	X	
Polat	2012	X				X			X	
Dunnet, Moorhouse, Walsh, Barry	2012	X		X			X	X		
Ađaođlu and Yurtkoru	2013			X		X	X		X	
Çokgezen	2014		X				X			
Yakar, Odabař and Gündeđer	2016		X						X	
Özcan	2016	X		X		X			X	
Çatı, İřtar and Özcan	2016		X	X		X				
Ceylan, Köse and Aydın	2017	X								
Apaydın and Kapucu	2017	X			X		X		X	
Tuncalı-Yaman and Çakır	2017		X	X		X				

The Research and Application Part of The Study

In this part of the study, the factors affecting the university preferences of the young people studying at the university are also included. This part of the study covers the research of the factors impacting university preferences of students studying at universities. The universities providing education for tuition fees that came forward as a result of the developing liberal economies have currently become service providers. Those who get the service have turned into consumers. While public universities provide education free of charge in Turkey, the foundation universities are managed like companies by the foundation chairs and provide education in return for a fee. Although the fees for education are different for different faculties and departments, the annual tuition fee of a four – year faculty is on average 30 thousand TRY (app. 4.500 USD). Due to this characteristic, higher education is carried out by service purchase. Thus, foundation universities are in the position of service providers and students are consumers purchasing the service. A very natural result of the relation between supplier and consumer is the issue of “preference”. As in every product and service preferred by consumers, factors impacting the university preference is also in question in this situation.

In this research, the answer to the question “Which factors do students take into consideration while making their university preferences in Turkey?” is sought. The sub-question of the study is “Are students who make their university preferences affected by the media while making their preferences?”.

Within this scope, in this study what the university preference criteria of university students are and how effective the advertising and promotion campaigns of universities on the media are have been investigated. The study has also conducted research on the issue of the ideas of students making university preferences on university commercials on television channels. In the research a survey has been carried out for university students, who at least once in their lives have made a university choice. In this descriptive qualitative study that was carried out with survey method a total of 284 students selected randomly were interviewed face to face.

Findings: University Students’ Preference Criteria

University students involved in the research were asked about the factors they had taken into account for their university preferences and they were also asked to specify three factors. Therefore, the total number of the responses was three times the total number of participants. According to the findings the students prefer the university mostly for its location (the university being in the city they live in and/or close to their home) (%18,7). In addition to these factors, low tuition fee (%15,7) and scholarship opportunities (%13,6) are the other prominent preference reasons.

In the findings of the research “Education quality” ranks the fourth in students’ preference with %12,6 and career opportunities of the university

(internship, finding a job after graduation) (%12,1) and university – specific implementation areas (studio etc.) (%8,1) were stated as reasons for preference by the participants. Other effective factors are the reputation of the university (%7,8), recommendations of important people (%5,1), campus facilities and (%4) and academic performance ranking (%3).

Table 4. *Participants' University Preference Criteria*

<i>Preference Criteria</i>	<i>%</i>
Location	18,7
Tuition Fees	15,7
Scholarship Opportunities	13,6
Education Quality, Academic Staff	12,6
Career Opportunities (Internship, finding jobs etc.)	12,1
University Facilities (Having a studio)	8,1
Reputation of the University	7,1
Recommendations of Important People (Friends, family, teacher etc.)	5,1
Campus	4,0
Performance Ranking, Sufficient Score	3,0
Total	100,0

Impact of Advertising and Promotion on the Media on University Preferences

Students participated in the research were asked about whether the advertisements and promotion of the universities on the media were effective on their university preferences. While the participants did not agree on common ground of the impact of the advertisements and promotion of the universities, opinions stating that these were not effective on preferences were more than others.

Those who stated that the advertisements and promotion of the universities on the media were not effective on their university preferences based their opinions on the issues that “education does not need advertising”, “students already do their research regarding”, “students have their own dreams”, “students can only prefer those places, for which they have sufficient scores” and that “the important thing is the success of the university graduates”.

Students who stated that the advertisements and promotion of the universities on the media were effective on their university preferences based their opinions on the issues that “while advertisements cannot reach students, they do reach the families and impact the preferences through families”, “advertisements leave a mark in the mind”, “they provide interest”, “they increase brand value”, “gives a more positive perception of the school”, that “they think if the university has a rich advertisement budget, they also have a rich general budget” and that “they provide information by explaining the universities’ opportunities and the type of education the university offers.”

Opinions on University Advertisements Published on Different Mediums

The participants' opinions are different from each other regarding the universities' television commercials. While one group states that television commercials have positive impact on university preferences, another group mentioned that it was not television commercials, but commercials on social media and the internet were effective on the preference. In other words, they advocated the view that the effects of traditional media and digital media were different. According to the findings, while the advertising and promotion activities on digital media had an impact of 65% on university preferences, the advertising and promotion activities on traditional media had an impact of 35%. 65% of the participants stated that at their university preferences the information they received through advertising and promotion on digital media was more beneficial for them.

Students who advocated that television commercials had a positive effect on university preferences said that "television could reach large masses" and "even if they could not reach students, they could reach parents and thus, increased the preference by the help of the important people criterion". Students who stated that "Television was outdated" stated that social media commercials played a determining role on the preferences. Accordingly, "social media commercials can reach students directly" and impact their decision in the first order. Particularly when the social media commercials reach large masses, the recognition and popularity of the university increase among young people who are at the stage of university preference.

Conclusion

Turkey is a country with a young population and as a country with an age average of 31,5, she has a great potential regarding higher education. Each year more than two million young people take examinations to be accepted to universities and students with certain scores can make their university preferences to become university students according to their score. The most important factor impacting a student's registration to the university is the score she gets at the annual Higher Education Examination (YKS). Students make their preferences after they receive this score by making a list of preferences of public or foundation universities and they get a right to register at a university. Students who make this list of preferences are bombarded by the fee charging foundation universities with advertising and promotion activities. Universities carry out advertising and promotion activities on the media both to admit good students and also to fill their quota.

In this research while young people stated that university promotions on digital media were more effective on their preferences, they also mentioned that television commercials were effective on their families. While making their university preferences, the students attach importance to information regarding "the location of the university", "tuition fees", "scholarship

opportunities”, “quality of education” and “opportunities for business life”. The students stated that they collect information on these issues either on their own or also mostly from digital media and they added that the advertising and promotional activities on the media were not highly effective on their university preferences.

The television medium in Turkey receives approximately fifty % of advertising expenses on its own. Despite the rise of the digital media, it still ranks the first as an important and dominant advertisement medium. While students making their university, preferences obtain information about issues they need to know from digital platforms such as social media and google ads, their families still follow the commercials on television. When students at the stage of university of preference are in this process, the families that are in the situation of an “advisory” body are still affected by the television medium. When parents advise their children on university preferences, they are under the influence of the advertisements and promotional activities broadcast on the medium of television. Taking the sociological structure of the Turkish family structure into consideration, we might point out that in the parents – children relations in the Turkish family the parents still have a strong impact on the decision – making of their children and thus, television commercials are, albeit indirectly, effective on the students’ university preferences. Even though currently in Turkey the students say the last word, families are influential in this preference. Students research the information on the factors they give importance to on the digital media. Parents are in the situation of traditional media television consumers. Therefore, parents experience an awareness regarding the university brands through the commercials broadcast on television and make recommendations for their children. Taking into consideration that today’s university students will be future parents, it may be stated that the indirect impact of the television medium in today’s university preferences will be transferred to digital media in the future.

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