



FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ACCOUNTING

GRADUATE STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND ACCOUNTING (MBA)

**Factors Affecting Student's Decisions in Choosing Private Institutions of Higher
Education: The Case of Botho University**

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Statement of originality

I, the undersigned certify that this research is my work and was carried out while a student at Botho University as partial fulfillment of my Master in business administration (MBA) Degree. I affirm that any ideas of other people have been fully acknowledged using the Harvard referencing style.

Signature: Golekanye Setume

Date: 04 October 2021

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my two elder brothers for the love and sacrifice they had in seeing to it that I become one of the only two siblings to go through post primary education and the first to earn an undergraduate degree. I also wish would thank my lovely wife, Mmasapatela Setume for her fervent prayers and support in seeing this dissertation to its conclusion. She has had to ensure many nights of sleeplessness in support of my study. My children, Mpho, Neo and Molebi are a pillar of hope each time I face difficulties in my studies. I have no doubt that this dissertation also belongs to them as much as it belongs to me.

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Abstract

This descriptive and quantitative study was aimed at closely examining the factors that affect student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on the 2020 first year students at Botho University. The study set out to address three specific research objectives namely, to determine the relationship between perception/institutional characteristics and student choice to further their studies, to determine the relationship between promotion and student choice to further their studies and, to determine relationship between external influence and student choice to further their studies. To measure the factors that affect students decisions to choose PIHE, a five-point Likert's scale was adopted. Data analysis was done through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This involved descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis such as analysis of variance, simple regression, and factorial analysis. The factor analysis revealed three factors which accounted for 58.7% of the variance. These factors are External Influence, promotion efforts and institutional characteristics. The findings indicated that these three factors have the highest influence in students' decision to enroll into a private institution of higher education and in this case, choosing Botho University. The importance of external influence such as advice from parents, siblings, relatives, alumni, high school friends and high school counsellors was clearly reflected in the study. The second highest choice factor related to promotion efforts and demonstrated that students place more emphasis on choice factors such as campus visit, influence of institutional publication (such as career booklet, prospectus), availability of institutional website, Facebook and advertisement on various mediums such as print, television etc. The third highest choice factor related to institutional characteristics and showed that students explore choice factors such as educational facilities, cost of study, employment opportunities of graduates, college reputation and type of academic programme. The Pearson coefficient correlation shows a strong correlation between the three variables of promotional, institutional, and external. The strongest association is between External and Promotional ($r = .687$), followed by promotion and institutional ($r = .422$) and lastly external and institutional ($r = .314$). This means the more respondents felt something was important in their external environment, the more likely they were to feel something promotional was also important. This correlation is quite strong. All three factors correlate significantly with each other which shows that if one was to find one very important, they were more likely to find

the other two more important. It also means that if one were to find one component not at all important, they were more likely to find the other two not at all important. The study came up with key recommendations for considerations by institutions on policy and practice to attract students.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BGCSE	Botswana General Certificate School Examination
DTEF	Department of Tertiary Education Financing
BQA	Botswana Qualifications Authority
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council
PIHE	Private Institution of Higher Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TEC	Tertiary Education Council
BU	Botho university

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Background

Since the decision by Botswana government to sponsor students into PIHE in 2007, higher education landscape has seen some plethora of growth in terms of numbers and quality. Prior to this strategic decision, there were around 5 PIHE, and the number has since jumped from around 5 in 2005 to around 37 in 2020. Though the number of players has increased, government sponsorship policy has remained consistent where every year, a cutoff point for eligibility to government sponsorship is set at 36 points. This criterion affects both Botswana General Certificate School Examination (BGCSE) leavers or equivalent and is largely dictated by the government budgetary provisions and not necessarily the demand for higher education. Every year around 35 000 students on average sit for the BGCSE from various centers. For example, the 2019 report of provisional results for BGCSE by the Botswana Examinations Council shows that there were 35 465, 37 251, 32 470 and 36 508 candidates by type of Centre in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. Of this number, around 8000 are eligible for government sponsorship annually (DTEF 2020/2021 Placement cycle report Pg. 4). This small number of eligible students is sponsored in both public and PIHE and though initially there were quotas reserved for each education and training provider, the policy changed to an open market system in 2018. Under this system, students apply for admissions to any institution of their choice and then apply for sponsorship directly with the Department of Tertiary Education Financing. Ever since the introduction of this open market system, there has been a steady decline of students getting sponsored into PIHE. This has also resulted in an intense competition among higher education institutions in their quest to attract students eligible for government sponsorship to apply for enrollment with them. This study, therefore, aims to establish factors that affect student's decisions in choosing PIHE.

Private higher education sector education is now an integral part of the higher education landscape and it enrolls about 42.6% of students as compared to the 57.4% in public sector during 2014/2015 (HRDC, 2015). The entire Botswana's tertiary education sector is regulated by two government agencies, namely the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) and the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA). Studies by Boyd (2012) suggested that owing to economic challenges facing many nations, higher education

institutions are faced with declining revenues and exploring ways to achieve more with less. The study further suggested the need for higher education institutions to address ever changing needs of their customers since students are seeking educational opportunities in institutions that meet their needs. To survive competition, PIHE need to be relevant and constantly adapt to the ever-increasing competitive landscape. They also need to present a strong value proposition to differentiate their institutions and be more attractive to local and international students, alike by showing relevance to industry and national needs. Through differentiation, PIHE can provide a product or service which differs from that offered by competitors (Zekiri and Nadelea, 2011). Over the past three to four years, PIHE were characterized by low or no enrolment in certain programmes and have had to rely on other key segments or programme to sustain their business models. Ernst and Young (2011) opine those institutions need to understand consumers they are targeting, their needs and how they prefer to be serviced.

1.2 Introduction

Higher education institutions are facing ever-increasing challenge in attracting & retaining students. The emergence of private institutions of higher education in Botswana in the early to late 90's has triggered an increase in viable options for higher education with greater competition for enrollment. This necessitates those institutions clearly understands various factors that affect student choice for private tertiary institutions and hence align their recruitment efforts to enhance students' probabilities of selecting their institution as a school of choice. In Botswana, post-secondary sponsorship was, prior to 2007, only available to students studying in public institutions. This situation changed in 2007 when government decided to strategically partner with PIHE. Given that the objectives of PIHE are also focused on profit, there is a public perception that the quality of education they provide is of lower standard compared to that of public providers. This perception seems to weigh heavily on student choice of institution of higher learning and may also be the reason why some of the PIHE have experienced low or dwindling enrollments in the last three years since 2018. The decline may also be exacerbated by an increase in number of registered PIHE from as small as 5 in 2008 to over 35 in 2020, among others. The increase witnessed a stagnant pool of high school leavers eligible for government sponsorship and created some competition among higher education providers. Though well over 35 000 students sit for their BGCSE every year, only a handful of around 8000 get eligible for sponsorship into institutions of higher education in Botswana. Though most of the remaining ones would still be admissible, the

challenge is that they lack the economic means to sponsor themselves and most of them either end up reseatting their high school examinations to improve on their grade or get relegated to the unemployed out of school youths. The situation does not suggest that all PIHE are struggling as opined by Hay and Fourie (2002) that though several PIHE are successful, others are struggling to survive. This is buttressed by Auer (2019) when she says that these days students have a plethora of options over and above just getting a degree. She further opines that to be ahead of the competition, private colleges need to constantly find ways and means to keep their enrollment up. So great is this concern that Auer (2019) goes on to say that declining enrollment is one of the key concerns among leaders of private colleges. This situation is also witnessed in South Africa, where higher education institutions face similar challenges, of low enrolment levels and high drop-out rates. Butrymowicz (2020) argues that a sizable number of colleges and universities had experienced declining enrollment and less or no support from governments over the past few years. With the increasing growth of tertiary education institutions, students now have wide options and choices to study at higher education level (Shah and Nair, 2013). Given such a competitive environment in higher education, institutions need appreciate and consider factors which students consider when selecting an institution of study.

1.3 Problem Statement

Studies show that education is a great tool in as far as it influences the socio-economic growth of any country. Higher education, on the other hand, is seen as a necessity especially in the fast-increasing competitive knowledge driven globalized economy (Zuekle, 2008). In Botswana, Higher education is provided by the public and private institutions. A study by Som Pal Baliyan and Fazlur Rehman Moorad (2018) suggests that over the years, there has been phenomenal significant growth of PIHE in Botswana in terms of enrollment as well as diversity of programmes offered. The study acknowledges this development in its contribution to a competitive higher education sector, though it also highlights an unsure picture in terms of quality provision by these players. It further opines that society and Industry is increasingly raising concerns about the quality of education offered by some of these providers.

The survival of private institution of higher education depends on revenue derived from tuition fees from students (Dezhbakhsh and Karikari, 2010). Som Pal Baliyan and Fazlur Rehman Moorad (2018) argues that such institutions should therefore serve their customers,

namely students. Perceptions of quality by students should therefore be considered to increase both quality and enrollment as well as reputation of such institutions. Besides government strategic partnership policy and other environmental factors, inclination to study at PIHE has also had a significant contribution on the recent growth of sector. This is because the growth of PIHE provides students with viable options alternative to access higher education (Shah and Nair, 2013). To survive, institutions require to put in place measures to be attractive to students and get higher revenue through the tuition fee. In this regard, PIHE need to understand factors which students consider in selecting institutions of higher education. It is also important for such institutions to appreciate why students choose certain institutions over others and how they compare and analyse institutions relative to others. Though several global studies were carried out on factors that influence student choice of institutions of higher education, very few such studies have been done with specific reference to Botswana. This study is therefore meant to closely look at the factors that affect student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on the 2020 first year students at Botho University.

1.4 Research Objectives

The higher education landscape in Botswana has been changing drastically since the decision by government to sponsor students studying in PIHE. This situation is compounded by having new education and training providers coming on board almost every year and thus increasing the competitive environment regarding student enrollment. PIHE find themselves having to deal with how to effectively position themselves to be competitive in the local and international market. The quality of programmes they offer is often shunned by both students and the industry at large (Douglas Chiguvu & Ruramayi Tadu, 2020). In this ever-increasing competitive environment, it is imperative for private higher education providers to be more competitive and differentiated.

This is more important given that PIHE financially dependent tuition from students as their main revenue stream. The perception that PIHE charge high tuition fees compared to public providers, often leads to parents and students paying more attention to the costs compared to quality and perceived benefits of attending such institution. This is important to those responsible for student recruitment to be more attractive to students and their parents as the choice of an institution is a combined effort of both students and their parents. The main objective of the study was to provide PIHE with an understanding of the factors considered important by students when choosing their institution for their higher education studies. The

study provided institutions with insight to position their student admission strategies with student's considerations in the selection of institution of study. As a result of this study, PIHE would appreciate why students prefer one institution over another and then develop appropriate interventions to enhance their enrolment.

This study was therefore aimed at answering the following key questions

1. What is the relationship between perception/Institutional Characteristics and student choice to further their studies?
2. What is the relationship between promotion and student choice to further their studies?
3. What is the relationship between external influence and student choice to further their studies?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

From the meta-analytical review of extant literature, this study examined the following research hypotheses or propositions:

H1: Institutional Characteristics has a positive impact on the choice of study

H2: Promotion/Marketing has a positive impact on choice of study.

H3: External Influence has a positive impact on choice of study.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study came at a time where there are some significant changes in the Botswana higher education market. The first change is that of regulation and accreditation of higher education in Botswana, which exercise has created some public perceptions on the quality of education provided by PIHE. Secondly the study came at a time where government has shifted from a quota sponsorship allocation system to an open market system where students choose institutions of their study and government supposedly honors such a choice by sponsoring students accordingly. The study also filled in the gap created by literature on the whole aspect of student choice and decision making on private institutions of higher education. This is echoed by Chaubey et al (2011) when they opine that very few studies have been conducted on the criteria students use when selecting a higher institution for study. They further opine that given this development, it is often difficult for both private and public institutions of higher learning to effectively position themselves to attract students to their institutions.

The study provided practical assistance to private institutions of higher education who find themselves having to boost their enrollment given the highly competitive nature of higher education in Botswana. It is in understanding the factors that influence college choice that PIHE would enhance their marketing and promotion efforts and ultimately increase enrollment.

1.7 Scope & Delimitations of the Study

The aim of this study was to closely examine the factors that affect Student's Decisions in Selecting Private Institutions of Higher Education with more focus on Botho University. The study focused on first Year students of Botho University who enrolled in July 2020 as its population. These students were enrolled in the four Faculties of Business and Accounting, Engineering and Technology, Health and Education & Hospitality and Sustainable Tourism. The students came from various economic and social backgrounds, some of which also attended their high schooling in major villages to towns and cities, hence exposed to various environments and family support systems. The students would have also been exposed to different information search techniques, with some having full access to the internet while others may have had limited access but also relying more on parental and significant others as source of information. Out of a total of 403 first year 2020 students who progressed to the January to June 2021 semester, a sample of 197 was chosen through simple random sample techniques, using Raosoft Sample Size Calculator. The study was conducted between May 2021 and October 2021. Independent and Dependent variables were closely looked into with independent variables mainly covering aspects such as institutional characteristics, promotional/marketing efforts, and external influence of significant others while the dependent variable was Private Institutions of Higher Education choice decision. The study was underpinned by several key theoretical framework models such as Chapman model and Hanson and little Model.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study focused on factors that affect student decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on Botho University. The study limitation was that it used samples from only one private institution of higher education in Botswana. The interpretation of the results would therefore need to be confined to the Botswana contexts and similar studies need to be conducted within the same context to compare the results before making any generalisations.

Other limitations arose out of time constraints and challenges of accessibility to the intended target group given the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. The study also focused on 2020 first year students and thus left out prospective students, who may have different views and opinions on choice factors.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter covered the Background of the study. The chapter focused on the introduction, problem statement, research objectives and research hypothesis, significance of the study, scope and delimitations and limitation of the study. The chapter also covered an overview of higher education and background of the problem, the problem statement, research questions and research hypothesis of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

PIHE in Botswana have a relatively longer history dating back to the pre- existence of the then Tertiary Education Council (TEC) which was founded in 2006. There is a mixture of local owned institutions as well as cross border ones with campuses in Botswana. In 2006, Government took a strategic decision to sponsor students into those PIHE which were registered and accredited by the then TEC. Government has made some significant gains because of this policy shift. Some of these gains include an increase in gross enrolment ratio from about 7% in 2007/08 to around 23% by 2016 and thus exceeding the targeted 2016 gross enrollment of 17% by 6%. The policy shift has also assisted government in being cost effective by way of making some savings resulting from reduced numbers of students sponsored externally, among others. However, despite these gains, like all other new entities, PIHE in Botswana have experienced some teething problems. Some of the students enrolled into these institutions have voiced concerns on several matters such as quality of lecturers, quality of facilities, among others. These issues have given rise to various conflicting public opinions about the quality of education provided by PIHE and overtime these opinions may have played a role in students choices for PIHE. According to the findings of a study conducted by Ostojic and Šimic (2021) there is a public preference for public higher education institutions, seemingly based on the to the perceived value for money and better employability obtained at the public institutions. This perceived value for money presents an unequal market position for private institutions of higher education. The study also affirmed previously established negative publicity and image regarding PIHE where they are perceived as having significantly lower employability rate compared to their than public counterparts.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The decision-making process by students in choosing institutions of higher education is quite complex and involves various factors. Jacqueline Fernandez (2010) opines that student first decide on whether to pursue higher education or not. Once that stage is settled, the students then proceed to decide on choice of programme and institution of higher education. This study is therefore aimed at examining the factors that affect student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on Botho University. Literature presents various theoretical models which attempts to explain factors that affects student's choice of a specific institution of higher education. These models include: (i) economic models; (ii) sociological models; and (iii) combined models.

2.2.1 Econometric model

The basic idea behind this model is that students explore means of having maximum benefits from institutions of higher education. This is usually done through comparison of cost and benefits (Hossler et al., 1999). The model is underpinned by the principle that in the entire process of choosing an institution, students assess both pros and cons and link some value with each choice. Finally, they choose rationally with a view to reduce costs and maximise benefits (Hossler et al., 1999).

2.2.2 Social Model

This model reflects that when a student decides on a college to enroll, they consider both social and individual factors which leads to some career and educational goals. The model addresses the entire socialization process, ranging from family, peers, and school environment and how these influences choice of institution of study. Literature shows that behavioral variables including students' academic attainment often interact with external variables, such as social status of parents to influence students' educational goals in life (Briggs, 2006; Kallio, 1995; Paulsen & St John, 2002).

2.2.3 Combined models

This model investigates both the rational economic model and social models. Literature suggests that combined models classify decision making by students into three phases namely, development of goals & alternative evaluation; consideration for other options and further assessment of all other options and final decision (Jackson, 1982; Vrontis et al., 2007). For this study, the researcher sought to use combined model which is further divided

into three aspects of: the Jackson model; the Chapman model; and the Hanson and Litten model.

2.2.3.1 Jackson Model

Jackson's (1982) model opines that that students' college choices involve three stages namely, preference stage; exclusion stage; and the evaluation stage. At the preference stage, student's educational goals and attitudes about college enrolment, is influenced by their level of academic achievement, family background and other social factors such as the influence of peers and school, among others. The second stage involves elimination of other institutions from the prospective list. Here factors such as location, and academic quality play a key role in the elimination process, leading to a preferred choice of institution.

2.2.3.2 Chapman Model

Chapman's (1981) model presents that student choice of an institution is influenced by their individual characteristics and external factors. The external factors are further divided into three types namely, the influence of significant persons such as parents, siblings; institutional fixed characteristics such as reputation; and the institution's marketing and promotional activities aimed at showcasing the institutional brand to prospective students.

2.2.3.3 Hanson & Litten Model

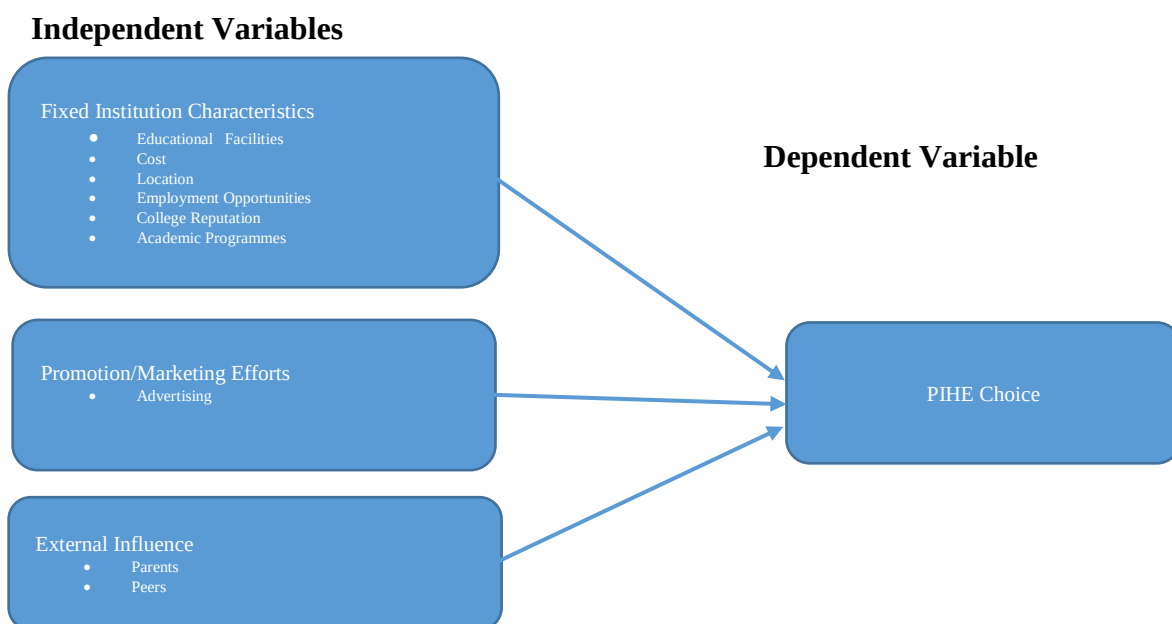
Hanson and Litten's (1989) model posit that college selection process is a continuum. This model also has looks at a three-stage process of a decision to further study beyond secondary education, comparing several institutions and creating a set of preferred candidates and ultimately applying and enrolling to a college. Within these stages, are key processes which includes college aspirations and searching, among others. This process is influenced by several variables such as quality of high school, parents, and financial aid available, among others.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Literature suggests that there are several factors that influence students' decision to select an institution of study. Yamamoto (2006) opines that though similar; these factors can vary from one student to another. These factors are grouped into various categories such as institutional characteristics, external influence, and marketing strategies (Ming & Kee, 2010). Institutional factors include reputation, location, academic programmes, educational facilities, cost,

employment opportunities, among others (Ming & Kee, 2010). Marketing or communication strategies includes such attributes as advertising and campus visits, among others. External Factors include such variables as parents and peers, among others. On the basis of these factors, a conceptual framework that highlights the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable is shown on Figure 1 below.

Figure 2.1 Dependent and Independent Variable Framework



Sources:

Adapted and modified from:

Norman Rudhumbu et al (2017), “Factors that Influence Undergraduate Students’ Choice of a university: A Case of Botho University in Botswana”, *International Journal of Learning and Development*, Vol. 7, No. 2.

Chapman, DW (1981), “A model of Student College Choice”, *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol.52, No.5, pp. 491-501

2.4 Related Literature Review

2.4.1 Introduction

This study is aimed at examining factors affecting student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a focus on Botho University. In this chapter, published research work by Baliyan (2016) on

an investigation into factors influencing students' choice to enroll at PIHE in Botswana and another study by Julian Shane Chan Shen Wei et al (2016) on factors that influence undergraduate student choice in Malaysia was taken as a review. Over and above that, a thorough review of other articles, journals from various sources such as Google Scholar, EBSCOHOST was also used.

2.4.2 College Choice Process

Literature on the college choice process suggests that it comprises three-stages which starts early in the education cycle of a student and ends when they finally enroll at college (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989). This position is also affirmed Hossler and Gallagher (1987) when they posit that the choice of a college follows a three-stage process and that each at each of the three stages, students actively engage and interact with several factors which ultimately results in a result that influences the choice of college by the student. Ranero (1999) also posit that this process involves several factors that influences students in deciding which college to apply to and ultimately attend. The first stage is predisposition. This stage involves students developing some educational and professional aspiration and determining whether they want to pursue higher education or not. This stage is characterized by several factors that interact with each other in many ways. Among the many factors that are interactive at this stage, parental encouragement has been found to play a critical role (Conklin and Dailey, 1981; Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper, 1999; Stage and Hossler, 1989). Other factors include, socioeconomic status, ability, and achievement, among others (Hossler and Gallagher, 1987; Stage and Hossler, 1989).

The second stage in the selection of a college is the search stage. This stage involves seeking and getting as much information as necessary to assist the student generate a clear short list of institutions to apply to. Some studies suggest that this stage is influenced by parental encouragement (Conklin and Dailey, 1981; Flint, 1992; Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989; Litten, 1982). At this stage, the student has a list of institutions they consider while they are still at high school. Student then subject this list to some examination of various attributes with view to get information that will aid them to make their final decision on the choice of institution to study (Martin and Dixon, 1991; Hosslerand Gallagher, 1987; Litten, 1982). Information about potential institutions is also sought through visits and talking to friends.

The third stage in the selection of a college is the choice stage. This is the last stage where students decide to attend a college of their choice. Several factors affect this stage such as the student educational and professional aspirations, college activities and costs, among others. Some studies suggest that institutional characteristics play a key role in the final decision to choose a particular institution of study (Paulsen, 1990). These stages are buttressed by Ngo (2021) when she opines that this process is generally divided into two stages. The first stage occurs during the application process when students figure out which colleges, they want to apply the second occurs once they receive the admission when they now narrow their scope using various factors such as geographic location, academic quality etc.

2.4.3 College Choice Models

College choice models assists us to understand various options available when an individual is faced with several alternatives (Rose and Scarpa, 2008). Literature suggests various theoretical models which attempts to present factors that affects choice of institutions by students. These models fall into three groups as posited by Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989) and these are econometric, sociological, and combined models.

2.4.3.1 Econometric model

The basic idea behind this model is that students explore means of having maximum benefits from institutions of higher education. This is usually done through comparison of cost and benefits (Hossler et al., 1999). The model is underpinned by the principle that in the entire process of choosing an institution, students assess both pros and cons and link some value with each choice. Finally, they choose rationally with a view to reduce costs and maximise benefits (Hossler et al., 1999). This model is premised on a decision to finance human capital with the hope that that the benefits of such an adventure will outweigh the costs involved (Ellwood & Kane, 2000; Paulsen, 2001). Here students compare the overall benefits of attending school such as employments opportunities and better health care etc. (Baum & Payea, 2004, Perna, 2006) with associated costs such as tuition fees.

2.4.3.2 Sociological Model

This model reflects that when a student decides on a college to enroll, they consider both social and individual factors which leads to some career and educational goals. The model

addresses the entire socialization process, ranging from family, peers, and school environment and how these influences choice of institution of study. Any student behavioral variables interacts with other external variables, including social position of parents to influence students' educational goals in life (Briggs, 2006; Kallio, 1995; Paulsen & St John, 2002).

2.4.3.3 Combined models

This model investigates both the rational economic model and social models. Literature suggests three stage student decision making process namely, goal development & alternative evaluation; consideration for various options and further assessment of other options and final decision” (Jackson, 1982; Vrontis et al., 2007). For this study, the researcher was more inclined to the combined model which comprises three aspects of: the Jackson model; the Chapman model; and the Hanson and Litten model.

Jackson's (1982) model opines that that students' college choices involve three stages namely, preference stage; exclusion stage; and the evaluation stage. At the preference stage, student's educational goals and attitudes about college enrolment, is influenced by their level of academic achievement, family background and other social factors such as the influence of peers and school, among others. The second stage involves elimination of other institutions from the prospective list. Here factors such as location, and academic quality play a key role in the elimination process, leading to a preferred choice of institution.

Chapman's (1981) model presents that student college choice is influenced by their characteristics and external influences. These external influences comprises of three categories namely, the influence of significant persons such as parents, siblings; the institutional characteristics such as reputation; as well as the institution's efforts to reach out and communicate with prospective students through marketing and advertising.

Hanson and Litten's (1989) model posit that college selection process is a continuum. This model also has looks at a three-stage process of a decision to further study beyond secondary education, comparing several institutions and creating a set of preferred candidates and ultimately applying and enrolling to a college. Within these stages, are key processes which includes college aspirations and searching, among others. This process is influenced by several variables such as quality of high school, parents, and financial aid available, among

others. Literature on the choice of institution by students suggests a relationship between social influence and student choice (Chalcraft, Hilton, & Hughes, 2015). These models are premised on different theoretical perspectives, which result in the emergence of three types of models: economic, sociological and those that combines both perspectives (Fernandez, 2010; Maringe, 2006)

2.4.4 Factors Influencing college choice by students.

2.4.4.1 Institutional Factors

2.4.4.1.1 Academic Reputation

Geiger (2002) opines that since the 1950s when institutional recruitment started to expand, it is elite institutions that had done well in attracting high achieving students. He posits that from existing study and research, high achieving students are more concerned about the academic reputation when choosing university of study and this appear to be a primary factor in deciding about choosing a university of study. Fred (2005) observed that this factor has increased owing to the vast markets for students that have grown from regional to international coupled with an increase in number of institutions of higher education. A research study by Johnson et al (1991) from Midwestern University, academic reputation comes as the most influencing factor for students when making a choice about a university. Empirical findings suggest that academic reputation is among key factors influencing student's choice of universities. (Beneke & Human, 2010; Nagaraj et al., 2008; Baharun, 2004). These studies suggest that students are now putting more effort in this factor when choosing a university owing to a rise in the number of private universities across many nations. Furthermore, there is a growing perception that students who graduate from universities with high reputation have a higher chance of getting employment as reputation almost gives a guarantee that they will be recognized. Ciriaci and Muscio (2011) also opine that a good university acts as an attraction for the best students. Kusumwati et al. (2010) also opines that Institutional reputation is the most significant factor in a student's decision for a college of study. Institutional reputation plays a key role in student's choice of a college.

Given the growing numbers of higher education institutions, students are becoming more critical and analytical in their choice of educational institutions (Binsardi and Ekwulugo, 2003). In a study by US Department of Education (2019), Academic Quality/Reputation was one of the three factors rated with the highest percentages of "very important" ratings. Students attach great value in the college reputation, and it plays an influential factor in choosing a college of study (Keling, 2006). Keling (2007) stated that the most influential factor that students will evaluate in selecting their choice of institution was reputation of the institution. In a study by Ramdhiani (2018), the findings showed that the college reputation influences decision of a college. Good reputation often reflects the quality of the college. The reputation of an institution plays a key role on tertiary education choice by students. There is a relationship between academic quality of an institution and its reputation (Veloutsou et al., 2015). Fernandez (2010) also opines that student not only consider the programmes offered when selecting a tertiary institution, but also credibility and the reputation of a brand.

2.4.4.1.2 Academic Support Facilities

Studies also suggest that student choice of a university of study can be affected by facilities and that in most cases, prospective students do extensive survey to check and compare facilities among competing universities before enrollment. Students normally consider such facilities as library facilities, study areas, computer resources (Matzdorf & Agahi, 2003), laboratory facilities and equipment, Lecture rooms (Padlee et al., 2010) in their process of choosing a university. Students feel more comfortable and enjoy universities with adequate facilities as these enable them to carry out their tasks and research more easily. Studies by Julian Shane Chan Shan Wei et al (2016) further suggests that facilities are not only confined to education but sports and social clubs as these are perceived to provide healthy lifestyles to students. According to a survey by Fides et al (2003) students reject institutions because they lack facilities, or they have important facilities that are not well maintained. Research findings show that academically gifted and average students place different emphasis of different institutional attributes (Litten, 1980; Tierney, 1983; Seneca and Taussig, 1987). While the former assesses an institution based on the quality of the programmes, the latter are more interested in good programmes and factors such as physical infrastructure, among others. Price, Matzdorf and Agahi (2003) also found that high quality facilities, such as availability of library facilities, computers, and study areas, influences students' selection of an institution. Other facilities that students usually take into consideration include

recreational facilities (Joseph and Joseph, 1998) and athletic or sports facilities (Maguire and Lay, 1981). Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, and Whitt (2010) argued that institutional environment plays an important role when students select a tertiary institution. Oldfield and Baron (2014) assert that students spend a lot of time within the environment, hence they would prefer an environment which is comfortable and conducive for learning. They prefer the classroom environment to be conducive for learning and the variables that influence this factor include layout, furnishings, teaching and learning equipment, among others (Oldfield & Baron, 2014)

2.4.4.1.3 Cost

Cost and financial aid are some of the key determinants of student's selection of an institution of study. Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) opines that research shows a significant negative relationship between tuition increases and enrolment. In other words, where tuition increases, enrollment seem to go down especially among self-financing students. To mitigate against cost, some institutions offer financial aid. Hossler, Schmit and Vesper (1999) found that financial aid lowers the net cost of college attendance. Foskett, Maringe and Roberts (2006) also found that institutions that have a flexible fee payment model and financial aid are more attractive to students than those without such opportunities. Studies by Bezmen and Depken (1998) show that demand for private universities tends to be at a higher level of price sensitivity than public ones and this seem to be more evident on lower income students (Long, 2004). Massaro and Soutar (2015) opine that almost half of today's students reconsider finishing their degree depending on the cost involved. The study also reveals that the high rate of student drop out from college is often associated with unaffordability of fees.

2.4.4.1.4 Type of Programmes

Studies show that the type of programmes offered by institutions influence their selection of institution of higher education. Hooley and Lynch (1981) suggest that suitability of the programmes is one of the most important consideration in students' college choice. Krampf and Heinlein (1981) also opine that prospective student compared programmes offered by different institutions to assess their relevance. This comparison is usually premised on factors

such as types of courses (Qureshi, 1995); availability and entry requirements (Bourke, 2000); quality and variety of offerings (Shanka, Quintal and Taylor, 2005), among others.

2.4.4.1.5 Location

The geographic location of an institution, or its proximity to home/place of residence, is another factor that has bearing on students' choice of institution of higher learning. Jackson (1982) suggests that most students consider colleges that are located relatively close to their homes/place of residence and that do not present excessive academic or financial obstacles. This is also confirmed by Wajeih and Micceri (1997) and Shanka, Quintal and Taylor (2005) when they opine that the location of an institution influences the choice of college. According to Gibbons and Vignoles (2009) students from the lower socio-economic backgrounds score low attendance rate mainly due to distances from universities and their home/place of residence as such distance places a burden on the cost of study. Gibbons and Vignoles (2009) asserts that commuting or re-location costs are more important choice factors with lower income students and may deter some students from attending university at all. This is because most if not all students do not possess their own transport but use public transport to access their universities. Public transport in most cases include buses or taxi, among others. A study by Kohn, Manski and Mundel (2014) found that distance to a university and cost of study played a key role on student's decision to choose a college of study.

Veloutsou, Lewis, and Paton (2015) supported this claim and found that the location of the tertiary institution as well as its surroundings has an influence student's tertiary institution choice. Another study conducted by (de Jager, & du Plooy, 2017) suggests that location of an institution plays a key factor on student selection of an institution in South Africa. Another study by Kusumawati (2013) revealed proximity between the location of campus and home were key factors for selection of an institution as attending the university nearby allow them to develop better relationship with family through frequent engagement and visits to their families.

2.4.4.2 Employment Prospects

The issue of unemployment is nowadays plaguing new graduates all over the globe, with unemployment rates among the youth increasing in almost all countries. In Botswana, youth unemployment is currently estimated to stand at 37%. This makes students more concerned about their employment opportunities even before they begin their higher education journey.

This often leads to students considering graduate employment rate of a university before selecting it as an institution of study. This position is well asserted by Shumilova, and Cayi (2011) when they state that employment prospect after graduation has become a key determinant in student choosing a particular university. In this context, universities that have strong ties and networks with companies and businesses present a strong reputation and appeal to prospective students than those without any such connections. A study by Asare (2020) reveals that the reputation of an institution gives credibility to the qualification offered, and thus making it easier for the graduate to gain employment. Geiger and Ogilby (2018) also revealed that job opportunities following a programme of study influences student selection of the programme and institution. Another study by Pascual (2014) showed that students' first consideration in choosing a course in university is influenced by employability prospects upon completion. This study is also agrees with findings of Rababah (2016) which revealed that opportunity and availability of jobs have an influence on students' selection of programme of study in a university.

2.4.4.3 External Influence

Research studies suggest that student usually consults their parents in deciding which institution of higher education to attend. Cabera and La Nasa (2000) assert that parental influence plays itself through motivational and leading roles, where at motivational level, parents exert high educational expectations for their children and at the leading level, they are actively and proactively involved in school matters and future college plans (Miller, 1997; Hossler, Schmit and Vesper, 1999; Perna, 2000). This is often because during their development, students rely on their parents for guidance and opinion. Given how parental influence affects students' college choice, institutions of higher education need to consider both parental expectation and students needs to meet their demands in a competitive higher education market. Some studies also suggest that peers influence students' college choice (Falsey and Haynes, 1984; Joseph and Joseph, 1998). Fernandez (2010) also asserts that parents have an influential and suggestive role in student choice of college. Johnston (2010) opines that parents provide key information source for student decision making on selection of a university and this is supported by Sukhawattanakum (2016) who also buttress that student consult their parents about their choice of university. A study by Ibrahim (2017) revealed that family members play a leading role in students' decision to pursue medical laboratory science since they were financiers of the children study. Similarly, Dagang and Mesa (2017) identified strong influence of parents on selection of programme by their

children in tertiary schools. Additionally, Kaneez and Medha (2018) contended that parental influence has significant bearing on the programme choice of their children

2.4.4.4 Sources of Information/Marketing & Promotion

The institution's marketing activities involves activities carried out to influence the demand for its products (Boone and Kurtz, 1998). Promotion on the other hand, presents a value proposition which compels clients to consider buying products (Wong, Saunders and Armstrong, 2005). Research has shown that various communication techniques such as institutional publication, campus visit by institutional representatives and open days, among others can effectively attract students. A study by Joseph and Joseph (2000) indicated that one way of increasing awareness of the programs offered is through educational fairs and exhibitions as these give students an opportunity to engage face to face with career counsellors on various career opportunities. The same literature also mentions internet as becoming a more utilised source of information for students and hence institutions should try to avail information through social media. In their Dominick, Johnson, Chapman and Griffith's (1980) mentioned that campus visits by prospective students serve as effective recruitment tools by college admissions officers. Most Research has shown that to survive, institutions of higher education should demonstrate how they meet the needs of their clients through a unique value proposition that gives competitive edge (Hoyt and Brown, 2003; Kotler and Fox, 1995). As a service, Higher institution of education promotion differs from ordinary promotion of products and services (Nicholls, Harris, Morgan, Clarke, & Sims, 1995). The management of such institutions needs to market them to establish some uniqueness, highlighting strengths and giving students a reason to choose the institution. Marketing, therefore, has a positive bearing on student recruitment. In a study to investigate factors affecting the choice of higher education institutions by prospective students in Latvia by Nadezda Rika et al (2016), 46% of the participants showed their inclination to make a difference in society post higher education life. This meant that in their marketing efforts, institutions of higher education should emphasize elements they offer intended to produce well rounded graduates. For example, corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability, among others. In the same study, Internet facilities were revealed as a key source of information regarding institutions of higher education and their offerings. 59% of the respondents used institutional websites to search for information. This implies that such institutions need ensure their websites are attractive and interactive in information

dissemination. More importantly, such institutions need to build a strong image through public relations efforts and media platforms, in physical and virtual environments. Studies also show that information supplied by the university is one of the factors influencing student choice of institution of higher education. Here students develop a list of available institutions and institutions need to provide as much information issues such as course structures, resources available and student campus life in general as to clear any doubt students may have on quality. Studies also reveal that students are more keen on establishing more information about Faculty profile.

2.4.2 Conclusion

This chapter provides literature review on previous research on the choice process, the college choice models and factors influencing choice of higher education institutions. Institutional choice models are presented and factors affecting college choice by students discussed. Review of related literature shows that decision to choose an institution is a multi-stage process, with a series of decisions leading to specific institution of study. The key choice models discussed in this chapter are economic models, sociological models, and combined models.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to closely examine the factors that affect Student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on Botho University. This chapter presents the methodology employed as well as the procedures involved in the study. It addressed research design, population and sample, data collection instrument, data collection procedures, and methods of data analysis, among others.

3.2 Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey research design. This design is important as surveys are useful in presenting a clear description of the characteristics of a large population and ensure a more accurate sample to gather targeted results where conclusions are reached and important decisions made (Salaria, 2012). The descriptive research design was employed to get a thorough and complete description of the study with direct cause and effect relationship (Westfall and Stasch, 1981).

According to Bernhardt (2004), Surveys provides for efficiency in collecting large amounts of data without upsetting the respondents. The study used quantitative approaches. Quantitative survey research studies population trends, attitudes and opinions with a focus on a sample of that population and explores influential factors on the population of interest

(Creswell, 2008). Through descriptive research data is gathered and this data which shows events is organized and tabulated to show how it was collected (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). Descriptive studies present summary data such as measures of central tendency, percentage, and correlation between variables, among others. Survey research commonly includes that type of measurement, but often goes beyond the descriptive statistics to draw inferences. Descriptive research is unique in the number of variables employed. Though it can include other multiple variables for analysis, it requires only one variable (Borg & Gall, 1989). This study focused on the first-year students enrolled in Botho University and their feedback was analysed to identify the factors influencing their choice in selection of PIHE. The researcher adopted Cooper and Schindler's (2001) research process by employing a quantitative research study to seek answers to the research questions and to verify the hypothesis with numerical data. The Model of Institutional Choice is investigated through survey method and structured questionnaires as the instruments to find correlations between the variables that were identified earlier. The approach used is consistent with the procedures recommended for college choice literature written by noted researchers (Espinoza, 2002; Joseph and Joseph, 2000; Soutar and Turner, 2002; Price, Matzdorf, Smith and Agahi, 2003).

This study followed qualitative research design

3.3 Population and Sample

A research population shows all the objects that conform to specific criteria where generalization of the research results would be made (Oppenheim 1996). Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013) define population as biggest group of units from which sample elements are drawn for purposes of research. The population for this study therefore comprised first year students admitted into Botho University in 2020/21 academic year. Studies show that when deciding on which institutions to enroll into, students consider professional and social factors and thus making a huge impact on how institutions plan. It is critical to gather data on opinions at high school level (Dave and Galloway, 1996; Smyth, 2012).

First year students were used in this study to capture their thought process on choosing an institution of higher education as they could still vividly remember such factors that influenced them. The research sample comprises individuals that are selected from a larger group also known as the research population (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen, 2009). This study used sampling to reduce costs involved in the process (Keller, Warrack and Bartel, 1994). A sample representative was chosen from among first year students enrolled into

Botho University in 2020. Fowler (1993) argues that there is no clear answer to how large a sample size should be. Though it is also acceptable that the larger the sample the more reliable the survey, often sample sizes are also determined by constraints such as budget and time, among others. There is no clear consensus on sample size (Harrington, 2009). There is a general agreement by most researchers that a minimum sample size of 100 is required for meaningful results and that a good maximum sample size should normally be 10% of the population, provided this does not exceed 1000. Kline (1998) opine that sample size can vary between 100 to 300, with anything below 100 considered small and sample between 100 and 200 considered medium while sample size above 300 was considered large.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

A sample is the segment of the larger population that is selected for purposes of investigation (Bryman & Bell, 2003). A total of 477 first year students enrolled into Botho University in 2020, of which 403 progressed to the January 2021 to June 2021 semester. The sample was chosen from the 403 students using random sample techniques. Simple random sampling strategy was used to select the participants. Simple random sampling is method of selecting participants such that each member within the large population group has an equal chance of being selected (Creswell, 2015). The sample frame for this study comprised all the 2020 first year enrolled into Botho University who progressed to the January to June 2021 semester, as reflected in the campus nexus information system. Research indicates that one way to undertake random sampling would be to construct a sampling frame and pick a sample number from the sampling frame through a computer generation program (Zikmund, 2002). For this study, a Raosoft Sample Size Calculator was used to generate the sample size considering factors such as margin of error. Though Probability random sampling grants the greatest freedom from bias, it is costly in terms of time and effort required for a given level of sampling error (Brown, 1947). The simple random sample means that every participant within the population has an equal chance of inclusion (Hamed Taherdoost, 2016)

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The sample in this study was made up of first-year students who enrolled into Botho University in 2020. Data collection was conducted in July 2021 where two research data collectors were engaged to collect data through telephone calls via online questionnaire and a call log sheet that allowed them to keep track of the number of calls made.

3.6 Interview Guide

Two senior research data collectors were engaged to administer the questionnaire for data collection to sampled students among the 2020 first year cohort.

3.7 Questionnaires

Orodho (2008) defines a questionnaire as data collection instrument that gives a measurement for or against a particular viewpoint. A Questionnaire was the main instrument adopted for the study to gather information from the students. A Questionnaire was used due to its convenience in data collection from the students who expressed their views without the any influence from the researcher. Based on literature review, a questionnaire on **Factors Affecting Student's Decisions in Choosing PIHE: The Case of Botho University, was developed.** The instrument comprised five parts. The first part of the instrument captured demographic information of the sample group. The second up to fourth part was on factors that affected decisions in choosing a Private Institution of Higher Education with more focus on Botho University. These parts had several potential variables influencing student's choice to select a private higher education institution. The items were measured using five ordinal Likert's scale categories (Likert, R., 1932). A 5-point Likert-type Scale requires participants to select one of five choices: Extremely high, High, medium, low, extremely low administrator or extremely important, important, somewhat important, not important, not very important. The instrument was adopted from a study by Baliyan (2016).

3.8 Validity of data collection instrument

Validity measures whether an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure given the situation it is being applied to. It is the extent to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure (Ary, et al. (2006:243). Expert advice was sought from my research supervisor and one other research professional (Mhundwa, 2021) to evaluate the Instrument for content validity and appropriateness. Suggestions and comments from these experts were integrated into the final version of the instrument.

3.9 Reliability of data collection instrument

An instrument is reliable when it yields consistent results from different researchers. Reliability reflects consistency and applicability over time. Furthermore, reliability is seen as the degree to which an instrument is free from measurement errors, since the more measurement errors occur the less reliable the test (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; McMillan &

Schumacher, 2001, 2006; Moss, 1994; Neuman, 2003). In the same way, Maree and Fraser (2004) ask how far the same test would produce the same results if it was administered to the same children under the same conditions.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

This study aimed to use the descriptive survey design to address the research questions. Data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This involved descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis such as analysis of variance, simple regression, and factorial analysis (Kachigan, 1991; Bernhardt, 2004; Field, 2009). The study answered the three questions.

1. What is the relationship between perception and student choice to further their studies?
2. What is the relationship between promotion and student choice to further their studies?
3. What is the relationship between external influence and student choice to further their studies?

These research questions were addressed by testing the research hypothesis.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) posit that researchers need to address ethical responsibilities and legal challenges that come with gathering and reporting of information to protect the rights and welfare of the participants involved in the research. The ethical considerations include approval for conducting research, confidentiality and infringement of privacy, among others (Gay, Mills and Airasian; 2006). Some of these ethical issues considered are discussed below.

3.11.1 Voluntary Participation

Any research should not involve coercion or deception and any research participation should be voluntary. Research is undertaken on the understanding that participants are voluntarily working with the researcher and their participation is without any form of coercion. Participants should also be made aware that non-participation will not result in any negative effects on their part (Beauchamp, T. L., & Bowie, N. E., 1997).

3.11.2 Informed Consent

Informed consent speaks to the need for participants fully understand what they are being asked to do and have full information in the event of potential negative consequences on their participation. Research suggests that the effective way to address this is to issue a letter to participants through an official university letterhead (Beauchamp, T. L., & Bowie, N. E.,1997).

3.11.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Best practice in research also dictates that participants' responses need to be kept as confidential and anonymous as possible. Anonymity requires that the researcher does not know who the participants are and confidentiality means that the researcher protects the identity of participants involved in the study from any disclosure.

3.11.4 Potential for Harm

Any research should protect participants from any possible harm and this harm could either be physical, psychological, emotional, or social. It is important that a researcher identifies any potential for harm and work on how to deal with such issues (Polonsky, M. J.,1998).

3.11.5 Credibility

Polit & Beck (2014) opine that confidence in the truth and study findings is one of the most important criteria (Polit & Beck, 2014). This will be addressed as part of internal validity of the research instrument to be used.

3.11.6 Dependability

Dependability deals with the level of confidence in data, its analysis and interpretation, and methodology employed to assure research quality (Pilot & Beck, 2014). In this study, a clear methodology was established to ensure the study was worthy of consideration by readers (Amankwaa, 2016).

3.11.7 Transferability

The research process and procedures will be clearly documented to ensure readers can easily assess transferability of findings to their own setting. Issues such as sample size, interview guide among others will be adequately addressed.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA, DISCUSSION AND INTERPETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to closely examine the factors that affect student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on Botho University. This chapter is covered two sections. The first section reports the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study. The second, third and final section presented findings on the three research objectives of the study. Hence, the purpose of this chapter is to ensure the objectives of the study are realized by answering the following three study questions.

- i) What is the relationship between perception/Institutional Characteristics and student choice to further their studies?
- ii) What is the relationship between promotion and student choice to further their studies?
- iii) What is the relationship between external influence and student choice to further their studies?

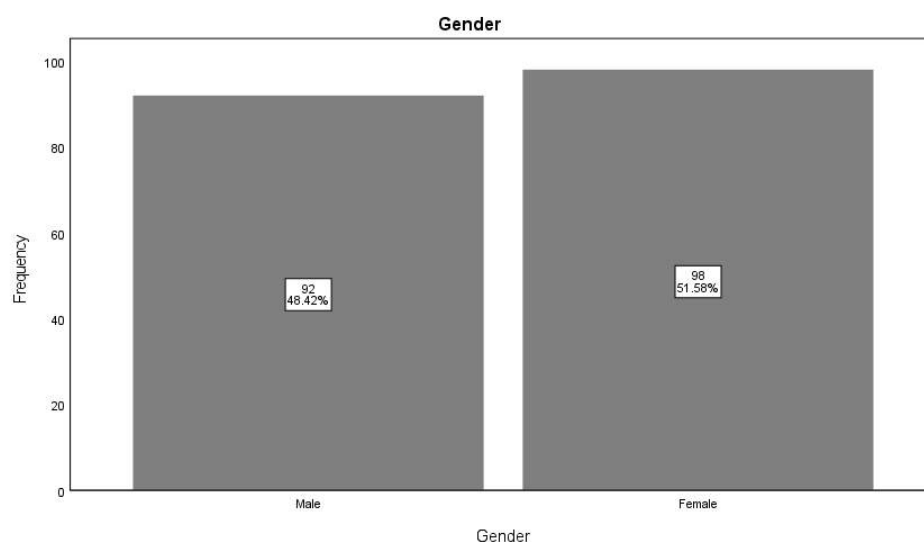
This study used as its population the 2020 First year students who enrolled into Botho University. 197 first year students were randomly sampled from the four Faculties within Botho University. Data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This included descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis such as analysis of variance. Out of the 197 randomly selected students who participated in the telephone call survey, 191 were successfully completed, while the remaining 6 were either not reached or calls not completed. This translates to 96.9% response rate.

4.2 Demographic Information of respondents

This section shows descriptive statistics for the demographic information of those participants who took part in the study. The demographic information includes frequency distributions and descriptive statistics of the eight demographic variables. The demographic information collected from the students in the study covered aspects such as (a) gender, (b) age, (c) nationality, (d) type of high school attended, (e) type of programme enrolled in, (f) program currently enrolled in, (g) permanent home address, (h) distance from home to Botho University. This information provides the reader with an overview of the type of students included in the study sample, and which sample was the source of information for the choice factors. Demographic analyses are presented in tabular form.

4.2.1 Gender

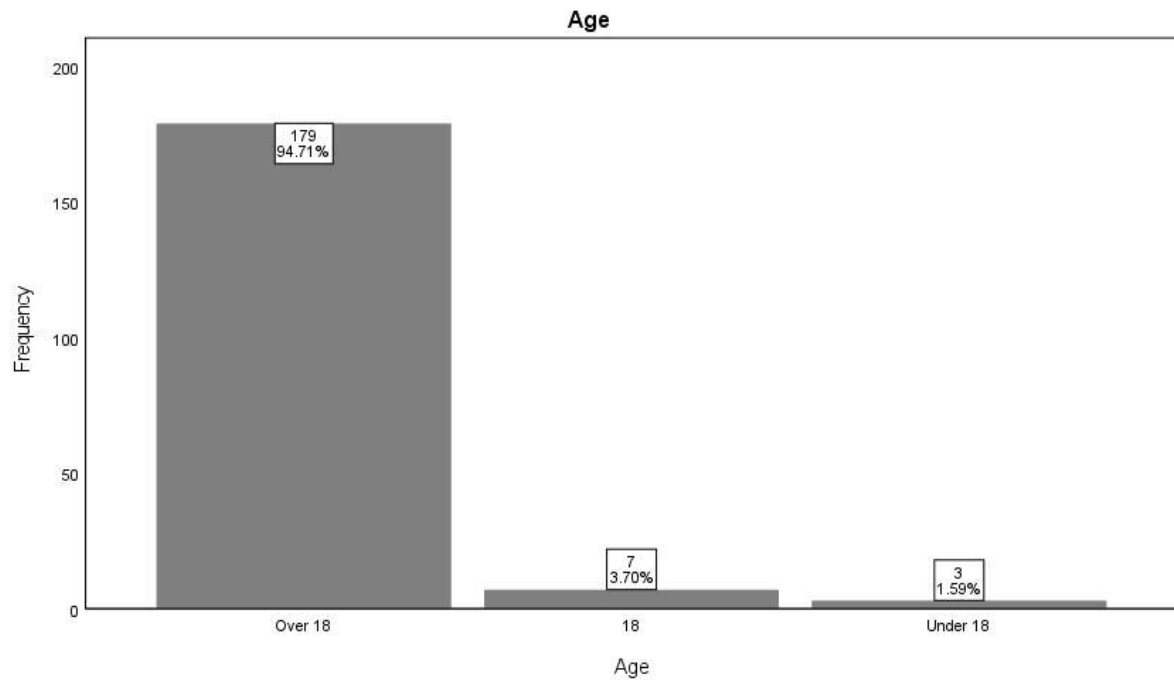
Figure 4.2 Gender



The student gender frequency indicated of the 190 respondents, 92 (48%) were Male and 98 (51%) were females. This means more females contributed to the total sample of 197 students under study.

4.2.2 Age

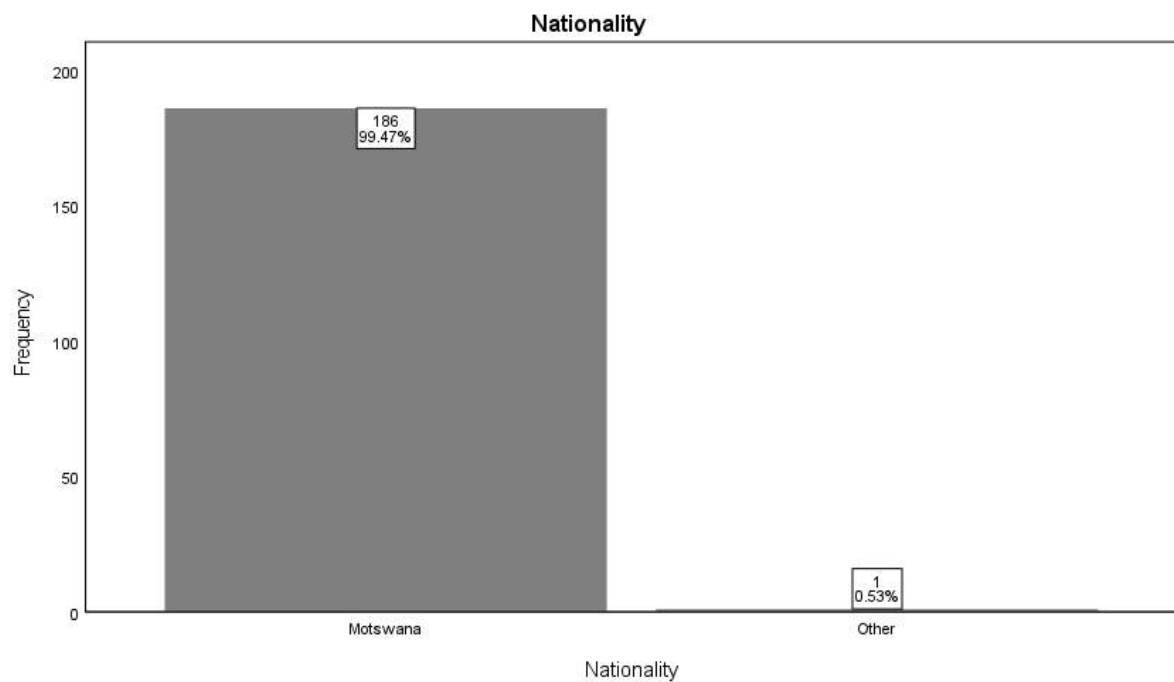
Figure 4.3 Gender



The student age frequency indicated that there were three age groups. Most of the students, 179 (94%) students were over 18. This is followed by 7 (3.70%) who were 18 and 3 (1.59%) who were under 18. This means most of the students in the study were above 18.

4.2.3 Nationality

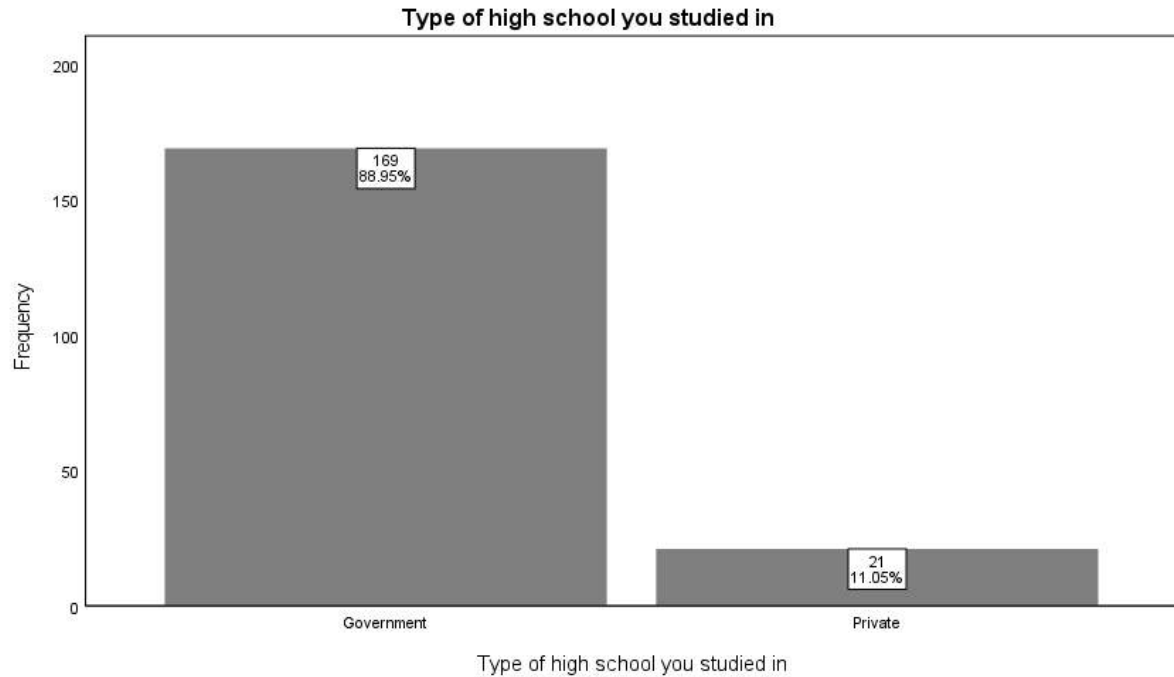
Figure 4.4 Nationality



The student nationality frequency indicated that the majority, 186 (99%) were Batswana and only 1 (0.53%) of the respondents were of other nationalities. This means almost all the study in the study were Batswana.

4.2.4 Type of high school attended.

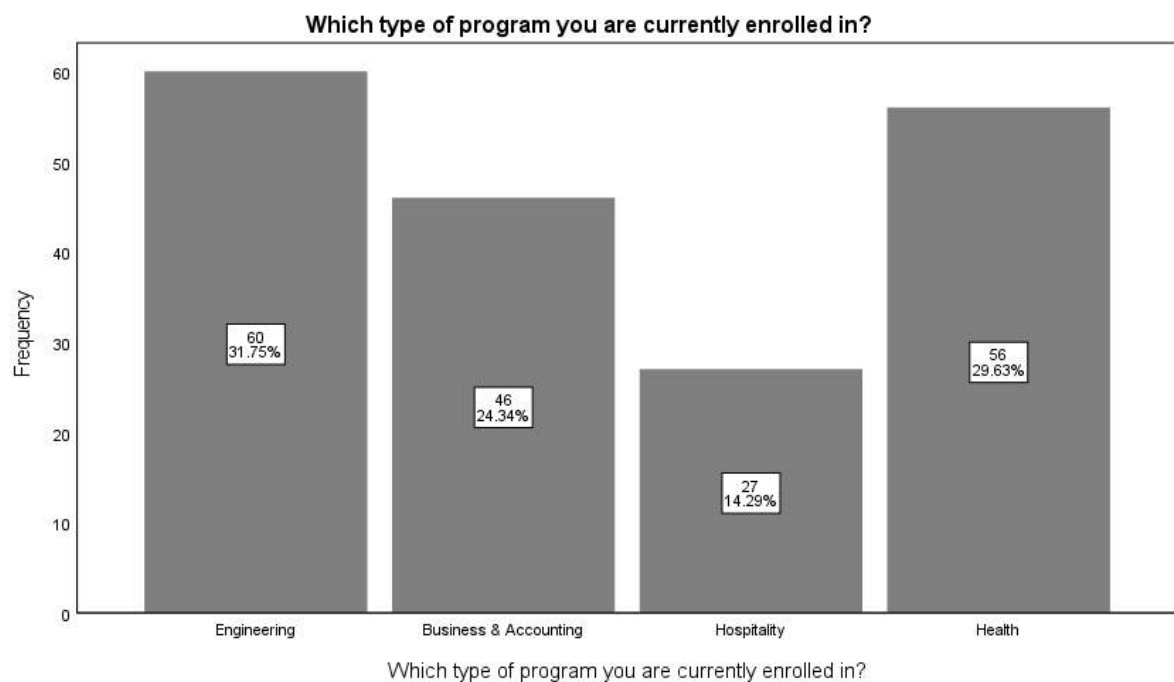
Figure 5.4: Type of High school attended



The majority of students, 169 (88%) attended a Government school prior to enrolling into Botho University while only 21 (11%) attended Private School prior to enrolling into Botho University.

4.2.5 Type of program enrolled in.

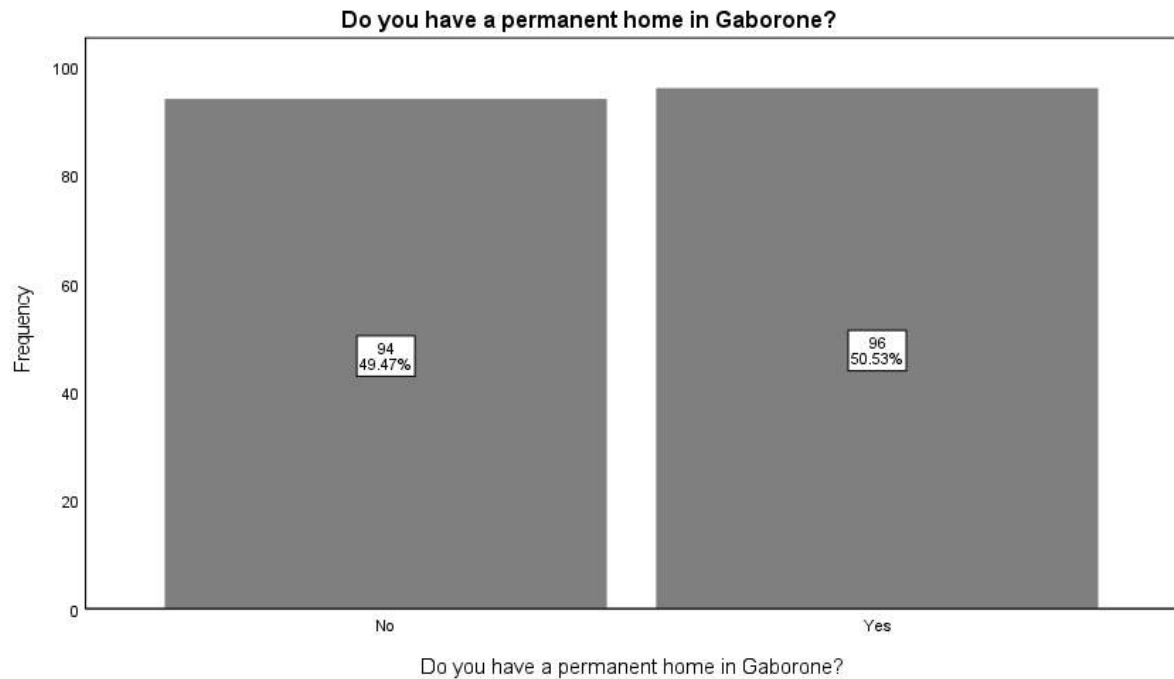
Figure 4.6 Type of Program



The student frequency on type of programme enrolled into shows the programme with highest enrollment of 60 (31%) as Engineering, followed by Health and Hospitality with 56 (29%) each, followed by Business & Accounting with 46 (24%).

4.2.6 Permanent home in Gaborone

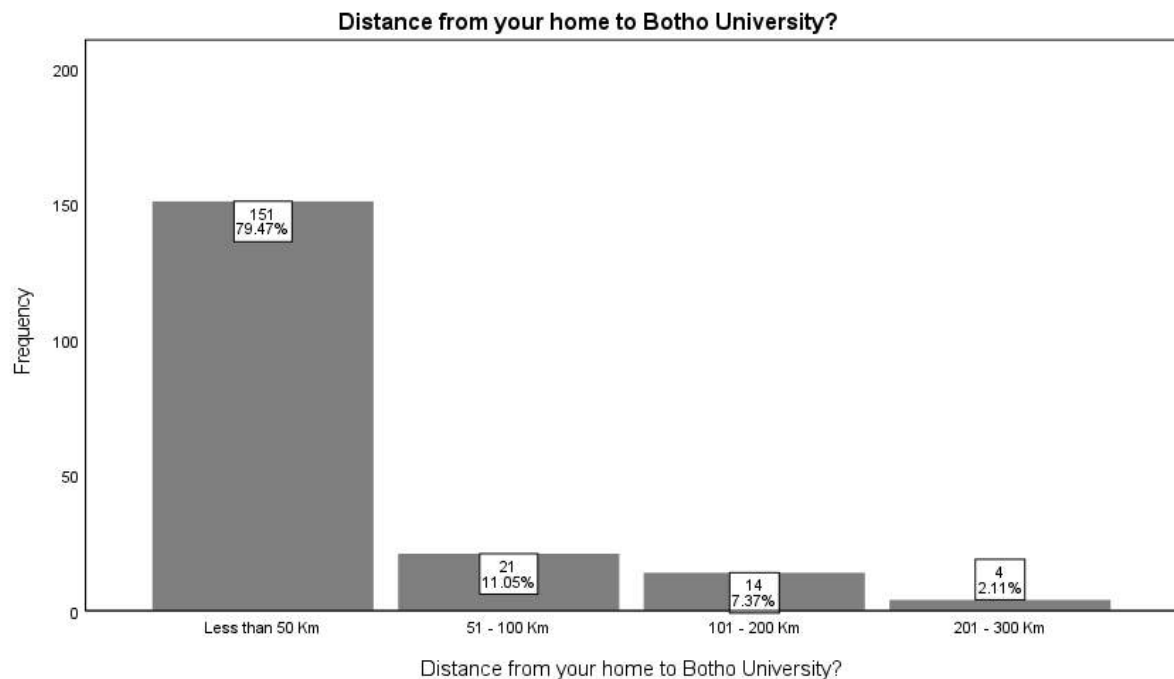
Figure 4.7 Permanent home in Gaborone



The student frequency on permanent home in Gaborone shows that the number of students who have a permanent home in Gaborone and those who do not are almost equal with 94 (49%) of the respondents indicating that they did not live in Gaborone while 96 (50%) indicated that they lived in Gaborone.

4.2.7 Distance from your home to Botho University

Figure 4.8 Distance from Botho University



Student frequency on distance from home to Botho University showed that most of the the respondents, 151 (79%) indicated that their home is less than 50 kilometres (Km) from Botho University, followed by 21 (11%) who indicated their homes were 51 – 100 Km away from Botho University. A further 14 students said their homes were 101 – 200 Km away from Botho University and lastly a small proportion of 4 (2%) indicated that their home was 201 – 300 Km away from Botho University.

4.3 Analysis of Research Objectives

There were 3 research questions in this study.

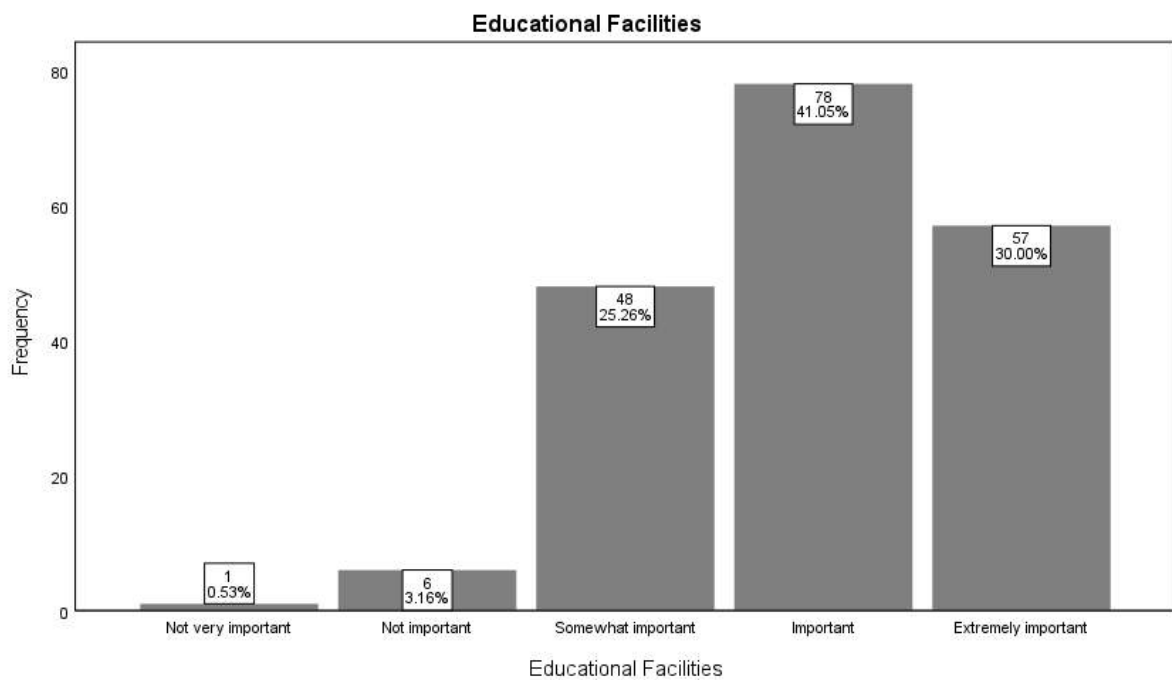
- i) What is the relationship between perception/Institutional Characteristics and student choice to further their studies?
- ii) What is the relationship between promotion and student choice to further their studies?
- iii) What is the relationship between external influence and student choice to further their studies?

4.3.1 What is the relationship between Institutional Characteristics and student choice to further their studies.

There were 6 Likert items in Part B. These statements were measured on a 5-point Likert Scale, where 1 = Not very important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Important, 5 = Extremely important.

4.3.1.1 Educational Facilities

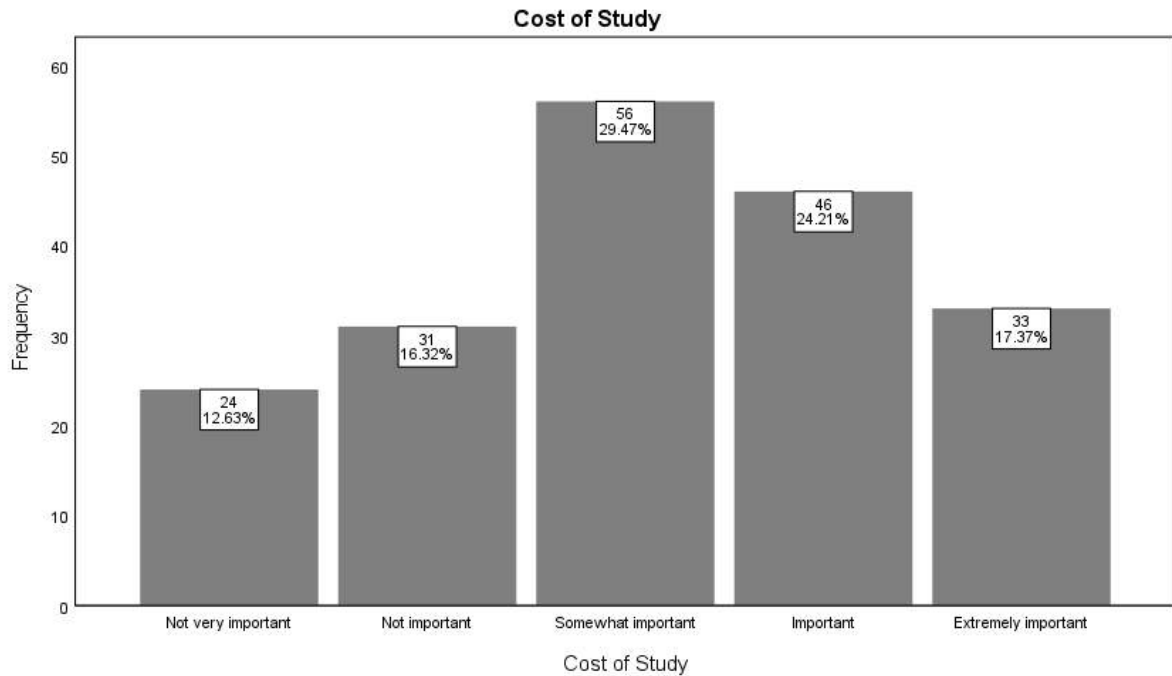
Figure 4.9 Education facilities



In response to the statement on importance of Education Facilities, 1 (0.53%) student rated them as not very important, 6 (3.16%) rated them as not important, 48 (25%) rated them as somewhat important, while 78 (41%) rated them as important and 57 (50%) rated them as extremely important. The student frequency on educational facilities shows that most of the students see educational facilities as somewhat important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.1.2 Cost

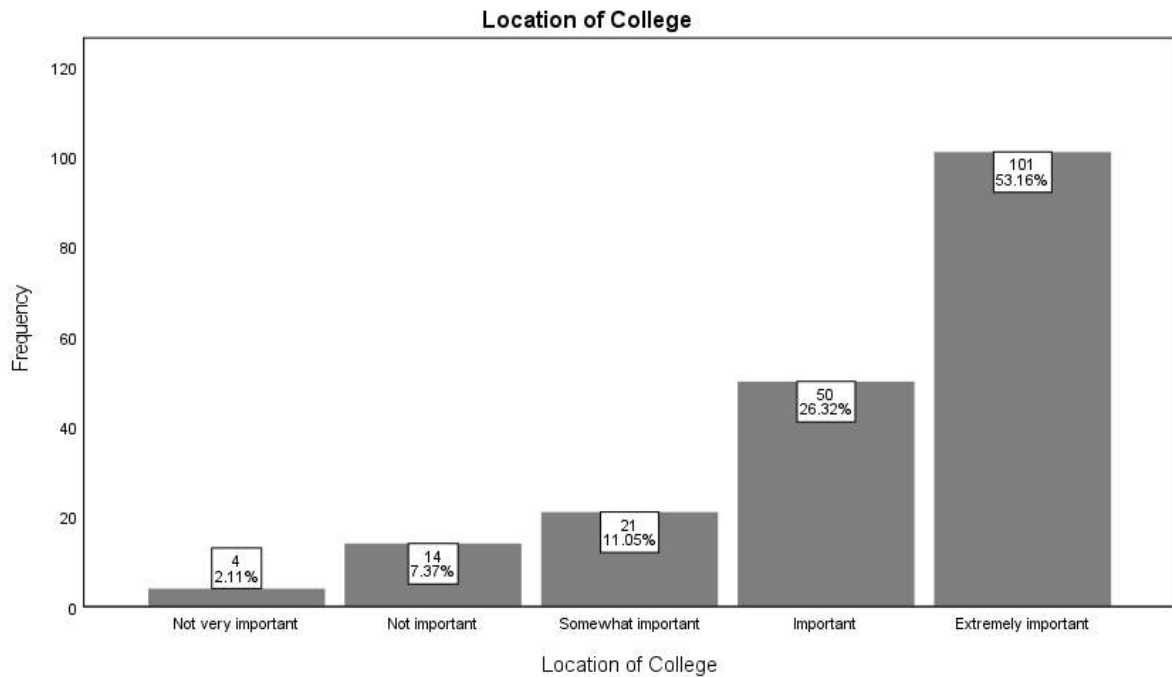
Figure 4.10 Cost



In response to the statement on cost of study, 24 (12%) said it was not very important, 31 (16%) said it is not important, 56 (29%) said it is somewhat important, 46 (24%) said it is important and 33 (17%) said cost of study is extremely important to them. The student frequency on cost shows that most of the respondents see cost as somewhat important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.1.3 Location

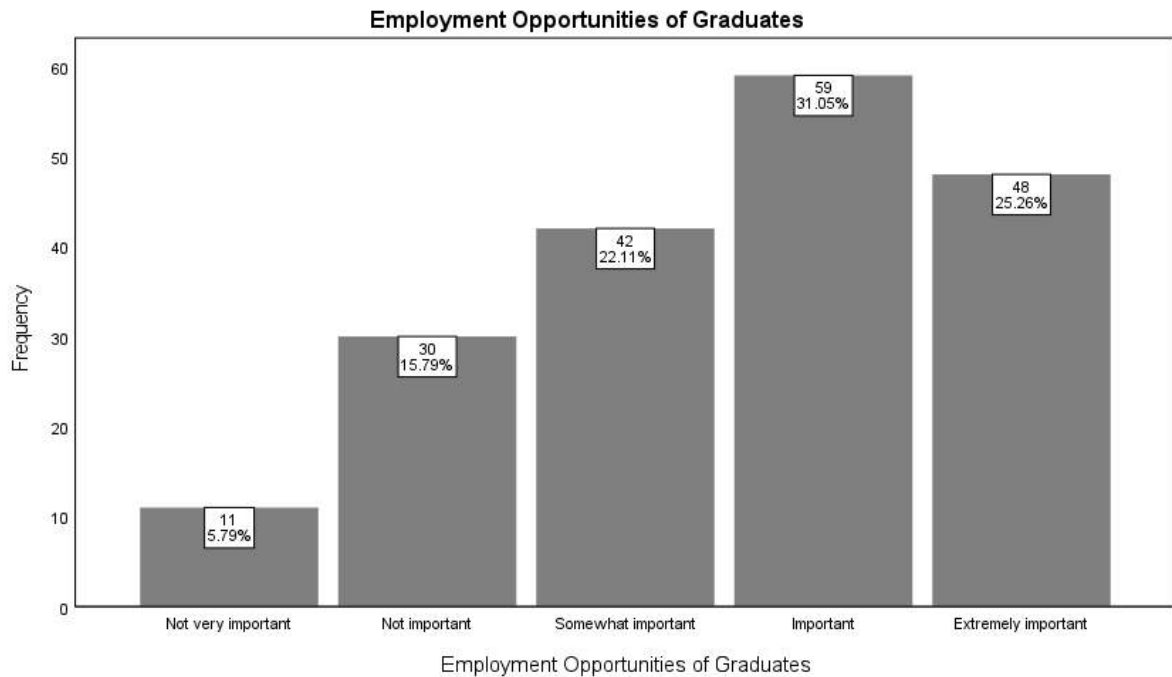
Figure 4.11 Location



Of all respondents, 4 (2.11%) students felt location is not very important, 14 (7%) said it is not important, 21 (11%) found it somewhat important, 50 (26%) felt it is important and 101 (53%) felt location is extremely important. The student frequency on location of college indicates that most of the respondents see location of college as important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.1.4 Employment Opportunities

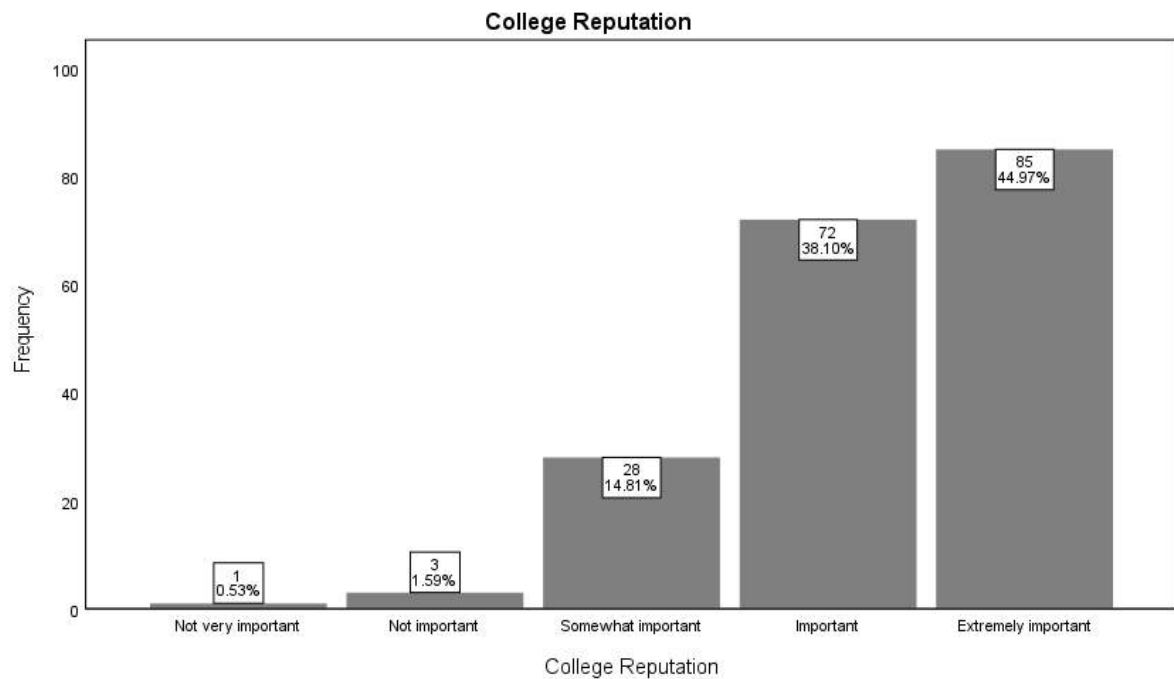
Figure 4.12 Employment opportunities



In response to the statement on importance of employment opportunities, 11 (5%) students rated them as not very important, 30 (15%) rated them as not important, 42 (22%) rated them as somewhat important, while 59 (31%) rated them as important and 48 (25%) rated them as extremely important. The student frequency on employment opportunities shows that most of the students see employment opportunities of graduates as somewhat important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.1.5 College Reputation.

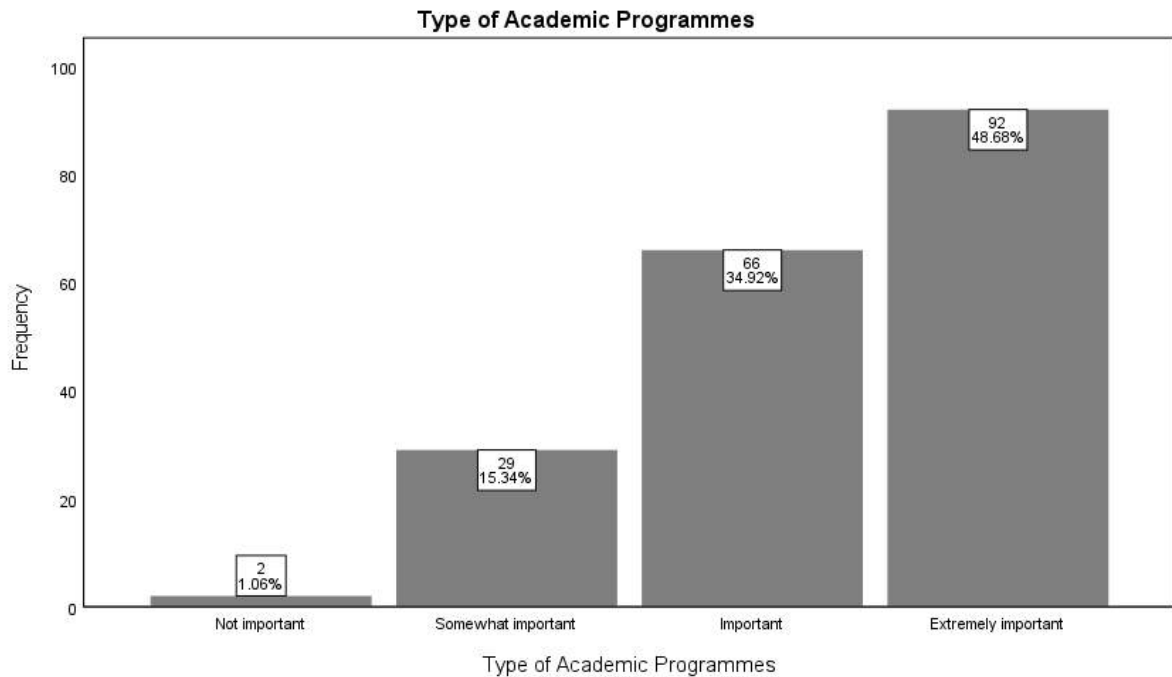
Figure 4.13 College Reputation



In response to the statement on importance of college reputation, 1 (0.53%) student rated it as not very important, 3 (1%) rated it as not important. 28 (14%) students rated it as somewhat important, 72 (38%) rated it as important and 85 (44%) rated it as extremely important. Student frequency on the college reputation shows that most students see college reputation as important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.1.6 Academic Programmes

Figure 4.14 Academic Programmes

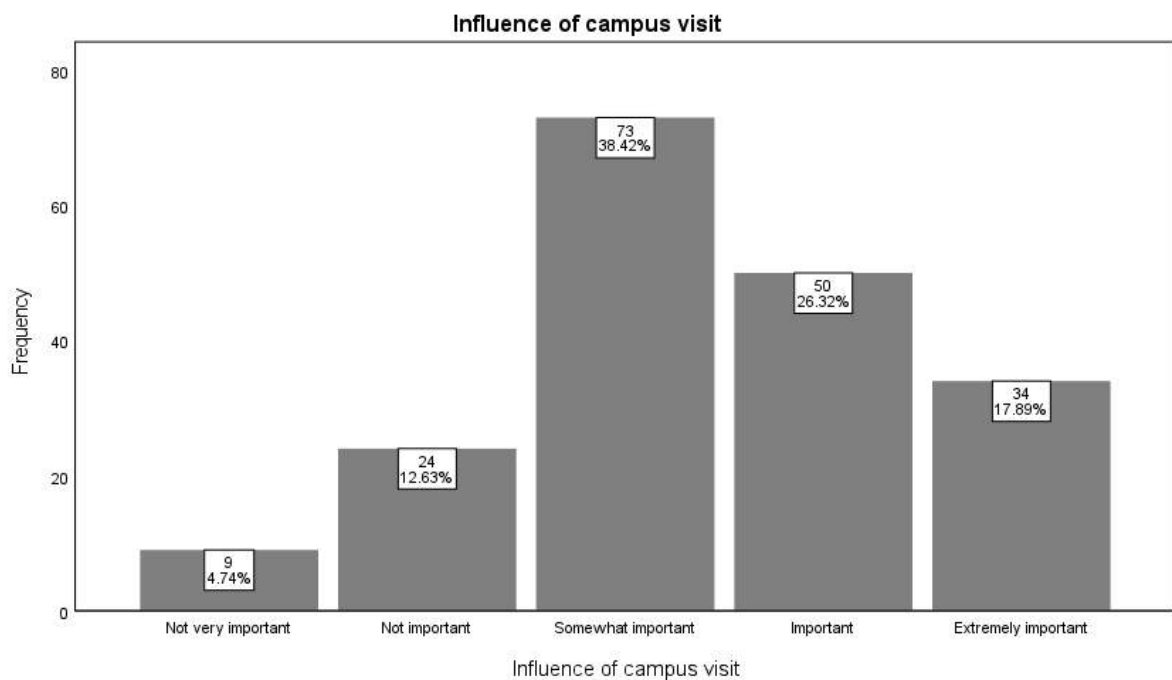


A total of 2 (1.06%) student rated type of academic programmes as not important, 29 (15%) rated them as somewhat important, 66 (34%) rated them as important and 92 (48%) rated them as extremely important. The student frequency on type of academic programme shows that most respondents see type of academic programme as important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.2 What is the relationship between promotion and student choice to further their studies?

4.3.2.1 Influence of Campus Visit

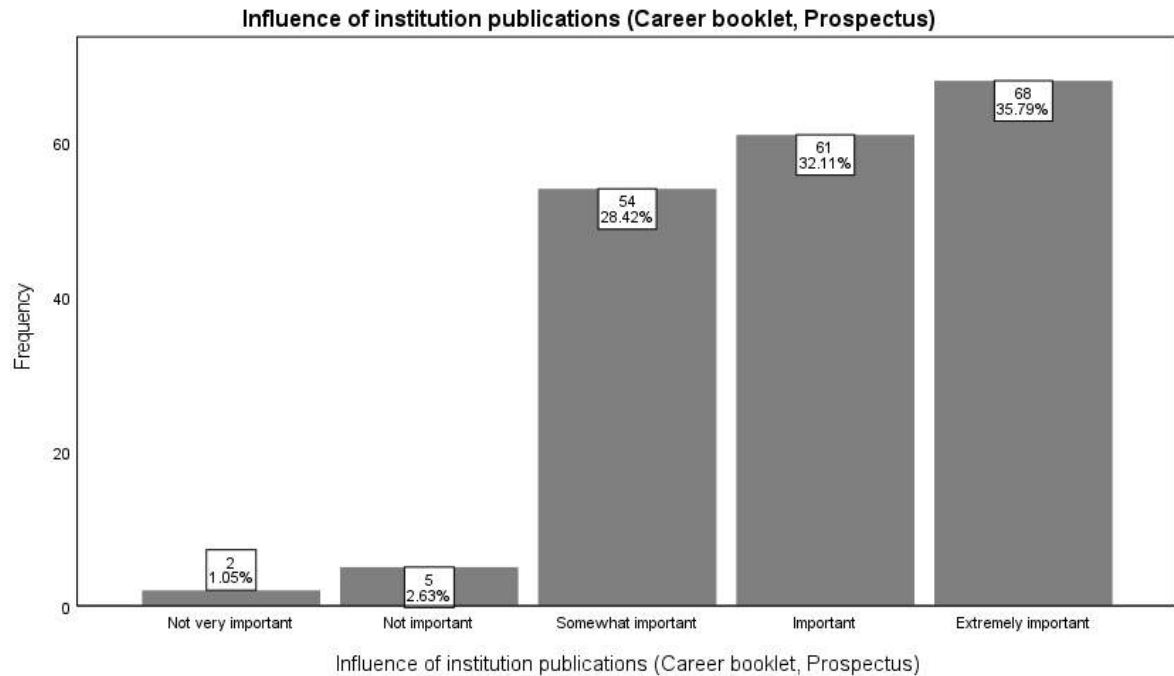
Figure 4.15 Influence of Campus Visit



In response to the statement on influence of campus visit, 9 (4%) students rated it as not very important, 24 (12%) rated it as not important. 73 students (38%) students rated it as somewhat important, 50 (26%) rated it as important and 34 (17%) rated it as extremely important. Student frequency on campus visit shows that most of the respondents see campus visit as somewhat important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.2.2 Influence of Institution Publications

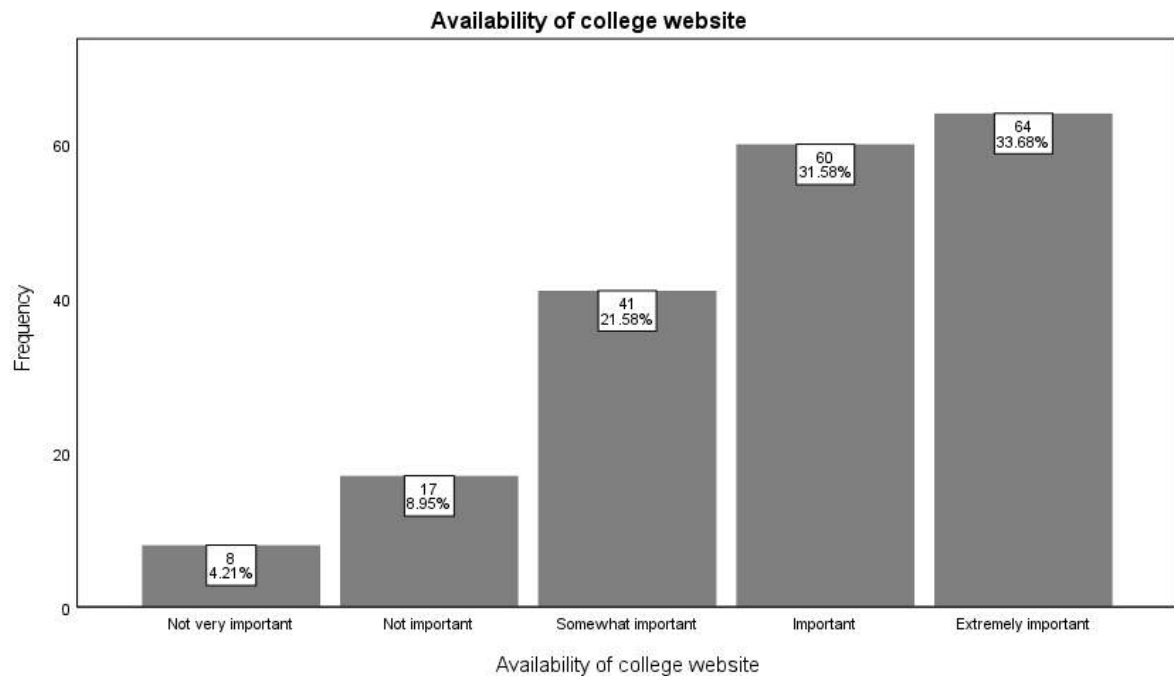
Figure 4.16 Influence of Institution publications



In response to the statement on influence of institution publications, 2 (1.05%) students rated them as not very important, 5 (2%) rated them as not important, 54 (28%) rated them as somewhat important, 61 (32%) rated them as important and 68 (35%) rated them as extremely important. The student frequency on institutional promotion shows that a high number of the respondents see institutional publications as somewhat important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.2.3 Availability of College Website

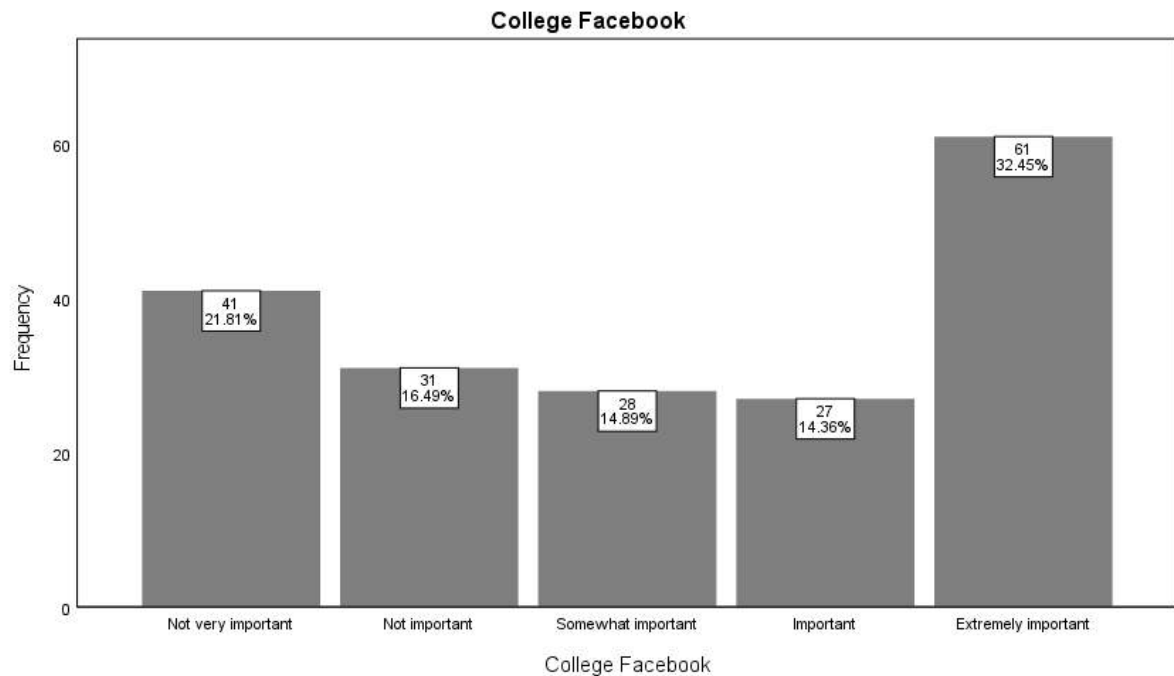
Figure 4.17 Availability of College website



Out of all respondents, 8 (4%) felt the availability of the college website was not very important, 17 (8%) felt it was not important, 41 (21%) felt it was somewhat important, 60 (31%) said it was important and 64 (33%) rated it as extremely important. The student frequency on availability of college website shows that most of the respondents see college website as somewhat important to extremely important in determining the choice of Botho University.

4.3.2.4 College Facebook

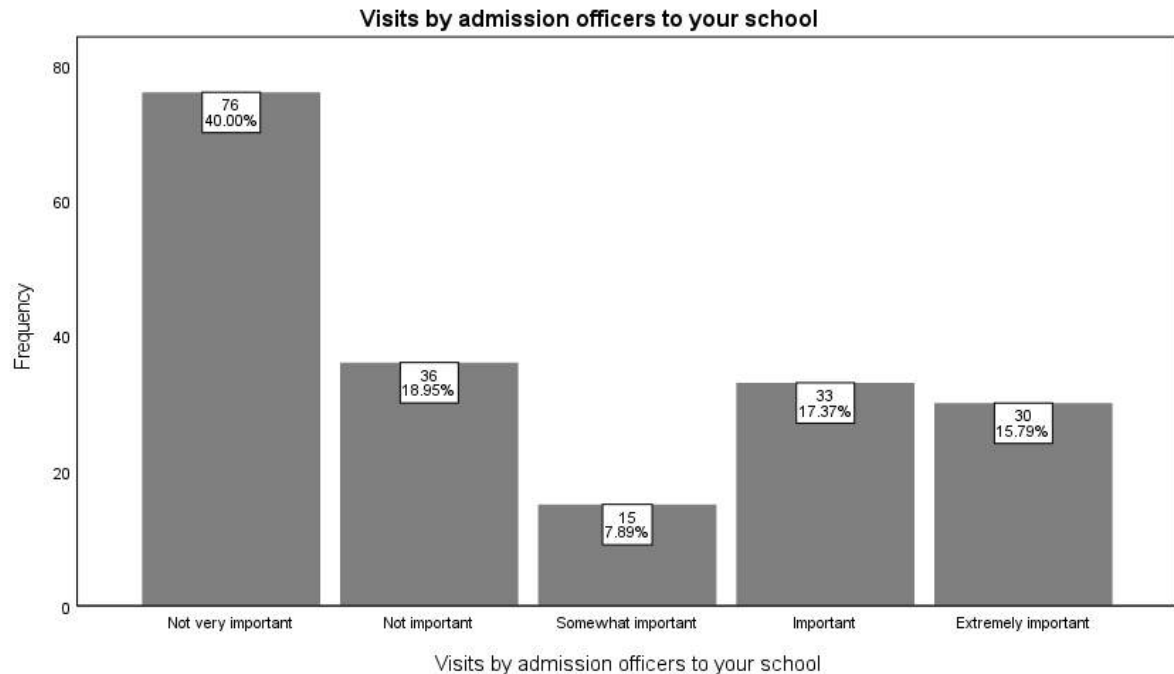
Figure 4.18 College Facebook



Out of all respondents, 41 (21%) felt College Facebook was not very important, 31 (16%) felt it was not important, 28 (14%) felt it was somewhat important, 27 (14%) said it was important and 61 (32%) rated it as extremely important. The student frequency on college shows a similar pattern of respondent who felt college Facebook was either not important, somewhat important, and important, with a large proportion of them seeing college Facebook as extremely important in determining to choose Botho University.

4.3.2.5 Visits by Admission Officers

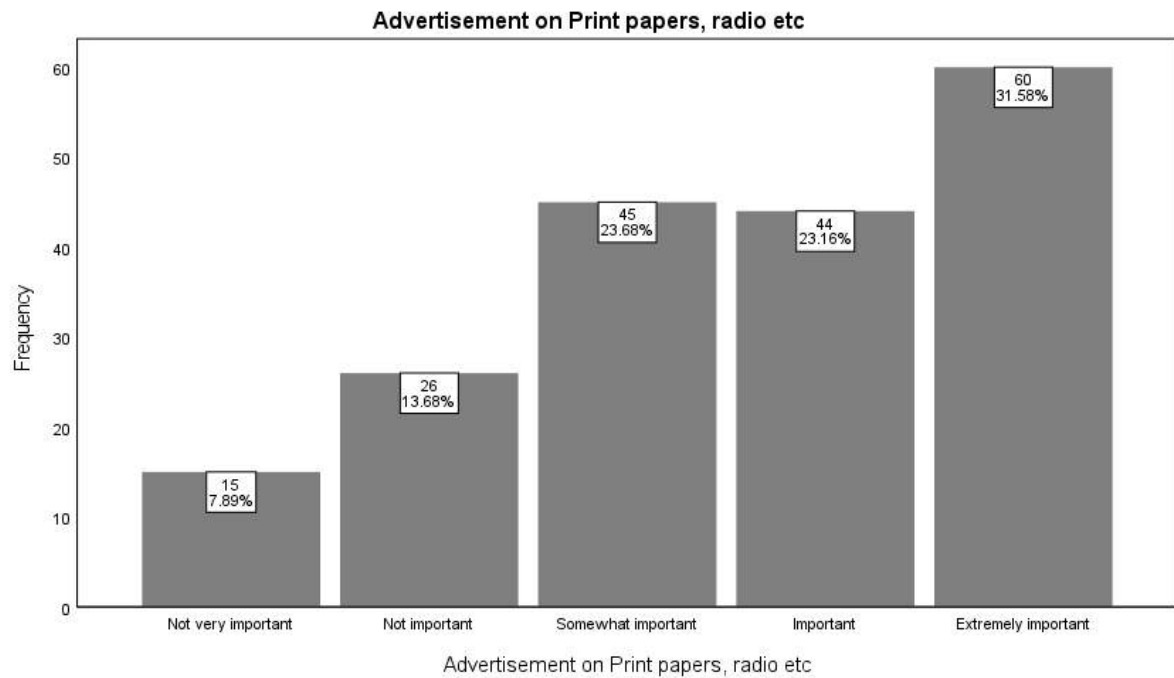
Figure 4.19 Visits by Admission Officers



In response to the statement on visits by admissions officers, 76 (40%) students rated them as not very important, 36 (18%) rated them as not important, 15 (7%) rated them as somewhat important, 33 (17%) rated them as important and 30 (15%) rated them as extremely important. The student frequency on visit by admission officers shows that most of the students see these visits as not important with small proportion of respondents seeing such visits as important in determining to choose Botho University.

4.3.2.6 Advertisement

Figure 4.20 Advertisement

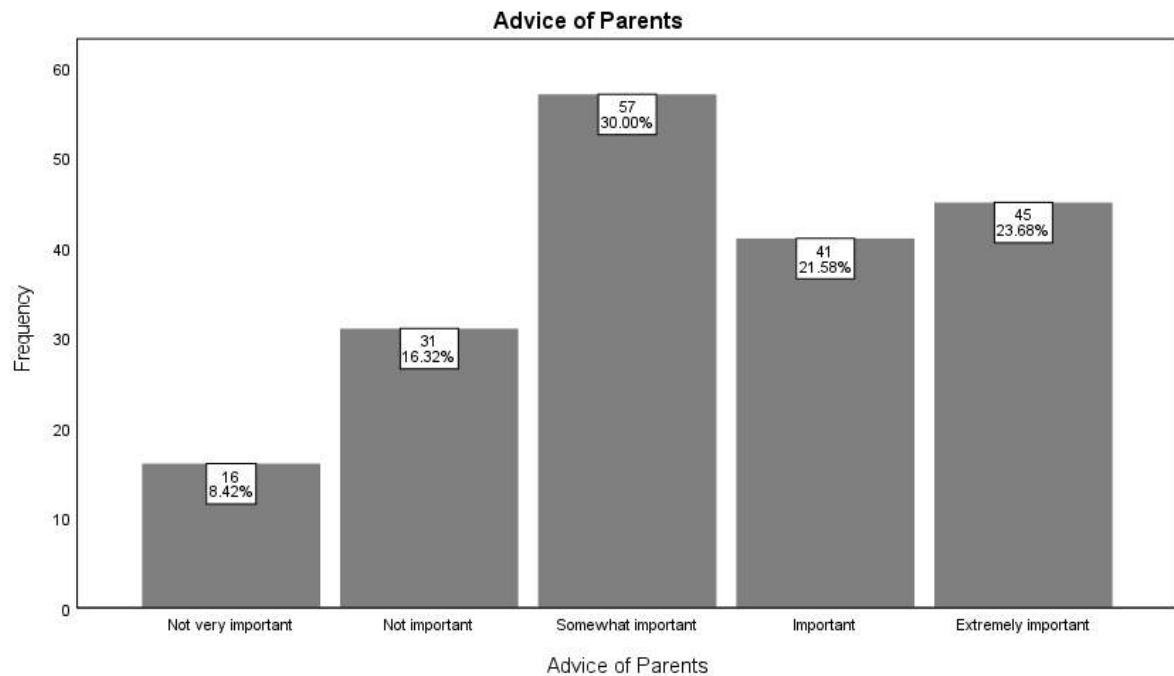


A total of 15 (7%) students rated advertisements as not very important, 26 (13%) rated them as not important and 45 (23%) rated them as somewhat important. 44 (23%) students rated them as important and 60 (31%) rated them as extremely important. The student frequency on advertisement on print papers shows that most of the respondents see advertisement as somewhat important to extremely important in determining to choose Botho University.

4.3.3 What is the relationship between external influence and student choice to further their studies?

4.3.3.1 Advice of Parents

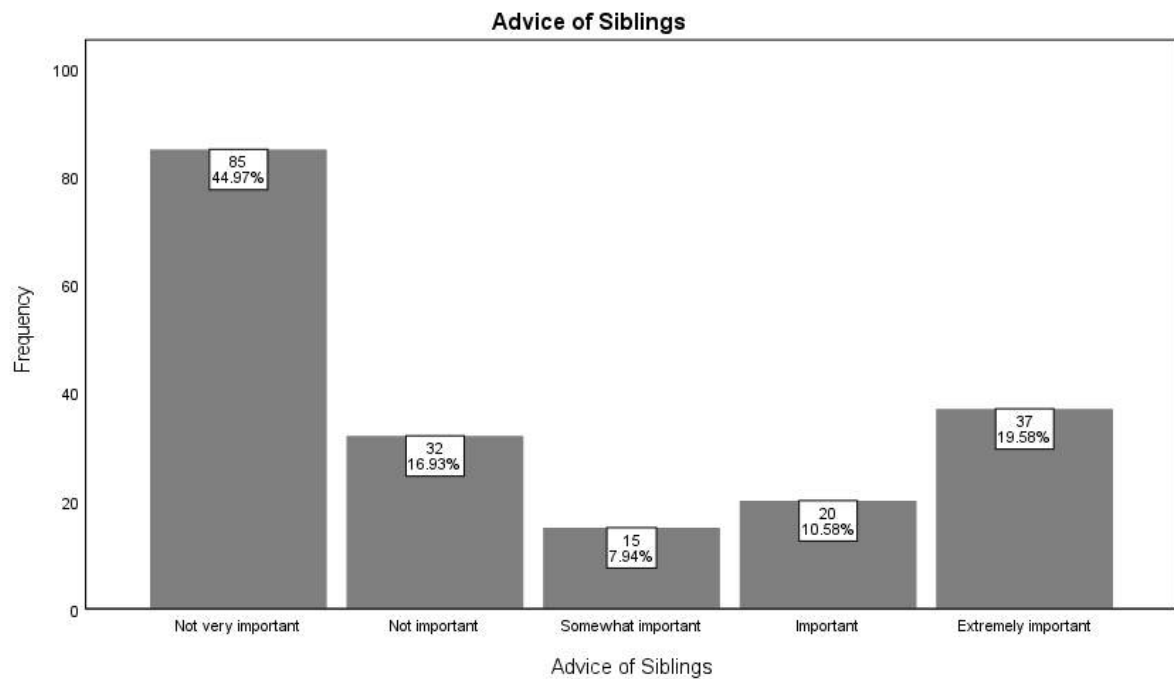
Figure 4.21 Advice of Parents



In relation to advice from their parents, 16 (8%) students felt it was not very important, 31 (16%) felt it was not important, 57 (30%) felt it was somewhat important, 41 (21%) felt it was important and 45 (23%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency on advice from parents shows that most of the respondents see advice from parents as somewhat important to extremely important.

4.3.3.2 Advice of Siblings

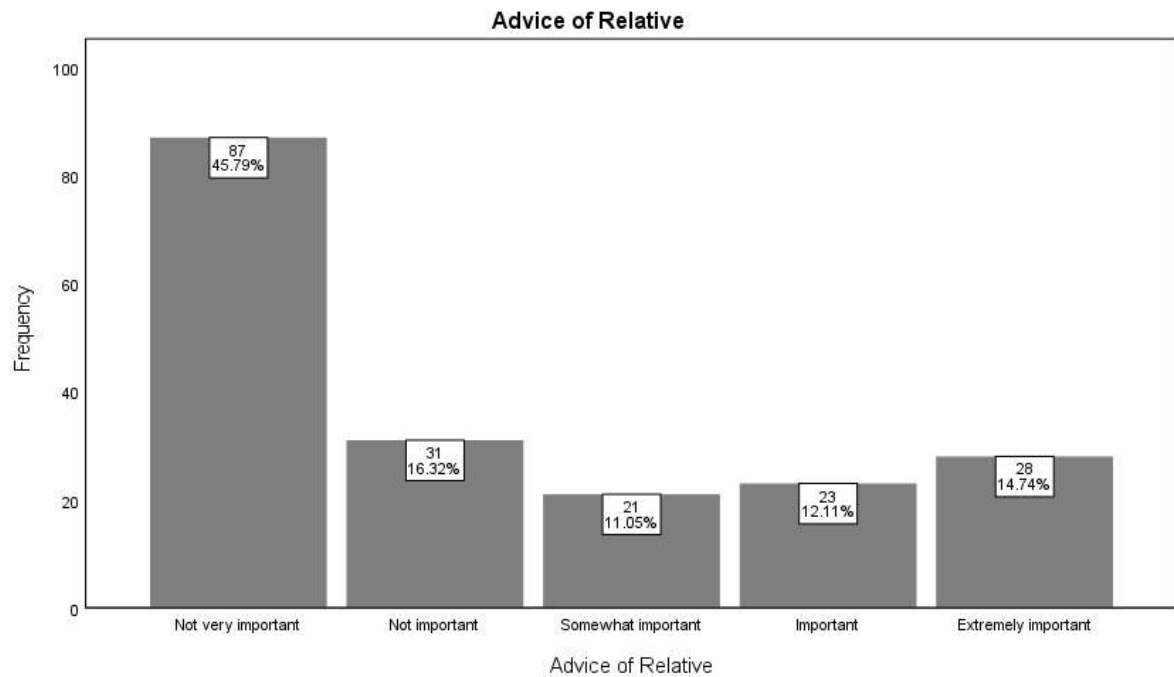
Figure 4.22 Advice of Siblings



In relation to advice from their siblings, 85 (44%) students felt it was not very important, 32 (16%) felt it was not important, 15 (7%) felt it was somewhat important, 20 (10%) felt it was important and 37 (19%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency on advice from siblings shows that most of the respondents see advice from siblings as not very important.

4.3.3.3 Advice of Relative

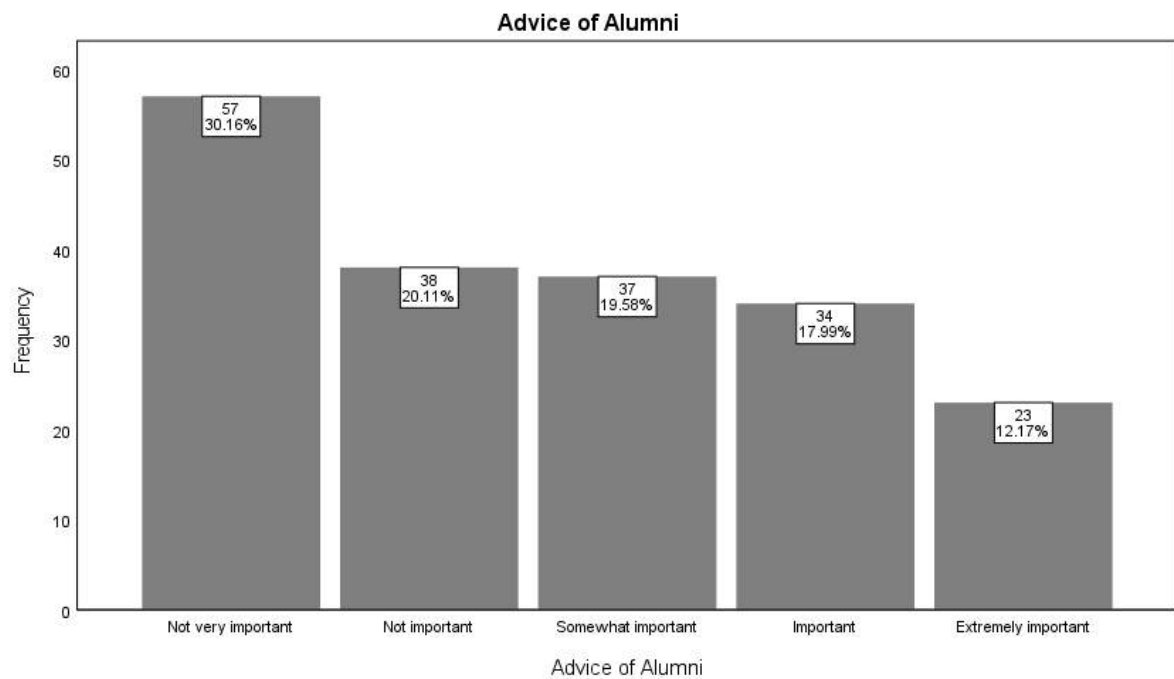
Figure 4.23 Advice of Relative



87 (45%) of students felt advice of their relative was not very important, 31 (16%) felt it was not important, 21 (11%) felt it was somewhat important, 23 (12%) felt it was important and 28 (14%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency shows that most of the respondents see advice from relatives as not very important.

4.3.3.4 Advice of Alumni

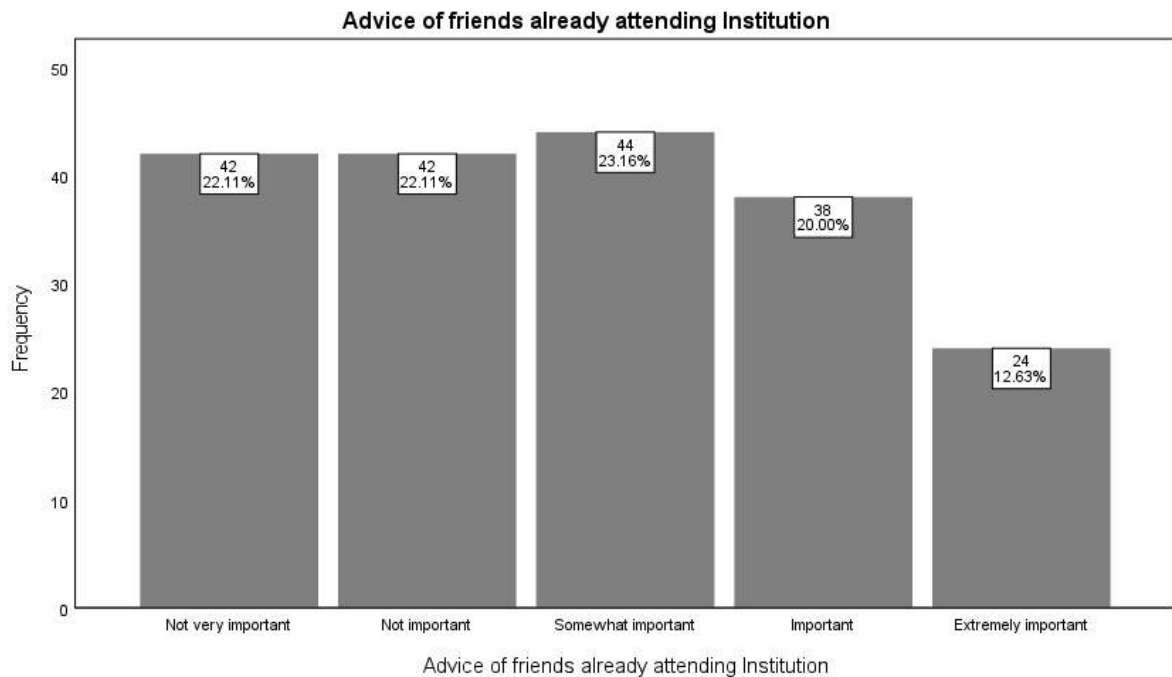
Figure 4.24 Advice of Alumni



57 (30%) of students felt advice from alumni was not very important, 38 (20%) felt it was not important, 37 (19%) felt it was somewhat important, 34 (17%) felt it was important and 23 (12%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency on advice from alumni shows that most of the respondents see advice from alumni not as very important with some moderate number of them seeing advice from alumni as somewhat important and important. A small number of 23 (12.17%) see advice from alumni as extremely important.

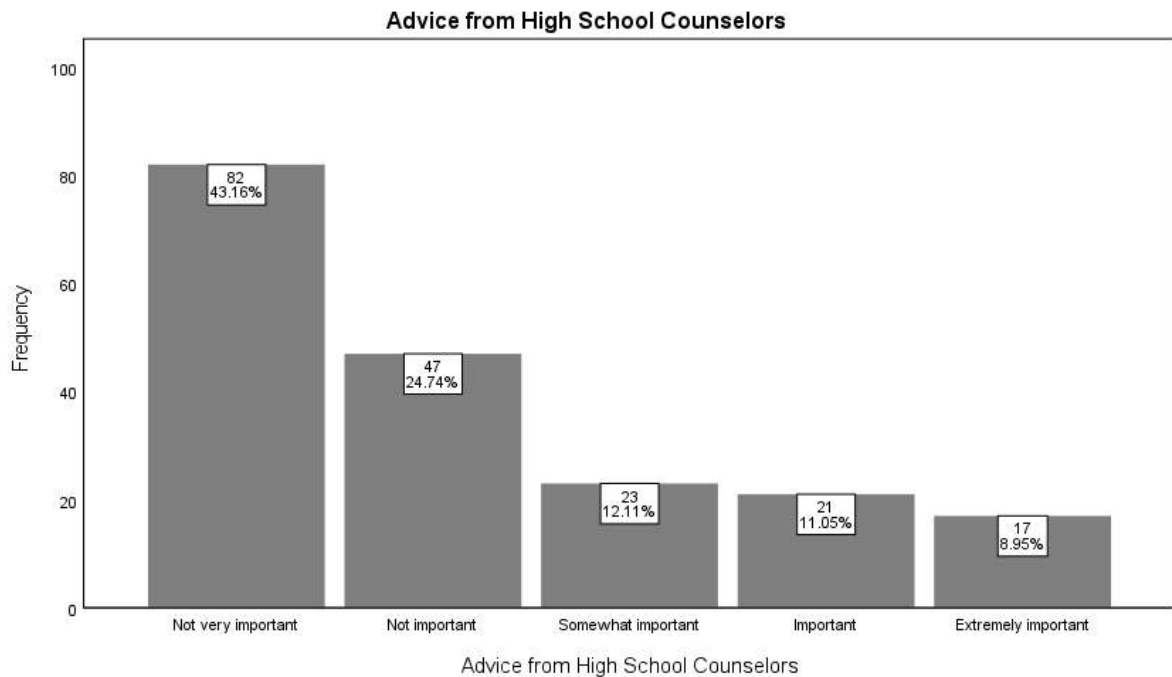
4.3.3.5 Advice of Friends already Attending Institution

Figure 4.25 Advice of Friends already attending Institution



42 (22%) students felt advice from their friends already attending the institution was not very important, 42 (22%) felt it was not important, 44 (23%) felt it was somewhat important, 38(20%) felt it was important and 24 (12%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency on advice from friends shows that slightly over 60% of the respondents see advice from friends already attending institution as not very important, not important and somewhat important while around 32% think that the same advice is important to extremely important.

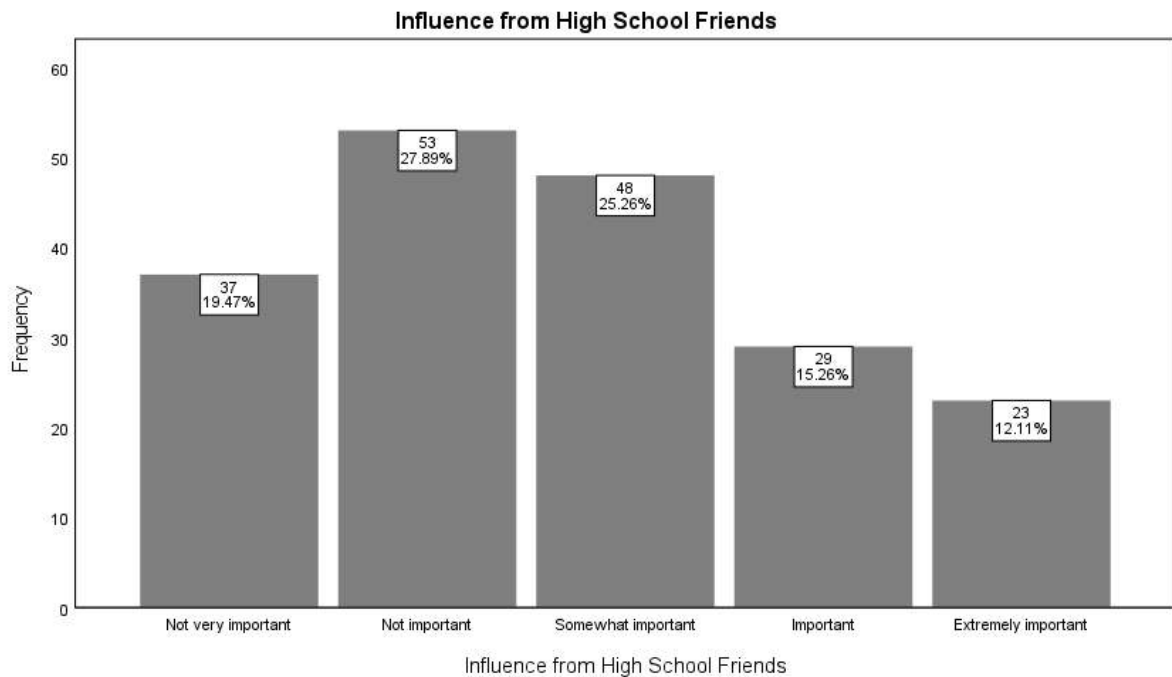
4.3.3.6 Advice from High School Counsellors
Figure 4.26 Advice from High School Counsellors



82 (43%) students felt advice from high school counselors was not very important, 47 (24%) felt it was not important, 23 (12%) felt it was somewhat important, 21 (11%) felt it was important and 17 (8%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency shows that most of the respondents, see advice from high school counsellors as not very important or not important.

4.3.3.7 Advice from High School Friends

Figure 4.27 Advice from High School Friends



In relation to influence from high school friends, 37 (19%) students felt it was not very important, 53 (27%) felt it was not important, 48 (25%) felt it was somewhat important, 29 (15%) felt it was important and 23 (12%) felt it was extremely important. The student frequency on influence from high school friends shows that most of the respondent do not think influence from high school friends is important.

4.3.4 Factor Analysis

Before applying factor analysis, tests for reliability of the instrument and measure of sampling adequacy were conducted. Each section is analysed independently so 3 different analyses of reliability were run for Part B, Part C and Part D. The reliability coefficients for both scales are presented in tables below.

Table 4.1 Part B Reliability of Survey Research Instrument

<u>Reliability Statistics</u>	
Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.703	6

There were 6 Likert items in Part B. These statements were measured on a 5-point Likert Scale, where 1 = Not very important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Important, 5 = Extremely important. There were 188 valid responses to the statements in this section and reliability analysis was run using these 188 responses. Cronbach's Alpha indicated the section reached robust reliability, $\alpha = 0.703$.

Table 4.2 Part C Reliability of Survey Instrument

<u>Reliability Statistics</u>	
Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.832	6

There were 6 Likert items in Part C. These statements were measured on a 5-point Likert Scale, where 1 = Not very important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Important, 5 = Extremely important. There were 188 valid responses to the statements in this section and reliability analysis was run using these 188 responses. Cronbach's Alpha indicated the section reached excellent reliability, $\alpha = 0.832$.

Table 4.3 Part D Reliability of Survey Instrument

<u>Reliability Statistics</u>	
Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.908	7

There were 7 Likert items in Part D. These statements were measured on a 5-point Likert Scale, where 1 = Not very important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Somewhat important, 4 = Important, 5 = Extremely important. There were 188 valid responses to the statements in this section and reliability analysis was run using these 188 responses. Cronbach's Alpha indicated the section reached excellent reliability, $\alpha = 0.908$.

Reliability helps to confirm that each item (question/statement) measures what it is meant to measure. This provides statistical assurance that if a respondent was to be given the same question again at another time where nothing had changed, the respondent would most likely provide the same answer. For an instrument to be considered reliable, a minimum Cronbach's Alpha level of 0.7 is necessary (Best and Kahn, 2006). The reliability analysis for both scales produced high reliability.

Table 4.4 Test of adequacy

<i>KMO and Bartlett's Test</i>			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			.889
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1343.463	
	df	120	
	Sig.	.000	

The Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling and Bartlett's Test for sphericity were included in the analysis. The purpose of these measures was to ascertain if the data were adequate for Factor Analysis. The sample data registered a near perfect KMO Measure of .889 while producing a significant test of Sphericity ($p < .000$). This helped to confirm that the sample data were adequate for a Factor Analysis.

Table 4.5 Variance explained

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings ^a
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	6.383	39.891	39.891	5.791	36.194	36.194	5.321
2	1.801	11.259	51.150	1.349	8.428	44.623	4.682
3	1.210	7.562	58.712	0.816	5.098	49.721	2.786
4	0.896	5.603	64.315				
5	0.827	5.170	69.485				
6	0.770	4.815	74.299				
7	0.663	4.145	78.445				
8	0.588	3.675	82.120				
a9	0.514	3.214	85.334				
10	0.463	2.893	88.227				
11	0.459	2.868	91.095				
12	0.416	2.603	93.698				
13	0.349	2.183	95.881				
14	0.254	1.587	97.468				
15	0.233	1.454	98.922				
16	0.173	1.078	100.000				

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

a. When factors are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

All Likert-scale items covering the three main areas under consideration, Institution Characteristics, Admissions/Marketing, and External Influence were included in the Exploratory Factor analysis. A Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis was run with Promax Rotation and configured to extract factors based on Eigenvalues above 1. Coefficients below 0.3 were suppressed for a cleaner read of the pattern matrix. As seen in the table above, the factor analysis produced three factors which accounted for 58.7% of the variance. These factors are Institutional Characteristics, Promotional and External Influence. All three factors registered eigen values above 1 and therefore had the highest influence in students' decision to enroll into a PIHE and in this case, choosing Botho University.

Initial review of the Pattern Matrix showed problems with discriminant validity for three factors because they registered cross loadings, that is they loaded onto two factors. The following items were excluded from the factor analysis: "Visits by admission officers to your school", "Advice of friends", "Advice of friends already attending institution.". The resulting pattern matrix is shown below.

Table 4.6 Pattern Matrix

Pattern Matrix^a

	Factor		
	1	2	3
Educational Facilities			0.612
Cost of Study			0.445
Employment Opportunities of Graduates			0.438
College Reputation			0.725
Type of Academic Programmes			0.413
Influence of campus visit		0.494	
Influence of institution publications (Career booklet, Prospectus)		0.833	
Availability of college website		0.756	
College Facebook		0.556	
Advertisement on Print papers, radio etc		0.529	
Advice of Parents	0.691		
Advice of Siblings	0.970		
Advice of Relative	0.983		
Advice of Alumni	0.737		
Advice from High School Counselors	0.633		
Influence from High School Friends	0.454		

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.^a

Table 4.7 Descriptive Statistics

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Institutional	190	2.17	5.00	742.80	3.9095	.63565
Promotional	190	1.60	5.00	656.40	3.4547	.89037
External	190	1.00	5.00	500.64	2.6350	1.11303
Valid N (listwise)	190					

The descriptive statistics of factors that affect student decision suggests that decision factors having highest mean value was institutional factors with a mean of 3.9095 followed by promotional factors with a mean of 3.4547 and the lowest being external factors with a mean of 2.6350. The findings from both factor analysis and descriptive analysis strongly correlate in terms of the three most influential factors on a decision to select a private institution of higher education. Though the extent of influence seems to vary between the two analyses, this study has established that the three factors are all important in influencing decision on which institution to study with.

Table 4.8 Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

<i>Correlations</i>		Institutional	Promotional	External
Institutional	Pearson Correlation	--		
	N	190		
Promotional	Pearson Correlation	.422**	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	190	190	
External	Pearson Correlation	.314**	.687**	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	190	190	190

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results from the correlation analysis shows that Respondents who register a high rating in Promotional factors also register a high rating in Institutional ($r = .422$; $p < .000$). The results further show that respondents who register a high rating on institutional also register a high rating on external ($r = .314$; $p < .000$) and that respondents who register a high rating on promotional factors also register a high rating on external factors ($r = .687$; $p < .000$).

4.3.4.1 External Influence

Factor one, external influence accounted for 39.891 of the variance. These sources include advice from parents, siblings, relative, alumni, high school friends and high school counsellors.

4.3.4.2 Promotional Efforts

Factor two, promotional efforts accounted for 11.259 of the variance. These sources include influence of campus visit, influence of institutional publication (such as career booklet, prospectus), availability of college website, college Facebook and advertisement on print, radio etc.

4.3.4.3 Institutional Characteristics

Factor three, institutional characteristics accounted for 7.562 of the variance. These sources include educational facilities, cost of study, employment opportunities of graduates, college reputation and type of academic programme.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The research objectives in the study closely examined the factors that affect student's decisions in choosing PIHE with a more focus on Botho University. These objectives were explored through application of factor analysis. The factor analysis produced three factors which accounted for 58.7% of the variance. These factors are External Influence, promotion efforts and institutional characteristics. The findings indicated that these three factors have the highest influence in students' decision to select a PIHE and in this case, choosing Botho University. These three factors are discussed in detail below.

4.4.1 External Influence

The factor analysis showed external factors as influence as the most influential on student choice of an institution of higher education. External influence includes advice from parents, advice from siblings, advice from relative, advice from alumni, advice from high school friends and advice from high school counsellors. Various research shows that parents are influential on students' choice of college and this is consistent with findings in this study. Students usually consults their parents in making decisions regarding institution of study.

Cabera and La Nasa (2000) assert that parental influence manifest through motivational and practical levels, where at motivational level, parents exert high educational expectations for their children and at the practical level, they get actively involved in school matters and engage on college plans (Miller, 1997; Hossler, Schmit and Vesper, 1999; Perna, 2000). Hofstede et al (2010) opine that investment in a child constitutes a collective family responsibility and is usually driven by the desire for a shared future goal for the student. Another study by Abrahamson (2010) revealed that students do rely and trust on advice from their parents throughout the entire process of choosing an institution of higher education. This is further buttressed by Jonstan (2010) when he opines that parent were regarded as critical source of information in guiding students to choose college. Other studies also reveal that family structures such as parents and relatives are influential on school selection by students (Oosterbeek, et al., 1992; Hossler, et al., 1999). Another study by Nadezda Rika et al (2016), suggested that prospective students took the advice of their parents (41% of the respondents), especially those whose parents possessed higher education qualifications (48% of the respondents) and were ready to discuss and share their experience with students. In a study by Proboyo and Soedarsono (2015) as well as Kusumawati et al (2010) it was found that parents played a major role on how students/ their children chose a university to study. This is also highlighted in a study by Aguado, Laguador and deligero (2015) whose findings showed that as sponsors of their children, parents have a great influence on the type of college their children enroll for study. Some studies also suggest that peers influence students' college choice (Falsey and Haynes, 1984; Joseph and Joseph, 1998). Other significant parties close to students also influence their decisions on institution of study. Lau (2009) opines that social influence emanates from individuals who are close to the students and have social links with them. Another study clearly demonstrated that families, teachers, friends, and peers are influential to students' selection of higher education Institution (Garwe, 2016). These findings resonate with the work of Munisamy et al. (2013) who also indicates that social influences emanate from recommendations by alumni and teachers.

4.4.2 Promotional Efforts

The factor analysis showed promotional effort is the second most influential factor on student choice of an institution of higher education. This factor includes influence of campus visit, influence of institutional publication (such as career booklet, prospectus), availability of website, college Facebook and presence on print, radio etc. The findings are consistent with several related studies. Henley and Rogers (1997) found that campus visits are an influential

factor in a student's decision to attend an institution. The study also found that having an admissions representative going to the student's high school was even a stronger influence. In another study by Norman Rudhumbu et al (2017), results show that 69.5% of students believed that advertising by the institution had a high influence on their selection of institution of study while 30.5% of the students did not believe so. 59.3% of the students believed that visits by university admissions representatives to their secondary school institutions to talk to them about the university and programmes had a high influence on their selection of a university. 19.2% of the students did not believe so while 21.5% of the students slightly believed so. Career fairs were also seen as highly influential by most students (69.9%) in their selection of institution of study. Adams and Eveland (2007) found out that student's satisfaction with the institution's web site also had a positive relationship to their selection of an institution. It also showed that the website and presence on television and radio are very effective in attracting students to a particular institution. Studies shows that a well-communicated marketing strategy has an impact on institutional reputation as well as students' enrolment. In a study by Osman et al., (2013) regarding students' decisions in choosing private institutions of higher education in Malaysia, it was found that promotion has a positive impact on the choice of study. Though this finding contrasted with the work of Lau (2009) who contend that promotion was not an influential factor, it is generally agreed that institutions of higher education must work on a strategy for promotional purposes (Sia, 2010; Osman et al., 2013).

4.3.5 Institutional Characteristics

The factor analysis showed that institutional characteristics is the third most influential factor on student choice of an institution of higher education. This includes educational facilities, cost of study, employment opportunities of graduates, college reputation and type of academic programme. The study by Norman Rudhumbu et al (2017), shows that institutional factors are influential on student decision to enroll at an institution. Students surveyed in the study show that 82.5% of the students were influenced by the academic programmes offered by the institution when compared to 17.5% who either were either slightly influenced or not influenced at all. 73.5% of the students were influenced by the image and reputation of the institution when compared to 26.5% whose decisions were either slightly or not influenced at all. 73.4% of students indicated that their decision to enroll at the institution was influenced by the quality of educational facilities such as classrooms, library while 26.6% indicated that their decisions were either slightly or not influenced at all. 65.6% of the students felt that the

institution had a good opportunity of getting employed hence their decision to enroll while 34.5% were either slightly or do not consider employment prospects of students from the institution. Other researchers (Ford, et al. 1999; Yosof, et al. 2008; Ismail, 2009) concluded that institutions that had a variety and flexibility of programs are likely to be attractive to students. There is contradictory research finding on the issue of cost and how it influences students' choice of an institution. Whereas other research findings suggest that students selection of institution was influenced by cost (Saichaie, 2011; Dolinsky, 2010; Angulo et al. 2010 and, Schoenheerr, 2009). Other findings by Soo and Elliot (2008) suggests an insignificant link between the cost charged by an institution and the students choice to enroll with the institution. Shumilova et al (2011) stated that employment prospects was an influential factor in attracting students to select a university. This study therefore shows that the three factors, namely External Influence, Promotion Efforts and Institutional Characteristic have a positive impact on the choice of institution of study by prospective students.

Lau (2009) reveals that students focus more on the physical characteristics in making choice to enroll in the Higher education Institutions. These factors act as an additional boost on student choice of institutions (Garwe, 2016). Other studies shows that institutions that are close to students hometown are most as they save the cost of transportation (Garwe, 2016). The availability of necessary support services such as Internet access and library is also one of the considerations that students made when deciding to enroll in a higher education institute (Shah et al., 2013). Khan, Mridha and Barua (2009) found that reputation of a high education institution was the second highest important factor compared to quality of teaching. Munisamy et al., (2013) opines that reputation falls on the second factor as the decision choice in choosing a particular institution compared to the graduate's employability factor. Another study showed that academic recognition and reputation were placed number three compared to quality of teaching and learning and fees (Garwe, 2016).

4.3.6 Correlation between the three variables

As confirmed in Table 4.10, the Pearson coefficient correlation shows a strong correlation between the three variables of promotional, institutional, and external. The strongest association is between External and Promotional ($r = .687$), followed by promotion and institutional ($r = .422$) and lastly external and institutional ($r = .314$). This means the more respondents felt something was important in their external environment, the more likely they were to feel something promotional was also important. This correlation is quite strong. All

three factors correlate significantly with each other which shows that if one was to find one very important, they were more likely to find the other two more important. It also means that if one were to find one component not at all important, they were more likely to find the other two not at all important.

Table 4.8 Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

<i>Correlations</i>		Institutional	Promotional	External
Institutional	Pearson Correlation	--		
	N	190		
Promotional	Pearson Correlation	.422**	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	190	190	
External	Pearson Correlation	.314**	.687**	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	190	190	190

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.5 Summary of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter was to answer the research objectives and present the findings of the study. The research objectives were addressed through employment of descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The descriptive statistics provided demographic information on the study participants. The factor analysis was utilized to extract the meaningful and representative factors from the choice variables included in the study. A randomly sampled 197 first year students who enrolled in July 2020 were surveyed in Botho University. The factor analysis produced three factors which accounted for 58.7% of the variance in the student's choice decision to enroll at PIHE. The study findings revealed three factors that affect students' choice to enroll at private PIHE in Botswana with a particular reference to Botho University. External Influence, Promotion efforts and Institutional Characteristics were seen as the top three influential factors. External influence reflected importance of choice factors such as advice from parents, advice from siblings, advice from relative, advice from alumni, advice from high school friends and advice from high school counsellors. The second highest choice factor related to promotion efforts and demonstrated that students place more emphasis on choice factors such as campus visit, influence of institutional publication (such

as career booklet, prospectus), availability of website, Facebook and advertisement on print, radio etc. The third highest choice factor related to institutional characteristics and showed that students explore choice factors such as educational facilities, cost of study, employment opportunities of alumni, college reputation and type of academic programme. It is critical that private higher institutions of education should pay more attention to these choice factors if they are to increase their enrollment prospects, as they have an influence on student choice of institution of higher education.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introductions

The purpose of this chapter is to present conclusions, implications, and recommendations on the study.

5.2 Implications and Recommendations of the study

The higher education market in Botswana has largely been volatile given Government's increasingly ambiguous policy regarding post-secondary sponsorship of students. The environment has seen a steady decline of students getting sponsored into private institutions of higher education, for the past four to five years. The situation has resulted in an intense competition between both public and private as well as within the private providers themselves in their quest to attract students eligible for government sponsorship to apply for enrollment with them. The following key recommendations are made from the study to assist PIHE understand influential factors in students' decision to enroll in PIHE with more focus on Botho University.

5.2.1 Implications and Recommendations of the Study

The study findings has unearthed some key implications for policy direction and institutional practice that could assist PIHE in their quest to recruit students to study with them. The implications and recommendations for policy direction and institutional practice are discussed below.

- a) Private institutions should focus on developing and sustaining good relationship with government schools as most students in the study (89%) indicated that they studied in government schools. It is also recommended that institutions should reach out more to private high schools as only 11% of the students indicated that they attended private high school. Reaching out to private schools will ensure their students also get attracted to private higher education institutions.

- b) Private institutions should put some efforts on recruitment of international students or students from other nationalities as a small number of students in this study (0.53%) indicated that they constituted other nationalities. Whereas most students in the study are Batswana (99%), this mainly constitutes government sponsored students, who are in decline over the years, hence for institutional sustainability, recruiting non-Batswana students can broaden the institutional revenue base as most of these students are self-sponsored and self-sustaining.
- c) Private institutions should focus more on addressing external factors as these were found to be the most influential in the student's choice of an institution of higher education. Such efforts could include reaching out and consulting parents, siblings, and alumni, among others on what they perceive as the most influential factors in their choice of institutions of higher education.
- d) The second most influential choice factor was revealed as promotional efforts by institutions. PIHE should be very aggressive in their branding, marketing, and advertising activities. These includes opportunities for campus visits, producing institutional publication (such as career booklet, prospectus), having an up to date and attractive website as well as presence in various mediums such as Facebook and advertisement on print, radio etc. Institutions should also consider arranging open days and campus tours for the high school completing students who are ready to enroll for their higher education. Institutional characteristics were also found to play a major role in students' choice of institution of higher education. Therefore, institutions should focus on addressing issues such as educational facilities, cost of study, employment opportunities of graduates, college reputation and type of academic programme. More specifically, Botho University should continuously seek ways to address the three overall aspects that constitutes educational facilities such as academic-related facilities, student halls of residence and activity-related facilities. Such facilities as technology, classrooms, and library needs constant review. Lighting, thermal conditions as well as noise are also key issues for Botho University to constantly address. Issues of connectivity are also critical as students are now more prone to digital learning and engagement. Regarding academic programmes, Botho University will benefit immensely from aligning their programme offerings to the Human Resource Development Council Priority Skills document of 2019, which spells out both current and future skills needed in the Local Market and Global Market. In the main, skills set that are increasingly in demand constitutes such areas

as engineering and health and applied sciences, among others. Therefore, developing academic programmes on those areas of study would position Botho University as a preferred institution of study by prospective learners. Botho University will also have work on a robust strategy to ensure graduate employability and easy integration into the labour market. In this regard, the institution will need to work on addressing graduate skills and strengthen structures that facilitate transition from schooling to industry. Some of these structures are already in place but will need continuous strengthening. This position is well articulated in literature where the provision of student services is seen as a key aspect of higher education institutions (Perez-Encinas 2017)

- e) To boost recruitment and attract more students, institutions should actively consider the three choice factors which influence student's choice of PIHE. These choice factors are; External Influence (advice from parents, advice from siblings, advice from relative, advice from alumni, advice from friends and counsellors in high school); Promotional Efforts (influence of campus visit, influence of institutional publication (such as career booklet, prospectus), availability of website, Facebook and advertisement on print, radio etc.); Institutional Characteristics (educational facilities, cost of study, employment opportunities of graduates, college reputation and type of academic programme)

5.2.2 Recommendations for future research

As a result of this study, the following future research is recommended.

- a. The sample population in this study was restricted to Botho University. It is important that future research should be based on large sample of institutions to provide a better understanding of student choice factors.
- b. The study focused on 2020 first year students who were enrolled in Botho University. It would be important for future research to consider high school students who are not yet enrolled into higher education institution to establish if there were any choice differences between those two student categories.
- c. As the finding has established that external factors are the most important factor influencing student's decisions in choosing PIHE, it is recommended that future study explore each of the external factors to determine how each influences student choice. This would assist in designing a relevant recruitment strategy for institutions.

- d. The study has revealed that promotional efforts are the second most influential choice factors. It is recommended that future research should focus more on how each promotion strategy can be further enhanced to improve recruitment prospects for institutions.

5.3 Conclusions of the study

This chapter gave a summary of the research study, implication for institutional policy and practice as well as recommendations for future research. Major factors **affecting student's decisions in choosing PIHE** have been identified. This study is not the first to be conducted in Botswana and it will add more knowledge to the student choice factors influencing choice of at PIHE. The study has clearly highlighted that external factor play a more influential role in choosing a PIHE. Hence policy makers in the PIHE would be able to develop informed strategies of how to make full use of such factors in their recruitment efforts. Finally, research recommendations presented in the study should facilitate a better understanding of the student's choice factors to enroll at PIHE in Botswana.

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ANNEXURE A: BOTHO UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW APPROVAL LETTER

OFFICE: Address: Golekanye, Setume P.O. Box 100, Botswana Tel: +266 (0) 11 200 0000 Fax: +266 (0) 11 200 0000	RECEPTION: Address: Golekanye, Setume P.O. Box 100, Botswana Tel: +266 (0) 11 200 0000 Fax: +266 (0) 11 200 0000	LIBRARY: Address: Golekanye, Setume P.O. Box 100, Botswana Tel: +266 (0) 11 200 0000 Fax: +266 (0) 11 200 0000	STUDENT: Address: Golekanye, Setume P.O. Box 100, Botswana Tel: +266 (0) 11 200 0000 Fax: +266 (0) 11 200 0000	ADMISSION & DISTANCE LEARNING OFFICE: Address: Golekanye, Setume P.O. Box 100, Botswana Tel: +266 (0) 11 200 0000 Fax: +266 (0) 11 200 0000	 BOTHO UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING & INNOVATION
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22/LTR/GBE/PGL/2021

May 21, 2021

Golekanye Setume
Faculty of Business and Accounting
Department of Graduate Studies in Business and Accounting, (MBA)

Dear Mr. Golekanye

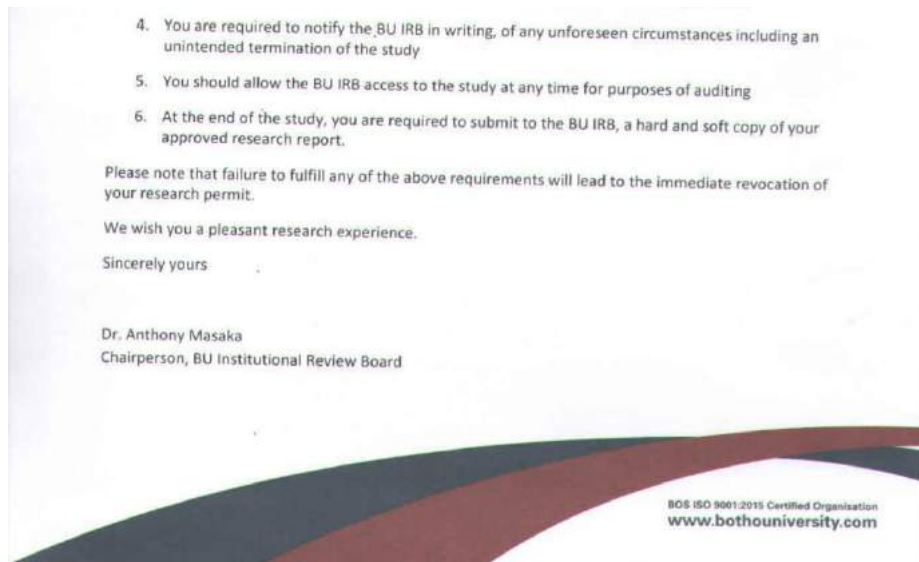
Project Title: Factors Affecting Student's Decisions in Choosing Private Institutions of Higher Education: The Case of Botho University

Botho University Institutional Review Board (BU IRB) has approved your request to conduct a study with the aforementioned title. The approval is in line with the mandate given to the University by the Department of Research Science and Technology on 03 December 2019 (REF: DRST 7/2/13 XXIII (24)) to issue research permits.

This permit applies specifically to your topic and the research proposal that you provided together with your application. The permit is valid for 6 months from the date written at the top of this letter.

Please observe the following:

1. You need to request for consent from your study participants before collecting data from them
2. You need to ask for permission from the institution/ department/unit from where you intend to collect your data
3. You may not change any aspect of your research without permission from the BU IRB



ANNEXURE B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

An Investigation into Factors Affecting Student's Decisions in Choosing Private Institutions of Higher Education: The Case of Botho University

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate factors that affect student's decisions in choosing private Institution of higher education with a focus on Botho University. This questionnaire is intended to collect the relevant data for the study and consists of Five parts: Part A, Part B, Part C, Part D & Part E. In Part A, I request that you kindly to provide some general information about yourself, your family, and other related questions. In Parts B to E, there are some factors which influenced your decision in choosing a private institution of higher education and. I request that you kindly indicate how each factor was more important in determining your choice to study with Botho University. Please note that there is no right or wrong answer in this exercise and hence be free to fully express yourself as honestly as you possibly can. Your opinions are valued and respected and any information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this study.

Thank you for your participation and may god richly bless you.

PART A: Demographic information about the participant.

Kindly read each statement and indicate your opinion by **placing a tick (√)** on the category that reflects your best opinion.

1. Gender: () Male () Female
2. Age: () Under 18 () 18 () Over 18

3. Nationality: () Motswana () other
 4. Type of high school you studied in: () Government () Private
 5. Which type of program you are currently enrolled in? () Engineering () Technology () Health () Business & Accounting () Hospitality () Jewellery Management
 6. Do you have a permanent home in Gaborone () Yes () No
 7. Distance from your home to Botho University? () less than 50 Km () 51 - 100 Km () 101 - 200Km () 201 - 300Km () More than 300 Km

PART B: Fixed Institution Characteristics

Considering the selection of the private institution of higher education you are now attending, how important was each of the following factors in determining your choice of Botho University. The importance of choice factors ranges from 1= not very important, 2= not important, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= extremely important

Please place a tick (✓) on the number in each college choice factor that best describes your decision to enrol at Botho University.

College Choice Factor	Not Very Important	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Extremely Important
Educational Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Cost of Study	1	2	3	4	5
Location of College	1	2	3	4	5
Employment Opportunities of Graduates	1	2	3	4	5
College Reputation	1	2	3	4	5
Type of Academic Programmes	1	2	3	4	5

PART C: Promotion/Marketing Efforts

Considering the selection of the private institution of higher education you are now attending, how important was each of the following factors in determining your choice of Botho University. The importance of choice factors ranges from 1= not very important, 2= not important, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= extremely important

Please place a tick (✓) on the number in each college choice factor that best describes your decision to enrol at Botho University.

College Choice Factor	Not Very Important	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Extremely Important
Influence of campus visit	1	2	3	4	5
Influence of institution publications (Career booklet, Prospectus)	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of college website	1	2	3	4	5
College Facebook	1	2	3	4	5
Visits by admission officers to your school	1	2	3	4	5
Advertisement on Print papers, radio etc	1	2	3	4	5

PART D: External Influence

Considering the selection of the private institution of higher education you are now attending, how important was each of the following factors in determining your choice of Botho University. The importance of choice factors ranges from 1= not very important, 2= not important, 3= somewhat important, 4= important, 5= extremely important

Please place a tick (✓) on the number in each college choice factor that best describes your decision to enrol at Botho University.

College Choice Factor	Not Very Important	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Extremely Important
Advice of Parents	1	2	3	4	5
Advice of Siblings	1	2	3	4	5
Advice of Relative	1	2	3	4	5

Advice of Alumni	1	2	3	4	5
Advice of friends already attending Institution	1	2	3	4	5
Advice from High School Counselors	1	2	3	4	5
Influence from High School Friends	1	2	3	4	5

**Thank you most profusely for your valuable time, effort, and opinion.
God richly bless you.**

ANNEXURE C: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Institutional	190	2.17	5.00	742.80	3.9095	.63565
Promotional	190	1.60	5.00	656.40	3.4547	.89037
External	190	1.00	5.00	500.64	2.6350	1.11303
Valid N (listwise)	190					

**ANNEXURE D: EIGEN VALUES OF EXTRACTED STUDENTS' CHOICE FACTOR
AND THE TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED**

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings ^a
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	6.383	39.891	39.891	5.791	36.194	36.194	5.321
2	1.801	11.259	51.150	1.349	8.428	44.623	4.682
3	1.210	7.562	58.712	0.816	5.098	49.721	2.786
4	0.896	5.603	64.315				
5	0.827	5.170	69.485				
6	0.770	4.815	74.299				
7	0.663	4.145	78.445				
8	0.588	3.675	82.120				
a9	0.514	3.214	85.334				
10	0.463	2.893	88.227				
11	0.459	2.868	91.095				
12	0.416	2.603	93.698				
13	0.349	2.183	95.881				
14	0.254	1.587	97.468				

15	0.233	1.454	98.922
16	0.173	1.078	100.000

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

ANNEXURE E: PEARSON'S CORRELATION COEFFICIENT

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

<i>Correlations</i>		Institutional	Promotional	External
Institutional	Pearson Correlation	--		
	N	190		
Promotional	Pearson Correlation	.422**	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	190	190	
External	Pearson Correlation	.314**	.687**	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	190	190	190

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).