

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SELECTION OF STUDY IN THE DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM IN INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT AT COLLEGE OF
INNOVATION AND MANAGEMENT, SUAN SUNANDHA RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY OF
CHINESE STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the basic information about Chinese students who are selected to study in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The specific objectives are to study the basic data of students who opt for this Ph.D. program, focusing on factors influencing their decision-making. The scope of the study targets the population and sample group, consisting of Chinese doctoral students studying in the field of Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, with a sample size of 137 students. The research findings indicate that 80.29% of the respondents are female, while 19.70% are male. Regarding the total monthly family income of 50,000 Baht or more, it constitutes 32.84% of the participants. In terms of factors influencing the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University of Chinese Students, as follows; the image branding factor of the academic department has the most significant impact on the decision-making process, with a mean score at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.55$, S.D. = 0.62), In terms of the factor related to public relations, it holds significant influence with a mean score at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.42$, S.D. = 0.94) and the factors curriculum factors is ($\bar{x} = 3.86$, S.D. = 0.94) respectively.

Keywords: Factors Influencing, the Selection of Study, the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management

INTRODUCTION

The current digital technology transformations have brought about revolutionary changes, leading to the emergence of disruptive technologies. These changes not only impact the economic system but also significantly affect people's lives globally. The influence extends to various aspects, including education, natural resource management, transportation, information utilization for administration, and work processes. Information technology is interconnected with all aspects of daily life, and these rapid

changes have widespread effects on Thailand. Organizations need to adapt to survive and compete successfully.

The development of human resources is a crucial mechanism to propel the country into a global society in the 21st century, aligning with the national strategy and Thailand 4.0. Preparedness, including knowledge, skills, and necessary competencies, is essential for individuals to adapt and stay abreast of the changing global trends freely and borderless. From the National Education Plan 2017-2036, it is evident that urgent actions are needed to enhance the country's competitiveness. To respond to the current situation in Thailand, it is imperative for the government and all relevant sectors to collaborate in setting directions and goals.

The focus should be on developing educational curricula at all levels to promote vital skills for the 21st century. This approach aims to enhance people's capabilities to meet the demands of the job market and foster economic and social development in the country, competitive with global trends and competition in the 21st century, as the research by Tanapol Kortana (2019) is aligned with Factors for Success for Online Business Entrepreneurs in the Digital Age include the need to identify and promptly respond to customer demands, utilizing technology in the digital era, adapting marketing strategies to current market conditions for rapid market opportunities. Additionally, incorporating innovative management practices to adjust business strategies for increased sales and market expansion is crucial. Moreover, education is an important process for developing quality people and is a factor that will help promote the country's development. In particular, postgraduate education focuses on developing academics and professionals to have a high level of knowledge in various disciplines so that they can freely pursue new knowledge as well as innovate.

The Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, is an educational institution that focuses on producing doctoral graduates. These graduates are equipped with knowledge and skills as a foundation to drive development and change at the regional level. Consequently, the researcher is interested in studying the factors influencing the choice of studying in the Ph.D. program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, among Chinese students. This information will be used to develop the program, enhance its image, and improve its public relations to be more effective and aligned with the needs of students and the community.

OBJECTIVE

1. To study the basic information about Chinese students who are selected to study in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

2. To study the factors influencing to study in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concepts, Theories, and Relevant Research:

1. Theoretical concepts related to marketing mix factors.
2. Theoretical concepts related to consumer behavior.

3. Theoretical concepts related to factors influencing consumer decision-making.

Theoretical concepts related to marketing mix factors

The Marketing Mix (Service Marketing Mix) refers to the tools or controllable factors that businesses must use collectively to meet the needs and satisfy the target customer group or stimulate demand for their products and services. In the context of football, as mentioned by Vichit Kamburaphong (2009), "Football teams are products; it's a show business that has marketing mix elements different from other types of products.

Sudaphorn Kunatalabut (2014: 9) defines the Marketing Mix as the components directly related to the products or services presented to consumers. Factors associated with the Marketing Mix typically include the four commonly known marketing elements referred to as the 4Ps.

Siriwan Sirirat and colleagues (2009) mention that the Marketing Mix represents the controllable marketing variables that companies use collectively to satisfy the target group.

Theoretical concepts related to consumer behavior

Consumer behavior refers to the characteristics of consumers' purchasing habits, such as where they buy, when they buy, how much they buy, who the buyers are, and the criteria they use to make purchasing decisions. Additionally, using behavior involves how consumers consume products, such as where and with whom they consume them, and in what quantity (Seri Wongmontha, 2009)

According to Darra Teepapal and Thanawat Teepapal (2010), consumer behavior involves a process with various steps. Before deciding to purchase a product, consumers go through an extensive process, starting with seeking information about the product, comparing and evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each product, and engaging in various other activities. However, in some cases, decision-making can be rapid, and almost immediate, particularly for certain products.

Kardes, Cronley, and Cline (2011) define consumer behavior as all activities related to purchasing, using, and disposing of products, and services, including emotions, attitudes, and anticipated behavioral responses that occur beforehand. This provides a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior boundaries.

Theoretical concepts related to factors influencing consumer decision-making

The factors influencing decision-making depend on various elements. Factors that influence consumer purchasing decision behavior make it possible to understand the characteristics of consumer needs in different aspects. This understanding allows for the identification of appropriate marketing strategies. Notably, these factors, as categorized by Kotler and Armstrong (2001, p.78), can be grouped into those affecting feelings and thoughts, including:

1. Values: The impact of values is significant in situations where multiple options are available. Changes in values may result in the development and adaptation of new values that better align with current needs.
2. Type of Family (Feeling): Characteristics of the family, such as size, financial status, occupation, and education, play a crucial role in influencing decision-making.
3. Family Resources (Thinking): Family resources have an impact on decision-making. Generally, individuals tend to follow past consumption patterns, creating a consistent decision-making process.

4. Socioeconomic Setting (Thinking): The economic condition of a country influences purchasing decisions. During prosperous times, people tend to spend more comfortably, while economic downturns prompt a reevaluation of spending habits.

Understanding these factors allows for the development of tailored marketing strategies that align with the diverse needs and preferences of consumers.

Research Framework

Independent Variables: Basic personal information and factors influencing the selection of study of the doctoral program in Innovative Management include brand image, curriculum factors, and public relations factors.

Dependent Variable: The decision to study in the doctoral program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

Figure 1

The framework of study factors influencing the selection of study of the doctoral program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

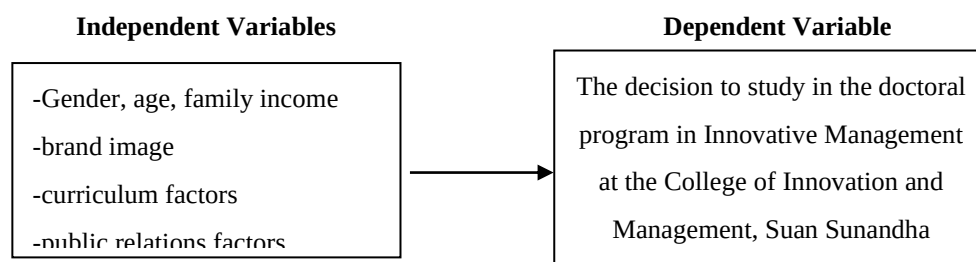


Figure 1: The research framework

METHODOLOGY

The Scope of Research, this research is conducted with the following scopes in various aspects:

1. Population and Sample Group:

The population for this research comprises Chinese students enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy program, majoring in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The total population is 205 students. The sample size, calculated using Taro Yamane's formula (Yamane Taro: 1973, p.125), is 137 individuals.

2. Content Scope: Variables used in the study include:

2.1 Independent Variables:

- Gender, Age, Family Income
- Factors related to the image of the academic discipline
- Factors related to the curriculum
- Factors related to public relations

2.2 Dependent Variable:

- The selection to study in the Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovative Management at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

3. Scope of area:

College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

4. Research Instrument:

The research tools for this study consist of three parts:

Part 1: General Characteristics of Survey Respondents: This section gathers basic information about the sample group, providing an overview of the respondents.

Part2: Data Related to Factors Affecting Decision-Making in Selection of study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for Chinese Students: This part includes data on factors influencing the decision to pursue further studies, specifically in the Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovative Management at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The factors encompass aspects related to the image of the academic department, the curriculum, and public relations. The data collection involves the use of a questionnaire designed with a Rating Scale of 5 levels, following the Likert's Scale. (Likert's Scale is employed as the measurement method for the questionnaire, using a 5-level rating scale)

Part 3: Comments and Suggestions: This section allows respondents to provide their comments and suggestions regarding the study. Participants are encouraged to share their thoughts and recommendations.

5. Data Collection:

This research adopts a survey approach, utilizing a questionnaire for data collection. The operational steps are as follows:

1. Review of Relevant Documents: Conduct a literature review to identify key factors influencing the decision to pursue further studies, specifically in the Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovative Management at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Develop a questionnaire based on the identified issues.

2. Expert Validation of the Questionnaire: Have five experts review the questionnaire. If discrepancies arise, the researcher will make necessary revisions to ensure the questionnaire aligns perfectly with the research objectives.

3. Distribution of the Validated Questionnaire: Administer the validated questionnaire to the sample group for accurate data collection.

4. Data Analysis from the Questionnaire in the Research and Research Summary

6. Data Analysis Procedures:

The researcher verified the completeness and clarity of the questionnaire and processed the collected data using statistical software. The following analytical procedures were employed: Data Analysis: Analyze the collected data using statistical software on a computer.

1. Analysis of Basic Personal Information and the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management. Use Descriptive Method statistics to analyze the frequency and percentage of personal information. This provides a comprehensive comparison and explanation of the variables.

2. Analysis of the Five Factors: Analyze the five factors, namely brand image, Curriculum, Personal Factors, Environmental Factors, and Relationship Factors. Utilize Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D.), and using One Way Analysis of Variance to examine variance.

3. Comparison of the Three Aspects of Students Pursuing the Innovation Management Program: Use a t-test at a 95% confidence level to compare means and perform One Way Analysis of Variance (F-test) to analyze variance. Additionally, compare data using LSD.

RESULTS

The research results in the Factors Influencing the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University of Chinese students from the distribution of 137 survey questionnaires, the following demographic information was gathered: Gender: Females: 110 respondents (80.29%), Males: 27 respondents (19.70%). Age: The majority aged 35 years: 57 respondents (41.60%), Followed by those aged 40 years: 53 respondents (38.68%), Aged 30 years: 11 respondents (8.02%), aged 25 years and above: 9 respondents (6.56%), youngest age group (below 20 years): 7 respondents (5.10%). Monthly Family Income (Average): Income of 50,000 Baht or more: 45 respondents (32.84%), Income between 40,001 - 50,000 Baht: 43 respondents (31.38%), Income between 30,001 - 40,000 Baht: 28 respondents (20.43%) These demographic details provide a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the survey respondents, including gender distribution, age groups, and average monthly family income.

The study identifies three key factors that significantly impact the decision-making process of choosing to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovation Management. These factors are the image branding factor of the academic department, the factors curriculum factors, and the factors related to public relations as follows From Table

Table 1
The table of Average and Standard Deviation of 3 Key Factors:

Evaluation items	$\bar{x}$	S. D	Level of opinion	Ranking
The factor of image branding	4.55	0.62	The highest level	1
The factor of public relation	4.42	0.94	High Level	2
The factors of curriculum	3.86	0.94	High Level	3
Total	4.28	0.83	High Level	

The research findings reveal the following insights based on the respondents about the factor of image branding has been affecting the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at College of Innovation and Management in the highest average level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.55, S.D. = 0.62) when considering each item, it was found that the field of study has been famous for a long time and has high-level average at ($\bar{x}$ =4.60, S.D. = 0.54) Respondents highly value the knowledge and expertise of faculty members, with the mean score at the highest level at ($\bar{x}$ = 4.55, S.D. = 0.57), The program is widely accepted in the labor market, as indicated by the highest mean score at ($\bar{x}$ = 4.51, S.D. = 0.61), The program excels in providing exceptional support to students, with the highest mean score at ($\bar{x}$ =4.50, S.D. = 0.60)

The research findings reveal the following insights based on the respondents about the factor of curriculum affecting the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative

Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University of Chinese Students with an average score of ($\bar{x}$ = 3.86, S.D. = 0.94). A detailed breakdown of specific statements reveals the following: The teaching approach emphasizing real-world practices received the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.53, S.D. = 0.52), The course structure emphasizing innovation creation is considered significant, with a mean score in the high range ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51, S.D. = 0.59). Respondents highly regard the program's accreditation and educational quality, as evidenced by the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.58, S.D. = 0.53). The average score for registration and other expenses throughout the program is high ($\bar{x}$ = 3.48, S.D. = 0.67), indicating that respondents consider the cost-related aspects positively in their decision-making process.

The research findings reveal the following insights based on the respondents about the factor of public relations affecting the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University of Chinese Student with an average score of ($\bar{x}$ = 4.42, S.D. = 0.94). Information from social media and various websites is the most influential, with the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.54, S.D. = 0.62), underscoring the importance of an online presence. Peers currently studying being information providers during orientation activities have the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.25, S.D. = 0.91), highlighting the impact of peer influence during educational events. Information from program recommendation sheets is considered influential, with a high mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.21, S.D. = 0.93). Information from the program's Innovation Management and university websites is highly regarded, with a mean score of 4.20 (S.D. = 0.92). And Guidance from staff and faculty members in educational decisions is considered significant, with a high mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.19, S.D. = 0.98).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Based on the study of Factors Influencing the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University of Chinese Students, the researcher's findings as follows.

Topic 1: Basic Information of Respondents In analyzing the basic information of respondents, who are students of the Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, we find the following key points residence and the majority of respondents are originally from Phuket, followed by Phang Nga and Krabi, respectively. This suggests that most students prefer educational institutions close to their homes, likely influenced by the convenience of staying with their families and avoiding long-distance travel. **Next Economic Status:** Respondents generally come from economically stable backgrounds, with a significant percentage having a monthly family income of 50,000 Baht and above. This economic stability is associated with the fact that the surveyed provinces are known tourist destinations with robust economic systems. **Educational Background:** A significant portion of respondents completed their education at the sixth year of high school, with a comparable number having vocational certificates (Matthayom 6 and Vocational Certificate Level 3). This aligns with the findings of previous research indicating that students often choose institutions near their residences and have completed their secondary education.

Topic 2: Image Factors of the Department, Regarding the image factors of the department, respondents express positive opinions, emphasizing the long-standing reputation of the Innovation Management program. The program is recognized for its academic and professional excellence, creating a positive image that fosters pride among students. Additionally, the expertise of faculty members in

producing competent graduates is highlighted, along with the innovative teaching methods incorporating modern technology, tools, and equipment. This positive perception is consistent with the research conducted by Krisuma Pakpianphasee (2010) on factors influencing the choice of undergraduate programs at Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University. The study found that students place high importance on the credibility of institutions, familiarity, and acceptance by the job market. All in all, Facilities and Environment, in the evaluation of facilities and environment factors, respondents highly appreciate these aspects. Recognizing the significance of conducive learning environments, the department has made efforts to ensure modern and beneficial facilities. These efforts include maintaining contemporary educational practices, integrating technology, and providing a variety of teaching methods, such as group discussions and seminars. This is consistent with the research by Kriangsak Saowakun (2017), which emphasized the importance of educational factors in decision-making.

Topic 3: Curriculum, regarding curriculum factors, respondents show a high level of satisfaction. This is attributed to the program's alignment with industry needs, leading to graduates being well-received by employers. The program's accreditation, quality of education, appropriate credit units, and reasonable fees throughout the course duration contribute to its positive image. This reflects the findings of Krisornsak Songsaengchan (2017), emphasizing the role of the curriculum as a significant factor influencing students' decisions to pursue higher education.

Topic 4: Public Relations factors also have a considerable impact on the decision-making process, with respondents expressing positive opinions. Effective public relations contribute to shaping a clear and distinctive image of the department. Utilizing diverse media, especially online platforms, enhances visibility and credibility. This aligns with the research conducted by Kraisorn Songsaengchan (2017) on factors influencing decisions to pursue higher education, emphasizing the role of public relations in providing information that aids decision-making.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that various factors, including residence, economic status, educational background, image factors of the department, facilities and environment, curriculum, and public relations, collectively influence the decision-making process of students in choosing the Doctor of Philosophy program in Innovation Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The positive perceptions of these factors contribute to the program's attractiveness and alignment with the student's educational and career goals.

Expected Benefits

1. Understanding the basic information of students who are selected to study the Ph.D. program in Innovative Management, College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunadha Rajabhat University
2. Insight into the factors influencing the choice of studying in the Ph.D. program in Innovative Management.
3. Utilizing the obtained data for consideration in improving and enhancing the program in the future.

Recommendations From the Research

Based on the study of Factors Influencing the Selection of Study in the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Innovative Management at the College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University of Chinese Students, particularly among Chinese students, it is evident that the image branding of the factor of the academic department plays a significant role in the decision-making process. Therefore, it is recommended that the department takes proactive measures to enhance its image

further. Initiatives aimed at promoting and strengthening the positive perception of the academic program should be prioritized to attract more prospective students.

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