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Role of Service scape on Student Institution Choice

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Abstract

In recent years there has been increased discussion of the subjective, emotional and sociological factors influencing student choice of university. However, there is a dearth of information exploring what constitutes these feelings. This exploratory paper uses the conceptual model of the servicescape to provide insight into the emotional factors driving student choice. In-depth interviews with prospective students revealed that first impressions really do count. Students are deterred by poor physical environments and excited by enthusiastic staff and students. Most significantly, the study revealed the necessity of a restorative servicescape to provide both a sense of escape and feeling of belonging. This paper contributes to broadening the application of the servicescape model and to a greater understanding of the impact of the environment on prospective students, and creates an opportunity to inform policy by providing university marketing decision makers with a better understanding of what constitutes the university environment and what makes it appealing to prospective students.

Keywords:

Service scape, Student choice, Higher education, marketing.

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