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Title

College choice and the university brand: exploring the consumer decision framework / Amber L. Stephenson ; Alex Heckert ; David B. Yerger

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Abstract

Branding in higher education has become increasingly used as a mechanism of differentiation among competitors to attract prospective students. Although branding in higher education is a common phenomenon, little work has been done assessing the college selection process using a brand choice framework. This paper aims to fill the gap by investigating the college selection process using the consumer decision framework specifically addressing the notion of the consideration set. The study employs qualitative research methods and included interviews of incoming first-year students. The findings reveal that the university brands in the consideration set for a student range from one to eight and need not be of the same type of institution. Also, the findings highlight other brand-related constructs that help to move the university from consideration set to ultimately the college of choice. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Stephenson, Amber L., E-Mail: astephenon13@outlook.com