

AN INVESTIGATION OF VARIABLES INFLUENCING PH.D. STUDENT PLACEMENT IN FACULTY POSITIONS

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ABSTRACT

Search committees recruiting junior faculty in marketing face increasingly complex tradeoffs among relevant dimensions; e.g., the perceived quality of the degree-granting institute, the candidate's quantity and quality of journal publications, perceived program quality, language of undergraduate instruction, the length of the program and previous work experience. Consequently, it is important for new Ph.D. candidates to understand how to improve their academic standing during the search for a tenure track position. The present study examines correlations between objective and reputational factors of Ph.D.-granting institutions and candidate placements. Program length plays an important role and is highly correlated with publication record. Given the increasing number of international students entering the U.S. academic job market, this study also investigates whether undergraduate instruction in English mediates placement, and the effect of a student's work experience. Findings suggest that a mediation model best describes the placement process. The purpose of this study is to inform candidates what kind of qualifications hiring institutions seeks, thus helping candidates position themselves before going to the job market.

The current study demonstrates the mediated effect of publication numbers on the relationship between a PhD candidate's degree-granting institution, language of undergraduate instruction, length of program, industry work experience, and his or her first job placement. The study suggests that international students could focus on generating publications to compensate for their lack of English proficiency in order to get better placement. Results also indicate that the style and nature of PhD level research differs significantly enough from that of business reporting and MBA case writing that a candidate's access to industry data sources does not necessarily enhance his or her quality and number of publications.

This study relied on secondary data and just a few variables reflecting the search committee's point-of-view. Future research should enhance the overall causal model by incorporating additional variables; e.g. geography location, family considerations, summer funding and others. Future research should also consider additional mediators such as the reputation of a candidate's advisor. We are developing an online survey to collect primary data of this type.