

**INVESTIGATING THE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN
MARKETING AND NON-BUSINESS STUDENTS' DECISION-
MAKING PROCESS WHEN CHOOSING A MAJOR**

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ABSTRACT

Faced with declining enrollments and heighten competition, Marketing educators have begun to recognize the need to enhance and strengthen their student recruitment efforts. These changing market conditions have led educators and researchers to begin seeking new insights into how and why prospective students choose particular institutions or academic fields of study. This manuscript builds on the work of previous researchers by further examining the decision-making processes of marketing and non-business undergraduate students when selecting an academic field of study. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to: 1) better understand the decision-making process of marketing and non-marketing students when deciding upon an academic field of study; and 2) to identify similarities and differences in student behavior and perceptions of career opportunities, academic specialization offerings, and student personal abilities and attributes.

As such, a questionnaire was designed and administered to a total of 252 undergraduate students eliciting information about their personal decision-making process when selecting an academic field of study. The results of the study reveal that while there

are a number of differences between the decisional process of marketing and non-business students, both groups share some interesting and important similarities. In particular, marketing and non-business students differed with respect to the timing of field of study selection, importance of various career attributes, and perceptions of certain personal abilities and attributes. However, findings indicate that marketing and non-business students share some important similarities with respect to their use of various sources of information and the relative importance assigned to specific field of study attributes. The relevance of the findings for the recruitment of undergraduate marketing students are also discussed along with directions for future research.

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