

Marketing of Educational Service - A Strategic Approach

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ABSTRACT

Education is seen as a requirement across all demographics. The Indian education system has certain fundamental flaws, such as a lack of job-oriented education and interactive education. If marketers (educational institutions) want to thrive in this globalised world, they must rectify these flaws. Regardless of the booming development of educational institutions, parents and students are informed that the expense of education has been increasing. There is already fierce rivalry among private educational schools. If international institutions are permitted to construct study centres in India, the rivalry will grow even more fierce. Despite the fact that quality and competence are the primary priorities of responsible institutions, profit-motivated institutions that want a higher rate of return seduce and distract parents and students through enticing advertisements while ignoring customer fulfillment. However, these institutions' performance will be limited in the short term. Building client loyalty via customer satisfaction has become difficult under these conditions. For assuring success and longevity in the marketplace, a well-designed educational marketing plan is essential. Education should be Open and Accessible, Versatile, and Appraisable, to name a few major characteristics. When you use the proper communication technique at the right moment, you can guarantee that you are easily approachable. The introduction of relevant and new curriculum helps ensure a student's potential and employability. Any strategy that is implemented must be adaptive. Otherwise, there would be utter dispersion and the institution's primary objective will fail. Following the adaptation of the strategy, it should be thoroughly assessed in order to understand the findings and identify the adjustments that are necessary for further progress. Thus, by improving the quality of the services by providing education with an updated syllabus such as an updated curriculum and industrial field study, it can attract potential consumers. Educational institutions may exceed client expectations via upgraded, greater infrastructural facilities and qualified instructors. This research attempts to establish the marketing approach that educational institutions should employ in order to assure their prosperity and sustainability.

Keywords: *service marketing, educational marketing, marketing.*

INTRODUCTION

Around 5000 BC, the Indian education system was founded with residential schooling known as "Gurukul." The pupils were referred to as Shisya, while the teachers were referred to as Guru. The pupils used to live near the guru's ashram or within the ashram. Initially, education was seen as a noble contribution to society for the advancement of a good way of life. The concept of social service has now shifted toward commercial service. When it came to student admissions, there was no competition back then. Since 1991, the educational sector has been swamped with a huge number of private and international participants, particularly professional services institutions, as a result of globalisation, privatisation, and liberalisation. Because of the competition among them, government agencies have enforced a marketing concept in this area that did not previously exist.

In general, education is a socially structured and regulated process of passing on socially important experience from past generations to succeeding generations. Enrolling in an education programme through the educational institution system is the most popular method of obtaining an education (Naziev, 2017).

EDUCATION AS A SERVICE

Education is a purely service industry, characterised by its intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability. The need for acquiring and developing knowledge—providing an intangible benefit (increased knowledge, professional skills, expertise)—arose as a result of a combination of tangible (infrastructure) and

intangible (instructor experience and knowledge) products over which the service's customer has no authority (Maringe & Gibbs, 2008). In the context of teaching and learning, the client only receives access to education or a learning advantage as a result of the services offered (Josiah Zachary Nyangau, 2012). There is no change in ownership of the physical and intangible components employed in the production of the service product. Collection of fees (cost of service) is only a consideration for access to information and the usage of resources for a specific period of time.

Education marketing is gaining traction as a result of the introduction of private educational institutions, changes in people's views toward education, and the expanding scope of the various courses available. The importance of marketing for educational services has grown as a result of technology advancements and reducing worldwide borders. Despite innovative ways such as employing multi-media kits while offering the service, the instructor-student interaction is losing importance. The market for unusual courses is growing in reaction to changes in consumer education and the employment economy. As a result, no marketer can afford to pass up these chances. Certain business ramifications emerge since education is intangible, indivisible, and perishable. Furthermore, service quality may not always be constant across all clients, or even within a single customer. As a result, the marketer's job gets more challenging. They must make certain that these aspects of educational services are better utilised in order to meet the needs of a diverse range of customers.

PURPOSE OF MARKETING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Educational marketing's purpose is to:

- Examine the market, its characterization, and comprehension, as well as prospective customers of products and services;
- Offering the correct services and goods at the proper time, location, and price to meet the demands of customers;
- providing clients with optimal, high-quality, and well-known educational services; and
- entice customers by focusing on their desires and requirements.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Intangibility

Education, like all other "pure" services, is a dominant intangible service that cannot be touched, seen, or felt. However, evaluating the service content (curriculum, course content, pupil activity, and faculties) as well as the service quality may be used to evaluate this service. The customer receives something concrete to present for his/her efforts at the conclusion of the service experience, such as a certificate or a grade card indicating his degree of skill in the specified course or program.

Perishability

Services are perishable and hence cannot be preserved. Production and consumption are both concurrent activities. Hence, there's no way to create inventories.

Inseparability

In the education context, this means that the service provider (the teacher) must be present when the service is to be provided and received.

Heterogeneity

In the context of services, heterogeneity indicates that, unlike in product manufacture, where design criteria may be finely defined and followed, the characteristics of services, including educational services, will rely on who offers the service and how. Because of this disparity in performance, service offers for the same fundamental "service product" from various schools are substantially varied.

Ownership

In the case of education, the customer just purchases access to knowledge or benefits from the services provided. The tangibles and intangibles involved in the production of the service product do not change hands. Fees (cost of service) are simply a cost for access to knowledge and the use of services for a limited time.

MARKETING MIX OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Product

We're all intrigued by the product but can't quite figure out what it is. According to (Kotler, 1986), "anything that may be offered to the market for attention, acquisition, usage, or consumption in order to meet a demand or a need." This product category includes intangible goods, services, people, places, organisations, and ideas. In the sphere of

education, product policy comprises a wide range of activities, and it is via these actions that educational institutions define their goals and carry out their operations, all of which are based on the use of effective strategies to accomplish the necessary educational measures. There are two approaches to defining educational products. First, the product might be represented by students or learners who are "put" with labour market dealers. Second, the product might be defined as a broad variety of services supplied to kids or students by schools, colleges, or universities. Lectures, seminars, and applied activities are among the services given, and may encompass any and all activities carried out by professors during the educational process. New trends and developments are emerging in all disciplines. New information in education, as well as a younger generation of students, might emerge, underlining the concept that nothing stays the same, that everything changes and progresses. In education, a product's "life" is unbounded and it gradually enriches and grows. Consumers desire things that meet specific quality requirements, are new in some way, and work well. As a result, businesses should strive to enhance their products on a regular basis.

Price

In economic literature, the price is defined as the sum of all the values that "the customers" supply in return for having or using the good or service (Kotler, 1986). Price is a complicated variable that influences products, advertising, and placement variables. The term "price" in the context of education refers to the amount of money that students must pay in the form of school fees. A fee is the amount of money paid to an institution in exchange for services or particular privileges, according to DEX's definition. The topic of training costs in education services has caused a slew of worries among experts. A number of internal and external variables influence educational institutions' fee-setting choices (cost). Marketing goals, marketing strategy, prices, and organization-setting fees are all important considerations, as are rival pricing and offerings, economic circumstances, legal framework, and government policy measures, and so on. A student is someone who pays a fee to get knowledge and information from an educational institution. He transforms the value (money) into something else (benefits of using the product). "Essential is the value, not the price," says Robert T. Lindgren, implying that what is worthwhile is priceless. Education is the finest example of this value. The school develops individuals with exceptional moral capacity and great potential.

Place

The term "place" refers to an educational institute's physical location. The institute will have a significantly higher competitive advantage if it is located in a metropolitan location than if it is located in a rural area. As a result, they rely heavily on geography as a marketing technique.

Promotion

As part of the marketing mix, promotion is defined as "a mixture of action and media that draws prospective purchasers to selling points in order to fulfil their wants and desires, hence boosting the efficiency of the producing company's economic activity." (Patriche, 1994). The fundamental aim of promotion is to enlighten the market and the customer. From the perspective of prospective customers, good advertising may generate a distinguished image of the organisation. As a result, promotional instruments are used in combination with excellent communication between the manufacturer and the consumer to persuade customers that the products or services given by an organisation are of higher quality than competing products and services. In the sphere of education, three key methods of promotion have been identified:

- advertising through television, radio, and newspapers;
- public relations via outdoor events, exhibits, symposiums, and scientific communication sessions;
- Brochures, letters, and Christmas cards have a unique position in printed promotions, and so on.

People

People in this context refer to members of the teaching profession as well as members of the non-teaching community who are directly or indirectly active in student services. The capacity of instructors to give their best services to students is completely contingent on their happiness and retention. Teachers are referred to as "facilitators" or "service providers" rather than "gurus." The competency, efficacy, efficiency, sincerity, passion, and devotion of an educational institute's teaching community are critical to its growth and survival, particularly for professional educational organisations. People have been shown to be one of the most active factors in the educational services in the marketing mix.

Process

A process refers to the technique, approach, and sequence of activities that contribute to a transfer of value. The manner in which service providers give services to students is critical for gaining competitive advantages. If the service strategy is easy, transparent, student-oriented, and tech-based, the school will undoubtedly stand out.



Physical Evidence

A student's direct sensory experience of a service aids him or her in determining if the educational institution has provided adequate facilities. The physical setting in which services are provided, the physical infrastructure provided, and the technology developed by the organisation are all examples. Cutting-edge technology, a building, a total environment, parking, a play area, a gymnasium, a swimming pool, an indoor stadium, transportation, a hostel, air-conditioned classrooms, a computer lab, a canteen, a library, books and journals, and various tech-oriented teaching aids are all examples of what it could include. In educational institution marketing, all of these aspects play a role.

SERVICE GAPS IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

- Academic establishments are unaware of students' aspirations.
- There are many disparities between learners' expectations and their views, which is called the "consumer gap."
- Educational institutions lack the needed service designs and standards to suit the needs of students.
- They do not reflect the intended results or the promises made to the pupils.
- Educational establishments are not achieving the service standards that are necessary.

STRATEGIC APPROACH OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Easy to Access

Any excellent programme must have a website that portrays the institute's aims and resources. It must meet the demands of professionals who must swiftly discover and assess data. The website must have the professional look and usability that visitors expect from consumer websites.

Relevant Informations

An effective educational marketing strategy should also incorporate customer-driven themes and tactics along with various similar topics that might help consumers achieve their major goals and objectives, thus encouraging them to further indulge in other products and services being offered. Customers who are well-informed have greater expectations, which must be satisfied in order to win their trust.

Timely Updates

Consumers are consistently on the hunt for new and better goods and services. As a consequence, educational institutions should update their products and services on a regular basis. In addition, educational institutions must erase obsolete information and incorporate an interactive request to urge clients to sign up for mail alerts.

Data Collection

Users are greeted with a high-quality marketing site, while the site's powerful database supplies critical information to consumer information systems. After receiving this sort of usage information, you may plan new content and site updates. Furthermore, one may exchange vital facts regarding customer and prospect preferences with their colleagues.

Evaluation

Evaluation methodologies and infographics help decision makers comprehend the effectiveness of educational marketing. As previously noted, an educational marketing website may provide crucial data capable of providing valuable insights into the activities and interests of both customers and prospects. Analytical tools and customer purchasing statistics allow marketers to monitor the influence of consumer awareness on product sales and obtain large scale data to guide marketing activities.

CONCLUSION

Marketing is everywhere these days. The researcher have tried to emphasise the important elements of marketing in education with respect to the marketing mix throughout this article. The educational marketing mix is made up of elements (such as product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence), all of which are detailed in detail throughout the article, with clear connections highlighting marketing's role in education. The use of marketing mix elements may correctly establish and implement the organization's major objectives. The primary practical challenges pertaining to educational marketing are clearly highlighted by each component in the entire marketing mix. Education, which is viewed as a sophisticated set of activities carried out and performed on a continual basis by educational management, focuses on modelling, teaching, and improving the communication skills of educational service users. The quality of education is largely determined by the quality of the teaching environment as well as the quality of instructors participating in this constant and complicated process. In education, students or learners constitute the consumers of education. They want to meet their diverse demands for

knowledge, information, and validation, and they must participate in the educational process to do so. Pupils or students who are inspired by a sense of creativity "purchase" educational items from schools. Teachers meet the needs of learners or students by providing information through teaching. Both the internal and external marketing requirements in education should be considered while reforming the educational system. During the learning process, interactive marketing education necessitates student-teacher interaction. The two fundamental components of educational marketing are teachers with teaching abilities and pedagogical skills, as well as responsive, attentive students with the ability to acquire new and necessary knowledge. The process is difficult to carry out due to a lack of education. To summarise, education is a critical component of both economic and social progress.

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