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Dr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta
Research Scholar, Department
of Management Studies,
Indian Institute of Technology
Indian School of Mines,
Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

To study the role of marketing strategy factors in higher education sector

Shailendra Kumar Gupta

Abstract

The relevance of studying the stated problem is due to the fact that for increasing the efficiency of higher education marketing it is necessary to take into account several factors, namely, factors that impact the choice of a University/Institute and an academic program (course) by students, as well as socio-psychological characteristics of the latter and impact of the program in knowledge level as well as career growth. Systematic research of this problem has not been done by now. The goal of this paper is to give recommendations for the implementation of higher education marketing strategies aimed at potential students. The main method used by us for studying the stated problem was the questioning of total 1150 students of two Universities in Chhattisgarh state, one is Government University named Central university of Bilaspur and second one is private university named Dr. C.V. Raman University with subsequent statistical data processing. The study has been succeeded in determining certain characteristics features of students and main factors that impact the choice of a University/Institute and an academic program (courses) by students and also ranked these factors. The ranking of the factors will help to the education Institutes that they will adopt the same for quality enhancement of their institutions. It refines factors that impact the choice of a University/Institute and an academic program by students, rank their motives for entering a University, reveal factors that influence the total number of students in a University, and determine new academic programs demanded by students. Basing on the obtained results, we propose a model of the implementation of an education marketing strategy should take into account the factors that impact the choice of a University and an academic program by students, as well as socio-psychological characteristics of the latter and impact of the program in knowledge level as well as career growth. The recommendations proposed by us can contribute to increasing the competitiveness of Universities/Institutes among students.

Keywords: Marketing strategy, higher education, factors of marketing strategy in higher education

Introduction

Marketing strategy is a long-term, forward-looking approach to planning with the fundamental goal of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. Scholars continue to debate the precise meaning of marketing strategy. Consequently, the literature offers many different definitions. On close examination, however, these definitions appear to centre on the notion that strategy refers to a broad statement of what is to be achieved. Strategic planning involves an analysis of the company's strategic initial situation prior to the formulation, evaluation and selection of market-oriented competitive position that contributes to the company's goals and marketing objectives. Strategic marketing, as a distinct field of study emerged in the 1970s, and built on strategic management that preceded it. Marketing strategy highlights the role of marketing as a link between the organization and its customers. Some definitions are below;

"The marketing strategy lays out target markets and the value proposition that will be offered based on an analysis of the best market opportunities." (Philip Kotler & Kevin Keller, *Marketing Management*, Pearson, 14th Edition)

"An over-riding directional concept that sets out the planned path" (David Aaker and Michael K. Mills, *Strategic Market Management*, 2001, p. 11) ^[6-7]

"Essentially a formula for how a business is going to compete, what its goals should be and what policies will be needed to carry out these goals." (Michael Porter, *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*, NY, Free Press, 1980) ^[7]

"The pattern of major objectives, purposes and goals and essential policies and plans for achieving those goals, stated in such a way as to define what business the company is in or is to be in. (S. Jain, *Marketing Planning and Strategy*, 1993).

Corresponding Author;
Dr. Shailendra Kumar Gupta
Research Scholar, Department
of Management Studies,
Indian Institute of Technology
Indian School of Mines,
Dhanbad, Jharkhand, India

"An explicit guide to future behavior" (Henry Mintzberg, "Crafting Strategy," Harvard Business Review, July–August, 1987 pp. 66–74)

Strategy is "reserved for actions aimed directly at altering the strengths of the enterprise relative to that of its competitors... Perfect strategies are not called for. What counts is... performance relative to competitors." (Kenichi Ohmae, *The Mind of the Strategist*, 1982, p. 37)

Strategy formulation is built on "the match between organizational resources and skills and environmental opportunities and risks it faces and the purposes it wishes to accomplish." (Dan Schendel and Charles W. Hofer, *Strategy Formulation: Analytical Concepts*, South-Western, 1978, p. 11)

Marketing strategy involves mapping out the company's direction for the forthcoming planning period, whether that be three, five or ten years. It involves undertaking a 360° review of the firm and its operating environment with a view to identifying new business opportunities that the firm could potentially leverage for competitive advantage. Strategic planning may also reveal market threats that the firm may need to consider for long-term sustainability. Strategic planning makes no assumptions about the firm continuing to offer the same products to the same customers into the future. Instead, it is concerned with identifying the business opportunities that are likely to be successful and evaluates the firm's capacity to leverage such opportunities. It seeks to identify the strategic gap; that is the difference between where a firm is currently situated (the strategic reality or inadvertent strategy) and where it should be situated for sustainable, long-term growth (the strategic intent or deliberate strategy).

Strategic planning seeks to address three deceptively simple questions, specifically:

1. Where are we now? (Situation analysis)
2. What business *should* we be in? (Vision and mission)
3. How should we get there? (Strategies, plans, goals and objectives)

A fourth question may be added to the list, namely 'How do we know when we got there?' Due to increasing need for accountability, many marketing organizations use a variety of marketing metrics to track strategic performance, allowing for corrective action to be taken as required. On the surface, strategic planning seeks to address three simple questions, however, the research and analysis involved in strategic planning is very sophisticated and requires a great deal of skill and judgment.

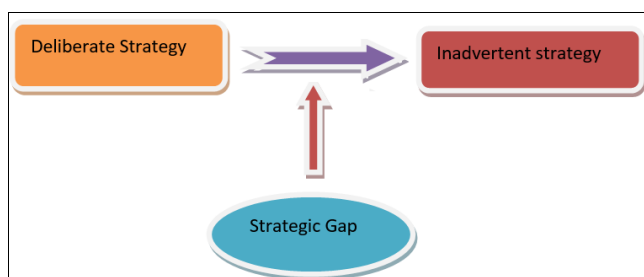


Chart 1: Strategic Gap

The implementation of higher education marketing strategies should be aimed at potential applicants, i.e., graduates of educational establishments who want and are

able to obtain a higher education. It is necessary to take into account factors that impact the choice of a University/Institutes and an academic program by potential students. However the research performed in the higher education marketing evidently is insufficient. Modern trends A graduate of a University, during his/her professional training in a certain area goes through three main stages: an applicant – a student – an alumnus. On each stage he/she is subjected to factors that define the choice of a University/Institutes and an academic program (on the first stage), the educational process (on the second stage), and the professional self-identification (on the third stage) (Shemetova, 2011). Moreover, on each of the mentioned stages, strategies of the marketing of education services based on the main factors impacting their choice by users can influence the target audience. But the first stage is the main one in the sense that it defines the next stages. On the first stage students are subject to the impact of the following factors:

1. The contact audience. It includes people who influence the students' choice of a University and course. The contact audience of a student includes his/her friends, acquaintances, parents, relatives, and teachers (Tikhomirova and Isaev, 2010).
2. Personal characteristics of a future student, his/her preferences, needs, aptitude (for example, to engineering, humanities or science), i.e., the mindset of the student, his/her self-confidence, independence of thought and decision making and so on (Notman, 2008).
3. The residence of a student. This factor often plays a decisive role in choosing a University/Institute by a graduate (it includes the development of the network of educational institutions in the region, the region's infrastructure and specialization, local customs and traditions, the level of income in the region, and the quality of school education) (Tikhomirova and Isaev, 2010). The location of University/Institute provides the possibility to apply to several Universities/Institutes which increases the competition between Universities/Institutes.
4. The financial position of a student (and, first of all, of his/her parents). This factor impacts not only the possibility to pay the tuition fee, but also the possibility to get education in a certain region or a certain city (Kirillina, 2000) ^[3]. Correspondingly, this factor can strengthen the impact of the «residence» factor on the choice of the University/Institutes by a student.
5. Media coverage shows the main source of information for students and their contact audience (for example, the participation of top University/Institutes officials in TV programs, the provision of information on salaries of University/Institutes alumni, publications of papers, and the publication of University/Institutes ratings and forecasts of demand for certain professions in the labor market in future) (Kirillina, 2000) ^[3].
6. The level of awareness of the situation in the higher education market. If a student is aware of the situation in the higher education market (i.e., of the availability of University/Institutes and academic programs, of the demand for particular professions and their positions in ratings, of conditions of education and so on), then his/her choice of a certain University/Institute and a certain academic program is better motivated (Kirillina,

- 2000)^[3].
7. The professional experience. If a student already has a certain professional experience, then this factor impacts his/her choice of an academic program and a form of education. This concerns, first of all, graduates of secondary special education institutions, those who want to get a second higher education degree or to improve their professional skills (Kirillina, 2000)^[3].
 8. The availability of budget places in the University/Institutes. The quantity of places financed by the federal budget is defined by the corresponding ministry or agency (Volkova and Zvezdova, 1999). At present time free academic programs (bachelor, master, and postgraduate ones) are offered, as a rule, by state University/Institutes. Private University/Institutes often have a flexible pricing policy, offering significant discounts to students. Some University/Institutes even make the education free for most successful students. However such University/Institutes are an exception to this rule, therefore state University/Institutes is more attractive for students.
 9. The material and technical base of the University/Institutes. We understand this factor as the University/Institutes infrastructure, including the availability of student dormitories, the availability of modern equipment (computers, laboratory equipment and so on), and the methodological support of the teaching process (library funds, tutorials, textbooks, and so on) (Volkova and Zvezdova, 1999).
 10. A form of education. This factor defines, first of all, the schedule of studying, training dates and locations, the academic load, and the possibility of combining study and work. The choice of a form of education by a student also depends on his/her financial well-being (or that of his/her parents) (Kirillina, 2000)^[3].

The goal of the study

The goal of our research consisted in the experimental identification of factors impacting the choice of the University/Institute and an academic program (course) by the students. To provide valuable suggestions regarding marketing strategy to the higher educational University/Institute.

Objectives of the Study

- To study and analyze the current marketing strategies being employed by higher educational Institutions.
- To find out the factors that affects the choice of University/Institutions by students.
- To find out the factors that affects the choice of courses by students.
- To find out the marketing strategies that attracts the students towards a particular University/institution as well as course.
- To suggest marketing strategies for higher educational Institutions to survive in the market and to give better services to the students.

Limitations of the Study

Table 1: Respondents details of the two Universities

University Name	Graduate	Post Graduate	Total
Central University	360	240	600
DR. C.V. Raman University	330	220	550
Total	690	460	1150

The study is limited to two Universities of the Chhattisgarh state (Figure 1). One is Government University named Central University of Chhattisgarh and second is private University named Dr. C.V. Raman University in the state. Total 1150 respondents (Valid Respondents) are there in which 600 from central University and 550 from Dr. C.V. Raman University who were participated in questionnaire. In totality 690 graduate students and 460 post graduate students participated from both the University.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study has been limited to educational services marketing only. The study has been confined to Chhattisgarh region of higher learning and students from all across the two Universities. The all factors of marketing strategy are limited to higher education sector. By study of this paper Higher educational University/Institute will adopt the marketing strategy accordingly for better services.

Research Methodology of the study

The study is based on descriptive research design. A questionnaire has been designed, to know the point of view of respondent regarding the factors that helps students in decision making. First part of the questionnaire contains information regarding demographics of the respondent. Second part has series of close-ended indirect questions which are based on students on student's emphasis as far as selection of educational institutions as well as courses is concerned. The survey was conducted in higher education two Universities in Chhattisgarh, one is government and second one is private university. Responses of 1150 students from graduation & post graduate students to know how they are deciding on their admission and selection of University/institution as well as selection of academic program (courses). So the sampling technique used was non-probability convenience sampling. For visual representation of finding and results bar charts, pie charts and tables etc. has been used.

After having analyzed many relevant publications, we have identified several probable factors impacting the choice of the University/Institute by the students. On the base of these factors we have made a questionnaire. This questionnaire, in particular, included several questions allowing one to identify specific characteristics of the students. The total number of questions was 25. Each question has allowed us to estimate the contribution of a certain factor characterizing students to their decision and, moreover, to identify factors impacting the implementation of higher education marketing strategies. Among factors that impact the choice of the University/Institute by a student we considered the following ones: the possibility of getting a Quality education, Quality of faculties, Branding and standard of the University, Easy Availability of a desired Course, Advices of other students, Suggestion of Parents, Media Publicity, Quality of study material and facilities of University, Admission according to low budget & Fee, University Ranking Report, Location of the University, Higher Placement Report, the need in additional education (in particular, in engineering, economics, psychology, pedagogy, or foreign languages), and so on. For estimating results of our research we studied the contribution of each factor to the overall picture of factors impacting the choice of the University/Institute by students.

Literature Review of the study

1. Criteria for marketing and advertising and their schemata in education have evolved out of historical social practices (Alam, 2008; Ssesanga, 2004). Interpretation of social events is guided and constrained by the prevailing rationality, which itself reflects the dominant constellation of power. Lately, the operation of a business without being involved in marketing activities is virtually impossible. As such, they ignored the role of formal advertising through media and felt that advertising was required only by those manufacturers whose products were substandard. Nowadays, such a concept is considered out of date (Eunec Conference, 2003). Every type of business, from the multinational company to the humble street grocer, gets involved with marketing (Kotler, 2006; Hirtt, 2005)^[8]. Highlighted below are some of the more general advantages and disadvantages of marketing and advertising.
2. Historically, people had no prior knowledge when modern, scientific products were introduced. Then the advertisement and promotion of new goods made people aware, helping them to avail themselves of and benefit from their use (Lynch, 2006). It can be said that an improved quality of life has been attained from the utilization of scientific innovation and technological advancement. This has become possible because of the rigorous marketing and promotional activity carried out by public and private initiatives. Education has now come to be considered as a fundamental need to be pursued, thanks to rigorous campaigning and promotion (Alam, 2008).
3. Good communications between customer and producer help recognition of a product's existing quality and can help identify any further need for development. Advertising and promotion not only provides the details of a product, but information as to how it should best be used. This increases benefits after a comparatively small investment of money and time (Kotler, 2006; Lynch, 2006)^[8]. Within this context, advertising and promotion can act as the link between producer and customer.
4. Customers will change their choice of product if the quality is not of the standard noted from advertising by the manufacturer or service operator. Ergo, producers have to take care to ensure the product quality is as stated in the advertising. Falling short of the required standard may lose the market partially or even totally, as competitors will always note any advertising distributed by their competitors to make their own product and promotion policy-rich (Coulson, 2003).
5. Successful advertising and promotion can often create intense interest from consumers wishing to consume/use the product. Lynch (2006) asserts that customers remain keen to buy a product when affected by „advertisement craze“. This situation creates a money market that breaks the „money fridge“ (Alam, 2008). A country with more idle money suffers from a „liquidity crisis“, which may hinder development. Thus, the „money market“ caused by the advertisement/promotional activity helps with the country's development (Kotler, 2006; Svensson, 2002)^[8].
6. Historically, publicly funded media was the only tool for promoting recreation. Then, after a time, media providers began to earn significant sums of money from their commercials (Morzyk, 2008). This income reduced the pressure on public subsidies. More recently, the media has been fully controlled by private funding, with the largest portion of it gained from advertising income. In addition to providing financial support to the media, advertisements or commercials circulated for marketing purposes can also support alternative forms of recreation (Kotler, 2006; Hirtt, 2005)^[8]. Producers may also choose to sponsor sports and other educational or recreational activities, which in turn subsidize the state budget for recreation.
7. Marketing activities can consume a large proportion of a company's total budget. For example, advertising consumes 72% of Coca-Cola's budget (Coulson, 2003). Within current practices, soft drink producer such as Coca-Cola are eager to compete with each other for a marketing „show down“, which does not essentially focus on the product itself, but will help the consumer be more alert to the finite details of their particular product and identify user benefits more readily (Kotler, 2006; Svensson, 2002)^[8]. This type of competition does not create new markets (Lynch, 2006).
8. Production of a quality product requires significant levels of funding. As a result, the quality of the product itself and service levels remain secondary. Conversely, an advertising campaign that consumes a higher proportion of the money available is considered to be the first option for marketing purposes. A parallel investment towards quality control as well as advertising and promotion needs large amounts of funding, so that producers and service providers can put their efforts into advertising and not into quality control (Coulson, 2003).
9. Advertisement and promotional activities connected to social development and awareness give high priority to ethics and civic values. A commercial business will concentrate on increasing profits. In order to catch their target market, producers use eye-catching advertisements that might have a negative impact on social ethics and values (Hirtt, 2005). For example, while state and donor agencies put their best efforts into ensuring students follow lessons in detail, the advertising and promotional policies adopted by some organizations (that is, Ice-cream Company, publishers of story and cartoon books) are committed to teach an attitude that interrupts the students' concentration on the lesson.
10. In some countries, a number of problems are caused by advertisements that contradict the national aims and objectives may be noticed. For instance, Morrow and Barraclough (2003) finds that, while the government in Malaysia and the Philippines are committed to reducing the number of people who smoke, unsurprisingly, cigarette companies do not support the government. The vigorous marketing campaigns carried out by cigarette companies put the government's efforts into a „wastage box“.
11. According to Alam (2008) the culture of Southern Asian countries is rapidly becoming more of a western pattern. He identifies that private education entrepreneurs support and promote the practice of western culture through their marketing activities.

These days, producers do not just market their products, but also promote western culture in order to catch the attention of the potential client. Practice of different types of culture within one geographic boundary and having same kind of religious faith may restrict the building of a distinct national character (Lynch, 2006). Without a national character, achieving desired levels of development is constrained.

12. The concept of branding is not a new phenomenon. However, the marketing of brands is a relatively recent concept. These days, branding is obsessive and many producers choose not to sell their products under their own name, but prefer to seek the help of a particular brand for marketing purposes. This usually results in a higher price for the product, which will limit the consumption capacity of underprivileged groups (Coulson, 2003).
13. There is another type of brand marketing, which does not provide details of product and benefits but focuses on the identity of producers and sellers. For instance, a number of universities do not focus on the quality of the course and the part it plays in national development while carrying out promotional activities. They concentrate on promoting their name and the eminent persons involved with their establishment. Hence, we may note that some social services and awareness activities, as well as education, health, and gender equality, require marketing as social responsibility (Holbrook, 2005).

14. But unfortunately, many of the universities are doing business using the „innocent ignorance“ of students through ostensible brand marketing policy. This may be of benefit to the university and the individual who pursues the course, but ultimately contributes very little towards state development. It also provides inverse returns, as the time and money invested to gain such an education is a poor investment (Alam, 2008).

The marketing mix (also known as the 7 Ps) is a foundation model for businesses (Chart 2). The marketing mix has been defined as the "set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing strategies in the target market". Thus the marketing mix refers to four broad levels of marketing decision, namely: product, price, place, and promotion. Marketing practice has been occurring for millennia, but marketing theory emerged in the early twentieth century. The contemporary marketing mix, or the 4 Ps, which has become the dominant framework for marketing management decisions, was first published in 1960.

In services marketing, an extended marketing mix is used, typically comprising 7 Ps, made up of the original 4 Ps extended by process, people, and physical evidence. Occasionally service marketers will refer to 8 Ps, comprising these 7 Ps plus performance.

Further there are many marketing tools, which are used by higher education sector (Chart 3), there are 12 marketing tools.

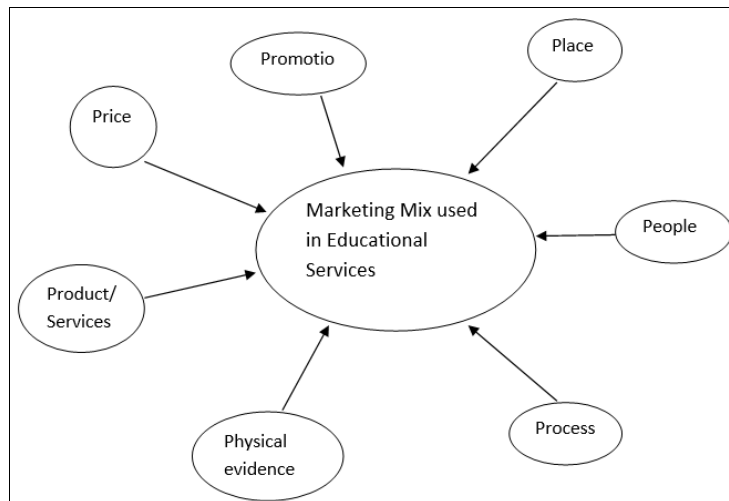


Chart 2: P's of Service Marketing.

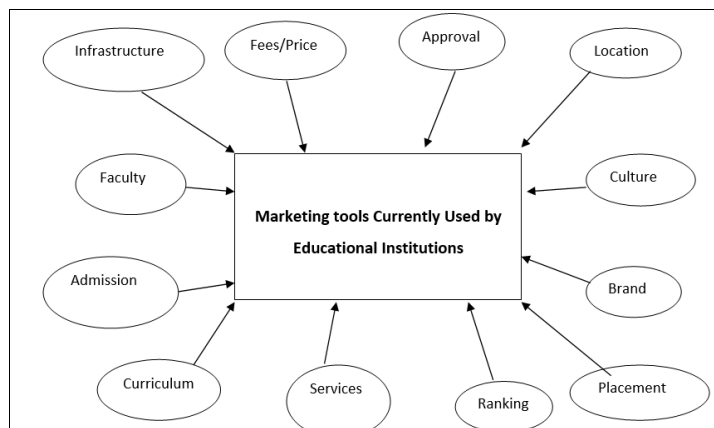


Chart 3: Marketing tools used by Educational Institutions

Table 2: Central University of Bilaspur.

Sr. No.	Central University of Bilaspur			
	Subject Name	No. of Applicants		
		Graduate	Post Graduate	Total
1	School of Studies in Arts	70	30	100
2	School of Studies in Life Science	30	20	50
3	School of Studies in Social Science	70	30	100
4	School of Studies in Physical Science	30	20	50
5	School of Studies in Natural Resources	30	20	50
6	School of Studies in Management & Commerce	50	50	100
7	School of Studies in Mathematics & Computational Science	25	25	50
8	School of Studies in Engineering & Technology	25	25	50
9	School of Law	30	20	50
	Total	360	240	600

According to above figure 2, there are 9 major subjects in Central University of Bilaspur. As per above figure we have

selected total 600 students, 360 from graduate level courses and 240 from post graduate level courses.

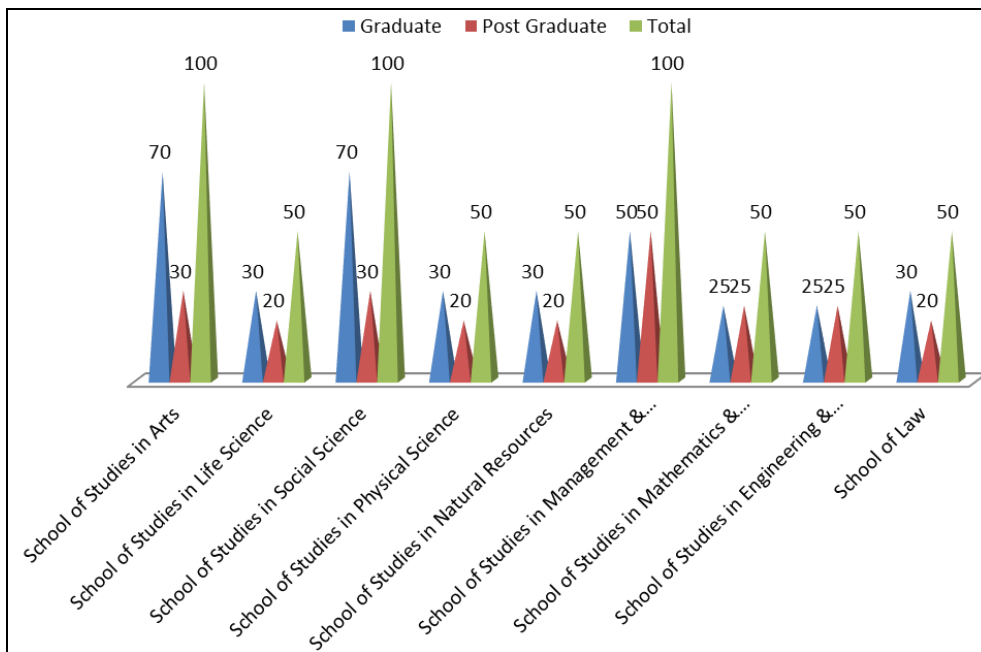


Chart 4: Applicants from Central University Bilaspur.

Table 3: Dr. C.V. Raman University of Bilaspur.

Sr. No.	Dr. C.V. Raman University of Bilaspur			
	Subject Name	No. of Applicants		
		Graduate	Post Graduate	Total
1	Arts	30	20	50
2	Commerce	30	20	50
3	Education	30	20	50
4	Management	30	20	50
5	Journalism	30	20	50
6	Law	30	20	50
7	Engineering & Technology	30	20	50
8	M. Phil & Research Program	30	20	50
9	Ph.D. & Research Program	30	20	50
10	Science	30	20	50
11	IT	30	20	50
	Total	330	220	550

According to above figure 3, there are 11 major subjects in Dr. C.V. Raman University of Bilaspur. As per above figure

we have selected total 550 students, 330 from graduate level courses and 220 from post graduate level courses.

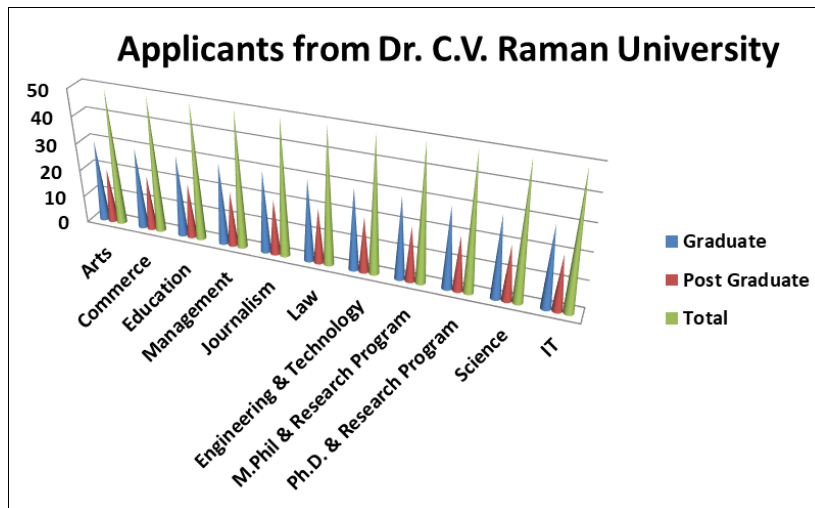


Chart 5: Applicants from Dr. C.V. Raman University of Bilaspur.

Table 4: Central University Bilaspur subject wise report.

Sr. No.	Marketing strategy factor	Central University Bilaspur subject wise report									Total
		School of Studies in									
		Arts	Social Science	Management & Commerce	Life Science	Law	Engineering & Technology	Mathematics & Computational Science	Natural Resources	Physical Science	
1	Quality of Education	8	5	15	3	11	8	9	7	13	79
2	Quality of Faculties	6	9	11	2	9	9	11	6	13	76
3	Branding and standard of the University	9	11	13	5	5	7	7	9	9	75
4	Easy Availability of a desired Course	7	5	5	4	1	6	0	5	0	33
5	Advices of other students	5	7	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	17
6	Suggestion of Parents	6	4	3	8	1	1	0	0	0	23
7	Media Publicity	3	6	9	6	5	6	3	6	3	47
8	Quality of study material and facilities of University	7	6	5	3	4	4	4	8	6	47
9	Admission according to low budget & Fee	9	11	1	4	1	0	2	0	3	31
10	University Ranking Report	11	7	1	5	2	0	3	0	1	30
11	Location of the University	7	9	5	4	6	1	4	1	1	38
12	Higher Placement Report	22	20	30	5	4	8	7	7	1	104
Total		100	100	100	50	50	50	50	50	50	600

According to above figure 4, total 600 students of 9 major subjects from Central University Bilaspur, responded for 12 major factors of marketing strategies in higher education sector. As per response from the students of major subjects

we have calculated percentage of Factor Points as well as Rank of the Factor Points. Figure 5 shows the report of ranking of the factor of marketing strategy as well percentage of the factor points.

Fig 5: Ranking report of Central University Bilaspur.

Central University Bilaspur Report by Factor Point				
Sr. No.	Marketing strategy factor	Factor Points	% of Factor Points	Rank by Factor Points
1	Higher Placement Report	104	17.33	I
2	Quality of Education	79	13.17	II
3	Quality of Faculties	76	12.67	III
4	Branding and standard of the University	75	12.50	IV
5	Media Publicity	47	7.83	V
6	Quality of study material and facilities of University	47	7.83	V
7	Location of the University	38	6.33	VI
8	Easy Availability of a desired Course	33	5.50	VII
9	Admission according to low budget & Fee	31	5.17	VIII
10	University Ranking Report	30	5.00	IX
11	Suggestion of Parents	23	3.83	X
12	Advices of other students	17	2.83	XI
Total		600	100.00	

Table 6: Dr. C.V. Raman University subject wise report.

Sr. No.	Marketing strategy factor	Dr. C.V. Raman University subject wise report											Total
		Arts	Comme rce	Educat ion	Manage ment	Journa lism	Law	Engineerin & Technology	M. Phil & Research Program	Ph.D. & Research Program	Scie nce	IT	
1	Quality of Education	5	6	4	3	4	6	9	4	5	5	6	57
2	Quality of Faculties	4	3	3	2	2	3	6	3	2	4	7	39
3	Branding and standard of the University	4	4	3	4	3	4	5	2	7	6	8	50
4	Easy Availability of a desired Course	7	3	15	4	8	9	0	13	20	9	2	90
5	Advices of other students	3	2	0	3	4	6	0	4	0	1	0	23
6	Suggestion of Parents	0	3	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	3	0	12
7	Media Publicity	13	10	7	14	12	8	9	14	9	4	9	109
8	Quality of study material and facilities of University	5	5	6	3	5	2	4	8	2	12	4	56
9	Admission according to low budget & Fee	1	3	1	1	0	3	1	0	3	0	5	18
10	University Ranking Report	3	4	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	2	16
11	Location of the University	2	3	5	2	2	2	4	1	1	1	0	23
12	Higher Placement Report	3	4	5	13	6	2	11	1	0	5	7	57
Total		50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	550

According to above figure 6, total 600 students of 11 major subjects from Dr. C.V. Raman University Bilaspur, responded for 12 major factors of marketing strategies in higher education sector. As per response from the students

of major subjects we have calculated percentage of Factor Points as well as Rank of the Factor Points. Figure 7 shows the report of ranking of the factor of marketing strategy as well percentage of the factor points.

Table 7: Ranking report of Dr. C.V. Raman University.

Dr. C.V. Raman University report by Factor Point				
Sr. No.	Marketing strategy factor	Factor Points	% of Factor Points	Rank by Factor Points
1	Media Publicity	109	19.81	I
2	Easy Availability of a desired Course	90	16.36	II
3	Quality of Education	57	1.36	III
4	Higher Placement Report	57	1.36	III
5	Quality of study material and facilities of University	56	10.18	IV
6	Branding and standard of the University	50	9.09	V
7	Quality of Faculties	39	7.09	VI
8	Advices of other students	23	4.18	VII
9	Location of the University	23	4.18	VII
10	Admission according to low budget & Fee	18	3.27	VIII
11	University Ranking Report	16	2.90	IX
12	Suggestion of Parents	12	2.18	X
Total		550	100.00	

Table 8: Cumulative report of marketing strategy factors for both Universities.

Sr. No.	Marketing strategy factor	Factor wise Report		Cumulative Total
		Central University Bilaspur	Dr. C.V. Raman University	
1	Quality of Education	79	57	136
2	Quality of Faculties	76	39	115
3	Branding and standard of the University	75	50	125
4	Easy Availability of a desired Course	33	90	123
5	Advices of other students	17	23	40
6	Suggestion of Parents	23	12	35
7	Media Publicity	47	109	156
8	Quality of study material and facilities of University	47	56	103
9	Admission according to low budget & Fee	31	18	49
10	University Ranking Report	30	16	46
11	Location of the University	38	23	61
12	Higher Placement Report	104	57	161
Total		600	550	1150

According to above figure 8, total 1150 students of many subjects from Central University Bilaspur and Dr. C.V. Raman University Bilaspur, responded for 12 major factors of marketing strategies in higher education sector. As per response from the students of major subjects we have

calculated cumulative percentage of Factor Points as well as cumulative Rank of the Factor Points. Figure 9 shows the report of cumulative ranking of the factor of marketing strategy as well cumulative percentage of the factor points.

Table 9: Cumulative Ranking report of marketing strategy factors for both Universities.

Sr. No.	Marketing strategy factor	Cumulative Total (Central University + Dr. C.V. Raman University)	% of Factor Points	Rank by Cumulative Total
1	Higher Placement Report	161	14.00	I
2	Media Publicity	156	13.57	II
3	Quality of Education	136	11.83	III
4	Branding and standard of the University	125	10.87	IV
5	Easy Availability of a desired Course	123	10.70	V
6	Quality of Faculties	115	10.00	VII
7	Quality of study material and facilities of University	103	8.95	VI
8	Location of the University	61	5.30	VIII
9	Admission according to low budget & Fee	49	4.26	IX
10	University Ranking Report	46	4.00	X
11	Advices of other students	40	3.47	XI
12	Suggestion of Parents	35	3.05	XII
	Total	1150	100.00	

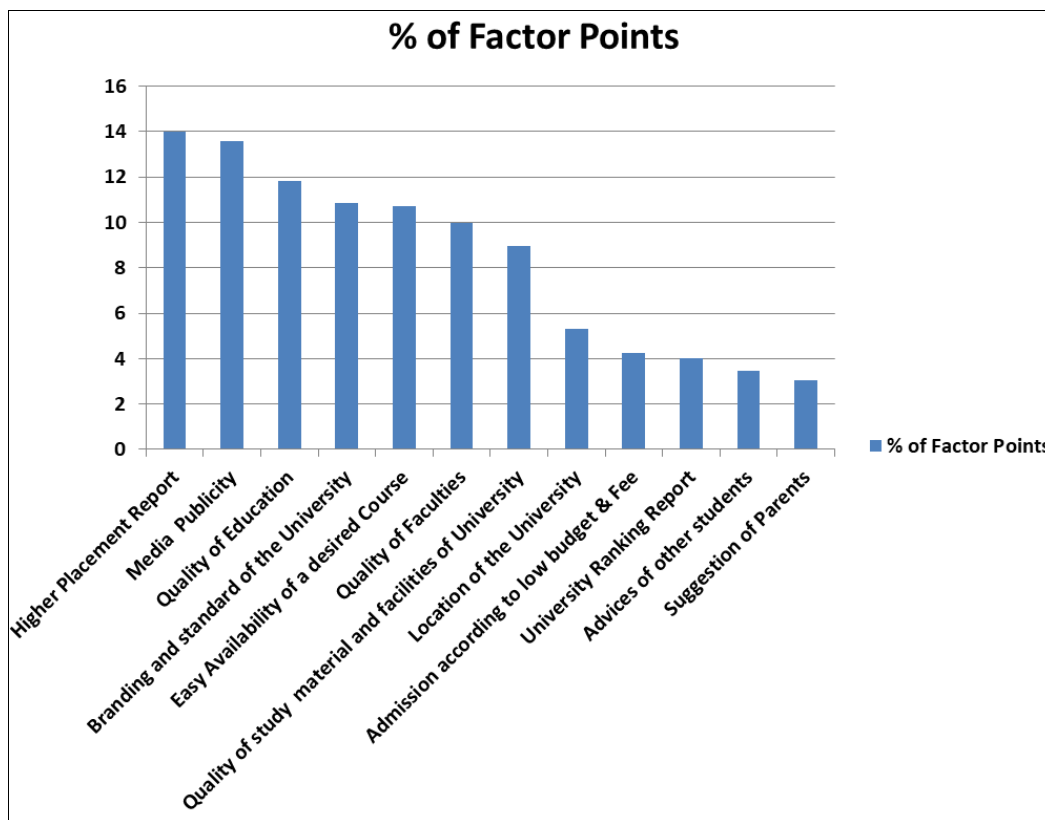


Chart 6: Cumulative % of Marketing Factors for both Universities.

Findings of the study

According to our study we have many findings (Figure 9);

- **Higher Placement Report** factor is top in factors ranking report. Some around 14% of the total respondent told that this factor is topmost factor which effect students for their choice to select University/Institute as well as academic program (Course). It means students are very much interested to joint University or choose course according to placement report.
- **Media Publicity** factor is second in ranking report, some around 13.57% of the total respondent told that

media is playing crucial role in marketing of higher education. Media is very important factor for deciding University/Institute as well as academic program (course).

- **Quality of Education** is third in the ranking report. Some around 11.83% says that the quality of education effect the choice of University/Institute and course.
- **Branding and standard of the University** is also very good strategy of any University for maximum students. Some around 10.87% go with brand name of the University/Institute.
- **Easy Availability of a desired Course** this factor is

important for female students, who wants to study nearby there residence. Some around 10.70% students take admission when they get desired course, this factor is also related to market.

- **Quality of Faculties** factor is always be a good, it is very charming factor in many courses. 10% from the total respondent prefer very good faculty. This factor is varying according to academic courses.
- **Quality of study material and facilities of University** is need of every University for good strategy in marketing. Some around 8.95% respondent said that they want good quality of study material and good premises of the University/Institute also. Infrastructures always play an important role to attract the students.
- **Location of the University**, this factor is again very useful for female students. If University/Institute located in heart of the city, definitely the attraction of the students is more than the remote location of the University/Institute. 5.30 % of the total respondent said the same.
- **Admission according to low budget & Fee**, this factor is now not that much important, cause easily available of loan for higher education. Every parents want better education for their child so they can easily arrange fee and able to pay for higher education. May be this factor is different when we study very rural or remote area.
- **University Ranking Report**, this factor not impacting the students so much. Only 4.00% from the total respondent go with rank of the University/Institute.
- **Advices of other students**, students are now very much self-guided, smart enough to choose their University/Institute as well as courses. But mouth publicity always works; some around only 3.47% respondent consider this factor.
- **Suggestion of Parents**, this factor is last in the ranking factor report, shows that students are now free from their parent's suggestion towards higher education. Only 3.05% respondents obey their parents while deciding for admission in University/Institute, rest of the students consider other factors of the marketing strategy.

Recommendations

The education marketing is important for increasing the competitiveness of universities; namely, the information on the prestige of a university, on the availability of budget places, on the availability of certain academic programs, on the qualification of faculties, on the availability of additional education programs (it is desirable to provide discounts on tuition fees for these programs), and on possibilities of the further career growth. Recommendations from our study are;

- Every University/Institute have to increase their placement, today unemployment is the curse for society, every student wants to join and choose University/Institute where they can get placed easily. Placement is very important marketing strategy for any University/Institute in the field of higher education. More placement camp/ job fairs should be organized by each and every University/Institute on the regular basis.
- We are in the age of media, many kinds of media, so this factor i.e. media coverage would prove very dynamic role in marketing for higher education. Most of the people in India as well as world are now

connected with many types' social media, so media is the great platform to market any institute as well as any course. So this factor should be used for the same.

- Quality education is always being a very good tool to market any course in higher education sector. So every University/Institute manages their education quality as per the demand of the higher education market. It is directly related to quality of faculties, so University/Institute has to invest more on good faculties.
- Academic Courses must be according to market demand in every University/Institute. For example: if any University/Institute located in industrial area, the University/Institute should have courses related to the industry located in the same region. Scope of the courses is always very attractive factor for attracting students.
- Study material is the backbone of any course, so it should be very good and easy available for every students.
- Where the scope of the job is high, the University/Institute has to locate the same location. The University's "brand" is based on quality, which often translates into faculty with vast teaching experience. Branding of the University/Institute is necessary.
- Awareness program of the University/Institute as well as all academic programs should be organized on the regular basis. This tool will help to approach the parents as well as many others.
- Institutions must maintain credibility with parents, alumni, employers and other stake holders. Post education services (like alumni meet, annual function and so on) must provide every one for better mouth publicity.
- Every faculty and staff member must have a basic grasp of marketing principles to achieve the levels of service required to effectively market. Faculty and staff who have had no exposure to marketing concepts need basic training, they all better know marketing strategy for higher education.

Conclusion

The obtained results have allowed us to propose the following model two Universities in Chhattisgarh State, applicants involved in the questioning were young people; they were successful in their studies and research, they participated in various competitions and Olympiads, many of them were winners of competitions and Olympiads, some of them had scientific publications, many of respondents were awarded medals for their studies at Universities, some of them got good scores in many competition exams, many applicants had some additional education (in many other subjects also), among them choosing a university we should mention the prestige, the availability of budget places, the availability of a certain academic program, and a high qualification of faculties. - However the final decision on the application to a certain university depends on the possibility to study on a budget-financed basis or to study for a low tuition fee.

Today, recent business marketing approaches that depend upon market analysis and planning have stimulated the growth of marketing firms that offer sophisticated quantitative market analyses in order to identify an organization's potential and current customers and their

needs. Students characteristics, external influences, University/Institutes attributes and information satisfaction are the factors that influence the student's choices of a University/Institutes. Variables which normally students are considering at the time of college search are University/Institutes reputation, educational facilities, employment opportunities, friends attending a University/Institutes and influence of other individuals. Apart from the above factors parent pressure and location of the University/Institutes also have significant impact in the decision of selecting University/Institutes. Using the factors mentioned above, University/Institutes could re-strategize their marketing strategies in order to attract and retain students. What we have observed that educational Institutions must seriously look at issues we have found and the important one is that the marketers must consider proper segmentation strategies to target the actual students (prospects). Educational Services are being consumed by students while the actual buyers are the parents who are actually paying fees of the courses. So, it becomes equally important to consider parents in designing marketing mix at a given situation. The cultural and social factors also do impact the decision of the students regarding the selection of educational Institutions.

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