Influence of People Mix in Selecting Institute of Technical Education: A Case Study of North Maharashtra University Region

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ABSTRACT

There is a rapid growth of technical education in last decade in terms of the number of institutes and intake capacity in India but non-directional. There is noticeable gap in between the actual no. of enrollments and intake capacity of these institutes. In the year 2015-2016, as per AICTE, New Delhi, 46% of seats were vacant in Technical Education in India. Segmentation and the ‘People’ factor of service mixing is very important aspects in education services. The purpose of this article is to highlight the influence of the people mix on geographical and demographical factors of students in selecting technical educational institutes. Different communication strategies of people mix can be used based on geographical and demographical factors, which will confirm growth as well as the development of technical education in the proper direction.

KEYWORDS
India, People Mix, Segmentation, Technical Education

INTRODUCTION

As Technical Education (TE) in India is turning more competitive, it has become necessary for TE institutions to engage in strategic marketing. More than promotional activities, strategic marketing involves drawing students toward the institution; it should also include market segmentation and positioning (Cann & George, 2003). The reason why segmentation is important and timely is that universities and institutes are currently struggling with how to best serve their learners in the face of declining financial resources, increased calls for accountability by Government, increasing competition among institutions and more discerning students, particularly those referred to as the ‘millennials’ (Howe & Strauss, 2000). While some prospective students share similar characteristics but most of them are not similar as per gender, age, geographical location, parent’s income etc. Students with similar characteristics can be grouped and can be yielded for definable segments.

Customers of educational services are classified as Internal customers; students, staff and management and External customers such as parents, other schools and colleges, alumni and community (Magaud & Krone, 2002). The institute searching process is a long one. McDonough (2004)
stated that the transition/searching process begins during the middle school years. Students begin to develop college awareness and ideas of academic aspirations. During 10th (SSC) and 12th (HSC) students began looking for schools that meet their needs socially and academically (McDonough, 2004). After searching internal sources, if the student realizes that the information gathered is not enough to base on and decide, external sources of information are considered. People Factor such as; Parents, Brother & Sisters, Relatives, Friends/Peer, Current & Post students of institute, previous School/Coaching Teachers, Staff and Management People of Institute, act as a reference group for the pre-students (prospective students) to take their decision on institute selection. Reference Group is the group to which the individual relates or aspires to relate himself or herself psychologically and a source for framing his or her experiences, perceptions, cognition, and ideas of self. Robert K. Merton hypothesized that individuals compare themselves with reference groups of people who occupy the social role to which the individual aspires (Gerald & Holton, 2004). There are several people who influence a student’s institute decision, but their degree of impact on students varies from school to school (www.eduventures.com).

Segmentation

Two broad groups of variables are used to segment customer market; Geographic & Demographic segmentation as these are measurable, substantial, accessible, differential and actionable. Geographic segmentation calls for dividing the students prospective market into different geographical units such as urban/rural, state and distances of their native place from institute etc. In demographic segmentation, the prospective students are divided as per the variable like; age, gender, parent’s income, parent’s occupation and qualification. Demographic variables are the most popular bases for distinguishing customer’s groups (Kotler, 2002).

People Factor of Service Mix

The tradition four Ps marketing approaches work well for goods but additional elements require attention in service business; People, Physical Evidence and Process. Because most services are provided by the people and experienced by the people by their motivation and behavioral characteristics, they make a huge difference in customer satisfaction. This is the main principle of service management; ‘By the people for the people’.

Parents

The home setting is a particularly rich and ongoing source of information for college-educated families (McDonough, 1997). The collision between the worlds of institute and of home and family must be understood by institutions as lower-income students become more prevalent (Howard & Levine, 2004). Many studies have connected parent support and encouragement to institute plans (Conklin & Dailey, 1981). Parents are main source of financial aspects; however, their support is determined by the education level. When parents lack firsthand “institute knowledge” and have limited financial and social resources, they consequently have a lessened capacity to facilitate institute planning (Thayer, 2000). According to Hossler, Schmit and Vesper (1999), parental support was a key factor in influencing students’ aspirations to go onto college. Typically, students whose parents did not attend college/institute graduation find it more difficult to address the issues related to choose, chances, and application needs when it comes to college. Typically, these students begin thinking about institute much later than do students who have parents and family members who have attended higher education institutions.

Brothers and Sisters

When parents are not educated or unknown about the institutes, the supporting information is provided by the siblings. However, graduate elder siblings or undergoing graduate siblings have a major role in the decision of selection. In rural area where the parents are uneducated and are unable to provide
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