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MARKETING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THE AIDED AND UNAIDED INSTITUTIONS IN PROVIDING QUALITY EDUCATION



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ABSTRACT:-

Today's world is the world of competition. We live in a world where everyone is after everyone's business. And in this, if you lose your business you never get it back. It's a competitive positioning world. And education sector is no exception to this. Every institution wants to be a leader and wanted to have maximum share in the market. Thus, they adopt different marketing strategies in order to outshine and face the competition from the other education institutes and also to attract the students and their parents. These marketing strategies can also help the institutes in providing quality education, with the help of state of art infrastructure, well equipped classrooms, career guiding cells etc. In the education sector, where "consumers" are parents and children's and suppliers are schools and colleges, more competition translate into higher quality schooling and enhanced educational outcomes. It is believed that not only education but quality education helps our children succeed outside the school, in having good careers and happy lives. Quality education enables people to develop all of their attributes and skills to achieve their potential as human beings and members of the society.

KEY NOTES: Marketing strategies, Aided and Unaided Institutions, Quality Education.

INTRODUCTION

Education Institution does not have any product to sell, but they sell their services of providing education to the students. Thus, the above concepts of marketing which are applicable in business firms are not completely applicable when it comes to education Institutes. As in case of business firms there is a cut-throat competition, similarly in case of these education Institutes there is a lot of competition among themselves and with the Global entrants also. Thus, it has become necessary for the education Institutes to go for marketing with the help of unique marketing strategies to stand ahead and differentiate themselves from the other institutes.

Education market exists where parents have a choice set of providers, i.e. Aided Institutions and Unaided Institutions and Government Institutions. Aided institutions are funded by government for running and development of their institution. Whereas unaided institutions are run by the institutes themselves. They charge higher fees as compared to the Aided Institutions in order to run their colleges. In order to stay in this competition, they adopt different marketing strategies. Thus, Marketing strategy is the goal of increasing sales and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. These Institutions mainly sell their products by making the use of marketing strategies such as branding, rebranding, repositioning, restructuring, indoor and outdoor advertising, internet advertising, print media etc. Whereas aided institution does not require marketing. But the question is, does this marketing strategy help the institutions to provide quality education and do they help to attract the students?

A college or a University is an Institution, where

financial incentives to excellence are absent, where the product line is not a unit or an object but rather a value laden and life long process, where the goal of the enterprise is not growth or market share but intellectual excellence, not profit but free good of knowledge, not efficiency of operation but equity of treatment, not increased productivity in economic terms but increased intensity of thinking about who we are and how we live in the world around us. But the situation nowadays is not the same. These Institutions are now working as business hubs.

"A good quality education is one that provides all learners with capabilities they require to become economically productive, develop sustainable livelihoods, contribute to peaceful and democratic societies and enhance individual well-being. The right to education is not only the right to access education but also the right to receive an education of good quality. Education must be available and accessible but also acceptable and adaptable.

Thus, the study will help us to know how, the different marketing strategies adopted by these institutions helps them to provide quality education.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND SOURCES OF DATA

The basic purpose of this study is to know whether the adoption of these strategies help the institutes to have a competitive edge over the other institutes and does it helps them to provide quality education to the students. Promotional and Marketing strategies help the Institution to utilize skills of their employees and help to develop creative approach to provide quality education to the students. Thus, this study will give the overall idea of the importance of quality in higher education. Further the study will help to know the different marketing strategies adopted by these Institutions and assist them to provide quality education. The study will also help us to know whose strategies are more effective among the Aided and Unaided Institutions. The institutions who want to rebrand or restructure, will get to know which strategies to adopt to become more competitive in the market.

The present study is based on secondary data. The relevant secondary data was collected through comprehensive review of existing literature i.e. books, journals, magazines, newspapers, reports and internet.

MARKETING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY AIDED AND UNAIDED INSTITUTIONS: - AIDED INSTITUTIONS

Grant in Aid and Permanent No grant colleges are both equally good options for higher education. They have some fundamental differences in their ownership, Management, Size of classes, Variety of Courses etc.

- They are funded by local and state government and usually offer lower tuition fees.
- They get grant from the government for various purposes like infrastructure development, academic activities etc.
- Funds are provided for the research work done in the institute.
- They have very high enrollment due to experience staff and lower fees.
- The government gives scholarship to the students and these scholarships are decided on the merit basis.

UNAIDED INSTITUTIONS

- They are not funded by the government.
- They cost more than the aided colleges.
- The classroom dynamics are much different at no grant colleges. Most of the students are committed to their academic success.
- They participate actively in classroom discussions, complete course work.
- Professors here are more loyal to the college and concerned about the success of their students.
- The students communicate closely with the teachers in and out of the class and the students themselves attempt to involve everyone in campus activities.
- Some even offer job training and certificates to bachelors, master's degree.

MARKETING STRATEGIES

One of the most notable trends in higher education branding and marketing is that

institutions are dedicating far more attention to these functions than in previous years. Many universities have hired marketing professionals from the corporate world, including CMOs, and have invested significant time and money to create strong institutional brands.

The main reason for the students getting attracted towards aided institution is their lower fees as compared to the private institutions who charge higher fees. As the government, aided institutions are funded by the government for all its facilities, they charge low fees from the students. Following are the marketing strategies mostly adopted by the institutes

ONLINE MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Perhaps the largest area of innovation and growth in higher education marketing and branding as well as in recruitment, is in the online and digital space. Institutions are making greater use of social media and digital platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and podcasts to market their programs, while website design and interface is proving a crucial component in how colleges and universities present themselves to prospective students.

Among the most important tools for social and online marketing is an effective and intuitive website, which should be considered the “ultimate brand statement” for an institution.

Websites often feature elements and layouts so as to streamline and highlight content, including navigation bars, engaging visuals such as slideshows, and prominent “call to action” buttons that encourage students.

Radio ads, asking current students or alumni for applicant referrals, and online college fairs were deemed least effective, while the most effective methods of outreach are open houses and campus visit days for high school students. Government Aided institutions do not focus much on its marketing part, as they have limited seats and they are easily filled as the students and their parents first preference is getting admitted in aided college for higher education because of lower fees as well. Thus, attracting students is not their priority in case of aided colleges which are too much in number. These institutes also have well developed websites, they also make use of social media, but not to that extent as the private institutions do in order to market them and attract the students.

USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES

Newer methods of online and technology and enhanced course delivery, including flipped classrooms and gamifications, are showing promising student outcomes. Flipped and gamified instruction models in particular have resulted in greater student engagement and resulted in providing the quality in education to the students.

Adaptive learning Technology has also enjoyed significant interest, and new technologies are currently under development in some institution. Institutes, when they are equipped with additional information about the student’s background and interests, create separate messaging, send relevant emails and create landing pages or dashboards that show they are meant for students. It also helps to get greater understanding of the competitive marketplace as it ascertains knowledge of different student needs within the same market as everybody is fighting for a slice of the same pie.

In today’s technology run world the best way to catch them up after college is by mobile marketing which is generally followed by both the aided and unaided institutions. It is a strategy that helps to target a large portion of college students.

Traditional posters and fliers mixed with students in cool themed t-shirts “walking billboards” in high-crowded areas around campuses to create the required buzz in the undecided students’ mind is a practice followed by most of the engineering and management colleges around Nagpur.

Most of the engineering colleges have started taking mock test for entrance exams. Many of them take entrances for JEE. It is one of best way to promote your college, where students come to your college campus and you will have them for attracting as well as motivating for getting admission in your college.

Aided colleges fail in providing all the above facilities. The reason for not providing such facilities could be lower fees and non-requirement as discussed earlier that these colleges do not focus much on marketing part to attract the students. The college management as well as the students also does not take much interest in such

activities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure in colleges can take the forms of capital, communications, governance, social, cultural, sports, and recreation. The capital infrastructure consists of the buildings, laboratories and equipment's. India, notably, has a sorry state of affairs in this case. But there are few exceptions, where some of the Engineering and Management colleges are infrastructurally advanced, because it is only the infrastructure on which the unaided colleges market themselves. Colleges are meant for studies for the students but apart from studies there are many other things which help in overall development of the students and helping the college in getting the good name and rank in the city or town. Along with the better teaching faculties a good infrastructure of the school will attract many minds of the parents so that parents can admit their children in that school for all the better facilities along with the quality teaching. Many of the engineering and the Management colleges use Video/Data projectors and projection screens; or an LCD/TV monitored players, Sound Systems, Standard VGA and 3.5mm audio connectors, UCB Wireless network coverage etc. With the help of which it becomes easy for the teacher as well as the students to teach and understand the subject matter contrary to text book teaching which is adopted by aided colleges.

Aided institutions lag behind in providing modern infrastructure facilities. Some of the institutes does not even provide the basic facilities such as proper classrooms and toilets. The main reason, for this could be the lower fees and corrupt nature of the management as well as traditional concept which they still follow.

We have some exceptionally good institution, which are infrastructurally well advanced. But the condition is not the same in all the government aided colleges. They do not have well equipped labs, classrooms and library. Many of the colleges do not have sufficient tube lights and fans in the class. Thus, it is not worth, if you have experienced and expert faculties, but due to the lack of these facilities, you cannot make their proper utilization in providing quality education.

Also, the attendance of the students in aided colleges is very low as compared to private institution, where they ask for 75% of the student's attendance. Aided colleges are not strict with the students attendance, which reflects in their studies and hence the students lack in quality education.

NO. OF COURSES OFFERED

The productivity and effectiveness of an institution depends upon the different number of courses offered by the institution. It also helped the institution to attract the students and increase the enrollment. Thus, many of the colleges has restructured their institution by adding new courses in their curriculum which are useful from their carrier point of view. Students have to go abroad or migrate to other states for pursuing such courses. But many such courses are now made available in the colleges of Nagpur District where students can enroll themselves and pursue their carrier in that course.

Aided Institutes offer various types of courses, but those are only basic, which does not have industrial application. Whereas unaided institutes offer new and advanced courses which are useful for the students from the job and the industry point of view.

TRAINING FOR PERSONALITY AND SOFT SKILL DEVELOPMENT

It is said that a person is known or judged by his personality. Personality reflects your inner strength and the type of person you are. An individual's personality refers to one's appearance, characteristics, attitude, mindset and behavior with others. Personality development grooms an individual and helps him to make a mark of his own, anywhere they go. Thus, the students after they get admitted in an higher education institutes, it is the responsibility of the institution to prepare the students to face the world in a positive way, thus along with education the institution has to develop overall personality of the students. Thus, special trainers are appointed by the institutions who helps the students to develop their personality. It helps the students when they face the interview and make their impression in their work place also.

Soft skill development is also essential which a part of personality development itself is. It is a combination of interpersonal skills, social skills, communication skills, character traits, attitude, career attributes which enable

people to effectively navigate their environment, work with others and perform well. Many forms of employment do not require academic knowledge but common sense, the ability to deal with people and develop positive attitude. This is a normal practice seen in most of the unaided colleges. If the institutions provide these facilities, ultimately students and their parents are attracted to such institutions.

All the above facilities are seen in only few aided colleges. The reasons for this could be non-funding for these facilities, absenteeism of students, students not showing interest, lack of infrastructure facilities, non-interest of the faculty and management etc.

RE BRANDING

Branding and Re-branding is practiced by almost all the organizations, be it a business organization or education. It is a practice to differentiate its offering from the competitors as well as to be competitive in the market. Institutes had their Logos or Monograms with slogans, which helps them to attract the students and the parents. As a part of Re-branding, many Colleges change their name. But this is not a regular practice as the institution is known by its name. Its brand image is created due to that name.

The reason for change of the name varies from institution to institution. Changing name depends upon the objectives and mission of that institution. Many a times change in name takes place due to mergers and takeovers. Sometimes it is because of the negative factor or negative image concerning the current name. Many of the Institution promote themselves with its Abbreviated name form and by using slogans. These names sound catchy and help the institutes to attract the students. Both Aided and Unaided institutes do branding, but the focus of unaided institutes on this is much as they have to compete with the other unaided institutes which are more in number.

CONDUCTING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SEMINARS

A seminar is a form of academic instruction, either at an academic institution or offered by a commercial or professional national or international organization. It has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate. It is essentially a place where assigned readings are discussed, questions can be raised and debates can be conducted. Institutions conduct such type of seminar once or twice a year. Current events or topics related with the study course are generally the topics of seminars, where the students can actively participate and share their thoughts and knowledge. It helps them to know their subject in depth and new inventions in their subject. Also the workshops help them to get practical knowledge about the subject as well as its industrial application. Government aided colleges do conduct national and international seminars on regular basis. The UGC provides funds for the aided colleges for conducting National and International Seminars under 12th plan. The scheme provides financial assistance to Aided Institutions for organizing Conferences and Workshops at State, National and International levels in various fields. Further, the scheme intends to promote high standards in Colleges by way of extending facilities to teachers, researchers and students, by providing a forum for sharing their knowledge, experiences and research findings. Financial assistance under the scheme is available to all Colleges, which come under the purview of Section 2(f) and are fit to receive central assistance under Section 12B of the UGC Act, 1956. It shall be mandatory for every college to get accredited by the Accreditation Agency, after passing out of two batches or six years, whichever is earlier. An International Conference is organized once in a year by a College having Postgraduate department(s), which is eligible for financial assistance under General Development Assistance Scheme, with prior clearance from the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

PLACEMENTS

Private engineering colleges are popping up in every nook and corner of the city. Hence, it's difficult to give a common verdict for all. But, several private engineering colleges established 5-10 years back, have put up a lot of efforts in tying up with MNCs and other big companies. So, these companies visit engineering colleges without fail and each of them are seen to recruit as many as 100-150 students in one go. There are several newly established private colleges, where no companies visit and students are left on their own to do the job hunt after graduating. As the situation seen in Nagpur District, aided Science, Commerce and Arts colleges are not doing well when it

comes to placements of their students. Only few colleges have placement cell or department who work for the placements of the students. Thus, no training is provided for their soft skill, personality and communication development. Thus, such students lack in their overall development and thus quality in education also. Local companies generally come for the placements where they provide sub-standard job profile and salary.

CONCLUSION

Aided Institutions have a bigger budget, better administration and happier teachers. So on paper, they should be better right. The reason why they aren't performing is due to poor execution of plans. The Aided colleges follow Socialistic approach whereas unaided colleges follow Capitalistic Approach. Unaided colleges are able to provide better education, because parents question them when they fail to do so as they are paying huge amount as their fees. Whereas in the case of aided college, its usually first generation learners that are enrolled and usually their parents do not expect a lot out of schools and hence aided colleges escape easily from being questioned by the parents. So their quality has deteriorated over the years. In private colleges education is seen as a business while in aided colleges, it is seen as a resource powerhouse whose operating costs are borne by the government. In private institutions, it is about maintaining your ranking and meeting AICTE norms but in aided colleges the same approach is at the individual level as there is no pressure on rankings.

Hence, after going through the above discussion, it can be concluded that unaided institutions are better in providing quality education. Infrastructurally they are much better than aided institutions, which is their strength to attract the students. With good amenities and facilities students get encouraged and they study and participate in extracurricular activities more actively. With good amenities teachers also get encouraged and they deliver quality teachings to students. Some of the amenities are well equipped classrooms i.e. classroom having proper blackboard with benches and desks in good condition so that students can sit properly without facing any problems and LCD projectors as well. Aided institutions nowadays are executing their resources properly to come up at par with the unaided Institutions with respect to Infrastructure, Faculties, new teaching technologies etc.

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