

# Educational Marketing: An Empirical Analysis of Promotional Tools Considered by Private Universities in Punjab

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## **Abstract**

*Marketing in Education is a very important aspect now days. This paper intends to reveal the promotional tools which are considered for higher educational (HE) marketing. For this, the researchers conducted survey among different university students in Punjab, India. The questionnaire was sent through Google form to get response from fifteen private university students. The findings from this permit researchers to come up with relevant promotional tools to put in practice in order to enhance enrolment. The researchers found 'Guidance by teacher' and 'Internet' to be the most influential factors as the promotional tools. This paper attempts to put forward the potential marketing tools to be used by the universities for marketing which further will enable the universities to develop appropriate communication mix.*

**Keywords:** *Educational Marketing, Higher Education, Communication Strategy, Promotion.*

## **Introduction**

Philip Kotler defines marketing on website [www.heidicoHEN.com/marketing-definition](http://www.heidicoHEN.com/marketing-definition) as "the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and desires. It defines measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential. It pinpoints which segments the company is capable of serving best and it designs and promotes the appropriate products and services." Jason Falls, a social media explorer, states that marketing helps people in buying their products and services. ([www.heidicoHEN.com/marketing-definition](http://www.heidicoHEN.com/marketing-definition))

Ramachandran, (2010) argues that the education being part of service industry, the theory of marketing of HE could be different from the other commercial sectors. Hence, it requires formulation of marketing strategy

in order to inform its customers i.e. students about courses (products), their benefits, and other required information. According to Jabber (2016) the higher educational institutes need to use different marketing strategies along with 4Ps to promote themselves in these days. By employing various marketing tactics educational institutes educate their potential buyers in order to make right decision.

## **Research aim and Theoretical Background**

Every education institution is putting in practice, various marketing activities for its growth and development. To apply better technique to marketing mix, the comparative analysis of promotional tools is required as marketing costs time and money to institutions. That's why authors come up with objectives, first to study the role of marketing in higher educational Institutes and second to identify potential promotional tools that can contribute to increase the enrolment in

universities. In order to investigate researcher added variables such as Marketing by University, Educational Consultant, Prospectus, Internet, Television, Magazines, University brochure, Relatives and Friends, News Paper Advertisement, Career Fair, Guidance by Teacher, and Social Media. Out of fifteen private universities ten university students responded willingly to the survey and 235 participated. The collected data analysed with SPSS along with relevant test application.

According Yang, X.G. (2016) the concept “Education Marketing” came from “application of marketing management’s theory and methods”. In order to promote HE one should do proper research about the relevant factors and implementation of proper model. It further builds relationship between stakeholders and enhances the enrolment and reduces the expenditure which use for marketing purpose. Ming &Kee (2010), examine institutional & Communication characteristics. However, in this paper researcher focus on communication characteristics mentioned in above paragraph.

**Marketing Communication**

Kotler et al (2008) states that marketing communication is the mean by which a firm tries to inform the customers, persuade and remind them either directly or indirectly of the products or services offered by it. Kotler & Armstrong (2008) concludes that marketing communication is a complex activity and is a blend of advertising, sales promotion, personal selling and direct marketing tools. The company uses this blend to persuasively communicate customer value and to build the customer relationship.

**Traditional marketing v/s digital marketing**

Before the advent of digital marketing, HE institutes used to apply the traditional marketing tools and techniques such as educational consultants, prospectus, newspaper advertisements, hoardings, brochure distributions etc. The digital marketing has changed the way the HE institutes communicate with their perspective students. According Yogesh K. Dwivedi et. al. (2021) The digital marketing being very cheap with wide target market range has been intensively used by HE institutes. Digital marketing also puts up some of the challenges as some of the platforms only offer limited space for putting up the information. Mungeaki (2012) suggested that appropriate marketing mix should be used involving both digital and traditional marketing tools as both have the impact on purchase decision of the consumers. The use of the tools depends upon the objectives of the campaign.

**Result Analysis & Discussion**

The distribution of study population according to gender and level of study, among all study participants (n=235), there were 62.6% males and 37.4% females. Majority of study participants were undergraduates (40.4%). Proportion of postgraduate and PhD degree holders were 24.3% and 9.8% respectively. Around 25.5% of them bear other qualifications

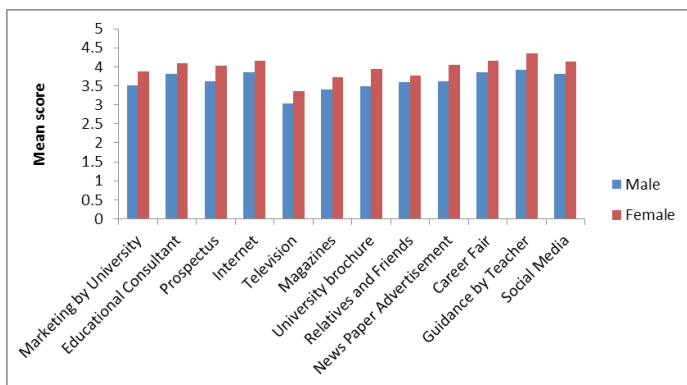
**Frequency of responses of study participants to consideration of promotional measures for University selection:** From all the factors 30.6% participants have given average importance to marketing by university as a promotional measure. Only 6% and 5.5% of them considered marketing as very important and important. Educational consultant was considered not at all important by 39.1% participants and not important by 25.5% participants. Prospectus was considered very important and important by 4.7% and 6.8% participants respectively. Internet was considered not at all important and not important by 45.1% and 22.6% participants respectively. Maximum participants (33.6%) gave average importance to Television followed by 23.4% of them who considered it as not important. Magazines were considered as a very important and important factor by 8.5% and 10.2% participants. University brochure was considered not at all important and not important by 30.6% and 26% participants respectively. Average importance was given by 33.2% study participants for relatives and friends while newspaper advertisement was considered very important and important by 5.1% and 7.7% participants respectively. Career fair and guidance by teacher were considered very important by 5.1% and 3.8% participants respectively. Social media was marked not important and not at all important by 29.4% and 39.1% participants respectively.

**Table1: Comparative assessment of mean scores of promotional measures according to gender**

Factor	Male (Mean + SD)	Female (Mean + SD)	p-value	Total (Mean + SD)
Marketing by University	3.51 + 1.16	3.89 + 0.92	0.001*	3.65 + 1.09
Educational Consultant	3.82 + 1.12	4.09 + 0.99	0.213	3.92 + 1.07
Prospectus	3.61 + 1.19	4.02 + 0.87	0.000*	3.76 + 1.09
Internet	3.86 + 1.25	4.17 + 0.99	0.057	3.97 + 1.16
Television	3.03 + 1.27	3.36 + 1.00	0.012*	3.16 + 1.19

Magazines	3.41 + 1.29	3.72 + 1.12	0.238	3.53 + 1.23
University brochure	3.49 + 1.25	3.95 + 0.99	0.002*	3.66 + 1.18
Relatives and Friends	3.60 + 1.10	3.78 + 1.09	0.892	3.67 + 1.10
News Paper Advertisement	3.61 + 1.19	4.05 + 0.97	0.009*	3.77 + 1.13
Career Fair	3.86 + 1.23	4.16 + 0.96	0.003*	3.97 + 1.14
Guidance by Teacher	3.92 + 1.21	4.36 + 1.01	0.048*	4.09 + 1.16
Social Media	3.82 + 1.19	4.14 + 0.89	0.004*	3.94 + 1.10

Test applied: Independent t test, \*indicates statistically significant difference

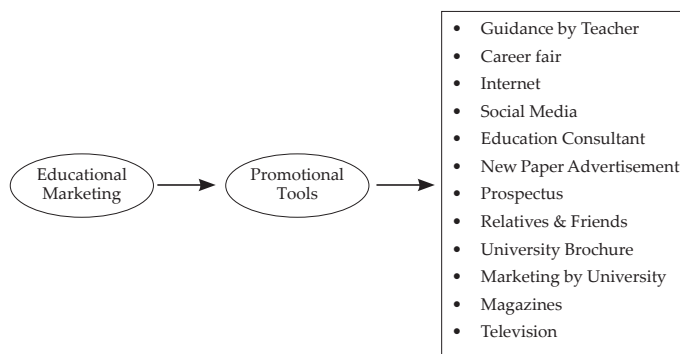


Graph1. : Comparative assessment of mean scores of promotional measures according to gender

Highest mean scores for university selection was evident for guidance by teacher (4.09 + 1.16) followed by internet (3.97 + 1.16), career fair (3.97 + 1.14) and social media (3.94 + 1.10). The lowest mean score was obtained by Television (3.16 + 1.19) followed by magazines (3.53 + 1.23) (Graph 1). When compared according to gender, mean scores for marketing (p=0.001), prospectus (p=0.000), television (p=0.012), university brochure (p=0.002), newspaper advertisement (p=0.009), career fair (p=0.003), guidance by teacher (p=0.048) and social media (p=0.004) were significantly higher among females than males (Graph & Table 1).

**Conclusion & Recommendations:** In past there was no competition in education sector so requirement to market educational services was not required. But in present time trend has been changed due to supply & demand. This makes institutions to develop proper educational marketing strategy. Researcher came up with the

following framework after this research. According to the Students response their priority or reliability in terms of university selection start with teacher guidance, career fair, Internet, Social media, Education consultant, Newspaper Advertisement, Attractive Prospectus, Relative & Friends (Word of Mouth), University brochure, Marketing by university itself, Magazines, and then Television.



However, in order to formulate proper Educational marketing strategy, universities need to concentrate on above mention characteristics. By considering these characteristics which came up from Students point of view, proper and effective use may result positive with regards of HE sector.

Further research can be conducted on impact of social media on students’ enrolment in Higher education.

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