

Abstract

Service industry has played a vital role in the growth of any country's economy. Nowadays, it becomes one of the most emerging sectors in the world economy. Services are all around us. As a consumer we use services every day. In many regions the growth in the service economy is broadly recognized and increasingly contributes to the development of economy. The dominance of the service sector is not limited to highly developed nations but also in developing nations as it plays a tremendous role in the creation of new job opportunities. A service can be described as an act, a process and a performance. The service sector includes a wide range of industries such as the education industry, hospitality, the tourism industry, financial services, charities, the arts and public utilities, banking, insurance, restaurants, hotels, etc. Being an emerging economy India also became a hub of services industry. Education industry in India has been flourishing. There are 41 Central Universities in India. Among all of them Banaras Hindu University is one of the pioneer, reputed and popular varieties. The paper deals with the services marketing of education and services marketing mix followed by BHU.

Key Words: *Services Marketing Mix, Education, Banaras Hindu University, Services Sector.*

Service Marketing of Education: A Case Study of Banaras Hindu University

Shuchi Dubey

Research Scholar, Faculty of Education, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

Dr. R.S. Mishra

Assistant Professor, Office Management & Company Secretaryship, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

Introduction

Services are now playing a dominant role all over the world. The services sector occupies an important role in modern economies. Consumers spend more on services than on tangible goods in UK, Western Europe, Australia and Japan, along with the US (Ruth, 2010). At present, marketing of services has gained extensive momentum into worldwide. The increasing number of clients in services sector is the most common indicator of the success of services marketing. In India services are growing significantly as it accounts for as much as 40% of exports (Ruth, 2010). Services marketing is not self-enclosed task but is integral to service organizations as a whole and the object of the activity people, who are reactive not proactive as compared to product. Service marketing is a broader function than product marketing because it is more dependent on the people factor. The Services Sector contributes the most to the Indian GDP. The Sector of Services in India has the biggest share in the country's GDP, it accounts for more than 50% contribution (Kumar, 2013) The various sectors under the Services Sector in India are construction, trade, hotels, education, hospitals, consultancy, advisory, transport, restaurant, communication and storage, social and personal services, community, insurance, financing, business services, and real estate. Services are economic activities offered by one party to another. Services include all economic activities whose output is not a physical product or construction, is generally consumed at the time it is produced and provides added value in forms (such as amusement, convenience, comfort, health or timeliness) that are essentially tangible. Investment in education directs to the formation of human capital, which is an important input into socio-economic development of a nation. In many developing countries, including India, education in general, and higher education in particular, is mainly in the public sector, though the trend is changing rapidly. Therefore education is believed to have been evading by the wonder of the market and is a market-excluding arrangement, rather than a market-complementary

arrangement. On the other hand, developed countries, have been able to have market complementary arrangements in education as a result of which widespread literacy levels have been achieved. The Indian Education sector is one of the most emerging sectors. In India the education sector rose with a compounded annual growth rate of 16.5% during FY05-FY12. The higher education segment was at 34.04% (\$17.02billion) of the total size in FY10 and grew with a CAGR of 18.13% during FY04-FY10. Due to the expected strong

demand for quality education India Ratings expects the Indian education sector's market size to increase to Rs 602,410 crore (\$109.84 billion) by FY15 (Shivani, 2013). Marketing of education is broader in scope. It is a part of services marketing. If it is considered that formal education begins at the school age and depending upon the choice, vocation and circumstance of the pursuant, grown-up into intermediate and higher levels of learning including professional and specialized fields. In fact, benefits required from higher and professional or vocational courses are more tangible or measurable in terms of entry qualifications to a chosen profession, certification to enable practicing a profession or virtual ease of access to an appropriate form of livelihood. A service is defined as any act or performance that one party can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Nothing is purchased while a service is availed of; at best what is purchased is just the use of, or access to, the facility/services. The buyer does not become the owner of anything. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] report says, "Services are a diverse group of economic activities that include high technology, knowledge-intensive sub-sectors, as well as labour-intensive, low-skill areas. In many aspects, service sectors exhibit marked differences from manufacturing – although these distinctions may be blurring" (Ruth, 2010). In simple words, services are a diverse group of activities not related directly to manufacturing of goods, mining or agriculture. Instead, they involve the provision of human value added in the form of labor, advice, managerial skill, entertainment, training, intermediation and others. Unlike manufactured goods, which can be stored, distributed and consumed without direct interaction with the entity that produced the good, services cannot be inventoried and must be consumed at the point of production. According to Lamb, Hair and McDaniel, "A service is the result of applying human or mechanical efforts to people or objects" (Bharan, 2011). It involves a deed, a performance or an effort that cannot be physically possessed. Services are performed not produced. Services are more people based than technology based. Services demand has greater elasticity. Services supply cannot be easily changed to meet the changed market needs. Services faced unique quality control issue and a larger number of problems in customer servicing. Service quality is a mixture of services like quality of delivery of services (MS- 65 Marketing of Services).

Objectives

The objectives of the paper are as follows:

- To study the education service and its marketing implication.
- To examine the services marketing mix used by Banaras Hindu University

Methodology and Period of the Study

The present study is based on secondary sources of data collected through journals, magazines, books, newspapers and websites. The study covers the higher education prevailing in India and about BHU. The paper is the study of BHU from the year 2008-2014 because during the period under consideration the University had seen tremendous changes such as added new courses, increased number of seats for applicants in both the campuses, improved its technology in the field of research and also use it for its day-to-day operations, made campus Wi-Fi, increased number of hostels etc.

Education Service and its Marketing Implication

The main role of service marketing mix of an educational institution is to combine competences, coordinating the challenges and limitations imposed by its environment and finding the best ways of achieving its mission and vision. By using these 7P's of services marketing our universities can achieve core competency and competitive advantage. The key features of services are intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, perish ability and ownership. Education is an intangible dominant service. It cannot be touch or seen. One can only feel it. Evaluation of this service can be obtained by judging service content (curricula, course material, student workload, constituent faculty) and the service delivery system. At the end of the service experience the consumer gets something tangible to show for his efforts i.e. certificate or grade card denoting his level of proficiency at the given course/program. Precise standardization of education is difficult. It cannot be

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patented. Services are perishable and cannot be stored. In education service production and consumption are simultaneous activities. In most of the conventional teaching institutions where face to face teaching necessitates simultaneous production and consumption.

To meet the challenge posed by the perishability nature of education, most of the open and distance learning institutions offered audio-video units course material to the students. It is generally impossible to separate a service from the person who is the provider. In the context of education, this translates into the need for the presence of the performer (teacher) when the service is to be performed and consumed. The open learning system overcomes the characteristics of inseparability by incorporating the teacher into the course material and bringing about a separation between the producer and the service. The heterogeneity of services means different services at different time in a different ways. Different faculty of the different institutes offers different ways of education services (teaching). In the context of education the customer merely buys access to education or derives the learning benefit from the services provided. The marketing of education in India had little significance during the previous decade. This was because of the reasons such as the demand far exceeded the supply of service because people ignored the importance of education because the Indian economy was more dependent on agriculture and it was the people's perception that it was the duty of the government to provide this service to the people. The condition still remains the alike in most poor and lower middle-class families where earning their daily bread takes priority over education. Though, radical changes have been taking place in the arena of educational services over the years which have led to drastic changes in the field. The reasons for this revolution are abundance such as the increasing alertness of the importance of education among the masses, corporatization of education, innovations in technology and privatization of educational services. Now a day's youth are eager on having a good career and making a mark.

An overview of Banaras Hindu University

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Ji, The Man, The Spirit, The Vision, is the Founder of the premier, old and prestigious, Banaras Hindu University. In the field of academic and research output Banaras Hindu University positions among the India's top few universities. During the year 2008-14 there were two campuses, 4 institutes, 16 faculties, 140 departments, 4 advanced centers and 4 interdisciplinary schools of the university. The University is building its brand at the national and international levels in the areas of Science, Social Science, Technology, Medicine and Agriculture etc. A university can grow successfully only when research and teaching mesh together seamlessly – one without the other is incomplete. Therefore, it had ensured that the development of a collaborative environment conducive to learning, exposure to the best international practices and promotion of innovation and creativity. At present, BHU has almost twenty five thousand students including 2500 research scholars and 650 foreign students from 34 nations. The students are pursuing different academic programmes at this campus under one roof. These are a number of the brightest young minds in the country and abroad, who have joined this University after clearing a tough entrance Test. Institutions of higher learning are instrumental in providing equality of opportunities, which is the essence of participatory democracy. This will not only remove a sense of alienation and neglect in the backward regions but also prevent out migration from these areas.

BHU has established the Rajiv Gandhi South Campus at Barkachha about 75 Kms. Southwest of Varanasi on 2760 acres of land. The first academic session commenced from 2006-07 with six programmes which has increased to more than 25 in the present session. This campus is emerging as a potential hub to impart education, training and entrepreneurship development skills, to the youth, women and marginalized sections of society in the backward region of Mirzapur and adjoining districts of Uttar Pradesh, Western Bihar and Northern Madhya Pradesh. The Campus is heading well as per the vision of the promoters for education to generate new breed of human resource who would be job creators and not job seekers. BHU have some affiliated colleges such as Vasant Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Mahila Maha Vidyalay, Basanta College, D.A.V., Arya Mahila Mahavidyalaya. BHU is one of the largest residential universities in Asia, with over 25,000 students.

Hostels and Residential Accommodation

There were 68 hostels (including 22 Girls Hostel) with an accommodation capacity of 9728 students (7003 boys and 2725 girls) in the campus during the year 2008-14. At present, some more hostels are work in progress for boys and girls. The University provides accommodation to its faculty as well as staff. The numbers of residential quarters are 538 and 678 respectively for teaching and non-teaching staff. In addition, the University has 4 guest houses and a transit house to provide accommodation to the guests.

Objectives of the University

- ✓ To promote the study of the Hindu Shastras and of Sanskrit literature generally as a means of preserving and popularizing for the benefit of the Hindus in particular and of the world at large in general, the best thought and culture of the Hindus and all that was good and great in the ancient civilization of India;
- ✓ To promote learning and research generally in Arts and Sciences in all branches;
- ✓ To promote the building up of character in youth by religion and ethics as an integral part of education;
- ✓ To advance and diffuse such scientific, technical and professional knowledge, combined with the necessary practical training as is best calculated to help in promoting indigenous industries and in developing the material resources of the country.

Services Marketing Mix of Banaras Hindu University

The service marketing mix of institution consists of the various elements which form the core of an institution's marketing system and hence helps to achieve marketing objectives. The Service marketing mix in BHU is as below:

Table: Services Marketing Mix of BHU during the Year 2008-14

Services Marketing Mix	
Product	As an academic institution BHU offers several courses at Under Graduate level (B.A., B.Sc.,B.Com. etc.), Post Graduate Level (M.A., M.Sc., M.Com etc.), Professional courses (MBA, MFM, MFT, PMIR etc.) Diploma courses (in Languages, Stress Management etc.) Diploma, PG Diploma and Certificate courses and Ph.D. courses in different departments.
Price	Being a Central University, BHU has minimum price structure for its courses which can be easily affordable by middle class and low middle class families.
Place	Place is not only just about the physical location or distribution spot for products. It includes the management of a range of processes involved in bringing products to the end consumer. As BHU is situated in Varanasi near the corner of holy river Ganga, the place is also known as Kashi. Having a natural, clean and peaceful environment BHU attracts the students.
Promotion	Being a Central University, BHU is well-known across the nation. According to India Today survey it is considered Asia's number one university in education as well as in infrastructure in the year 2011-12. However, the promotion mix of BHU includes advertisement and publicity through newspapers, magazines, internet, social media and word of mouth.
People	The person of every institution represents itself. People of BHU contain Vice Chancellor,Professors, Readers, Lecturers, Staffs at Administrative level, Proctorial Board, Clerks,Peons etc.
Physical evidence	There are two types of physical evidence peripherals and essential. In BHU peripheral evidences are id-card issued by BHU, fee receipt, hostel id-card, library card etc. Essential evidences are its infrastructure which includes different departments, faculties, library, auditorium, play ground, stadium, computer centre, Wi-Fi campus, health centre, hospital, NCC Workshop Units of Public Relations, Auditorial Publications and Press, Bharat Kala Bhavan (Museum), Malaviya Bhavan, Dairy Farm, Schools (3), Post Offices, Petrol Pump, Academic Staff College, Shopping Complex, Airstrip and Helipad, University Club, Air strip used by air wing of NCC, UWD (University Works Department), Banks with ATM,

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Sanitary and Support Services, Electric and Water Supply Services, Canteen, Vishwanath Temple, Telegraph Office, Ayurvedic Garden, Ayurvedic Pharmacy etc.

Process

Process includes the procedure for taking a service. As an academic institution BHU advertise for inviting application for different courses. After that it conducts written tests for various courses and for that purpose the university issued admit card to the students which is the evidence that they can appear in the exam. Then it makes merit for selecting the students and conducts counseling for them and sends the call letter for the counseling. In the counseling the authorities cross check all the relevant documents regarding the course as well as the information given by the candidate in his/her application form. After the counseling they select the students who have all the relevant documents and correct information related to the course. Then they issue an admission letter which is a proof for taking the admission in the university. When the student pays the fee for the course he/she become a student of the university. The process by which the services delivered by the institution are- through class lectures, guest lectures, audio-video lectures, regular seminars, conferences and workshops on the relevant areas, sites and organizations visit, education tours, interactive sessions with other institutions.

Conclusion

The contribution of the service sector to the economy has increased as services are considered to be playing a major role in economies. Thus, the speedy growth of services marketing in recent years is not surprising. The education sector has got wide recognition across the world. Varanasi has been one of the leading places for education. At the outset of Higher Education, BHU has a distinct position. Its strong brand image attracts a large number of candidates. It has followed a fine blending of service marketing mix. According to the study, the Banaras Hindu University should adopt the high-tech education system and keep update with the latest technologies to maintain its brand image and deals with competitors. As per the requirement of this competitive era the young generation especially women, wants to establish their career or get employed as soon as possible with the help of short-term courses. Thus, the university should add some short-term courses like diploma in women entrepreneurship, diploma in office management & business communication, P.G. Diploma in Office Management & Corporate Secretaryship, diploma in tourism management, P.G. Diploma in Travel & Tourism Management, BNYS, diploma in packaging, diploma in foreign exchange, diploma in naturopathy etc. to attract more students as well as to make them eligible for employment.

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