

Students Motivation Vis a Vis Internal Marketing: A Study on Students of a Private University

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Abstract

Purpose: The fundamental target of this exploration is to comprehend the relation between student motivation and internal marketing among the private university students. The study was conducted to explain those determinants, which are crucial for positive word of mouth.

Methodology/sample: The research work is quantitative and based on field survey. Primary data was collected from 120 students of a private university. Analysis of the data was undertaken through statistical software SPSS. Correlation and Multiple Regression was applied for analysis.

Findings: The result has shown that campus safety, faculty qualification course availability, industry exposure and value of education for price have a very significant impact on student satisfaction and overall motivation, which eventually leads to positive internal marketing /word of mouth advertisement.

Practical implications: Findings of this research are likely to help the think tank of universities (administrators/policy makers) to target resources to those areas, which plays a dominant role to their attractiveness and competitiveness

Keywords: Student Motivation, Student Satisfaction, internal marketing, business school, private university

Introduction

Education is the true alchemy that can bring India to its next golden age (century hall of parliament New Delhi, 25th July 2012: president of India Honble Mr. Pranab Mukherjee). Higher education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in its institutional capacity in the years since independence. The number of universities, university level institution has increased from 18 times from 27 in 1950 to 656 in 2013. However, a Management education in India is gradually losing its charm. This is evident from the data where the last year there were 2.14 lakhs CAT registrations, which dropped to 1.94 lakhs. (**Hindustan Times New Delhi, September 30, 2013**) this year. This all is resulting in high competition in this sector. But the problem is further aggravated due to the decline in the number of MBA aspirants, lead to a large number of seats in the business Schools (B-Schools) across the country remain unfilled. This is evident from very low GER (15%) as compared to USA (84%) and other countries (Deloitte, 2012). This is causing a large number of resources and capacity being un-utilized. Many colleges have opted for closure. According to a report, because of decreasing number of MBA aspirants, around sixty-five B-Schools in India are planning to close down as the trustees of these institutions believe that there is no future of management education in the country. Data reflects that many of such B-schools are located in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. It is feared that this number may increase before the start of the next academic session (Nanda, 2012), hence the success and sustainability of institutions /universities are highly dependent on student satisfaction and student motivation which ultimately leads to internal marketing (“The willingness to recommend the institutes they were currently attending to other”). Hence, this analysis is endeavored to originate on the correlation amid customer (student) motivation and internal marketing (word of mouth advertisement) of university students, and to find out the main factors affecting student’s motivation.

Literature review

Based on the findings obtained in the field of service quality, O'Neill and Palmer (2004) defined service quality as follow: the difference between what a college student expects and his/her cognition of what he/she really receives. Oliver (1997) declared that satisfaction may be defined as a practical pleasant research which means that consumers understand

that consumption satisfied needs, wishes, goals, etc. to some extent which is pleasant. Researches imply that students' contentment is a convoluted/multifaceted theory. Reference to the definitions of Oliver and Desarbo (1989), Elliott and Shin (2002) of motivation show that they described students' motivation in this context is the desirability of mental evaluation of a student of different results/experiences related to education and that it forms continuously by the repetition of experiences in student's life.

Motivation in the educational institute context has been highlighted in several studies in recent years mainly to find ways to influence students to increase their involvement in learning activities (Guimarães, Bzuneck, & Sanches, 2002). Student motivation is believed to be at the core at channelizing the energy of students towards their academic performance and achievements, and contributes importantly to the achievement of satisfaction in their lives.

Motivation is "a psychological process in which personality traits (e.g., motives, reasons, skills, interests, expectations, and future perspectives) interact with perceived environmental characteristics" (Lens, Matos, & Vansteenkiste, 2008, p. 17). This indicates that the student motivation is depended on his/her internal factors as well as the factors pertaining to the external environment of university/college they study in.

Cole, Feild and Harris (2004), who argued that motivation is an important issue for research into all levels of education because it is one of the crucial determinants of the success of any learning activity,. Not only this, this motivation also impact student retention, developing positive image about the institution and spreading a positive word of mouth by students, which can prove to be a great differentiator in such a fiercely competitive sector. According to Seymour (1972), developing many happy satisfied customers, whether they are students, parents of students, alumni, or industry employer, should be a primary goal of higher education. Thus, focusing on enhancing the customer satisfaction that leads to their motivation at colleges and universities is crucial in developing overall customer value (Seymour in Kara and De Shields 2004:4).

Students can be regarded as internal customers of the universities. Therefore, it is important for the university to focus on its customers, and to meet their expectations by providing not only the quality education but also a satisfactory and happy experience in all the interactions to the extent possible. This has become a major challenge for the universities and it has been recognized that student satisfaction and motivation is the major source of competitive advantage and this leads towards student retention, attraction for new students and positive word of mouth communication, as well (Arambewela & Hall 2009). This not only affects the better academic performance of the students but also I creating a positive image about the institution, which especially in present competitive scenario, is of great importance in terms of its value to educators, employers, and society at large.

Internal Marketing

Internal Marketing (IM) was proposed by Berry in 1976 to solve the problem of service quality using external customers' strategies on employees so called internal customers. The job is considered as product, which should be designed in such a way that will meet human needs and motivate them to offer high quality service (Berry, 1976).

Word of mouth defined as the customer who informs friends, relatives and colleagues about the event that has created a certain level of satisfaction (Soderlund, 1998). Furthermore, Walsh and Mitchell (2010) also defined the word of mouth as a general concept of marketplace and the degree of product related information, which a consumer is motivated to communicate to other consumer. On the other hand, Ng et al., (2011) commented that word of mouth is the significant tangibles or experiences for service providers. Gremler et al., (2001) concluded that word of mouth has impact to the relation of customer and employee, and the perception of service quality. While Soderlund (1998) pointed the association between customer satisfaction, motivation and word of mouth.

Motivation and association is related to the level of satisfaction as high-level satisfaction produce the positive association and motivation among customers. According to Astin (1993), just like any form of business, factors related to satisfaction levels and students' perceptions of quality will not only attract and retain students but also motivate them to

spread a positive image about the institution. It is paramount for higher educational institutions to satisfy their valued customers because a satisfied student will be a good word of mouth in promoting the college to their family members, relatives and friends.

In the marketing literature, it is well established that consumer's positive word of mouth has a significant influence on an organization's ability to attract new customers as well as retain current customers (e.g., Lam, Lee, and Mizerski, 2009) with positive word of mouth being influenced heavily by high levels of customer motivation (deMatos, Alberto, and Rossi, 2008) and negative word of mouth being impacted directly by lower levels of customer satisfaction (Johnston, 1998). Past studies have indicated that, depending on the product, word of mouth is a primary factor associated with 20-50% of all purchase decisions (Bughin and Doogan, 2010). Thus, measures aimed at promoting positive consumer word of mouth and minimizing or eliminating those factors that may lead to negative word of mouth are important elements of an organization's overall marketing strategy.

Previous studies have found that such variables as quality of rapport with customers (Macintosh, 2009), customer loyalty (Ashley and Varki, 2009; Katicci and Dortvol, 2009), perceived customer switching costs (Lee and Romaniuk, 2009), difficulty of customers being able to lodge complaints with entities (Oh, 2006), and perceived levels of product quality (de Matos et. al., 2008) are all significant predictors of word of mouth behavior of customers. This situation is true regarding factors contributing to positive and negative word of mouth behavior by university student. Satisfied students make effective public relations agents." Highly motivated students "engage in favorable word-of-mouth publicity". Word-of-mouth from satisfied students lowers the cost of attracting new customers for the university and enhances the universities overall reputation, while that of dissatisfied students has the paramount opposite effect (Fornell 1992). Specially in this age of technology and information, this word of mouth spreads faster than ever and has multifold impact on the institution's overall marketing efforts.

The findings of previous researches show that motivated students may attract new students among their friends and relatives for the university via Word Of Mouth advertisements. Also, the previous researches shows that the motivated students results in better academic results, which again is a great marketing factor to attract students.

As the market for higher education continues to become more competitive (Wright, Palmer, Eidson, and Griswold, 2010) it is imperative that those individuals responsible for recruitment and retention of students obtain a better understanding of factors leading to both positive and negative word of mouth.

Research Purposes

This analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between student motivation and the internal marketing (**to recommend the institutes to others**). The main purposes of this study are briefly described as follows,

1. To investigate the impact of attributes of education service quality on the level of student satisfaction and motivation
2. To explore the correlation of student motivation and the internal marketing", where determinants of student motivation are independent variables and "internal marketing" is dependent variable
3. Accordingly, bestow quantity of conversation and effect for policy makers and institute administrators

Research Procedures

This study employed the Questionnaire Survey methodology. Research was conducted through the distribution of survey questionnaires to the enrolled management students of a private university

Target Population and sample size: The management students of university were targeted for the study ,160 questionnaires were initially send, out of which 120 were found valid and used for further study,

Descriptive Statistic

Factors	Number of Responses	Mean	Std. Deviation
Faculty qualification	120	3.28	.601
Industry exposure	120	2.74	.687
Campus safety	120	3.60	.810
Value of education for price	120	2.59	.551
Course availability	120	2.87	.671
Extra-curricular activities	120	3.70	.850
Staff professionalism	120	3.49	.731

Correlation Analysis

First of all the correlation between the determinants of student motivation and student motivation was analyzed

Factors	Correlation	Significance(2 Tailed)
Faculty qualification	0.618**	0.00
Industry exposure	-0.465**	0.00
Campus safety	0.654**	0.00
Course availability	-0.501**	0.00
Extracurricular activities	0.718**	0.00
Staff professionalism	0.489**	0.00
Value of education for (price)	-0.067**	0.00

** P < .05

The correlation with faculty qualification ,extracurricular activities and campus safety and staff professionalism are significantly positively correlated but campus safety and extracurricular activities are highly correlated (positively) which means that with the increase in these parameters, the student motivation increases. There is a negative correlation between course availability, industry exposure and value of education for price with student motivation. Data analysis reveals that student motivation is highly negatively related with value of education for price, which means that with the increase in the price of education, the student motivation decreases.

Regression analysis

In order to realize the correlation between determinants of students motivation and internal marketing (word of mouth advertisement) the regression model is used. Determinants of student motivation factors were used as predictors of internal marketing/word of mouth advertisement. Multiple regression analyses were performed to determine which determinants out of seven predictor variables were the best predictors.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \epsilon$$

- Y: internal marketing which is defined as “willingness to recommend others”
- X_1 : Faculty qualification
- X_2 : Industry exposure
- X_3 : Campus safety
- X_4 : course availability
- X_5 : Extracurricular activities
- X_6 : staff professionalism
- X_7 : value of education for price

The Results of Regression Analysis

Variable	B	Standard Error	T	P
β_0	0.207	0.267	0.773	0.441
X_1	0.362	0.033	0.655	0.001***
X_2	0.551	0.850	5.673	0.001***
X_3	0.331	0.036	4.684	0.001***
X_4	0.375	0.571	5.498	0.001***
X_5	0.065	0.903	0.435	0.665
X_6	0.199.	0.087	0.739	0.461
X_7	0.711	0.861	6.594	0.001***

*** P< .001

- **Predictors:** (Constant), faculty qualification, industry exposure, campus safety, course availability, extracurricular activities, staff professionalism, and value of the education in terms of price
- **Dependent Variable:** Internal marketing

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.818 ^a	.669	.648	.60

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	159.026	7	22.718	32.273	.000 ^a
Residual	78.841	112	.704		
Total	237.867	119			

In the second part the internal marketing (willingness to recommend others) is a dependent variable and the determinants of student motivation act as a independent variables.

The regression of motivation factor scores against rated willingness to recommend the institute show that all motivation factors (faculty qualification, campus safety, industry exposure, course availability, and value of the education for price) have significant influence on internal marketing except extracurricular activities and staff professionalism. It indicates that internal marketing is predicted significantly (P< .05) by five of seven determinants motivation factors, and its adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$ means which accounted for high variability in student motivation. The outcome seems to be steady and coherent with the study of prior analysis and research, which granted confirmation for the significantly positive influence of motivation on loyalty/word-of-communication (Fornell, 1992; Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Hallowell, 1996; Anderson, 1998).

Discussion and Conclusions

Middling of any sector, internal marketing has an imperative influence on consumer procurement assessment. Eventually this plays an eminent function if facts and figures are attained from a source prospected as extremely convincing and trustworthy such as close friends or relatives. In this competitive era, it is highly crucial for universities for their sustainability and success, that they not only try to improve on factors (industry exposure, course availability and value of education for price) which are negatively related motivation but also ensure enhancements of all those factors, which are positively related to student motivation.

Attractive and pleasant infrastructure, technology and a conducive environment is as instrumental to university as any other factor but to improve student motivation they should emphasis on:

- Abundance of courses (modern curriculum) that have high demand and are highly rated
- Innovative and action learning methodologies
- Practical exposure and hands on experience
- Improved placements and industry linkage
- Alumni network
- Providing value to the students in terms to cost-benefit analysis
- Broaden Career counseling and career developmental services
- Better communication between students and the administration (For student concerns and requirements)

For Universities, to compete, the first step is to take student motivation into consideration, which may help universities by acting as public relation agent in present and future. According to the previous researches (Fornell, 1992; Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Hallowell, 1996; Anderson, 1998), customer motivation is the antecedent of relational outcomes, such as customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth advising.

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