

THE INFLUENCE OF 7Ps OF MARKETING MIX ON THE PROSPECTIVE YOUNG ADULT STUDENT ASPIRANTS DURING SELECTION AND CHOICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES AND COLLEGES – A STUDY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The decision to enrol in a higher education institution is extremely important because during these years one's future career is being built. Therefore, when making a decision regarding the future, individuals evaluate several alternatives offered by the institutions. One of the key-triggering factors is that the incoming rate that every education establishment (HEI) achieves at every educational academic year. Prospective students always try to seek proper and accurate information about the institution intended for taking admission. Different factors of the service marketing and consumer behaviour have definite impact and relation to the decision making process, choice of the institution and similar other related matters which have direct connection with the selection of HEI by the prospective student.

Higher education trains the extremely competent manpower and contributes to the analysis base and innovation capability that progressively determines fight within the knowledge-based international economy. With its central role in society encounters, higher education fosters mutual understanding and helps to build global networks for the future. At constant time, cross-border flows of ideas, students, faculty and financing, coupled with developments in information and communication technology, are changing the environment for higher education. This implies each augmented collaboration and competition between countries and establishments on a world scale.

Thereby, the purpose of this paper is to study the available literature on the impact of the 7Ps of Marketing Mix – Product (Service), Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process and Physical Evidence; that influence

students and young adult aspirants to select, make choice and then enrol in a private higher education institution.

Keywords: Higher Education Institutions (HEI), Students' Enrolment, 7Ps of Marketing Mix, Service Marketing, Young Adult Aspirants, Selection or choice of HEI

A. Introduction:

Within the field of education in general and HEIs in particular, service marketing (**Mazzarol, 1998; Nicholls et al., 1995; Enache, 2011; Zeithaml et al., 1985**) has been mentioned on several occasions. Service marketing consists of four dimensions that describe the product (service) as perishable, heterogenic, inseparable and intangible. A service is perishable since it could not be saved for later use. A service is also heterogenic and therefore hard to standardize which could affect the quality. It is also inseparable, since the sender (seller) and the receiver (buyer) is involved in the production of the service. Finally, as services are intangible it could not be stored or patented and therefore difficult to communicate. (**Zeithaml et al., 1985**) Taking these dimensions into consideration within HEIs, they serve different purposes. Since education is inseparable there is an importance of a mutual understanding between the HEI and the student. Linked to perishability, a seminar lecture cannot be sold for later use or stored. Heterogeneity, on the other hand makes it difficult to standardize and repeat the service. The quality of a lecture can fluctuate on daily basis, making it difficult to actually measure the quality. Furthermore, intangibility possesses differences in terms of the how the service is equipment-based or people-based. Courses within HEIs are often conducted by people, meaning that the staffs are connected to the product itself. **Nicholls et al., (1995) and Mazzarol (1998)** states service marketing as an important theoretical part within marketing of HEIs. Institutes need to conduct a marketing approach that overcomes obstacles related to the specific characteristics of a service. Various authors have noted the pressures and changes within the instruction landscape (**Whyte, 2001; Espinoza, Bradshaw & Hausman, 2002; Rindfleisch, 2003; Van Louw & Beets, 2008**). Locally, instruction establishments (HEIs) area unit Janus-faced with problems with globalization, broadening access to higher education, changes in language policies, changes in government funding, an increased emphasis on technology, transformation policies, mergers, changing student profiles and increased competition (**Jansen, 2003; Van Niekerk, 2004; Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007; De Vries, 2007**). With the changing landscape of education, HEIs will have to become more market-oriented as they increasingly compete for students and funding. The increase in competition within the HEI market is often attributed to many factors. The most important part is the opening of universities to all races provided they meet the access criteria (**Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007**). This has accentuated the imperative for establishments to recruit high-achieving students United Nations agency area unit doubtless to graduate in minimum time (**Smit & Schonefield, 2000**). The noted increase in competition for funding is also compelling HEIs to

make their programmes more relevant for the nation market and to consider eliminating activities that are not commercially profitable, even if it may have academic value. Furthermore, increased pressure from government on broader access implies that institutions must ensure that they recruit and attract students from different ethnic orientations and gender groups.

These marketing challenges have sparked interest in institutions' student recruitment processes. Understanding the decision-making processes of scholars in terms of how they choose a HEI can assist establishments to focus on the market higher. Student enrolment has therefore become increasingly important and numerous studies have examined institutions' enrolment processes in an attempt to identify factors influencing students' choices (Chapman, 1981; Litten, 1982; Kealy & Rockel, 1987; Espinoza et al, 2002; Hoyt & Brown, 2003; Gray & Daugherty, 2004; Punnarach, 2004).

An establishment that has information concerning the factors that influence students' application and entry choices will increase the work between the factors and also the institution. Institutions will use student choice method data to develop promoting ways designed to draw in comfortable numbers of scholars with the specified educational, still as non-academic, characteristics like gender and ethnic orientation.

HEIs also need to manage problems related to over or lack of capacity and for these on-going continuous situation of the HEI, the constituents of the Extended Marketing Mix (7Ps) for Service Marketing is considered at large.

B. Objective of the Study:

To understand the impact of 7Ps of Marketing Mix on the young adult and student aspirants while selecting the private HEIs through a study of the available literature review.

C. Methodology:

Different sources of the available literature have been selected and studied thoroughly as well as incorporated according to the need of the subject keeping in view the essence of 7Ps of marketing mix in choice making of young adult aspirants while selecting a higher education institute (HEI).

The 7Ps item of marketing mix for higher education and student choice (decision making) developed by Kotler & Fox, 1995 was used to understand the marketing mix elements and student choice.

D. Study of the Literature Review:

The 7Ps of Marketing Mix in Higher Education

HEI is different from marketing associated with physical products and therefore requires further adjustments in the marketing mix (Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011). The classical selling combine consists of 4 totally different Ps; product, price, place and promotion. In relation to educational service, this mix can be adapted and relevant to a certain degree. (Nicholls et al., 1995) However, speculations demonstrate that this marketing mix is inappropriate for marketing of services (Ibid, 1995).

Additional Ps has been introduced and **Nicholls et al., (1995)** stress that the Ps people and process provide better performance in regard to services. The four Ps model is traditionally used towards physical products. However, the educational service sector requires a different approach. In order to stipulate economical selling of services the 7Ps approach were introduced - adding individuals, physical evidence and process to the traditional mix. **(Ivy, 2008)**

The 7Ps approach has been recognized and associated specifically to services marketing. By including additional three Ps—people, process and physical evidence, it is believed that HEIs could make use of a more comprehensive marketing strategy. **(Ivy, 2008; Enache, 2011)**

All components within the 7Ps approach possess different outcomes, where one component has the possibility to alter the effect on one another. **(Ibid, 2011)**

The development of a selling strategy involves the coordination and combination of the selling combine components **(Hawkins et al, 2001, Kotler and Fox, 1995, Ivey, 2008)**.

It is the mix and coordination of the weather within the selling mix that permits organizations to fulfil customers' want and supply customer's worth. A traditional marketing mix consists of the following four elements: Product, Price, Place & Promotion **(Kotler, 2008)**.

Higher education has all the characteristics of an industry, which are:

- a. Customers do not obtain ownership. Customers sometimes derive worth from a service while not getting possession of any tangible components.
- b. Service products are intangible performances. Intangibles check with one thing that's knowledgeable and can't be touched or preserved.
- c. Customer involvement in the production process. Customers square measure usually actively concerned in serving to form the service product by serving to themselves or by cooperating with the service personnel.
- d. People as part of the service product. Given the actual fact that totally different service personnel mat deliver the service to customers, it is difficult to achieve uniformity in service delivery.
- e. Importance of time. Customers ought to be physically gift to receive services.
- f. Services are perishable and cannot be stored like physical product.

As a service, higher education marketing is sufficiently different from the marketing of products and it needs the vital concept of marketing mix.

Kotler and Fox (1995) have developed a version of a selling combine that is meant specifically for education establishments.

The 7Ps of the Marketing Mix at a glance are as follows:

Product (Service)

Price

Place

Promotion

People
Process
Physical Evidence

1. Product – Program (Service):

The first element in marketing mix is product – program. Program is that the simplest call that pedagogy establishments have to be compelled to build. Developing program that satisfies consumers' wants and needs are critical marketing activity for education institutions (**Hoyer and McInnis, 2001**).

In pedagogy there are 3 main activities as service offered: teaching, research and community service Higher education should evaluate its academic program and service product mix periodically, and particularly when considering modifications.

Quality of upper education establishment services becomes vital as a trigger for client satisfaction. But, each neutral in pedagogy incorporates a specific read of quality, dependent on their specific needs.

A program structure contains information content and learning methodology for a particular program in a higher education. The program content and structure is controlled, revised and monitored from time to time by the respective HEIs in order to ensure of its high quality. On the other hand, **Osman, Muhammad & Andy (2013)** highlighted that the programs offered in a particular higher education institution is said as the top attribute as the decision choice for students' enrolment. Furthermore, students who were well equipped with information towards programs offered at the particular HEI definitely will choose the program when enrol into institutions. Apart from that, a wide range of programs offered seems to be a competitive advantage to the institutions. Flexibility of a program content and structure attracts student to choose the particular HEI as they can choose the mode of study whether it's a full time or part time basis (**Lau, 2009**).

2. Price:

Price is the amount of money (or some other item that is exchanged or bartered) that the buyer exchanges for a service provided by the seller (**Lamb et al, 2004**).

In pedagogy, price usually is related to tuition fees offered, and any monetary related issues. Pricing has major influence on marketing strategy as most students and their parents are concerned about the financial implication of attending HEI.

According to **Kotler and Fox (1995)** worth for college kids, consists of a monetary cost as well as other cost, for example effort cost, psychological cost and time cost.

Financial aid has continuously contributed to the importance of students' choice to further studies in the HEI. Financial aid has been priority compared to other factors according to **Hayden (2010)**.

The result supports the work of **Coy-Ogan (2009)** who stated that the cost of attending HEI for example tuition fees had become a burden to some students.

In the same matter, **So & Hyun (2015)** differentiates between financial aid and tuition fees. According to their study, financial aid acts as helps to fund the students' tuition fees; inputs for financial aid could come from many sources. For example, it can be injected from the governments or federals, HEI itself and specific foundations and it can come in different forms such as loans, scholarships and grants.

A significant finding by **Claire & Jackson (2005)**, show that there was a relationship between debt and social class issues. This finding emphasizes that those students from less financially advantage backgrounds are exposed to debt more than those who come from others social class.

One more way of viewing the factors that influence student departure decisions is to weigh the costs and benefits of staying in college and participating in various activities. That is, if a student perceives that the price of staying at school or changing into concerned during a bound activity—such as orientation, a first-year seminar, internship, or study abroad—outweighs the come on investment, they will forgo the opportunity and leave college prematurely (**Braxton 2003**).

Costs are thought to include tuition and fees as well as lost income; benefits represent future earnings and other less tangible outcomes such as obtaining additional knowledge and skills and enjoying a better overall quality of life (**Goldin, Katz, and Kuziemko 2006**).

3. Place:

The third element of marketing mix in higher education is place or distribution.

Kotler (2008) outline distribution as, in teaching place refers to the provision of education/program to potential students within the most convenient and accessible manner.

A typical delivery mode for education services is for the establishment to gift courses at one location, with students gathering for room instruction (**Kotler & Fox, 1995**).

But the part place isn't restricted to geographic location because the data technology development provides alternatives in delivery the education service. Higher education establishment might use distance learning and new technology in serving their students to boost their competitive advantage.

Place, often called distribution channel, is used by institutions in order to enable its market to meet needs, wants and expectations from students have the ability to get relevant information (**Ivy, 2008**).

Today, the development of IT has been added as an alternative educational service method, in comparison to the previous restricted geographical location of the institutions (**Ibid, 2008; Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

IT based instruments offer students' access to material and various ranges of inputs related to education. Opportunities to get hold of the related materials have been developed through other IT sources as well. Web pages, e-mail, video and telephone based conferences are just a few examples that have been recognized. These innovative approaches and distance learning are tools that can be used to increase a HEI's competitive advantage (**Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

Two perspectives prevail within place and this seeks to provide knowledge to students by considering educational service to be the product. If graduated students are considered to be the product, place should aim to develop ways to embed the student into the labour market. New technologies are considered to be important since it could transfer knowledge to students. Place channels such as radio and TV are typical examples of possible knowledge distributions by HEIs.

Online information could also reduce amount of employees, since it partly deals with administrative activities. Those channels can be operated for other purposes as well, such as online lectures available to students and it can also function as a feedback pool. These enable students multiple ways of providing feedback or collecting student related material. As of the second case, a HEI's relationship with the labour market needs to be taken more into consideration. If the educational product reflects the needs and wants of this market, place will most likely be successful.

It is important for HEIs to have knowledge of the labour market's demand; otherwise the education could be mismatched and therefore irrelevant and unnecessary for the student. Place should not be underestimated, as it provides service performance and boosts the fulfilment of exceeding expectations.

Nicholls, et al. (1995) also stresses class locations, teaching methods and styles, and IT features as examples related to place.

Lau (2009) demonstrates that location of the institutions can infuse competitive advantage to the institutions. The author reveals that students focus more on the physical aspects in making choice to enrol in the HEIs.

Physical aspects such as place, favourable learning environment, recreation and sports, cleanliness, safe environment and campus social life plays a vital role. These factors act as an additional advantage as the decisions choice (**Garwe, 2016**).

According to **Ionela, George & Blaga (2014)**, there were many facilities and resources provided by HEI. Location of the institutions is important as it can determine number of students' enrolment. Institutions that have area with less transportation (public or institutions) facilities could result in fewer students' enrolment. Students may prefer to study in an institution that is close by their hometown to save the cost of transportation (**Garwe, 2016**).

4. Promotion:

Education institution needs to communicate its services to the target market through promotional strategy.

Lams et al (2004) argued that promotional strategy could be arranged for best use of the weather of promotion, specifically advertising, publicity, promotion and private mercantilism.

The promotion component that may be utilized by pedagogy establishment is set by the scholars market's expectation and needs of the service and different components of establishment selling choices. Promotion

will have the central role within the selling to pedagogy. Promotion can enhance name recognition and provide exposure for the HEI (**Rudd & Mills, 2008**).

Higher education establishment will use pull strategy and push strategy in promoting its services (**Soedijati, 2006**).

The combination of promotional mixture of pedagogy consists of marketing, sales promotion, advertising, internet and sponsorships (**Rudd & Mills, 2008**).

The most important matter for pedagogy establishment in developing promotion strategy is to grasp the scholars as their primary shoppers.

HEIs could inform the market of its offerings based on a multiple sets of channels (**Enache, 2011; Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011; Ivy, 2008**).

These channels could consist of advertising, public relations, publicity, promotional based sales efforts (**Ibid, 2008**) and personal sales contacts (**Nicholls et al., 1995**).

The personal sales contact between the HEI and the student has shown to be of importance, as previous research shows that students outlined the need for personal advice when they examined different enrolment alternatives (**Ibid, 1995**).

The HEI needs to address and inform prospective students in such a manner that the educational product is understood. One important channel for transferring information to students is through a web site. (**Enache, 2011**)

However, **Ivy (2008)** states that to solely rely on the internet as a channel for communication is unlikely to be effective. After the student's first contact with the institution, a web site could inform the potential candidate, and thereof be a useful tool for an efficient enrolling process.

A website should also inform the student of general information and the opportunities as well as demands. The demands and opportunities are associated with the particular education. (**Enache, 2011**)

E-mail and advertising could also function as efficient tools for HEIs in order to inform and stimulate potential students for enrolment (**Ibid, 2008**).

Former students could aid the HEI in providing constructive experience towards prospective students. They could thereby inform and encourage potential students to enrol, based on previous successes as a graduate from that particular HEI. (**Enache, 2011**)

Enache (2011) outlines students as the most important recipients for HEIs.

HEIs promotional channels are based on the target market, students and their requirements and expectations of the service (**Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

Advertising and public relations are important channels according to Ivy (2008) and Enache (2011).

Promotion is also important since it could play a central role for HEIs to market themselves (**Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

Advertising towards the public and potential funders is often used in order to inform about the HEI and its related benefits for society. Since students could be informed by multiple sets of channels, marketing towards the public and potential funders needs to be based on a more direct approach. The university could focus on building up a positive public opinion of its operations, which is managed from a public relations office and thus work as an efficient tool in order to improve the promotional strategies. Since the promotional strategy influences the image, HEIs needs to be aware of the message they distribute as it is connected with reputation. As it is difficult to improve a damaged or deprived reputation, HEIs need to manage and hold on to a desired reputation.

Thus, reputation needs to be taken into consideration as it has been identified as an important key driver within HEIs (**Enache, 2011**).

Promotion is an important marketing activity for HEIs which is used to inform and enrol students (**Ibid, 2011, Ivy, 2008, Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

However, some HEIs do not engage in marketing activities (**Nicholls et al., 1995**).

This could be due to cultural factors, as marketing could express negative values not connected with the organizational culture (**Ibid, 1995**).

Besides the importance of image and reputation (**Enache, 2011**), HEIs need to develop a promotional strategy that identifies the student as their primary customer (**Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

The HEI industry these days portrays a rapid expansion in the market in that they are very aggressive in communicating their attributes. As mentioned in the earlier part of this paper, HEI needs to have a well-planned marketing strategy in order to compete with other education institutions. A well-communicated marketing content of a particular institution will enable a high possibility of reputation as well as students' enrolment.

In a study by **Osman et al., (2013)** regarding students' decisions in choosing private institutions of higher education; it was found that promotion has a positive impact on the choice of study.

This finding contrast with the work of **Lau (2009)** who contend that promotion was not a prominent factor. However it is agreed that HEI have to filter which information can be used as promotional expressions (**Osman et al., 2013**).

5. People:

The concept of people includes HEI based staff members that interact with prospective students before, during and after the enrolment (**Ivy, 2008; Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

The staffs therefore represent an important factor for students' satisfaction and promotion of the institution, thus becoming an important factor to consider (**Enache, 2011**).

Staff members are an important part of education, as high-contact service operation is based on personal contacts, communication and interactions between people (**Nicholls et al, 1995**).

These interactions are based on personal contact with supportive, administrative and academic staff. Staff's image could be linked to student's perception and potential of the institution (Ivy, 2008).

Other people that could influence a student's enrolment are public and well known profiles working at the HEI, such as experts that frequently appear in television or other media (Ibid, 2008; Enache, 2011). Administrative staff has an important role due to their service towards prospective students. Interactions between academic staff and students could therefore affect the reputation of the HEI. The perceived service, both at the front line (lecturers) and the back line (administrative), is valuation of the service quality. (Ivy, 2008)

HEIs could obtain student and society satisfaction, an enriched image and improved educational service if they promoted and encouraged well known and respected professors. The right people at the right place are a key step in order to develop a fruitful education, which is linked to the staff's ability to deliver in a correct manner. (Enache, 2011)

Besides current staff, former students are important for HEIs. Former students could inform prospective students of their experiences regarding the education and other university related matters. (Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011)

Even though the supportive functions of a lecturer may influence students' perception, the management of a single phone call by administrative staff could impact students will to enrol (Ivy, 2008).

Administrative staffs are connected with the enrolment process as they deal with prospective students and their requests. The way administrative staffs answer these requests could influence students, which plays an important role. Thus, staffs are a key factor for the HEI marketing mix. (Enache, 2011)

Another factor that could influence student's enrolment is publications and research records of a well-known professor (Ivy, 2008).

When students seek information, the first impression could be of significant importance. Students' impressions could be based on the initial contact with people of the particular HEI. (Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011)

Hence, if HEIs employ well suited personnel the institution could improve their marketing mix. Finally, Enache (2011) and Pratminingsih and Soedijati (2011) stated people as the single most influencing and important supplementary factor within services marketing.

Social influences reflected from various elements, which comprises of one's sentiment, judgment, or actions. Basically, social influences are attracted or influenced by other parties who are closed to them.

Lau (2009) proves that social influence comes from individuals who are close to the students and have socially affiliation with them.

Significantly, influences from families, teachers, friends and peers contributed to factors of decision making to enrol HEI (Garwe, 2016).

The findings support the work of **Munisamy et al. (2013)** who also indicates that social influences come from recommendation from graduates and influence from teacher.

A research conducted by **Shah et al., (2013)** mentioned that most of the students responded that they decided to choose a particular HEI based on the campus visit and communication with the institution's representatives like course authority and staffs.

In contrast, according to **Munisamy et al., (2013)** proved that social influences falls on the third factor to consider when choosing HEI compared to employability of graduates and reputation.

6. Process:

Process is related to the logistics of the service delivery (**Nicholls et al., 1995**).

Process refers to the way an institution does business and this relates to the whole administrative system to this element (**Kotler, 2008**).

Procedures, mechanism and also the flow of activities by that service square measure consumed square measure the essential components of the promoting combine (**Palmer, 2005**).

Higher education establishments got to make sure that students perceive the method of getting a service. Process in higher education refer to the things happen in an institution, such as the process of management, enrolment, teaching, learning, social and even sport activities.

The service delivery contains the administrative and formal functions of the HEI. This is related to the enrolment process including requests for registration, course examination and evaluation, besides giving out examination results and graduation (**Ivy, 2008**).

Social events and entertainment activities are said to be included within the process (**Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**).

Educational service could be connected with a lot of administration and bureaucracy for students. However, a well-functioning process could reduce the frustration for both students and HEIs (**Enache, 2011**).

The HEI has to confirm that students understand the process of obtaining a service (education), since the customer (students) is involved in the production process. As the service involves interaction in order to create the product, cooperation with staff is important. (**Pratminingsih & Soedijati, 2011**)

Face-to-face interaction with staff is important since HEI requires payment preceding the consumption that often takes place over long time periods. During the enrolment phase, HEIs needs to manage students' registration on the right course, accurately calculated grades and that a correct degree is awarded.

Student satisfaction could also be ensured by supporting accommodation, course schedules and access to the library. (**Ivy, 2008**)

The enrolment phase is important as it transforms prospective students to registered students. If process is combined with people, the university could improve image and reputation which could attract additional

students. If the enrolment phase is successful, students could benefit from knowledge transferred from the HEI.

A smooth enrolment phase could also affect the educational quality and the HEI in a positive manner, which could lead to a lower dropout rate and more matched integration with the labour market. **(Enache, 2011)**

IT is an influencing process for development within HEIs and the transformation towards the growth of higher education worldwide **(Knight, 2004)**.

Connected to IT, the component E-commerce has been identified within public and private institutions. HEIs use this component as a driving factor towards attraction and enrolment of students **(Kleen & Shell, 2003)**.

The increased competition within higher education has given institutions challenging tasks in their recruitment and online customer service process towards foreign students. It has also stimulated new marketing approaches towards students. Communication from institutions has enhanced the service available to foreign students. One communication factor for student attraction and enrolment, underlined by **Gomes and Murphy (2003)**, is the role of the internet.

Changes are taking place within the arena of higher education and the increased flow of IT-based information is told to be one contributing factor. IT has also been affecting the way HEIs generate knowledge. As a result, different HEIs now have the ability to offer websites and databases for foreign students. **(Altbach, mail responses, 2004)**

HEIs shall aim to provide relevant information for potential students. Further, since education within HEIs is intangible, it becomes challenging for prospective students to actually verify the content. Courses that are offered within higher education are often time-consuming and complex, which make it difficult to get a perception of the education. In order to minimize this obstacle, reliable and independent individuals turn out to be identified as a problem solving factor. Educational agents are one example that HEIs could use in order to support and present constructive answers to prospective students. **(Gomes & Murphy, 2003)**

Continuing, **Gomes and Murphy (2003)** states that, HEIs, no matter whether public or private, should strengthen their brand by using online activities. This should be done through utilizing name and e-mail addresses to stimulate the satisfaction for online prospective students.

As a whole, previous research concludes that HEIs gains successful outcomes in the recruitment process through deeper insight into e-business strategies and online customer service. **(Ibid, 2003)**

As the factor IT has been stressed as important for student attraction and enrolment, the following section focuses on the other complementary marketing factors image and reputation.

7. Physical Evidence:

Physical Evidence, in this domain consists of the beliefs, impressions and attitudes that a group or a person has of an object. The object may be a product, brand, place or person. The impression could be perceived as imagined, real, true or false.

Physical facilities or evidence refer to all of the physical, tangible items an institution makes available to customers ranging from brochures to the infrastructure. Physical evidence is very important because the intangible nature of the service offered by higher education institution. The environment in which the service is delivered, both tangible and intangible help to communicate, perform and relay the customer satisfaction to the potential customer (**Ivy & Fattal, 2010**).

Kotler et al (2008) suggest that physical evidence would render the primary impression about HEI and usually they see the building and facilities.

Further, **Gibbs and Knapp (2002)** add that the condition of the physical location contribute greatly on the image of the institution. For example: technologies used, cleanliness of rooms, library, etc.

Reputation is the estimation which is formed to be the element of an object that is repeated towards the receiver. The attributes are parts of the object, exemplified as quality, price and marketing related skills. (**Herbig & Milewicz, 1993**)

Image and reputation is of importance for institutions who seeks to enhance student attraction and enrolment combined with high student retention figures. (**Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001**)

Mazzarol (1998) concludes a positive correlation between universities and colleges marketing performance internationally and the factor image.

Wilkins and Huisman (2011) mention reputation as an important and influencing factor for students' destination choice. This knowledge could help the HEI in conducting a communication strategy suitable for the particular market. Even though the role of image and reputation is important, HEIs often struggles to manage these two factors due to its abstract and intangible nature.

Besides the connection between image and reputation towards loyalty, students' correlated with the perceived degree of loyalty. (**Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001**) Hence, image (**Mazzarol, 1998; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001**) and reputation (**Ibid, 2001; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011**) could be important inputs for HEIs which strive to attract and enrol students.

The influence of company reputation, or what is often referred to as corporate reputation, can be expected to become more important when there are higher levels of service (**Cretu & Brodie, (2007)**).

A company (corporate) reputation has been defined as "a particular type of feed-back received by an organisation from its stakeholders, concerning the credibility of the organisation's identity claims" (**Whetten & Mackey, 2002**).

A constructive and visibly recognized name or position for value, achievement and reliability represent the reputation as a whole. It represents the symbolic of an institution's image; hence play an important role in putting forth the visibility of an organization to the public. Reputation involves the process of forming, building and organizing institution's judgment (**Kewell, 2006**).

Reputation for a HEI is derived from ranking; its reflection of good reputation is built by age, accreditation and competitiveness of admission and brand name (**Ionela et al., 2014**).

The institutions with a respectable identity will derive the institution to have a better-perceived value to a target market than its rivals can provide. Ranking helps HEI to build up their reputation and where they stand in education industry. Furthermore, this ranking can be a dimension medium to classify which HEI to mull over or close the eyes to (Ionela et al., 2014).

Khan, Mridha & Barua (2009) found that the reputation or image of HEI is the second highest important factor compared to quality of teaching.

Similarly **Munisamy et al., (2013)** agrees that reputation falls on the second factor as the decision choice in choosing a particular HEI compared to the graduates employability factor.

Further, academic recognition and reputation was ranked to number three compared to quality of teaching and learning and fees and cost structure (Garwe, 2016).

E. Findings from the Literature Review:

1. Programs or subjects offered in a particular higher education institution is said as the top attribute for students' enrolment choice.
2. Flexibility of a program content and structure attracts student to choose the particular HEI.
3. Financial aid has continuously contributes to the importance of students' choice to further studies in the HEI.
4. Location of the institutions can infuse competitive advantage to the institutions.
5. Physical aspects such as place, favourable learning environment, recreation and sports, cleanliness, safe environment and campus social life plays a vital role
6. HEIs could inform the market of its offerings based on a multiple sets of channels of information.
7. E-mail and advertising could also function as efficient tools for HEIs in order to inform and stimulate potential students for enrolment
8. Former students could aid the HEI in providing constructive experience towards prospective students.
9. HEIs promotional channels are based on the target market, students and their requirements and expectations of the service.
10. Reputation needs to be taken into consideration as it has been identified as an important key driver within HEIs.
11. HEIs need to develop a promotional strategy that identifies the student as their primary customer.
12. The staffs represent an important factor for students' satisfaction and promotion of the institution, thus becoming an important factor to consider.
13. Staff members are an important part of education, as high-contact service operation is based on personal contacts, communication and interactions between people.
14. Influences from families, teachers, friends and peers contributed to factors of decision making to enrol in a HEI.

15. Social influences come from recommendation from graduates (pass-outs) and influence from teachers.
16. Student satisfaction could also be ensured by supporting accommodation, course schedules and access to the library.
17. IT is an influencing process for development within HEIs and the transformation towards the growth of higher education worldwide.
18. Image and reputation is of importance for institutions who seeks to enhance student attraction and enrolment combined with high student retention figures.
19. Reputation for a HEI is derived from ranking; its reflection of good reputation is built by age, accreditation and competitiveness of admission and brand name.
20. Pricing has major influence on marketing strategy as most students and their parents are concerned about the financial implication of attending HEI.

F. Conclusion:

In summary, the outcome this study shows that in all seven dimensions of service marketing mix (7Ps) has significant impact on the student choice of higher education institution. The findings have implications for HEI oriented strategies in order to have deeper knowledge about the student choice process and also to improve their knowledge on how to deal with the influences that can form student perceptions. The 7 Ps marketing mix is a set of controllable elements a HEI uses to shape its offer to the market.

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