

IMPLICATION OF BRANDING INITIATIVES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF MADHYA PRADESH AS PER FACULTIES PERCEPTION

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Abstract: The main purpose of this research is to explore and study the effects of branding initiatives in higher education institutes in the Madhya Pradesh. Thus, there are several research aims and objectives that this study attempt to achieve. Due to rising competition in the educational world, the chance of delivering the service minimizes. It is necessary that higher education institutions use the branding initiatives for creating brand or identity that locates them in the social and corporate world. Branding gives community members the ability to recognize higher education institutions through several quality factors. The reason for branding higher education institution is to characterize quality education system, market-oriented, but the institution primary role and function, which is to provide a specific type of service of general social benefit, in accordance with its needs cannot be ignored. Due to the increased numbers of higher education institutes, the quantity of educated students is increasing while the quality standard of education is decreasing.

Keywords: Branding, management institutes, implication, management faculties

1. Introduction:

The education sector in India offers a huge untapped market due to low literacy rate, high concentration in urban areas and growing per capita income in the country. India's aspirations to establish a knowledge society in the wake of increasing liberalization, privatization and globalization, is based on the assumption that higher and technical education

essentially empowers people with the requisite competitive skills and knowledge (Altbach P. & Knight, J.(2007)) [1]. That is why increasing attention has also been given to quality and excellence in higher education. Keeping in mind the scope and growth in the education sector in India, a number of private sector educational institutes/universities have mushroomed across the country (Gumport, P. (2000))

[2]. The very energetic edupreneurs are making great efforts to get more and more admissions. It has been commonly accepted now that brands represent real and significant financial value to their owners (Wart, S. & Murphy, J. (1998)) [3]. Establishing and then, managing a brand therefore definitely requires careful and strategic stewardship. Therefore, the edupreneurs these days have been adopting each and every measure possible to build a brand name of their institute/university.

1.1 Need of Branding of Higher Education Institution:

In higher education, branding is getting complex day by day. The real value of any higher educational institution is identified only through the willingness of parents and students to pay for it and donors and faculty is willing to contribute to make it worth (Chris Chapleo.(2005)) [4]. One of the complexities set up today encompassing institutions image is that objective ordinarily as of now has an apparent idea of the association's offerings even before an official interaction happens. Over that, by and large, the genuine effect of an institutions branding on the consumer most of the time is very hard to quantify. With the huge number of correspondence channels today, a key brand system for organization is more critical than any other time in recent

memory. The advanced education colleges and other HEIs are progressively compelled to change to associations that go about as organizations in a focused market. Therefore, branding and marketing activities are progressively vital for building image in consumers mind. From several years higher education institutions are capitalizing on their brand identity either unconsciously or consciously. The goal is to identify indicators of branding that higher education institutions are using to improve their quality, brand building and continuous improvement processes. Branding should be an imperative part of any business growth strategy. Branding in higher education, as an area that may be questionable, has so far received limited scrutiny among academics. Branding is a symbolic strategy and a delegate system that does not necessarily represent the substantive, internal activities or, indeed, the identity of the HEI. Hence, branding is about image management, emotional attachment and quality in service. From this perspective, brands and images are related to the interactions between internal and their external environment, whereas the concept of identity should rather be situated in the internal context of the educational institution. Although this is changing, however, there is little evidence of much work to investigate how and whether the effectiveness and indicators of

branding activity in the HE sector should be evaluated, surveyed and measured.

1. Literature Review:

One of the most fundamental strategic marketing concepts that is critical to the branding process and is under researched in higher education marketing is segmentation. Segmentation allows marketers to more precisely define and understand consumer needs and gives them the ability to tailor products to better suit those needs (Kotler and Keller 2009) [5]. Hemsle-Brown and Goonawardana (2007) remarked that branding is in initial stages and it has to be developed and adapted in higher education sector. [6]. Bulotaite (2003) explained that in higher education, the branding is to create image, not to sell the products and services [7]. It communicates and develops identity of the organization to help in promotion and increase the enrollment.

Tigga, Pathak & Kumar (2014) findings showed that good placement opportunities were the most important expectation of students across the different levels of B-school students [8]. There was a significant positive correlation between the expectations of students of national and regional level B-schools, but in case of faculty members, there was a significant positive correlation between the faculty members of national and premier level B-

schools. Recruiters looked for the right attitude and students' ability to adapt to the organizational culture as compared to knowledge or skills. The findings of the study have significant implications for B-school branding. The study suggested that the B-schools must align their strategies and resources to deliver as per their stakeholders' expectations - especially as per the expectations of their students, recruiters, and faculties - to achieve a strong and successful brand image.

2. Rationale of the Study:

The importance of study on branding strategies of management institutions seems to be considered more important than ever before. The aim is the strong positive impact a brand is expected to have on students and other associates that help in attracting resources and creating goodwill (Stanton, G. (2009)). [9]. Several researches have been conducted for establishing institutions as a brand, and their conclusions have contributed to the society (Johnston A (2001)) [10]. Since, Madhya Pradesh has a wide range of institutions which attract students seeking professional education in the areas of business studies. The changes in the environment and expectations of faculty have inspired the author to analyze the opinions of faculty regarding branding strategies of management institutions of

Madhya Pradesh. This research focuses on factors affecting branding of management institutes in the state of Madhya Pradesh.

3. Objectives of the Study:

1. To identify the key factors of effective branding of higher educational institutes of Madhya Pradesh.
2. To assess the impact of branding strategies upon students.
3. To identify the present challenges before the higher educational institutes in Madhya Pradesh.
4. To suggest brand building measures to improve the brand image of higher educational institutes.

5. Hypothesis of the Study:

A. Hypothesis Testing – Faculty

H_{0a1}: Relationship of Branding efforts and practices does not have significant impact on prospective students.

H_{a1}: Relationship of Branding efforts and practices have significant impact on prospective students.

6. Research Methodology:

The research on a subject area like Branding of Management Institutes will be helpful to existing as well as upcoming management institutes. With Increasing complexity in academic and business

world and constantly changing needs of the industry. Study of the topic has become a necessity. Study of the topic becomes important with growing competition for student placement and industry mind share.

The area chosen for the study consisted of the management institutions of Madhya Pradesh. The research design adopted for the study was descriptive. Descriptive research design is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or group. It also determines the frequency with which something occurs. Primary data is collected through the structured questionnaire as it ensures that the data collection was standardized such that all the respondents got the same question in the same format. The selection of the research tool depends on few factors such as time, the skill of the researcher and budget of the study. Secondary data refers to the existing information which is collected by someone else for the specific purpose. For this secondary study data was collected through various research reports, research papers, journals, periodicals, magazine and different websites.

Sampling method are the means to select sample of respondents from the population. A convenient and judgmental

sampling technique will be used for this study. A simple random sampling method was adopted for selecting the sample of institutes, and respondents for the survey was selected through convenient sampling due to limitations of time and cost. When the units of the sample are drawn independently with equal probabilities it is known as simple random sampling. It is most popular and simple method of sample selection. Around 350 respondents from faculties who are directly or indirectly associated with various management institutions have been contacted / surveyed.

Sample Size: The sample size is decided by the use of the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where N = Size of the universe e = Desired margin of error

n = Size of the sample

Given the value of N = 3005, and e = 5%

The calculated value of n is found to be 353, but for convenience of analysis a sample size of 350 is chosen.

It was decided to choose the faculty of MBA/PGDM for sample respondents.

A sum of 450 faculty members were approached for the survey and 350 were finalized for analysis.

After collection the data was systematically arranged tabulated and appropriate analysis is carried out with the help of research-based statistical software i.e. SPSS-17. It has been used to generate tabulated reports and also provide descriptive statistics. Certain statistical analyses like Mean, Standard deviation, factor analysis and ANOVA are used.

Findings: It is imperative to express that usable information (n= 350) were gathered from an overview of 450 polls filled by the respondents working in management institute from the different part of Madhya Pradesh. This brought about 77.78 percent reaction rate, which portrays great perception and information for the investigation.

Most of the respondents are of the age of 21-30 (44.57%) and it is good for our research as they are young faculties and most of them have recently completed their higher education from the MP only, so they are well aware of the branding strategies of their and other management institutes. Female respondents (53.14%) are more as compared to the male faculties (46.86%), but not by very large margin

which shows that in MP there is no gender disparity in education. It is also important to state that the respondents are spread across the Madhya Pradesh.

Most of the respondents are doctorate (52.57%) which shows the quality of respondents as they all know the importance of research in education system. Most of the respondents (58.86%) are from private institute, it is because of number of private institute in Madhya Pradesh are more than the state university department, private university and B-schools. 56.57% of the respondents are assistant professor and it is so because of the ratio (5:2:1) of teaching staff in management institute. Almost 42% of the respondents are of senior cadre and have good experience in teaching and research.

Objectives-1

To identify the key factors of effective branding of higher educational institutes of Madhya Pradesh: As per faculties perception, most of the faculties from the management institutes are of the perception that in order to enhance the Brand Value of a Management Institute in Madhya Pradesh the institute have to focus on regular updating and revision of the curriculum content as per the requirement of the industry/corporate with the help of Industry Experts and Senior academicians, offer industry oriented certifications

course other than regular course which helps the students in placements and gets higher packages in house campus placements. As per the faculties the placement plays a key role in the Brand Image of a Management Institute. The other important factors are accreditations by NAAC, NBA etc, infrastructural facilities, Weight age to Industry experience in Admission, rigorous selection criteria in Admissions and Conducting MDPs (Management Development Program) for industry people also helps the Management Institutions to enhance the Brand Value of a Management Institute in Madhya Pradesh.

Nine factors are extracted from the factor analysis. The following are the nine factors as per faculties' perception important for the effective branding of higher educational institutes of Madhya Pradesh:

1. Innovative teaching pedagogies and Academic Alliances
2. Research Oriented institute and Accreditations
3. Industry oriented Curriculum & Infrastructure
4. Admission criteria & Good corporate and industry linkage

5. Continuous assessment & Branding efforts and practices
6. Sports and extracurricular activities facilities
7. Membership of various management associations
8. Weight age to Industry experience in Admission
9. Placement is also plays a key role in the Brand Image of a Management Institute

Relationship of Branding efforts and practices have significant impact on prospective students as per faculty perception.

Objectives-2

To assess the impact of branding strategies upon students: Most of the respondents have selected their institute because of the brand name, alumni and infrastructure. They are feeling proud to be part of their institute and they also suggest the same brand to their friends and relatives. But most of them are not happy with the quality of the faculties, staff and safety precautions.

There is a significant association of Curriculum Design with help of Industry Experts and Senior academicians with all the demographic factors except gender of

faculty members. Hence gender has no significant association of Curriculum Design with help of Industry Experts and Senior academicians.

There is a significant association of Offer industry oriented certifications course other than regular course which helps in placements and enhances the Brand Image of a Management Institute with all the demographic factors except gender. Hence gender has no significant association of Offer industry oriented certifications course other than regular course which helps in placements and enhances the Brand Image of a Management Institute.

There are no significant associations Membership of various management with all the demographic factors except post of faculty. Hence post of faculty has a significant association with the Membership. There is a significant association of Placement with all the demographic factors except age and gender. Hence, age and gender has no significant association with the Placement.

There is a significant association of higher packages in house campus placements with all the demographic factors. There is a significant association of Good corporate and industry linkage with all the demographic factors of faculty members.

There is no significant association of Regular guest lecture by corporate or industry experts with all the demographic factors except post of faculty. There is no significant association of Regular industry visit provided to students with all the demographic factors except post of faculty.

Research Oriented institute like Publication of National/ International Research Papers, Corporate or industry experienced faculties, Continuous assessment of students by faculty mentor, Regular up-dation and revision of the curriculum content as per the requirement of the industry/corporate, Innovative teaching Pedagogies by Faculty Members, Sports and extracurricular activities facilities, Infrastructural facilities, Accreditations by NAAC, NBA etc, Use of ICT) (Information Communication Technology) in teaching and learning and Branding efforts and practices are important to attract prospective students have significant association with all the demographic factors of faculty members.

Conducting MDPs and EDPs have significant association with all the demographic factors except gender and educational qualification of faculty members. Entrepreneurship development

cell and Participation in various B-School Surveys have significant association with all the demographic factors except educational qualification of faculty members.

Up gradated Library, Computer Lab and research lab resources have no significant association with all the demographic factors except educational qualification and type of institute of faculty members. Weight age to Industry experience in Admission have significant association with all the demographic factors except age of faculty members.

Objectives-3

To identify the present challenges before the higher educational institutes in Madhya Pradesh:

Challenges:

- Quality in management institutes/higher education is a multilevel, multi-dimensional and a dynamic concept. To ensure quality in management education in Madhya Pradesh is presently not at the top level. Branding of most of the private management institutes is based on the financial nature such admission on the low fees or scholarship is deteriorating the quality of education However, Government, AICTE and UGC are

continuously focusing on the quality management education. Still Large number of private colleges and universities in Madhya Pradesh are unable to meet the minimum requirements laid down by the AICTE/UGC and our universities are not in a position to mark its place among the top universities of the India/world.

- Poor infrastructure is another challenge to the management education system of Madhya Pradesh particularly the institutes run by the private sector suffer from poor physical facilities and infrastructure. There are large numbers of private management colleges on ground which has no infrastructure as per norms. In branding infrastructure plays a key role at the time of admission.
- Shortage of quality faculties are there in every management institute. In Madhya Pradesh most of the management institutes are private and they are only looking for profit. They have no intention of providing quality education to the students; most of the private management institute has young faculties with low salary, and have no experience of teaching or research which harms the

education system very badly. Even they are not appointing faculties as per the AICTE/UGC norms. Quality of faculties is also a key factor in branding of management institutes.

- Research and Innovation is also big challenge face by most of the management institutes in Madhya Pradesh. Most of the private institutes not motivate the faculties and students to do quality research. Even they are not funding the research work. In most of the management institutes even in the university department are not much focus on quality research. There are insufficient resources and facilities, as well as, limited numbers of quality faculty to advice students. So, this is another area of challenge in the route of branding of higher education in India as well as Madhya Pradesh.

Objectives-4

To suggest brand building measures to improve the brand image of higher educational/management institutes: The following are the some measures to improve the brand image of higher educational institutes or management institutes in Madhya Pradesh:

- Institutes or universities in Madhya Pradesh need to improve quality and reputation. There should be a good infrastructure should be provided by the private colleges and universities which may attract the students.
- Management institutes should collaborated with the management institutes in India like IIMs and top International institutes for better quality and collaborative research.
- An active placement cell should be there in each and every management institutes to support the students for employment.
- Scholarship based management institutes should be discourage by the Higher Education Department as it Detroit the education system very badly and effect the branding of management education in Madhya Pradesh.

7. Conclusion & Suggestions:

The present study was structured with the aim of examining various existing branding strategies, factors considered by the students before seeking admission in management institute in Madhya Pradesh. The opinions and expectations, levels of faculty members on various aspects of branding have revealed an insight of the present situation. Follow up work done on

these would enable institutions to identify and understand their strong and weak areas to reframe their branding strategies that in turn would aid them in reaching their optimum level of efficiency. It has also contributed in evolving an appropriate precise mode of branding strategies for management institutes. Students should be precisely aware of the accreditations and academic alliances of the institutes. The tangible features and placement records of the management institutes have attracted the attention of students.

The management institutions of Madhya Pradesh should arrange regular workshop, seminars, and conferences, provide variety in the curriculum as per the current corporate/industry requirement. Curriculum should be contemporary, robust and comprehensive. The management institutes should attempt to maintain world-class infrastructure attract students and faculty from different regions and nations because diversity provides exposure and allows one to explore the path of new experiences. In order to achieve this, purposeful interactive sessions of faculty-students and people from the corporate ought to be managed. The institutes should not be money-oriented, but must be study-oriented. In order to develop academic standards-framework of accreditation, academic

alliances, partnerships, foreign collaborations, corporate house alignment and community participation have to be incorporated.

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