

## A New Educational Marketing Mix: The 6ps for Private School Marketing in Iran

<sup>1</sup>Mehrdad Alipour, <sup>2</sup>Ali Aghamohammadi, <sup>3</sup>Reza Ahmadi and <sup>1</sup>Seyyed Hadi Hoseini

<sup>1</sup>Department of Management,

<sup>2</sup>Department of Statistics, Zanjan Branch, University of Zanjan, Zanjan, Iran

<sup>3</sup>Department of Management, Hidaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hidaj, Iran

**Abstract:** This study aims to present a new marketing mix for private schools based on parents' attitudes of non-public school students in Tehran. Each institution needs to survive is to provide marketing services. Educational institutions such as private schools to attract more students who are among the main goals of these institutions need to use Principles of Marketing. The type of hotels or restaurants services varies with educational services. Hence the educational sector particularly private schools need a new marketing model. This study seeks to present a model to be able thereby to increase Students enrollment. Research method of this study was the combination of exploratory, descriptive - survey and analytical. Gathering techniques of data were through both questionnaire and interview. First results obtained from factor analysis, showed that 3 factors obtained from the 6 factors, which are among the traditional marketing mix include: "Price", "promotion" and "product" and three new factors with the "Parent Teacher Communication," professor "and" privilege ". So the effect of each 6 factors on increasing the enrollment students rate were evaluated by test the hypotheses. The current study took nearly one year to be completed (Feb. 2011 to Dec. 2011). This study also was conducted in Tehran city, Iran.

**Keywords:** Educational marketing, private schools, service mix

### INTRODUCTION

Educational markets, primarily in Western countries were formed between 1980 and 1990 which led to the formation of competitive environment in the schools (Bell and Rowley, 2002; Oplatka, 2002; Taylor, 2001). With nearly 30 years in the field of education through school marketing topics, but this concept in countries like Iran has rarely been discussed and most principal are unaware of it. However, many researchers, believe the marketing role in the increase of students enrollment rate is vital (Cubillo *et al.*, 2006; Ivy, 2001; Maringe and Foskett, 2002). Marketing is a regular management process that will identify customer needs and wants (Foskett, 1992). Transferring a good and effective image of school to parents is one of the significant tasks of educational marketing. Educational marketing has no required effect without transferring of this image (Oplatka and Jane, 2004). Educational marketing is design and delivery of educational programs in a way that appropriate to recognized needs of people and groups (Foskett, 1992). The school should develop means of communication with the external environment to promote the goals and values for pupils and their parents (Davis and Ellison, 1997). This is the same as educational Marketing in schools.

Since the needs and wants of parents is very important to recognize, analyze parental behavior should

be the priorities of schools. Pardey (1991) and Hanson (1996) point to this issue. Marketing experts encourage schools to follow several major stages: Marketing research and analysis of the environment, Formulating a marketing plan and a strategy, implementing the marketing mix and evaluating the marketing process (Davis and Ellison, 1997; Foskett and Hemsley-Brown, 2001; Hanson, 1996; Kotler and Armstrong, 1999).

This study aims to find out the current educational marketing mix in the world and then to customize them according to marketing of private schools in Iran.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

**Services marketing mix 7P:** One of the steps that schools in the marketing process are recommended by the researchers is implementing the marketing mix. Marketing mix is controllable tools that institutions use to getting appropriate response from their target markets. Ivy (2008) presented the Model that includes 7 factors. He offers the model for MBA schools. Chung-Kai and Chia-Hung (2008) has been studied, 5 elements: people, promotion, price (tuition), place and the product for primary schools. He has concluded that these 5 elements have a positive impact on parent loyalty. In this study, first, we review 7Ps of the traditional services marketing mix to education section.

**Price:** Lamb *et al.* (2004) believe, price is the amount of money that the buyer, pays to the service provider. But the tuition that parent pay for their children's education is the corresponding price in the educational sector. So price involved tuition issues (soedijati and Pratminingsih, 2011).

**People:** People Factor can be related to all staff, employees and members, including Principal or deputy as well as teachers. In fact, people include all members of the school that can serve to student (consumer) and parents (customer) (Kotler and Fox, 1995). Soedijati and Pratminingsih (2011) emphasize in own study that people factor as vital for the successful delivery of the service is very important. Of course Soedijati and Pratminingsih (2011) believes, it is related to the ability, skills, experience and knowledge of teachers. According to his opinion, the most important aspect that affect on parental satisfaction is Teaching features that lead to learning (Chung-Kai and Chia-Hung, 2008).

**Promotion:** Promotion may be key element in the school marketing mix. Indeed, most marketing efforts that are performed at schools are classified as promotion (Oplatka and Jane, 2004). The purpose of promotion is communication with the target markets. The same concept today plays an significant role in creating competitive advantage for organization against competitors. Plan will not succeed without effective promotional plans. Most schools in the world use promotional activities such as PR. However, television and Press advertising is less common in the educational sector (Bell and Rowley, 2002).

Now, we review some of usual promotional activities in private schools:

- **Public Relation (PR):** PR is creating of favorable school mentality among different groups of the target market, without having to pay for it. PR encompasses a wide range of activities, Such as media relations, interviews, (Friedman *et al.*, 1996). The role of PR is, enhance the marketing efforts in the schools. Important goal of it, is shaping a way to introduce and create public awareness about the achievements of the school. One of the most common types of non media public relations is PTA (Parent Teacher Association) (Symes *et al.*, 1994).
- **Expo:** Expos is common among private schools. These exhibitions are part of perception managing of parents. Expos prevent the spread of rumors about schools (Oplatka and Jane, 2004) and will be accustom parents with the characteristics of the school and its achievements. Also will expand communicate between the schools and parent.

- **Brochure:** Among elements in advertising, brochures are used in schools more than others. Brochures, often are first contact the parents and the schools. It can make possible create and developed a favorable image of the school in parent's mind

**Physical evidence:** Intensity of intangibility the educational services will be reduced by physical evidence. University facilities and buildings can be considered physical evidence. Kotler and Fox (1995) also believe that the first image in the university student's mind will be shaped by this Factor. Ivy (2008) considers video projectors and facilities necessary to present lectures as physical evidence.

**Place:** This factor is related to whether the school is available and will be comfortable to travel there or not. Prospective parents may choose a school and it is a simple reason which school is located near their home (Lockhart, 2005). Yoo *et al.* (2000) believe that the reduction of parent traveling time to school, will lead to a positive perception and it has a positive impact in improving the school image in their mentality.

**Product:** Product in educational sector is related to school facilities such as workshops and training labs, libraries. This element in this sector is similar to the physical evidence. Price *et al.* (2003) showed that the major factors of selecting university by the perspective students, is the university facilities.

**Process:** Processes are all the administrative and bureaucratic functions of the university which is registration, course evaluation, examinations, result dissemination and graduation (Ivy, 2008). Moreover Soedijati and Pratminingsih (2011) considers the learning process and social activities as Processes that occur in universities.

## METHODOLOGY

**Methodology** In this study using a combination of three exploratory, descriptive and analytical. This study has been done on parental views of non-public school in Tehran. Sample size is 1000 that were collected from 400 secondary schools are located in Tehran. Sampling method is a combination of classification and clustering. Data collection tool is questionnaire, which contains the spectrum of 5 items Likert. Data have been gathered as the postal and face to face.

In determining the major effective factors on educational marketing mix, following steps were done:

First, Interviews with administrators of private schools extracted, 21 variables that influence on attracting perspective students. Then the 21 variables in the

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-meyer-olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.848
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2449.203
	df	810
	Sig.	0.000

questionnaire form was poll and Cronbach's alpha 0.872 was obtained to assessing reliability of scales. The results of KMO and Bartlett's test showed there is requisite for factor analysis. Factor analysis reduced, 21 variables extracted to 6 main components. The factors have been retained which factor loadings are greater than 0.6 and 61.495% of variance have been explained by 6 main components.

**Factor analysis:** Factor analysis is a technique that reduces the number of dependent variables into a smaller number of Latent dimensions. As can be observed in Table 1, results of the KMO and Bartlett test show that the requisite for factor analysis is available.

In our study, 21 variables we have extracted through interviews with principals of non-public schools. Then with factor analysis technique we have reduced them to six main components. In Table 2, you can see results of factor analysis with varimax rotation.

The Factors have been retain that their factor loading is greater than 0.6. In Table 3 these factors have been shown.

**New 6P educational marketing mix:** After factor analysis and identified six factors, we now point to the new marketing mix that 3 factors are the same traditional service marketing mix. price, with Cronbach's alpha 0.833 and promotion with Cronbach's alpha 0.756 and product

with Cronbach's alpha 0.784 services are included in the 7P traditional marketing mix which also in educational sector are useful for marketers. Of course in this study, Price includes tuition issues such as Tuition fee or having installment tuition and etc. Product includes issues like having library or lab at the school and Promotion more include connecting to perspective student by brochure and expos.

**Now we explain the three new factors:**

**Professor:** Professor refers to the characteristics of the school teachers. This factor is a vital factor for a private school in studied statistical society. For example, a teacher's skill and specialty is one of the factors which attract patents to school (loading = 0.788). The next variable is Academic Teacher reputation (loading = 0.624). Parent Accentuate to academic reputation because they think teachers have a PhD, have high knowledge in their field. The Cronbach's alpha is at an acceptable level of 0.707.

**Parent Teacher Communication (PTC):** This factor is refers to parents' tendency to direct or indirect communication with school teachers. Direct relation such as communicate via PTA (loading = 0.601). The next item is communication with teacher's school via website (loading = 0.808) and connecting parent and teachers with Interactive voice response (loading = 0.780). In telecommunications, IVR (Interactive Voice Response) allows customers (parents) to interact with a school's host system via a telephone keypad or by speech recognition. They are informed from children's score by it. These factors can make satisfaction. The Cronbach's alpha is at an acceptable level of 0.714.

Table 2: Extraction method: Principal component analysis. Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Component	Component					
	Price	Privilege	Product	PTC	Promotion	Professor
Academic_teacher_reputation	0.167	0.094	-0.109	0.258	-0.071	0.624
Teacher skill	-0.034	0.123	0.096	0.088	0.103	0.788
Teacher experience	0.030	0.083	0.265	-0.070	0.263	0.564
PTA	0.055	0.099	0.144	0.601	0.153	0.134
Communciation_via_website	0.091	-0.020	0.240	0.808	0.183	0.014
IVR (interactive voice response)	0.261	0.095	0.069	0.780	0.132	0.083
Computer facilities	0.174	0.074	0.626	0.265	0.262	0.088
Lab	0.123	0.121	0.825	0.137	0.030	0.115
Library	0.198	0.097	0.734	0.227	0.153	0.019
Legal_tuition	0.724	0.168	0.243	0.065	0.054	0.105
Having installment tuition	0.832	0.107	0.021	0.099	0.119	-0.005
Flexible approach of tuition	0.827	0.088	0.152	0.105	0.092	0.098
Informing tuition detail	0.655	0.040	0.142	0.218	0.318	-0.023
Print brochure	0.200	0.124	0.199	0.081	0.713	0.150
Ebrochure	0.180	0.019	0.116	0.292	0.758	0.025
Expo	0.096	0.278	0.097	0.170	0.681	0.083
Final_exam_passing	0.003	0.790	-0.028	0.182	0.224	0.023
Accepting rate_in_university	0.067	0.775	0.052	0.081	0.057	0.083
Administrators prestige	0.114	0.424	0.406	-0.087	0.173	0.094
Teachers prestige	0.074	0.545	0.285	-0.070	0.014	0.396
Using popularity of another institution	0.222	0.626	0.126	0.017	0.046	0.080

Table 3: The extracted components with factor loadings of variables

Components	Factor loading	Accepted factors
Professor	teacher's skills	624.0
	academic_teacher_reputation	0.788
PTC	PTA	0.601
	communication with website	0.808
	interactive voice response	0.780
Product	computer facilities	0.626
	training lab	0.825
	library	0.734
	legal tuition	0.724
Price	having installment tuition	0.832
	flexible approach of tuition	0.827
	informing tuition detail	0.655
	print brochure	0.713
Promotion	brochure via email	0.758
	expos	0.681
	accepting rate in universities	0.775
Privilege	accepting rate in final examination	0.790
	using popularity of another institution	0.626

**Privilege:** Privileges are items which can play an important role in creating positive image in parent's mind. This factor includes acceptance rate of school the students in universities in order to great effect on improving the school's image in the minds of parents (loading = 0.775). The next variable refers to the ratio of the students to pass national final examinations (loading = 0.709). Fame of another educational institution is next item that help to improve parent's mentality of the school. In fact this factor will make a positive and favorable image in parents' mind. (Loading = 0.626). The Cronbach's alpha is at an acceptable level of 0.726.

After introducing a new marketing mix for educational sector, now to test each of the factors, we have 6 hypotheses as to ensure the effect of these factors on student's enrollment.

**Normality test:** We must first determine what the test will use. (Parametric or nonparametric), thus normalizing the test do and decide. We asses it by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-wilk test (Table 4):

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Research data are normally distributed  
**H<sub>1</sub>:** Research data aren't normally distributed

Table 4: Result of normality test

Component	Kolmogorov-smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Professor	0.211	1000	0.000	0.847	1000	0.000
PTC	0.118	1000	0.000	0.951	1000	0.000
Product	0.124	1000	0.000	0.915	1000	0.000
Price	0.117	1000	0.000	0.950	1000	0.000
Promotion	0.122	1000	0.000	0.960	1000	0.000
Privilege	0.161	1000	0.000	0.891	1000	0.000

a: Rotation converged in 6 iterations

As we see every one of the factors p-value is smaller than the significance level (p-value = 0.000<0.01).Therefore, There aren't strong evidence for accepting the hypothesis H<sub>0</sub> so it is rejected and H<sub>1</sub> is accepted. Thus the data are not normally distributed and non-parametric methods will be used to test the hypotheses.

**Testing hypotheses:** Now we do non-parametric methods to test the hypotheses. In this study we used nonparametric Wilcoxon sign rank test.

**H<sub>a</sub>:** An extracted school marketing mix, namely (H<sub>a1</sub>) Professor, (H<sub>a2</sub>) PTC, (H<sub>a3</sub>) Product, (H<sub>a4</sub>) price, (H<sub>a5</sub>) Promotion and (H<sub>a6</sub>) Privilege, is positively related to school student enrollment.

**Hypothesis test results:** As you can see in Table 5 because the p-value is close to zero (p-value <0.01), all hypotheses are accepted on a 1% error level

**Ranking of factors:** After being confirm the factors impact on increasing student enrollment, now it comes to ranking them. The purpose of the ranking is prioritizing is based on the most effect on the dependent variable means the student enrollment. Because there are correlations between variables in this study thus we use Friedman test for ranking the factors. You can see the ranking is based on the Friedman test in Table 6:

As can be seen professor has greatest impact and promotion has lowest impact on increasing student Enrollment.

## RESULTS

Results of the hypotheses and propose on the basis of these results is as follows:

- Professor on the increasing enrollment of private school students has significant effect. This factor has greatest effect on increasing the enrolled students. Therefore use of specialist teachers and the teachers that have PhD or MA is recommended.
- Privilege is effective in increasing student enrollment. This factor includes using popularity of another institution, ratio of university acceptance and ratio of state examination passing. Therefore holding

Table 5: Result of hypotheses with wilcoxon rank test

Hypotheses	N	Statistic	p-value	Estimated median
Hypo1	1000	61709.5	0.000	4.500
Hypo2	1000	56631.5	0.000	3.835
Hypo3	1000	56631.5	0.000	4.170
Hypo4	1000	51508.0	0.000	3.875
Hypo5	1000	50075.5	0.000	3.835
Hypo6	1000	62012.0	0.000	4.335

Table 6: Ranking the factors

Mean rank	Factors	Rank
4.48	Professor	1
4.26	Privilege	2
3.82	Product	3
2.92	PTC	4
2.88	Price	5
2.64	Promotion	6

classes and also getting representative famous institutions and the use of the Institute teachers for the schools a high influence in schools to attract parents. Thus, extra-curricular classes and getting representative famous institutions and using the institution teachers for schools have an important role in attracting parents to the schools. Reputation as an institution that has a positive effect on parents, causing them to enroll their children in school is more encouraging:

- Product factor that reduce the intensity of intangibility of services is positively related to increasing enrolled students. Therefore set up the school library and laboratory of training in order to better teaching for pupils seems necessary.
- PTC has also increased the enrolled students of private schools. Promoting of This communication by increasing the number of PTA per month and via the school website and IVR is suggested. IVR systems can also set up in schools where parents can check educational status of their children for example from their workplace or own home so can have a positive impact on parental satisfaction.
- Price that is relevant to the issues of tuition has effect of encouraging parents to register. Therefore policies such as the installment tuition and having flexible approach can be effective of increasing registration. Flexible approach means that, for example, fees for distinguished students to be given a discount. The next suggestion is that the spending of tuition and its details to be published on the school website. In this case, the parent's confidence of the school will be more.
- Promotion factor that refer to brochures and expo in order to communicate with the target market, on increasing the student's enrollment is effective. Thus we recommend that schools should attempt to provide attractive and vesicular brochure. Also the Schools can send brochures via mail in order to their cost come down. So the brochure sending via email

not only makes the information more easily available, but also provides the possibility of viral marketing. And finally is recommended that schools participate in the annual exhibition through it to introduce the school achievements to highlight.

## REFERENCES

- Bell, L. and A. Rowley, 2002. The impact of educational policy on headship in primary schools in England, 1994-2001. *J. Educ. Admin.*, 40(3): 195-210.
- Chung-Kai, L. and H. Chia-Hung, 2008. Marketing tactics and parents 'loyalty: The mediating role of school image. *J. Educ. Admin.*, 47(4): 477-489.
- Cubillo, J., J. Sanchez and J. Cervino, 2006. International students' decision-making process. *Int. J. Educ. Manage.*, 20(2): 101-115.
- Davis, B. and L. Ellison, 1997. *Strategic Marketing for Schools*. Pitman Publishing, London.
- Foskett, N., 1992. *Managing External Relations in Schools: A Practical Guide*. 1st Edn., Route Ledge, New York, pp: 232.
- Foskett, N. and J. Hemsley-Brown, 2001. *Choosing Futures: Young People's Decision-Making in Education, Training and Careers Markets*. Routledge-Falmer, London.
- Friedman, S.M., K. Villamil, R.A. Suriano and B.P. Egolf, 1996. Alar and apples: Newspapers, risk and media responsibility. *Pub. Understand. Sci.*, 5(1): 1-20.
- Hanson, E.M., 1996. *Educational Administration and Organizational Behavior*. Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA.
- Ivy, J., 2008. Higher education institution image: A correspondence analysis approach. *Int. J. Educ. Manage.*, 15(6-7): 276-282.
- Kotler, P. and K.F.A. Fox, 1995. *Strategic Marketing for Educational Institutions*. Prentice-Hall Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Kotler, P. and G. Armstrong, 1999. *Principles of Marketing*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Lamb C.W., J.F. Hair, C. McDaniel, C. Boshoff and N.S. Terbalancle, 2004. *Marketing Management*. 2nd Edn., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Lockhart, M.J., 2005. *How to Market your School*. Universe Books.
- Maringe, F. and N. Foskett, 2002. Marketing university education: The Southern African experience. *High. Educ. Rev.*, 34(3): 35-51.
- Oplatka, I., 2002. The emergence of educational marketing: Lessons from the experiences Israeli principals. *Comparat. Educ. Rev.*, 46(2): 211-233.
- Oplatka, I. and H.B. Jane, 2004. The research on school marketing: Current issues and future direction. *J. Educ. Admin.*, 42(3): 375-400.

- Pardey, D., 1991. *Marketing for Schools*. Kogan Page, London.
- Price, I., F. Matzdorf and H. Agathi, 2003. The impact of facilities on student choice of university. *Facilities*, 21(10): 212-222.
- Soedijati, E.K. and S.A. Pratminingsih, 2011. The impact of marketing mix on students choice of university study case of private university in Bandung, Indonesia. *Proceeding of the 2nd International Conference on Business and Economic Research (2nd ICBER 2011)*.
- Symes, C., P. Meadmore and B. Limerick, 1994. Secondary education in queensland: Never a matter of primary concern. *Discourse*, 14(2): 92-102.
- Taylor, A., 2001. Fellow travelers and true believers: A case study of religion and politics in Alberta schools. *J. Educ. Pol.*, 16(1): 15-37.
- Yoo, B., N. Donthu and S. Lee, 2000. An examination of selected marketing mix elements And brand equity. *J. Acad. Market. Sci.*, 28(2): 195-211.