SOME PRINCIPLES IN EDUCATIONAL MARKETING

Hasbi

Abstrak

Pemasaran merupakan sebuah metoda untuk memberikan pelayanan terbaik bagi konsumen sehingga mendatangkan keuntungan bagi produsen. Teori pemasaran berkembang seiring dengan perkembangan produk dan jasa termasuk dalam dunia pendidikan. Pendidikan sebagai sebuah komoditi telah menyediakan beragam produk jasa pendidikan, memerlukan adanya pemahaman tentang teori pemasaran untuk dunia pendidikan.

Kemampuan institusi pendidikan berkomunikasi dengan lingkungan dan peningkatan mutu layanan pendidikan menjadi faktor penentu dalam pemasaran pendidikan. Tulisan ini memaparkan beberapa konsep dasar dalam pemasaran pendidikan.

Keywords: marketing, educational institutions, marketing mix, product, communication, promotion.

I. INTRODUCTION: A BASIC MODEL OF MARKETING

Marketing came into existence with the first barter exchange when someone realised that exchanges added value for both parties (Baker et al, 1998). Exchange is the act of obtaining a desired object from someone by offering something in return (Armstrong and Kotler, 2003). Though it is not the only way for people to satisfy their needs, exchange allows a society to produce much more than it would with any alternative system. People can concentrate on producing things that they are good at making and trade them for needed items made by others. A person does not have to be a computer engineer to possess a computer. Consequently, a person can be a carpenter and trade that skill to get a computer.

As people always want to get better value, they start to think about gaining some benefit from their exchange activities. People then organize themselves to be able to create and offer some products to exchange with other parties. This is what Gibbs and Knapp (2002, p. 4) defined as marketing: “a social and managerial process through which institutions and individuals obtain what they want through creating, offering and exchanging products and services with others”. The concept of marketing then develops into more strategic and comprehensive concepts involving the pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods, ideas, and services. These concepts are planned and implemented in such a way as to create exchange that is beneficial for both individual and organizational objectives.

II MARKETING IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The previous section describes the basic model of marketing that is applicable to the marketing of education. However, Canterbury (1999) argued that although marketing was introduced to educational institutions more than 30 years ago, there is still a challenge to the institutions to identify whether they are different from other markets and services to warrant adjustments in marketing methods. From this point of view, this section
Some Principles in Educational Marketing discusses the nature of marketing in educational institutions.

Kotler (1982) confirmed that: “Marketing is the effective management by an organization of its exchange relations with its various markets and publics”. Therefore, all organizations operate in an environment of one or more markets and publics. In this study, the term public is in line with the definition stated by Kotler and Fox (1995) that is to describe a person or group which has an actual or potential interest in or effect on the institution. Every educational institution has several publics, and the institution should strive to have responsive relations with most or all of them. In Figure 2.1, Kotler and Fox (1995) illustrated 16 major publics, individuals, and groups who have an actual or potential interest in and effect on an educational institution.

Figure 2.1 The University and its publics (Following Kotler and Fox, 1995)
When students come to a college, they willingly give their time, energy, and sometimes tuition fees, to get a better education and knowledge in exchange. Kotler and Fox (1995) pointed out that the nature of educational marketing is the way an institution offers satisfaction—courses, degree programs, career preparation, and other services and benefits—to its markets. In return, the institutions receive needed resources in the form of tuition payments, donations, volunteers, money, time, and energy from those publics.

12 WHY MARKET?

There are a number of reasons for educational institutions to develop marketing programs. Kotler, Ferrel, and Lamb (1987) argued that "marketing is relevant not only to businesses but to every organisation that provides something of value to clients or the public". The fact that educational institutions have some publics to serve may encourage them to develop a marketing program. Michael, Hamilton and Dorsey (1995, p. 22) reported that educational institutions can become more effective by adopting marketing strategies.

Competitive consumerism is another reason for educational institutions to run a marketing program. Gibbs and Knapp (2002) suggested that educators need to get their message through the clutter of competitive consumerism. Supporting this premise, Baker et al (1998) stated that as institutions have been opened to competition and the creation of market economies, they have to have an understanding of marketing concepts.

Likewise, Hesketh and Knight (1998, p. 22) added that "schools are in the market place, having to attract sufficient pupils to finance their activities and, preferably, to attract the right sort of pupils". In many countries, a new policy, advanced by the government about funding education, is one reason that forces education to find alternative sources of funding.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the fact that educational institutions have to make an effort to develop marketing programs so that they can achieve their strategic mission. Implementing the marketing concept requires that the entire company and its people are oriented towards the needs of the customer (Lancaster and Massingham 1999, p. 41).
Gibbs and Knapp (2002, p. 2) argued that “it is essential to put the educational offering into the context of a marketing process”. Further they suggested that marketing processes can help institutions understand who their customers are, how their needs are changing, and how an institution needs to adapt, develop and change to meet these needs. Marketing requires the institutions to provide better services to their real customers as they come to understand both their clients, and the changes that occur in the market. To make marketing function in carefully formulated programs and not just random actions, it must be well planned and carefully implemented.

### 13 MARKETING MIX

In any discussion of marketing concepts, it is widely agreed that there is a need to present the concept of marketing mix. Baker et al (1991) noted that this is one of the oldest and most useful concepts in the marketing repertoire. In this study the concepts of this marketing mix of four Ps, namely product, promotion (marketing communication), place (service distribution) and price, are discussed in relation to the setting of educational institutions.

As one of the most basic concepts in marketing, Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) defined the 'marketing mix' as the elements an organisation controls that can be used to satisfy or communicate with customers. Marketers need to identify their product, price, place, and promotion in order to be able to suit the customers. What is their product, how high a price are they willing to set, where is the product to be located or made available, and how to communicate these ideas to the prospective customers are questions associated with these elements. Although there is
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a sense of order, it must be noted that the flow of these activities is far from being linear. What is important is how this concept will satisfy the customers and fulfill the organization's goals.

14 PRODUCTS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

From the marketer's viewpoint, the first thing that is determined is the product. Slaughter et al (2002, p. 12) raised a critical question that faces educational institutions before they go to market: What is the product of the educational institutions that they sell? This is a crucial question, as some people have no clear idea of what the products of educational institutions are.

A product is anything that the organization offers to potential consumers that may satisfy a need, whether it is tangible or intangible. Armstrong and Kotler (2003) suggested that a product is anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a need or want. The concept of product is not limited to physical objects. Anything capable of satisfying a need can be called a product. Furthermore, Armstrong and Kotler (2003, p. 7) indicated that "in addition to tangible goods, products include services, which are activities or benefits offered for sale that are essentially intangible and do not result in the ownership of anything".

From these concepts it can be argued that a program of study in a college is an activity that is intangible but people can benefit from it. This means that the program of study is one of an educational institution's products. Indeed, Weame (1993, p. 91) stated that "an institute's products are its training programs or any education materials it produces".

15 Product Development and Life-cycle

Kotler and Andreasen (1987) stated that in developing a product or a program, administrators should focus on three levels: the core, the tangible, and the augmented aspects. The core aspect addresses what the consumers are really seeking in terms of benefits that are expected. The tangible aspect - which has certain features, styling and quality - focuses on what is associated with the product that can be perceived, felt or touched by the consumer. For example, course packages constitute a tangible aspect of an adult and continuing education program. The augmented aspect includes all additional services that attempt to enrich the consumer's experience. Institutions can differentiate their program offerings at each of these levels.

In developing a product, it is important to understand whether the product will satisfy customers and be purchased by the target market. As
Stott and Parr (1991) indicated, a product can also be defined as what someone buys to satisfy a perceived need. Therefore, marketers need to look at how well the product satisfies the customer. Customers are not as interested in a list of specifications rather they are more attracted by the personal advantages to be gained, such as a better qualification of their education.

Those responsible for marketing have to be constantly aware of the inevitability of change in the nature of the market. If customers' needs are changing, so products must also be expected to change if they are to match those needs (Stott and Parr, 1991). This change forms period of growth of a product known as product life-cycle. When the product is first introduced, the growth will be slow, but then as the market needs it, the growth will be faster. At a certain phase, the growth will decline. Stott and Parr (1991) explained that the relevance of the product life-cycle in the compulsory phase of education is less clear, however, it is worth examining. Marketers should know the features of each product and try to assess where it lies in the cycle. In educational setting the changes in technology is one of the crucial issues to examine in the modern time.

16 Product Quality

Kotler and Armstrong (1999) argued that institutions need to identify the expectation of the target customers concerning service and product quality. It is worth asking what the customer is really buying by choosing a particular educational institution. Several answers may emerge, such as the quality of teaching, the pleasant educational environment, the qualifications of staff, the attention to personal service, and the overall reputation and standing of the particular institution. All these are part of the product, and if any of these are major influences on buying decisions, they need to be examined from the point of view of product quality.

The notion of quality should be related to the institution's strengths and the demands of the market. It is probably unrealistic to expect optimum quality in all facets of an institution's life, but the central product features, those which are crucial to the success of the institution, need a very clear focus on quality, and there needs to be a commitment by all those concerned to achieving this end (Stott and Parr, 1991). Therefore, there should be a regular evaluation in product delivery. Kotler and Armstrong (1999) stated the importance of communication and evaluation to secure the quality. In educational institutions the accreditation of the
program is one way to guarantee the quality of the product delivery.

17 PLACE OF SERVICES DISTRIBUTION

Products need to be available to customers in the right places at the right times. Stott and Parr (1991) articulated that as far as educational institutions are concerned, place decisions are concerned with the institution's environment and the importance which management attaches to it. They are also concerned with access. Michael et al (1995) stated that place, distribution strategy or the program delivery system describes how the products or services developed are made available to the consumer. In particular, Kotler and Fox (1995) endorsed the view that the basic service-delivery question for educational institutions is concerned with how they can make their programs and services available and accessible to their target consumers.

Furthermore, Oplatka (2002) said a place for service delivery refers to more than just the location, accessibility and availability of the services but also to its appearance and facilities. Offering a high quality, appropriately priced program is not enough. The customers must be satisfied with the facilities and the environment of the institution. Whether the appearance is stimulating is also a matter of concern. Some educational institutions, recognizing these market changes, have adopted new schedules, delivery systems, and locations to retain existing markets and serve new markets.

18 MARKETING COMMUNICATION

After developing good quality products and choosing a strategic location, marketers need to inform their potential customers of the existence and availability of the products. Stott and Parr (1991, p. 83) stated "unless they are convinced of the value of the products, all research efforts and product development initiatives will be wasted". Following the development of the product, the marketers need to inform and convince the customers about the availability of the product and its value for them.

Michael et al (1995) defined promotion as the process of creating awareness and encouraging consumers to act favourably towards the program developed. This definition confirms that the objective of marketing communication is to approach and persuade the customers so that they have information about the product. In this sense, Engel et al (1987) suggested four criteria should be met in marketing communication. Firstly, the segment should be of sufficient size and market potential to warrant expenditure of marketing
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funds. Secondly, it must be possible to measure market potential in the segments. The potential market is already segmented so that different methods can be applied to different segments. Thirdly, it must be possible to reach each segment through available media. Whether the segmented market can access the information given should be considered. And finally, each segment should show clear variations in market behaviour in comparison with other segments and the response of the segment to promotional variables must be different.

Stott and Parr (1991, p. 83) stated "in its simplest form, the promotional plan of any organization is a matching process between the producer (in this case, educational institution) and the customer or client". The process assembles the customer into the objectives of the organization, and the marketers communicate the organization through the promotional mix.

Developing the Promotional Mix

In deciding the promotional mix, knowledge of the characteristics of potential students is important (Riggs, 1989). Indeed, the effectiveness of this process depends on how accurate this knowledge is. As such, Michael et al (1995) added that the selection of a promotional mix depends on the purpose to be achieved. For example, a strategy to create general awareness of a program is different from that which is aimed at changing negative attitudes of a particular group of people towards the program. As well, the media technology available to the institution through which the target audience can be reached influences the options for promotion available to the administrators.

Oplatka (2002) suggested that promotion includes activities such as advertising, public relations, and written materials, which inform the market and persuade the clients to choose the service that is offered. More specifically, Stott and Parr (1991) added that there are three main types of promotion that may be used by any organization, namely advertising, public relations including press and non-press, and outreach material.

Advertising and the Media

Advertising is a non-personal communication from an identified sponsor using mass media to persuade or influence an audience. This is where time or space is purchased to communicate a given message to a specific market. From this perspective, Stott and Parr (1991) mentioned that the advantage of advertising is that it gives reliable coverage, certainty and economy. This can be understood from the comparison of cost and coverage.
Another advantage is that the effort and time on the part of the organization is low, since a single advertisement may reach an extremely large number of potential buyers.

There is a broad array of paid advertising media to function as communication channels, namely television, cinema, radio, posters, billboards and press, as well as newspapers and magazines (Stott and Parr, 1991). With the development of information technology, marketer should also employ Internet as a media for communication. Gibbs and Knapp (2002) stated that the strategic issue is to establish what the strengths of the educational institution are and communicates them through the Internet. Gose (2000, p. 51) added that "a college could eliminate some production and mailing costs by using e-mail messages to steer staff to recruitment information on its World Wide Web site".

Public Relations

Public relations are an indirect promotional tool whose role is to establish and enhance a positive image of an organisation and its services among its various publics (McColl et al, 1998). Public relations seek to persuade people that a company is an attractive organisation with which to relate or do business. This is important for services, as it has already been noted that services are evaluated very subjectively and often rely on word of mouth recommendation.

Stott and Parr (1991) mentioned that there are two categories of public relations: press and non-press. Non-press public relations include receptions, exhibitions and special events. Exhibitions appear to be quite an effective way to communicate educational institutions. They can be run in an exhibition hall or just in the institution as an open day activity.

Another form of public relations is outreach material, sometimes called 'giveaways'. This form includes all material that is produced to communicate with a specific audience. It includes all forms of printed material, such as the school prospectus, leaflets, letters, greeting cards, direct mail, and other material such as a school video or the so-called 'giveaways' such as pens, carrier bags and badges, all of which carry some messages about the school (Stott and Parr, 1991).

Sponsorship

One way that service organizations can try to make their service tangible is to attempt to get customers to link the image of the organisation or of specific services with a more tangible event or activity. More specifically, McColl et al (1998)
stated that sponsorship involves investment in events or causes so that an organisation can achieve objectives such as increased awareness levels or an enhanced reputation. Sponsorship can build the reputation and credibility of institutions and forms strong relationships with customers and the community.

Moreover, McColl et al. (1998) found out that the advantage of sponsorship is that it is attractive to service companies as it allows the relatively well known characteristics of an event or activity being sponsored to help to enhance the image of an organization’s own inherently intangible service. A further advantage of sponsorship is that it allows a company to avoid the general media control usually associated with advertising. Therefore it should be seen as a tool that complements other elements of the promotional mix (McColl et al., 1998).

19 PRICING EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

In developing marketing programs for educational institutions, it is necessary to conduct a proper analysis of pricing. Gibbs and Knapp (2002) suggested that in order to set a price accurately requires an understanding of a number of related issues, including the relationship between pricing decisions and institutional missions, how the learner and the purchaser view the price, and how the customer judges the value that it conveys.

For this, Michael et al. (1995) proposed the idea that pricing in a marketing-oriented institution is a carefully planned strategy that follows an orderly sequenced decision-making process. The ultimate pricing decision reflects knowledge of the market and competitors, government decisions, students’ willingness and ability to pay, the cost of operation and the objective of the institutional administrators. In this way, Ihlanfeldt (1980) suggested that the institution should consider the effects of a given pricing policy on enrolment, and also the degree to which a particular pricing policy may encourage response. He also argued that prices are charged by comparable competing institutions, therefore marketers need to consider the effects of its own price level and price changes on the actions of such other institutions.

110 THE MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

McColl et al. (1998) stated that marketing orientation requires organizations to monitor their environment and to adjust their offerings so that consumer needs are fulfilled, thereby facilitating the organisation in meeting its own objectives. The marketers should have information about the environment and the needs of their real customers so
that the marketing program meets that need.

Kotler and Armstrong (1999, p. 64) defined the marketing environment as "the actors and forces outside marketing that affect the marketing management's ability to develop and maintain successful transactions with its target customers". It comprises suppliers, marketing firms, competitors, the public, and demographic, economic, natural, technological, political, as well as cultural forces. Knowing the environment might help the marketers to maintain their transactions and satisfy the customers.

Kotler and Armstrong (1999) stated that to be successful, a company must provide greater customer value and satisfaction than its competitors. Thus, marketers must do more than simply adapt to the needs of target customers. They must also gain a strategic advantage by positioning their offerings strongly against competitors' offerings in the minds of consumers.

II. SUMMARY

In summary, this writing leads to the idea that the theory of marketing developed in business and commerce can be applied to educational institutions. Although the objectives of marketing in business are not exactly the same as the objectives of not-for-profit organizations, such as educational institutions, the literature reveals one common concept that they share, namely how to satisfy the customer. By having marketing programs the institutions may achieve greater success in fulfilling their mission and increasing the satisfaction of their publics and their markets without losing their funding.

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