

CRM practices followed in management institutions in Northern India

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ABSTRACT

Customer relationship management has been used among several service sector organizations over the world. Despite the extensive research on the implementation of CRM practices in the service sector, there is a lack of empirical studies on the implementation of the CRM practices in the education sector. The present study tried to identify the CRM practices being implemented in management institutions with reference to students and its effect on the student-institutions relationship. The education sector is a highly competitive market and its main focus is on the students and maintaining good contact with them and to satisfy the student's needs.

1. Introduction

Effective CRM practices in an education sector means providing services related information to students very quickly, responding to the student's request, dealing with the student's queries & complaints expeditiously and exercising all kinds of flexibilities in serving students to students. In order to increase the loyalty of the students towards the institutions, higher education sector improves satisfaction and retention of the students (Seeman & O'Hara, 2006). Colleges are competing with each other to invite the pupils into their academic courses. An extremely massive amount of money is used in the admission procedure. But still, the preservation rate of numbers of pupils is alarming low (Crosling, Heagney, & Thomas, 2009). Education institutions carry out several programmes to meet the requirements of their clients – the pupils. There are necessitating for colleges to recognize the motives of their prospects from the starting points all through to graduation. The CRM process will provide students "with interactive touch points through pre-admission and post-admissions, registration, teaching evaluation and financial aid which have impact on students satisfaction and loyalty" (Grant & Anderson, 2002).

Universities and public administration have made important efforts to improve the quality of higher education, often at the behest of market forces. As a result, universities rethink their strategic orientation in order to respond adequately to the various transformations they face (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006). This is the case of student demands, the needs and patterns of differentiated behaviour, the increasingly competitive global markets, the frequent innovation in teaching/learning procedures, etc. In this context, it is not surprising that universities opt for intelligence and information systems and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technologies (Neville, Heavin and Walsh, 2005; Seeman and O'Hara, 2006) in order to identify those students who require greater attention and provide them with a more personalised service, thus reducing the number of dropouts and maximising the value of the service on offer.

2. Customer Relationship Management applied to higher education

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Competitions for students represent a new struggle for many institutions of higher education. On the one hand, there are increased numbers of facilities and on the other there is the reduced number of students. New conditions lead to a greater competition in the institutions of higher education. In terms of an increasingly competitive market, universities around the world recognize the need to change their business towards developing the best possible relationships with students. Students are more and more perceived as users of educational services, and educational institutions recognize the need of the students for applying marketing strategies in their business.

CRM practices allow marketers to construct long term associations with clients at the individual level through the utilization and administration of various applications and essential parts. The regular modification in demographics along with high client objectives is making businesses reconsider their client relationship management practices (Wells, R., & Wells, 2011). For delivering better customer value, retaining the customer and maintaining a good relationship between them, there is a need for CRM practices. The practices of CRM mean providing greater client values, keeping the client and having an excellent connection with customers. With the use of

CRM practices customer loyalty will increase and as a consequence, the customer's retention and satisfaction is improved (Brower 1991).

3. Research Methodology

The scope of the study was restricted to the states of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. The study was based on primary data. The data was collected from 270 management colleges through the convenient sampling method. For

obtaining the responses, a five point Likert scale has been used. In the present study, descriptive statistics was applied with the help of SPSS.

4. Analysis of Data

In order to know about the CRM practices used by the various management colleges, mean and standard deviation of different statements related to CRM practices was obtained.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Different Statement of CRM Practices

S. No:	Name of the variables	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	This college follows a defined process to maintain the relationship with students.	2.65	1.46
2	All the admission related enquiries are registered and the data is stored in the system for follow up.	2.18	1.19
3	The college has a website with all details of the college and its admission process.	1.85	1.16
4	There is helpdesk to solve the students' queries.	1.85	1.02
5	The college website is very fast, updated and responsive.	1.96	1.06
6	This college uses software to store students' data and give feedback on their performance.	1.86	1.04
7	The college keeps upgrading its technology.	1.89	1.14
8	My college website is interactive and informative.	2.13	1.05
9	My college uses a high technology for CRM.	1.94	1.05
10	The college organizes campus visit and various events from time to time.	2.21	1.09
11	College follows a strong online system for handling enquiries.	2.17	1.07
12	The college coordinates with different organizations for training and placement of students.	2.04	1.13
13	The staff of this college seems to really understand what I want from this college.	2.00	1.20
14	The college serves my interests and preferences well.	2.53	1.09
15	The college makes a sincere effort to solve students' complaints quickly & fairly.	2.29	1.03
16	I am satisfied with the way college tracks of my performance all the times and communicates the same to me.	2.23	1.13
17	This college uses faster modes of technologies to communicate with students.	2.37	1.10
18	The college information is easily accessible.	2.33	1.13
19	College provides prompt, timely and assured services to students.	2.38	1.09
20	I can contact the college authorities anytime even at a short notice.	2.58	1.17
21	College provides quality education and fulfills its obligation to students.	2.48	1.06
22	My college communicates with students faster, and gives correct information.	2.49	1.10
23	All staff members are trained to be emphatic (caring about others) suggestions.	2.43	1.10
24	The college staff is regularly trained and understands the needs of the students.	2.33	1.00
25	College follows a defined process for placement of the students.	2.50	1.12
26	My college keeps making changes in its operations to fulfill the students' requirements.	2.41	1.09
27	Ex- students are treated as future recruiters.	2.16	0.99
28	Regular alumni meets are held in college.	2.21	0.98
29	There is a defined process to track and follow Ex-students.	2.23	1.00
30	Ex- students give positive feedback about the college.	2.50	1.02
31	The college keeps updating details of the ex-students periodically.	2.45	0.93
32	Ex- students' suggestions are always welcomed.	2.40	1.09
33	My college website has ex- student's corner in it.	2.47	0.95
34	I was counseled well, while taking admission in this college.	2.69	1.44
35	This college kept pursuing me regularly for admission.	2.63	1.26
36	I am satisfied with the way the college staff follows the complaint handling process.	2.61	1.37

Table 1 shows the information reveals the mean and standard deviations of all the variables. The mean is the most

famous measure of focal propensity (Thompson, 2009). The statement 34 "I was counselled well, while taking admission in

this college” scored the highest mean i.e. M=2.69, S.D= 1.44, which is followed by statement 1“This college follows a defined process to maintain relationship with students” scored the highest standard deviation S.D= 1.46 and M= 2.65, while the 4th statement “There is helpdesk to solve students queries”

scored the least mean M=1.85 and S.D= 1.02 and statement of 11th item “ The college keep updating records of the ex - students from time to time” scored the lowest standard deviation, S.D= 0.93 and M=2.45

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation of different Statements of a Student Institutions Relationship

S. No:	Name of the variables	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	If the students are satisfied, better placed in companies, taken care of by staff, then the college will have better relationship with students.	2.12	0.96
2	The more the college adjusts itself to fulfill the needs of the students, the better is the relationship.	2.15	1.00
3	The greater the level of CRM technology, the stronger is the relationship with the students.	2.30	1.08
4	The better is the relationship with alumni; the better is the college student relationship.	2.36	0.96

Through the table 2 The statement 4 “The better is the relationship with alumni, the better is the college student relationship scored the highest mean i.e. M= 2.36 and S.D=0.96., which is followed by statement 1 “If the students are satisfied, better placed in companies, taken care of by staff, then the college will have better relationship with students” scored the least mean M= 2.12 and S.D= 0.96. The statement 2 “The more the college adjust itself to fulfil the needs of the students, the better is the relationship” scored the mean and standard deviation i.e. M=2.15, S.D= 1.00. The statement 3 “The greater the level of CRM technology, the stronger is the relationship with the students” scored the highest standard deviation i.e. M=2.30 and S.D= 1.08.

5. Conclusion

Management institutions have selected the CRM concept that originated in the corporate business with the intention of identifying students who need greater attention in order to provide them a more personalized education service, thus reducing the number of dropouts and maximizing the value of service. It is conclude that CRM philosophy combined with appropriate strategy execution delivers a new conceptual and structural framework for focusing organizational actions to attract and retain different types of students and interest groups by improving benefits from increased access to information and services to various stakeholders such as students, alumni, faculty, and other staff.

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