CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The education sector has seen a host of reforms and improved financial outlays in recent years that could transform the country into a knowledge haven. With human resource increasingly gaining significance in the overall development of the country, development of education infrastructure is expected to remain the key focus in the current decade. Education marketing, particularly as this relates to the value/service proposition, has stimulated much debate within the higher education sector. At present, the HE environment is becoming much less stable and less predictable at the level of customer behavior (especially as related to customer search–buy processes), and also competitive dynamics and market positioning. Such changes point up the need for traditional bureaucratic cultures, typically found within universities, to change and for levels of market and responsiveness to be more in evidence at a strategic and operational level.

Higher education has seen significant development in Uttarakhand in the most recent couple of years, particularly after the state formed. A subjective change does not coordinate the quantitative extension in higher education that we have seen in the state, in the present century. Accordingly, there has never been a more important time for marketing investment within higher education institutions. In the absence of universities engaging with potential customers, and clearly defining and communicating differentiated value propositions, potential customers will begin to identify ‘value’ on their terms. This approach will likely be driven by a need to understand better what their chosen course will do for them not just regarding utility/employability but also regarding the differential advantage conveyed by the institutional brand from which their degree comes. Such customer evaluation processes need to be understood by managers and then positively influenced and managed.

To expand higher education in India stand to bring access to a new generation of college students in India. The country has already shown that it can dramatically improve college access. Dynamic change within Uttarakhand higher education sector has many components. At the level of the customer, the fee-paying environment has brought changes in customer expectations and a following change to the search–buy behaviour processes employed by customers regarding how a degree offering and institution are chosen. The present study focuses on the marketing activities undertaken by the higher
educational institution to create their brand in Uttarakhand state. In a survey 510 respondents, some important findings of the study are as follow:

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:**

- The sample consisted of 510 respondents, the majority of the respondents were male (297 are male, and 213 are female).
- Out of 510 respondents sample was dominated by the respondents ranging in the age group of 21-30 years in the sample.
- The study indicates that maximum respondents were undergraduates and graduates.
- The study indicates that the largest group of monthly income was (50001-75000) Rs with 173 of respondents.
- The study indicates that majority of the respondents are from self-financing private institution followed by deemed universities.
- The study indicates that out of total 510 respondents, 416 respondents, i.e., 81.6% were students.
- The study indicates that out of total 510 respondents 213 respondents were from self-financing private institution out of these 213 respondents, 121 were male and 92 were female.
- The study indicates that majority of the respondent’s i.e., 21.9% consider the reputation of the institution is essential factor while deciding to select an educational institution for higher studies.
- Majority of the respondents consider advertisements on newspaper, TV and social media best mode of the channel to hear about the institution before applying for admission followed by family, friends or relatives were also a correct mode to hear about the institution.
- The study indicates that mode of channel preferred by the respondents differs significantly across the qualification of respondents.
- The study indicates that there are 8 factors of brand loyalty and brand image for the higher education institutions in Uttarakhand. Infrastructure, Course curriculum, Faculty, Student support progression, Ranking, Value offerings, Promotional Activities, Awareness and community service.
• The study indicates that stakeholders have a different perception of the factors that affect brand loyalty and brand image of the education institutions in Uttarakhand.

• The study indicates that no association between the position of the respondents and branding factors of the higher educational institutions.

• Anova is carried out to compare means of different factors promoting brand loyalty. To determine whether there exist significance difference in their means across the stakeholders of higher education institutions in Uttarakhand. Hence it is found out different perception of stakeholder regarding factors promoting brand loyalty of higher institutions differs significantly across the stakeholders.

• Majority of the respondents consider themselves most loyal towards the university having unique brand image compared to competing for educational institutions as this factor scored the highest mean value of 4.07.

• Mean of components of brand equity is calculated and found that majority of respondents consider that the factor University is more than an educational institution for me reports the highest value of mean 4.04 followed by factor love to recommend this University to my friends and relatives having value 3.9.

• Majority of the respondents, i.e., 21.8% feels that digital and social media advertising is an important tool for marketing the educational courses.

• Study indicates that marketing activities of higher educational institutes of Uttarakhand differs significantly across government and private sector institutions.

• The study indicates that marketing tools used by higher educational institutes of Uttarakhand differs significantly across the position of the respondents.

• The study indicates that most appropriate marketing tool according to the various position (Student, faculty, alumni, parents) respondents are significant usage of digital and social media advertising.

• The study indicates that factors promoting brand loyalty of higher institutions does not differs significantly across the type of university, whereas factors like value offerings, promotion, awareness and community service differ significantly across type of university.

• Chi-square test was carried out to examine the association of marketing activities used higher educational institutes of Uttarakhand in creating brand awareness and brand image of educational institutes. It was seen that the calculated value of $\chi^2$
is 48.41 which is less than the tabulated value, i.e., 60.48 therefore null hypothesis is accepted. Hence marketing activities are not associated with brand awareness.

- Chi-square test was carried out to examine the association of marketing activities used higher educational institutes of Uttarakhand in creating brand image of educational institutes. It was seen that the calculated value of $\chi^2$ is 43.33 which is less than the tabulated value, i.e., 60.48 therefore null hypothesis is accepted. Hence marketing activities are not associated with brand image.

- The study indicates that there is no significant relationship between factors influences the decision while taking admission to the higher education institutions with the type of university.

- The paired T-test applied to compare the mean of students before taking admission and after admission to analyze the difference between student’s expectation and institutional delivery. It was found that there is no difference in students expectation from the institutions and service delivery.

- It was found that mean of factors of effective branding of higher educational institutes of Uttarakhand differs significantly across government and private sector institutions.

- It is found that there is a significant relationship among the perception of students regarding factors of brand in enhancing the brand loyalty of higher education institutions except infrastructure has no effect in enhancing the brand loyalty.

- It is found that there is a significant relationship among the perception of students regarding factors of branding in enhancing the brand equity of higher education institutions. Whereas infrastructure, course curriculum, ranking, value offerings and promotion has no significant relationship in enhancing brand equity.

- Anova and Regression analysis were carried out to study the various branding factors used by HEIs in enhancing the rating, ranking and brand equity of the HEIs. The study revealed that majority of the respondents indicates that there is a positive impact of rating and ranking in enhancing the brand equity of the consumers towards higher education institutions.

- Anova is carried out to study the significant relationship between branding factors across gender classification. It is found out that there is no significant relationship between branding factors across gender, but the calculated value for
the ranking factor across gender classification is greater than tabulated value of F hence there is a significant relationship between ranking factor across gender classification.

- Anova is carried out to study the significant relationship between branding factors across qualification classification. It is found out that there is no significant relationship between branding factors across qualification of the respondents.

5.2 SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of the study following suggestions were drawn:

- Higher education in Uttarakhand has seen significant development in the most recent couple of years, particularly after the state formed. Every day universities and colleges are coming up with exciting, innovative courses for the millions of motivated students all over the world. Marketing tools are required to position the various innovative courses in the prospect's mind. Hence it is suggested to assess and evaluate various marketing tools for positioning the services provided by the higher education institutions.

- It was found in the study that various marketing activities strengthen the branding of HEIs. Making sure that institution stands out is vital for successfully attracting students. Branding is now an essential part of the marketing strategy for any university, especially if that institution isn’t particularly well-known or well-established. Creating a solid identity is the best way to appeal to students. Hence it is suggested digital and social media advertising promotes a distinctiveness which separates an institution from others.

- It was found in the study that rating and ranking of the HEIs have a significant effect on enhancing the brand equity hence it is suggested that the institutes should focus on the factors that are responsible for improving the rating and ranking of the higher educational institutes in Uttarakhand.

- Increasing brand equity can be challenging, but to survive in the ruthless world of the free market, branding is a necessity for businesses of all sizes. Hence it is suggested effective branding factors are infrastructure, faculty, course curriculum, ranking, value offerings, student progression, promotion, awareness.

- Students before taking admission in higher education institution expect a good image of the institution, well-qualified faculty, proper infrastructure, best
teaching-learning methodology and all these factors are well delivered. Hence it is suggested to focus on student-centric procedures to neglecting gap between students expectation and institution delivery.

- Universities have turned to branding as a tool to compete more effectively and drive recruitment. Hence it is suggested, loyalty towards the university is gained to those having unique brand image compared to competing for educational institutions.
- Various modes of media play a significant role in communicating and validating the HEIS brand image. Hence it is suggested to upgrade communication channels and marketing strategies to the extent that helps to become the benchmark.

5.3 Discussion

The rapid growth in educational institutions in Uttarakhand leads to new opportunities and challenges for education sector players. The present study tries to outline the marketing activities undertaken by the HEIs to create their brand. To reach and achieve the future requirements it is necessary to overlook the marketing strategies, quality standards, equity and financial resources of HEIs. Internal evaluation and external review is required to gain competitive advantage. With the help of the study it was found that digital and social media advertising is the best market tool used by the institution to position their services in the mind of prospects. Academic quality matters when HEIs tries to build their brand or public identity. (Pragya .p 2011). The researcher identified eight factors that is very helpful in creating brand of educational institutions in Uttarakhand. The various factors of effective branding are Infrastructure, Course curriculum, Faculty, Student support progression, Ranking, Value offerings, Promotional Activities, Awareness and community service.

Keller’s (2001), loyalty assumes top priority and alludes to the significance of this in generating repeat purchases. It is described because the ‘final relationship’ among brand and customer and want to be the underlying cause in advertising and marketing decision-making. It was found that factors promoting brand loyalty of higher institutions does not differs significantly across the type of university, whereas factors like value offerings, promotion ,awareness and community service differ significantly across type of university.
Students have a favorable impression of higher education, yet also clear desires as a top priority of what organizations should give to help and empower their learning and improve their vocation prospects. Students wanted to be challenged in their learning but also supported by the institution. Students almost exclusively spoke of their educational learning experience regarding their course. A key feature of transition for students was balancing the various demands of higher education, and what support the institution provided for them. However, there needs to be a balance between what the institution can offer and with a ‘marketing’ approach.

To analyze the gap between student expectations and institution delivery paired T-test was carried out and it is proven statistically that there is no gap between student expectations and institution delivery.

Brand loyalty and brand equity are interrelated to each other. Brand equity can be managed through brand loyalty. Higher education sector is delivering services to the students as the quality in services increases brand loyalty and equity also increases. It is found that there is a significant relationship among the perception of students regarding factors of branding in enhancing the brand equity of higher education institutions. Whereas infrastructure, course curriculum, ranking, value offerings and promotion has no significant relationship in enhancing brand equity.

While selecting the institute, placement activities done by the college is the most influencing factor among all the placement related factors (Patel..R 2012). The findings from the study suggests that the majority of the respondent’s i.e., 21.9% consider the reputation of the institution is essential factor while deciding to select an educational institution for higher studies.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Higher education institutions are responsible for generating new thoughts, improving skills resolve troubles, improve merchandise or tactics and adapt to new and changing environments. The institutions need to be innovative in their teaching and learning styles along with the research and research institutions. Being a non-profit organization, the higher education sector is facing several management and marketing challenges. Parameswaram and Glowacka. (1995) suggested that with the help of unique brand of values created by institution enables to maintain the competitive position of HEIS in the market. This was supported by (Ali-Choudhury et al., 2009) that ‘Mass market’ universities above all require strong brands to improve awareness of their existence and
program offerings among prospective customers; to differentiate themselves from rivals. From the findings, it is suggested that marketing activities help to maintain the awareness and build an image in the minds of prospects.

Though education is a service industry and is experimental and intangible, therefore, branding of education sector should be based on experience and employability factors. Brand image and improved and innovative education quality help institutions in attracting both faculty members as well as students. Most personal higher education institutions placed extra effort to enhance their brand equity with a purpose to attract students. The terrible belief toward private HEIs gives more reasons for those HEI to be involved in creating brand-building strategies. The high training fees charged by the public, HEI are one aspect that has extended college students expectancies of the promised overall performance. Understanding the demographics, and push to identify what motivates the stakeholders (Students, parents, alumni, establishments employees) in their choice-making. As the number of higher education universities and colleges are rapidly growing, it is becoming important to stand out from the competitors, and for gaining competitive advantage, HEIS are spending budgets on marketing activities and branding to attract students. The findings from the study reveal that for building brand of HEIS it is important to focus on the marketing activities performed by them. If the universities are successfully communicating their unique characteristics to the stakeholders, this will lead to creating a brand image of the universities. Brand equity for the universities increases as the rating and ranking increases. Rating of HEIS depends on the services and quality education provided by them. For improving rating higher education institutions should provide services as per the stakeholder's requirement when the gap between the expectations and service delivery does not exist then only the rating and ranking of the institutions are going to improve. Rating and ranking of the institution directly enhance the brand awareness and brand loyalty among the customers.

The data were analyzed regarding the demographic profile of the respondents, across branding factors and the findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between factors and demographics of the respondents. The findings revealed that there is no significant relationship among the perception of students regarding factors of branding in enhancing the brand equity of higher education institutions. The reputation of the institution is the most important factor for the respondents belongs to the students and alumni position. Factors of the effective branding of higher educational institutes of
Uttarakhand differs significantly across government and private sector institutions. Different promotional factors are considered while promoting a different type of universities. It was found that there is no difference in students expectation from the institutions and service delivery. It is proposed that university has the educational nature. So, the perceived services quality of a university by students is evaluated by its educational services and facilities. Due to the effect of this factor on brand equity, it is recommended to universities to emphasize on indicators of the educational facilities and services.

5.4 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY
The study has practical implications for higher education institutions in Uttarakhand. In numerous past studies have been conducted on the marketing mix, brand loyalty brand image and brand equity concerning higher education institutions. Several researchers suggested that with the help of brand loyalty customers retain and attract for repurchase but more research is required to find out the specific reasons or factors that involve in creating brand and brand loyalty. The success of particular HEIS branding leads to encouraging other universities to take a close look towards their strategies and programming. Today’s every student prioritize the practical outcome of job placements, promotions in designation, monetary increment. Hence it is suggested to focus on strategies, communicating the unique characteristics to gain competitive advantage.

5.5 FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY
Future work could study the actual components of brand characteristics and marketing activities responsible for enhancing the brand value in greater depth by concentrating on specific HEIs. Such a study can also include ranking information about the institutions which can complement the data set with external reputation indicators as well as the influence of rankings on HEI's perceived quality. Also, the causal effects of strategies to influence, for example, brand image and student satisfaction could be investigated in a longitudinal study. Therefore, future research should focus on the things that matter most for students in their choices of the university, so that universities can adjust their brand images and identities and accordingly build brand equity.