

Influence Of Guerilla Marketing On Student Enrolment

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Abstract

Higher educational institutions in India are recently facing tough competition from every nook and cranny. When it comes to attracting students, educational institutions use conventional methods of marketing. Guerilla marketing, an unconventional marketing strategy was successfully used by the business giants like coca-cola, burger king, etc. This directs to undertake a research work to study whether guerilla marketing will be beneficial for educational institutions. A causal study was undertaken with the help of students' sample to find out whether unconventional marketing will help to boost students' enrolment. The regression analysis suggested that guerilla marketing will be beneficial to the higher educational institutions in India to boost students' enrolment. The conceptual model tested in this study will help the higher educational institutions to boost their enrolment.

Keywords: Guerilla Marketing, Higher Educational Institutions, Insights.

1. Introduction

In 2019, The Honourable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi envisioned making India a USD 5 trillion economy. One of the pre-requisite to achieve this is the availability of a quality workforce. Higher education institutions are the factory where young minds are tuned into quality workforces who in turn boost our economy. Self-financing institutions of the Higher Education System are one form of educational institution which focus on self-sufficiency. Self-financing educational institutions in India are facing tough competition from every nook and cranny. When it comes to attracting students, self-financing institutions use more conventional methods of marketing. Student enrolment may not be a big problem for reputed institutions. But in the case of growing and the newly started institution, attracting young minds is a difficult task.

In this scenario - Can Guerilla Marketing, an unconventional way of marketing be beneficial to the self-financing institutions in India? A probe was undertaken to answer this research problem in this paper.

2. The Concept of Guerilla Marketing

In 1984, Jay Conrad Levinson introduced an entirely new and innovative concept to the marketing world called Guerilla Marketing in his book titled 'Guerilla Marketing'. Guerilla Marketing is an unconventional way of marketing a product or service. An appropriate example of this would be the popularisation of the film Kabali by the producer Kalaipuli S. Thanu through the advertisement printed on the AirIndia aircraft. Even though this concept was proposed thirty years ago, it has become a weapon in the marketing arsenal only in recent years.

This guerilla marketing concept could be well applied to higher education institutions to boost student enrollment. It could be well applied to

higher education institutions in the following forms:

1. Ambient Marketing: Innovative advertising messages in unusual places
2. Viral Marketing: Messages spread through social media and blogs.
3. Alumni Push: Spreading messages innovatively by alumni

3. Research Gap

A comprehensive literature review revealed that only a very few studies were conducted on Guerilla Marketing in India. For the study a total of 50 research works in connection with Guerilla Marketing were collected. The scrutiny of all these fifty research works revealed that no study was undertaken to study the application of the guerilla marketing concept in higher educational institutions in India. As the Guerilla Marketing concept is gaining attention all over the world, and the competition among the self-financing institutions, deemed to be universities and private universities are rising day by day, research on this particular topic would give some useful 'Biz 2025' ideas to these institutions engaged in higher education in India. Hence to fill this research gap this study was undertaken.

4. Statement of the Problem

Guerrilla Marketing refers to conducting an innovative and unconventional marketing campaign in unexpected places. The primary objective of guerrilla marketing is to create a distinctive and thought-provoking advertisement aimed to create buzz and consequently get positive responses from the consumers. Studies revealed that no study was conducted to study the applicability of the guerilla marketing concept in the education sector.

According to the 'All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE)' 2019-20 report, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education in India is 27.1 percent for 2019-20. This indicates that institutions engaged in higher education should do something special to increase the student enrolment ratio in India. Higher Educational Institutions normally spend less amount for marketing when compared to manufacturing and service providing organisations. Also, they are satisfied to spend the amount on traditional marketing activities

only. But its effectiveness is debatable. Guerilla marketing is also a low-cost affair, but its effectiveness is more when we compare it with traditional marketing strategy. Competition among these higher educational institutions is also increasing day by day. This adds more pressure on the higher education institution to find novel ideas to boost their enrolment. Moreover, more than 5 lakh students went abroad for higher education in 2019. To attract these students, HEI in India need to find a suitable marketing strategy. Could guerilla marketing be the answer for all these headaches of HEI in India? An attempt was made in this study to get some insights into this problem.

5. Objectives of the Study

The following are the research objectives:

1. To apply the concept of guerilla marketing in Higher Education
2. To gain some insights into the guerilla marketing
3. To study the influence of guerilla marketing on student enrollment

6. Research Methodology

The research design employed in this research is causal design. Since the primary aim of this research work is to examine the influence of guerilla marketing on student enrollment, this research design was employed. Guerilla marketing is measured by its three dimensions namely Ambient Marketing, Viral Marketing, and Alumni Push. This study employed the Convenience Sampling method to collect the data from the respondents. The data was collected from the students of two colleges in Chennai. The data was collected from 154 respondents. A structured questionnaire is used to collect the data from the respondents. The dimensions of the guerilla marketing and the dependent variable student enrollment are measured using a five-point Likert Scale. Percentage Analysis and Multiple Regression were used to analyse the collected data.

7 Results and Discussions

7.1 Descriptive Statistics

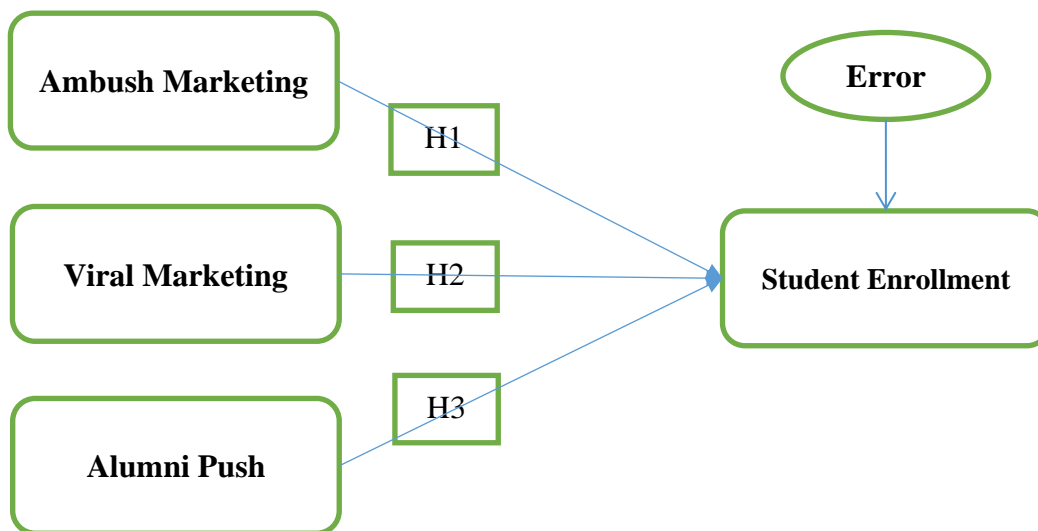
The data was collected from 119 male and 35 female students. In connection with 'who or what

influenced the admission decision, 67 (43.5%) respondents said their parents influenced the admission decision. It is quite interesting to see that only 2 students out of 154 students said that they were influenced by the advertisements. For the question of which would be the appropriate media for educational advertisements, 62 students are in favour of social media. For the 'factor essential for student enrollment', 59 respondents are in favour of the reputation of the institution.

7.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis was employed to assess the influence of guerilla marketing on student enrollment. It is used to determine whether a set of independent variables influence another dependent variable. Multiple Regression Analysis is used to determine whether the three dimensions of guerilla marketing positively influence student enrollment. The proposed conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of the study



The following research hypotheses were developed to assess the relationship.

H1o: There is no significant relationship between ambient marketing and student enrollment.

H2o: There is no significant relationship between viral marketing and student enrollment.

H3o: There is no significant relationship between alumni push and student enrollment.

Before passing on to multiple regression analysis, tests of regression assumptions were conducted. The basic classical linear regression model (CRLM) assumptions were tested. A constant

term was included to meet the assumption that the errors have zero value. The Scatter plot did not exhibit any non-linear pattern and hence linearity assumption was also met. The Scatter Plot analysis clearly showed homoscedasticity has not been met by the variables. Condition of normality was also met through the normal p-p plots. Hence the study moved on to the next stage of hypotheses testing.

Table 1 Hypothesis Testing

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.160	.514		6.151	.000
	Ambush Marketing	-.262	.088	-.258	-2.986	.004
	Viral Marketing	.474	.097	.424	4.876	.000
	Alumni Push	-.210	.088	-.208	-2.395	.019
a. Dependent Variable: Student Enrolment						

Source: Developed for the Study

Table 1 presents the results of the t-test and its significance value. The null hypotheses are accepted or rejected on the basis of the significant value (p-value). The above table reveals that the significant values for ambush marketing, viral marketing and alumni push are less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that there exists a significant relationship between the independent variables ambush marketing, viral marketing and alumni push and the dependent variable student enrolment. Hence the following relationships are valid.

H1a: There is a significant relationship between ambient marketing and student enrollment.

H2a: There is a significant relationship between viral marketing and student enrollment.

H3a: There is a significant relationship between alumni push and student enrollment.

The above table indicates that the t-values are high. This indicates the strong explanatory power of that independent variable. The model summary is presented in the below table.

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.534 ^a	.285	.263	1.285	2.010
a. Predictors: (Constant), Ambush Marketing, Viral Marketing, Alumni Push					
b. Dependent Variable: Student Enrolment					

Source: Developed for the Study

The R-value in the above table represents the correlation and is 0.534 (the "R" Column), which indicates a moderate correlation between variables. The R^2 value indicates the variation in student enrolment explained by ambush marketing, viral marketing and alumni push. In this case, it is 28.5%, which is adequate.

Table 3 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.268	3	21.089	12.768	.000 ^b
	Residual	158.572	96	1.652		
	Total	221.840	99			
a. Dependent Variable: Student Enrolment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Ambush Marketing, Viral Marketing, Alumni Push						

Source: Developed for the Study

The above table indicates the statistical significance of the regression model. The significant value is less than 0.05, which indicates

the overall fit of the regression model. Based on the above analysis the following regression

equation would be derived to represent the model:

The general regression equation is:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3$$

The regression equation of the study is derived from the above-mentioned equation.

8 Insights gained

The main objective of this study is to apply the guerilla marketing concept in higher education and to gain some insights. The following are the insights gained from this study.

1. Conventional advertisements have very less influence on the student community. It influenced only 2 respondents out of 154 respondents.
2. Parents (n=67, 43.5%) have a very good influence on students in selecting a particular college.
3. Social media is considered appropriate media for educational advertisements.
4. Reputation of the college influences students while selecting an educational institution.
5. Ambush marketing, viral marketing and alumni push have a significant influence on student enrollment.
6. The results of the study strongly indicate that unconventional marketing activities have a strong influence on students than traditional marketing.

9 Limitations of the study

The following are the limitations of the study.

1. The sample size is limited to 154 respondents only. It may not represent the views of the entire population.
2. Only students' samples were considered. Other stakeholders such as parents, faculty and management were excluded. Hence the results of the study cannot be generalized.
3. Convenience sampling method was adopted to collect the data. It limits the generalisation of the results.
4. Bias may be in the responses. It may affect the validity of the results.
5. The data was collected from two educational institutions. It limits the applicability of the findings to other higher educational institutions.

$$SE = 3.160 - .262 AM + .474 VM - 0.210 AP$$

where SE stands for Student Enrollment, AM stands for Ambush Marketing, VM stands for Viral Marketing and AP stands for Alumni Push.

10 Contributions of the Research

From the theoretical point of view, the application of guerilla marketing to the education sector, the research model tested and the inclusion of alumni push as a variable are the major contributions. The review of the literature suggested that the guerilla marketing concept is not applied to the education field. This study applied the guerilla marketing concept to the educational institution. This is a major contribution. Also, this study introduced alumni push as a factor of guerilla marketing. No other study has this as a variable. In this way, this is another major contribution of the study. No other study tested the research model too. From the management point of view, guerilla marketing, an unconventional marketing strategy could be applied to the educational field too. These are the major contributions of the study.

11 Conclusion and Future Research Direction

This study aimed to determine the influence of guerrilla marketing on student enrollment. Guerrilla marketing is a recent innovation in the field of Marketing. It also aids creativity and innovation in the marketing field. The results of this study suggested that Guerilla Marketing influences student enrollment. Hence in terms of managerial implications, higher educational institutions could use this concept to increase their enrollment. For further research, this study may be replicated with more samples. This study may also be replicated by including in the sample other stakeholders such as parents, faculty, and management members of the particular institution. Future studies can be undertaken by the probability sampling technique.

According to Jay Conrad Levinson, Marketing is not an event, but a process. It has a beginning, a middle, but never an end. The same applies to this concept too. This concept may be three

decades old, but it is going to rule the world ever and forever.

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