

## **A Bibliometric Perspective on Marketing Strategies in Private Higher Education Institutions: Global Trends and Indian Insights**

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### **Abstract:**

The last decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century brought the policies of privatization in every sphere of life, and education wasn't spared. Today, education has become a global product with institutions worldwide competing for students. India isn't untouched by its influence on it. In fact, after the 1990s, the private education institutions in India have mushroomed very systematically, impoverished in metro and semi-urban cities and towns of India. Indeed, the admission seekers for higher education institutions are diverse, such as those seeking graduate-level degrees, vocational degrees, technical degrees, etc. This means the higher education institutions require an equally diverse range to accommodate a large number of prospective students. Academic interest in Marketing Strategies toward Private Higher Education has significantly grown in recent years. Regretfully, the topic has not received enough bibliometric and visualization research. Thus, in order to provide a summary of the knowledge, the researcher merged information from the Scopus database with bibliometric methods like bibliographic coupling. This paper reveals the contradiction between the students and the private higher education institution owners, and also suggests some viable suggestions that would enrich the work of Institutions, those working or bound to work in this saga.

**Keywords:** Higher education, Institution, Marketing Strategy, Accommodate, Diverse range, bibliography coupling

### **1. Introduction**

Marketing strategies are one of the keyworks in any public influence targeted work. Managing the customers toward the product isn't just an ideal word but requires mastery to attract, through impulsion criteria to judge the demands of the consumers. Marketing modules have been increasingly prevalent in the realm of education, particularly in higher education, to inform students about various sectors for admission. It is noteworthy that students aren't only looking for an institution with good education, but simultaneously search for different facilities. Interestingly, to apprise the student, the Institutions require to assimilate multiple components from infrastructure to advertisement; indeed, for all these institutions need well-maintained and workable marketing strategies.

When discussing marketing strategies, the author (Bennet, 1995) defines them as the process of organizing and carrying out the concept, pricing, distribution, and promotion of concepts, goods, and services in order to meet the objectives of both individuals and organizations.

It has been more than three decades, since the privatization in higher education crept in, and so do well planned marketing strategies also entered into the market to influence the students; though still in the initial stage but needs to go long way with the motive of defining and redefining the higher education in the changing world. Authors (Zafiropouos and Varna, 2008) in their studies, stress the need to understand that it is a heterogeneous and diverse field, that contains several levels and objects which need to be analyzed, such as ranking (Saisana *et. al*, 2011), faculty (Rindaningsih, 2021), are the few to cite.

Around the world, there have been significant changes in higher education policy, governance, organization, and status in recent years, and India is certainly not the only shining example. Indeed, privatization, diversification, decentralization, internationalization, and throat-cut competition are the common trends found in private higher education. The authors (Maringe, 2006) assert that the competition among private higher education institutions has an impact on how these institutions operate, and that these impacts are what propel the marketization of higher education.

The authors of this study have carefully and patiently read through a number of online journals while writing the review, examining the bibliographic couplings and co-citations. Thus, up to five clusters were identified: service quality; economic impact of universities and entrepreneurship, competitiveness of universities as enterprises; measurement and development of higher education models; and institutional theory. To convey the study, these clusters comprise subfields such as Academy and Professional Relations, Efficiency, Institutional Multiplicity, Institutional Pressure on Higher Education, and Quality-Based Education. The cornerstone of the paper is to go into the dearth of the past literature and review the different aspects of private universities in detail.

According to the authors (Mazzarol, 1998) Marketing is a crucial theoretical part within the marketing of HEIs. It urges conducting a marketing strategy that clearly addresses barriers pertaining to the particulars of services. Further, Authors (Enache, 2011; Heyduk and Fenigstein, 1984; Fagerberg *et al.*, 2012) have integrated the seven subsets in order to provide the theoretical basis for academic promotion. Indeed, marketing strategies evolve around the demand for better education. The highly skilled professional designs impressive marketing strategies for their clients, so that the students who dream purposefully find their dreams true. Thus, the method that allows organizations, groups, and consumers to acquire the things they require and desire through the identification, provision, communication, and delivery of value to others is known as marketing. However, the promotional aspect of higher learning is a contentious topic.

Nevertheless, the contribution of the study on the subject is threefold. It starts with the findings, which obviously reveal the researcher's pattern; thereafter, an overview is provided through the application of bibliographic coupling. And finally, by exploring the relationship of authors (Lee, 2014), countries (Brown *et al.*, 2007), and journals (Baldwin and James, 2000) to compile some sort of suggestion for future research.

## **2. Marketing for Private Higher Education and Its Scope**

The sector of private colleges and universities comprises two main features- primarily, all the entire schooling from primary to most nations' college and university systems are not for profit, promotional techniques used in this field don't work the same way they do in the corporate sector. Furthermore, colleges or universities offer a service. Considering the two aspects, Author (Maringe, 2006), expresses the fact that the industry serves a variety of clients, including companies, students, and society at large, is well acknowledged. While authors (Temple, and Shattock, 2007) say that students are the direct and immediate customers of the higher education service.

Indeed, with yielding competition among the private higher education institutions to attract students, the institutions float dynamic information through various available sources. Thus, according to authors (Bulotaite, 2003), massive applicants for higher educational institutions are therefore no longer apathetic consumers but rather knowledgeable buyers who choose their universities logically. Therefore, the private institute owners need to fulfill multiple requirements of the students who are looking for admission. For instance, besides the teaching and learning activities, as authors (Chapleo, 2004) express about quality-based service.

- Branding is yet another marketing concept that nowadays is customary for private institutions. While covering the concept of brand, Author (Han, 2014) illustrates that Branding is associated with the creation of images with the sole purpose of increasing the number of students' admission into the institutes.

- In higher private institutions, promotion policy concentrates on marketing communication and the dissemination of information. Such activities mainly emphasize the use of communication tools like advertising, public relations, etc., in order to attract the students, which is associated with admission in private HEIs.
- Pricing policy also deserves to play a pivotal role in the admission process of students in private institutes. Two decades ago, higher education was supposed to be totally state sponsored, which meant the students were free of charge. But since then, things have dramatically changed with the new education policy of the government. This drastic change eventually cut down the deployment of government-aided universities, and promoted the privatization, especially in higher education. As author (Bodycott. 2009) reveals about the USA, how it transformed from traditional academic values to market-focused values.
- Alumni and Students also play a pivotal role in the marketing for private HEIs. No matter what institutions say about itself doesn't consider as valuable as, what they express becomes more valuable. If institutions are looking for more and more students in the institution, they need to look at their current and former students who appraise the work of the institution.

India also didn't remain far and wide from the mold of privatization in the higher education sector, perhaps in the last couple of decades it has remained torch bearer by taking a leap jump compared to many other countries. With this, rise in tug-a-war is preceded among the private institutions to attract the new students who are looking ahead for private institutions.

### 3. Institutional Theories

Higher Education has become more and more diverse and competitive in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. Now, definitely, students have a variety of options to select from the public institutions to those that are private. Further, HEIs are dabbling in commercial management exercises, through marketing practices to adapt themselves within the changing environment (Baird, 1998). Nevertheless, it has also been found to be equally true that students who are going ahead with higher education, often influenced by other factors like economic, political, societal, and cultural characteristics, occasionally. Besides, there have been other aspects that play a pivotal role in regard to making a choice, such as academic, administrative, and environmental factors that determine important factors while selecting the institutes for further studies (Farrukh *et. al*, 2020; Green, 1994). A peaceful and calm place, away from hustling and bustling centers, is a paradise for the students (Hassan, 2020).

There always remains an argument that quality and education are two fundamental pillars of society. Indeed, A key component of the country's future is high-quality education. Therefore, it is regardless to say that quality-based higher education is crucial for social development. To serve the purpose, there has been the incorporation of the four Ps, so that the reputation is identified in relation to place, promotion, people, and process. In the previous research regarding these certain factors has student admissions in HEIs remain as a focal point (Ahmed *et. al*, 2021; Kondakci, 2018). While Tripathi and Purnendu in their book pointed toward different aspects of marketing management and technological innovation in all spheres, to determine the possibilities of growth in the admission of students. Ivy (2008) emphasises that colleges and Universities' major concern is to maintain the enrolment. He devastates a model that is effectively used to represent factors like admitting students' selection for college for further education.

Another aspect is the use of social media, pointed out by Ivy (2008). He draws attention through a report commissioned by the National Association for College Admission Counselling, which states that private institutions have begun using social media as a tool for admissions tactics. It has been shown that over half of private educational departments utilize social media to get admission. The impact of data sources on students' selection of universities for postsecondary education is also examined (Kondakci, 2018). Influence from friends, family, college visits, etc., is another important aspect in India, which often becomes the deciding factor for many students.

According to Ahmed *et. al*, (2021), choosing an educational institution isn't easy or the same for different people; rather, it relies on the demands of the pupils. According to the author, parents are more inclined to have an impact on their children's educational choices. Litten (1982) points out that the implementation of fee structures and the subsequent privatization of colleges and universities have led to cost sharing and a more "consumerist" strategy to college educational institutions in many European nations, further emphasizing the necessity to take students' expectations into account. In actuality, Mazzaro and Soutar (2002) and Nawaz *et. al*, (2020) discussed the need for novel approaches to operation, including the implementation of more business-oriented and market focused practices in order to boost competitiveness in colleges and universities at the organizational, national, and worldwide levels.

The writing of various authors raises some different arguments that are related to the subjectivity and objectivity of the past. Perhaps, the initial studies on the subject focus on the wants of the quality based higher education that attract the student for admission, but then it leaves unclarity about service quality (Nawaz *et. al*, 2020; Quinnet *et. al*, 2009). While reviewing these, an essentiality is felt to go into the depth to understand the pragmatism of admission in private higher education institutions. Nevertheless, the literature available from the past takes us on a journey in glancing at how different marketing concepts are used by private higher education institutions' authority to motivate a wide section of students who are looking for better opportunities in the future.

#### **4. Bibliometric Analysis**

A complete understanding framework called bibliometrics analysis uses mathematical and statistical methods to examine all kinds of information (Seymour, 1992). This indicates that the primary source of measuring objects is a variety of papers, such as journals and citations, language dimensions, etc. Indeed, bibliometric techniques have advanced over the past decade to do bibliometric analyses of journals (Sizer, 2001), disciplines (Soedijati and Pratminingsih, 2011), institutes, and countries (Verma and Saini, 2022). Citing evaluation, bibliographies interaction, and search term relationship analysis are among the statistical methods used to examine the effectiveness and organization of advertising techniques used in the admissions process of students to privately educational organizations. While search terms relationship assessment mostly examines term similarities, reference, and biographical connection primarily represent the significance of the source material and the similarities between its subjects.

##### **4.1. Methodology**

For the review paper, the researcher has gone through numerous research articles and acknowledged that the 'Scopus database' is suitable to enhance bibliometric analysis. These tools are convenient for exporting data (Tripathi & Mukerji, 2013). The study went ahead to search Scopus for "Marketing Strategies for Admission by Private Higher Education Institutions" in the title, abstract, keyword, and text of the article. The research hasn't limited itself to a time range. Marketing and Management are the areas that have been analyzed.

#### **5. Result**

##### **5.1 Leading countries in marketing strategies for admission by private higher education institutions research**

While examining the section, the researcher accumulated the most influential countries whose theme paper that was published was related to Marketing Strategies for Admission by Private Higher Education Institutions. These countries comprise both the developed and developing. The countries that are in the table below mostly fall into either developed or developing nations. The five top countries known for publishing papers are the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and China, while India stands in sixth place. The glimpses of countries as per their ranks are given in Table 1.

**Table 1. The most productive countries**

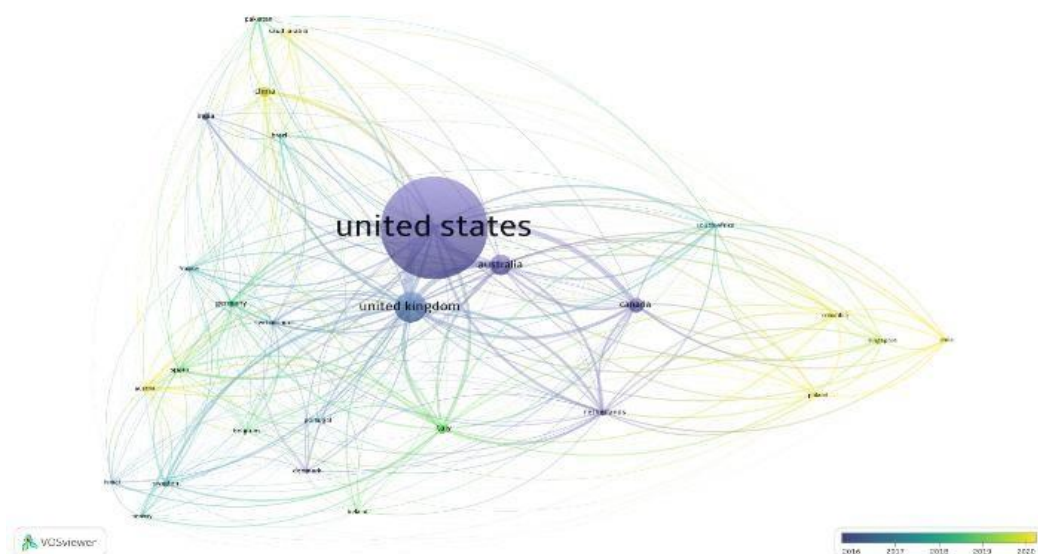
<b>RANK</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>CITATIONS</b>	<b>TLS</b>
1	United States of America	1122	164	28388
2	United Kingdom	294	1058	26834
3	Australia	192	3306	19063
4	Canada	131	21	12702
5	China	86	3063	7053
6	Italy	83	58	16054
7	Germany	56	25	7682
8	India	56	111	3357
9	Netherland	53	76	11195
10	Spain	45	825	7662
11	Sweden	44	43	6140
12	Switzerland	39	382	6561
13	France	37	142	5405
14	Denmark	33	1435	3317
15	Brazil	28	611	4929
16	Suadi Arabia	27	355	3791
17	Belgium	26	47	3612
18	South Africa	25	76	7837
19	Pakistan	24	1147	3765
20	Portugal	23	305	2595

## 5.2 Country bibliographic coupling

Bibliographic coupling occurs only when two documents cite a third study in common. In the case of countries, bibliometric coupling occurs only when their publication, a document from two country cites a third document. Thus, this shows how other countries use similar literature in their publication, erstwhile focusing on a similar point. The following graphic network visualization is an exemplary example based on each country's minimum as shown in Fig. 1.

## 5.3 Authors bibliographic coupling

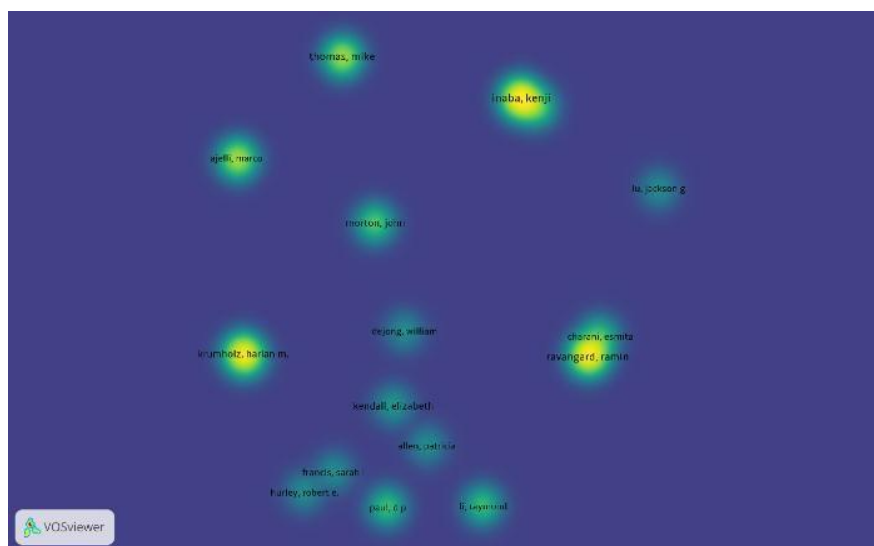
As per the concept of bibliographic coupling, the cluster having the same color presents a common research area. In the database overall, there are 11081 authors in Table 2. After the minimum publication limitation was set to three, there were 66 left that met the threshold. The Fig. 2 shows the collaboration and connection of authors in the field of marketing strategies in higher education institutions. It has been observed that there are seventeen clusters that are quite fragmented from each other into seventeen clusters.



**Fig. 1: Bibliographic coupling of countries**

**Table 2. Authors bibliographic coupling**

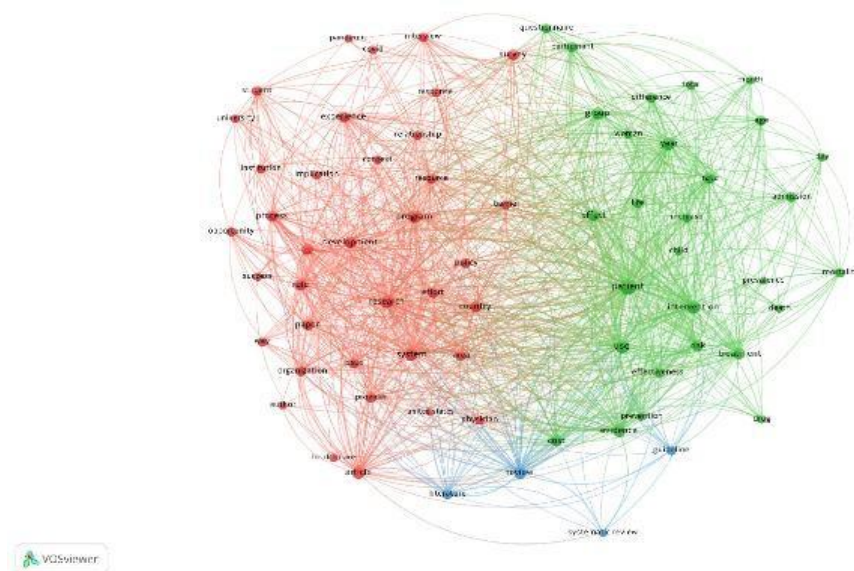
Rank	Author	Document	Citation	Link
1	Ajelli, M	3	85	25
2	Allen, P	3	28	01
3	Arena, R	3	28	00
4	Bahadori, M	4	38	03
5	Banerjee, S	3	223	01
6	Bastani, P	4	18	02
7	Bauman, A	3	11	02
8	Becker, Si	3	21	00
9	Berndtson, Ae	4	72	11
10	Bhutta, Za	4	557	06
11	Biffl, Wl	3	37	00
12	Black, Re	3	394	04
13	Blumenthal, D	3	103	00
14	Boltz, M	5	74	07
15	Bradley, Eh	4	690	20
16	Brown, A	3	26	01
17	Brown, S	3	62	01



**Fig. 2: Authors bibliographic coupling**

#### 5.4 Keyword co-occurrence

Similarly, to identify the future research direction for marketing strategies in private HEIs, the researcher needs to analyze the co-occurrence of keywords and topic trends of the themes. Indeed, keywords are the most essential part of an academic article. With the help of co-occurrence keywords, scholars can easily identify the research hotspots. Here, the researcher has created a cooccurrence graph in VOS viewer. In this observation, the researcher set a minimum of 100 occurrences of a keyword to analyze from 50602 keywords, and finally observed that 117 of them met the threshold, as shown in Fig. 3.



**Fig. 3: Keyword co-occurrence**

#### 6. Limitations

Wherein, the paper provides us ample of evidences to understand the importance of marketing strategy in private higher education institutions, but there are limitations also. While going through the concept, it simply let us know that it isn't a static in term, but continues and comprehensive changes could be seen. Though, the paper gives detailing as per the past author, but lacks in binding the review with the latest scenario of role played by marketing strategies in private institutions. In accordance with the studies, certain limitations in the review paper that need space in the future have been found.

- Firstly, the data accumulated for the study is perhaps only taken from Scopus. In the future, other database, like Web of Science and Dimension, can also be used to extract bibliographic data.
- Secondly, it has been observed that there are many similar duplicate data in bibliometric data, like singular and plural of the same keyword and likewise.
- Finally, in the future researcher can use different retrieval strategies to explore great strength to the work. Further, the researcher could generate networks of bibliography coupling and keyword co-occurrence with looser threshold setting to identify much more potential link between identified sub-themes to explore more detail and minute things for the literature.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, use of marketing concepts in higher education varies from one country to another as well from time to time. It is vital to note that student's behaviour toward the selection the type of higher education counts a lot for the private HEIs to rethink about their plans; and this keeps on changing. Therefore, it become essential to have continuous survey of students' thoughts. Even the thinking of urban students differs from the rural students. Though, neither the privatization of higher education nor marketing strategies are new phenomena for India, but due to uncertainty and changing students' behaviour now and then, we need to overhaul our old plans to restructure it so that it works according the requirement.

Definitely, marketing isn't one way strategy, but is multi-faceted- sometimes, word of mouth may attract its audience, later it may more planning is required to appease the audience. Thus, one can say, to make marketing concepts only partially applicable to the higher education institutions, as said by authors<sup>14)</sup>, that the approaches taken from other sectors or from commercial marketing platforms aren't readily transferable to higher education as it is. In such cases, students' behaviour is seen as a valuable source of information, Authors<sup>14)</sup> indicated that as their satisfaction depends on the relationship between their expectations and their perceptions of actual performance. As discussed by authors<sup>13)</sup> in their writing reveals applicants to higher education are no longer passive consumer; they era the one who make rational choices of higher education courses and institutions at the time of seeking admissions.

Thus, the chain of private higher education institutions that has mushroomed in all corners of India require to thoroughly study the impulse of students and accordingly plan the action, so that it could satisfy the consumers. The bottom of the line is that private institutions ensure their institutional image and reputation and based on these principles construct the brand that is essential to attract the students, and these three are based on the quality services that embellish a certain gesture towards students and stakeholders. In the case of higher education teaching, research, and other services are the basic components that provide satisfaction to the admission-seeking students and their parents.

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