MARKETING OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES – PERCEPTIONS OF THE PARENTS / STUDENTS

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Abstract

India, with more than a billion residents, has the second largest education system in the world (after china) and stands third in student enrollment after China and USA. The quality of instruction varies widely, depending on the region of the country and whether one is enrolled in a State supported public school or a fee based private school.

The Marketing Management philosophy holds that achieving organizational goals depends on determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors do. (Philip Kotler & Gary Armstrong). Therefore Marketing of Educational Services is a process of creating / designing Educational Courses and providing the services for which there is actual and / or potential demand.

Need for the study: Education plays an essential role in the overall personality development of individual. The quality of the Educational services in India differs incomparably. Hence there is a need to understand the Expectations of the Parents / Students about the Educational System, particularly about the School Education System, as this forms the very base of the Education.

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Objectives of the Study

- To understand the concept of Schooling System in India.
- To examine the Perceptions of Parents and Students regarding Excellent Schools.

Conclusion

The Respondents opine that the identified twenty two factors, that include the curriculum, teaching and the tangibles, are all important factors for the identification of the Excellent Schools. Out of the different types of Schools the Religious Schools and the State Government run schools are rated the lowest. This is an alarm for the State Governments. Corrective measures have to be implemented without any further delay.

Introduction

India, with more than a billion residents, has the second largest education system in the world (after china). Experts estimate that 28.5 percent of its current population is under the age of 15. But counter to the image of India as a youth full engine of economic growth where many urban based citizens work in some of the best technology-centered jobs in the world, males in India complete just 2.9 years of schooling on an average, females just 1.8 years. And for the small proportions that do persist through primary and secondary schooling, the quality of instruction varies widely, depending on the region of the country and whether one is enrolled in a State supported public school or a fee based private school.

India is next only to China and USA in student enrollment in the higher education sector. It is the largest as far as the number of higher educational institutions is concerned. Universities like Visva Bharati University, Banaras Hindu University, University of Allahabad, Jamia Millia Islamia are a few reputed ones which were established during the pre-independence period. The quality and quantity of the skilled manpower, including intellectual skills, determines the competency of economic leadership of any society in the global market. Higher education is essential for any nation for its social and economic development. India is a fast growing democracy with a robust GDP growth of 7-8 per cent and rising year by year.

The term Marketing means *satisfying customer needs*. Marketing is defined as a social and managerial process whereby individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products / services and value with others. The Marketing Management philosophy holds that achieving organizational goals depends on determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors do. (Philip Kotler & Gary Armstrong).

Educational services sector (as defined by North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) 2002) comprises establishments whose primary activity is education, including public, not-for-profit, for-profit establishments and the regulatory framework. Therefore Marketing of Educational Services is a process of creating / designing Educational Courses and providing the services for which there is actual and / or potential demand. Marketing of Educational Services may include:

➢ An integrated effort to satisfy the Customers (Parents / Students) by making available the best possible services to them;

➢ It is a device to transform the potential Customers / Students into actual Customers / Students;

➢ It has to generate demand and expand market;

➢ It should harmonise the social and organisational interests;

➢ It involves fact finding, data gathering and analysis i.e., Market Research;

➢ It applies all the Marketing Principles;

➢ It is social as well as Managerial process.

Need for the study

Education plays an essential role in the overall personality development of individual. What is more important is provision of quality education rather than opening institutions without taking care about quality issues. With the passage of time it was realized that education is necessary for all without any discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, religion and gender. Gradually, various National, International, State Boards and Organizations of School Education came into existence to serve the objectives of the Educational System. However the quality of the services delivered differs incomparably. Hence there is a need to understand the Expectations of the

Parents / Students about the Educational System, particularly about the School Education System, as this forms the very base of the Education.

Objectives of the Study

The Study is conducted with the following objectives:

- To understand the concept of Schooling System in India.
- To examine the Perceptions of the Parents and Students about Excellent Schools.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the Study is limited to understanding the Perceptions of the Respondents about the various types of Schools that are functioning in India, particularly in the Telangana State.

Period of the Study

For the Primary Data collection the period of the study is from September 2017 to February 2018.

Methodology

The following are the details of the Methodology used.

➢ **Sources of Data:** Primary and Secondary Sources are used for collecting the Data for the Study.

Primary Data: Primary Data is collected from the Students and Parents by a Schedule / questionnaire. The Sample of the Respondents is taken from the Students studying in the various colleges affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Nalgonda and their Parents.

Secondary Data: Secondary Sources include various publications of the Government of India, State Governments, Government of India Census, other related organizations and published Research articles.

➢ **Sample Selection**

The sample size is 300. The sample size is selected based on krejcie morgan model. As per this model, for a population size of more than 10 lakh a sample of 384 would suffice.

Tools for Analysis

Data are analyzed by using simple tools such as Ratios, Averages, and Percentages.

Limitations of the Study

The following are the limitations of the Study:

1. Since sampling itself suffers from certain inherent limitations, likewise the present study, which is based on sample, may also suffer from certain limitations on account of the sample procedure. Limitations of the sample may affect the quality of results.

2. The quality of the schools varies from region to region, and the perceptions changes from person to person.

3. Data are collected from those parents / students who were willing to share their experiences. The parents / students were not selected on a random sample.

4. The scope of the study as regards to students / parents (sample) is limited to the Nalgonda only. Hence the conclusions may not be generalized.

Review of Literature

The study of earlier research work will certainly help the researcher in presenting the report in a clear and precise manner with valuable suggestions and conclusions. In fact, a brief history of yesteryear's reports, surveys and research articles in the similar area helps as a 'backbone' for the present study. Therefore a review of the past, related studies in the field are as important as the present study.

Kaiu.Schnabel Jacquelynne[1] conclude that irrespective of students' social origin, the correlation between parents' education and socio-economic status and the educational outcomes of their offspring remains a rather universal phenomenon. **Kamalesh, Harjeeth**[2]analyses as to what extent such efforts in the field of education have succeeded in different states of the country. **Uvrasi Sahni**[3] examines the school dropout rates and low levels of learning. **Saima Siddiqi**[4], investigates differences for boys and girls in terms of the relation between different aspects of creativity in two secondary schools of Aligarh city and findings reveal that boys do not differ significantly in the variables. **K.C.Chakrabarthy**[5] examines the composition of the higher education system and the causing factors. **Ali mozaffari, Raouf moini**[6], studies about the importance of Vocabulary in specific disciplines and the need for the published material for the same**. Parker J Palmer** [7], this primer on authentic education explores how mind and heart can work together in the learning process. **Carr, Sarah**[8], reports that anecdotal evidence and studies

by individual institutions suggest that course completion and program retention rates are generally lower in distance education courses than in their face-to-face counterparts. **James mcleskey[9]**, conducted a study address the major trends in the field of special education. **Hazel, Francis[10],** this booklet aims to establish a consensus on broad educational goals and to rebuild the sense of community ownership of schools that is missing today.

Research Gap

The above review of literature points out that many studies have been made on schooling system. But a very few studies have been made to examine the Perceptions of the Parents / Students about their understanding of Excellent Schools. It would therefore be appropriate to make such a study to address the gap.

Indian Schooling System – An Overview

In ancient times, India had the Gurukula system of education in which anyone who wished to study went to a teacher's (Guru) house and requested to be taught. If accepted as a student by the guru, he would then stay at the guru's place and help in all activities at home. This not only created a strong tie between the teacher and the student, but also taught the student everything about running a house. The guru taught everything the child wanted to learn, from Sanskrit to the Holy Scriptures and from Mathematics to Metaphysics. The student stayed as long as she wished or until the guru felt that he had taught everything he could teach. All learning was closely linked to nature and to life, and not confined to memorizing some information.

The modern school system was brought to India, including the English language, originally by Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay in the 1830s. The curriculum was confined to "modern" subjects such as science and mathematics, and subjects like metaphysics and philosophy were considered unnecessary. Teaching was confined to classrooms and the link with nature was broken, as also the close relationship between the teacher and the student.

The Uttar Pradesh (a State in India) Board of High School and Intermediate Education was the first Board set up in India in the year 1921 with jurisdiction over Rajputana, Central India and Gwalior. In 1929, the Board of High School and Intermediate Education, Rajputana, was

established. Later, boards were established in some of the States. But eventually in 1952, the constitution of the board was amended and it was renamed as Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). All schools in Delhi and some other regions came under the Board. It was the function of the Board to decide on aspects like curriculum, textbooks and examination system for all schools affiliated to it. Today there are thousands of schools affiliated to the Board, both within India and in many other countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

The School System

India is divided into 29 States and 7 "Union Territories". The States have their own elected Governments while the Union Territories are ruled directly by the Government of India, with the President of India appointing an administrator for each Union Territory. As per the Constitution of India, school education was originally a State subject —that is, the States had complete authority on deciding policies and implementing them. The role of the Government of India (GoI) was limited to coordination and deciding on the standards of higher education. This was changed with a constitutional amendment in 1976 so that education now comes in the *concurrent list*. That is, school education policies and programmes are suggested at the national level by the GoI though the State Governments have a lot of freedom in implementing programmes. Policies are announced at the national level periodically. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), set up in 1935, continues to play a lead role in the evolution and monitoring of educational policies and programmers.

There is a national organization that plays a key role in developing policies and programmers', called the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) that prepares a National Curriculum Framework. Each State has its counterpart called the State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT). These are the bodies that essentially propose educational strategies, curricula, pedagogical schemes and evaluation methodologies to the States' departments of education. The SCERTs generally follow guidelines established by the NCERT. But the States have considerable freedom in implementing the education system.

The National Policy on Education, 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) 1992 envisaged free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality for all children below 14 years before the

21st Century. The Government committed to earmark 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for education, half of which would be spent on primary education. The expenditure on Education as a percentage of GDP also rose from 0.7 per cent in 1951-52 to about 3.6 per cent in 1997-98.

The school system in India has four levels: lower primary (age 6 to 10), upper primary (11 and 12), high (13 to 15) and higher secondary (17 and 18). The lower primary school is divided into five "standards", upper primary school into two, high school into three and higher secondary into two. Students have to learn a common curriculum largely (except for regional changes in mother tongue) till the end of high school.

There are mainly three streams in school education in India. Two of these are coordinated at the national level, of which one is under the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and was originally meant for children of central government employees who are periodically transferred and may have to move to any place in the country. A number of "central schools" (named Kendriya Vidyalayas) have been established for the purpose in all main urban areas in the country, and they follow a common schedule so that a student going from one school to another on a particular day will hardly see any difference in what is being taught. Kendriya Vidyalayas admit other children also if seats are available.

The second central scheme is the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE). It is understood that this was started as a replacement for the Cambridge School Certificate. The idea was mooted in a conference held in 1952 under the Chairmanship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then Minister for Education. The main purpose of the conference was to consider the replacement of the overseas Cambridge School Certificate Examination by an All India Examination.

In addition to the above, there are a relatively small number of schools that follow foreign curricula such as the Senior Cambridge. Each State in the country has its own Department of Education that runs its own school system with its own textbooks and evaluation system.

Mostly, the schooling system in India has Pre Primary Stage, the Primary Stage, the Secondary Stage, the Senior Secondary Stage, the Under Graduation, the Post Graduation and the Research Courses. The student spends about 13 years (including the preprimary stage) in the school for earning Schooling Certificate.

National Policy on Education:

The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a policy formulated by the Government of India to promote education amongst India's people. The policy covers elementary education to colleges in both rural and urban India. The first NPE was promulgated in 1968 by the government of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and the second by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986. The recent developments in the National Education Policy include:

- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)/Right to Education (RTE)
- National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)
- Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) for development of secondary education,launched in 2009.
- Inclusive Education for the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS IEDSS)
- Saakshar Bharat (Saakshar Bharat)/Adult Education
- Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) for development of higher education, launched in 2013.

In India, there are multiple ways and methods of imparting primary education. There are different curriculums, methods of teaching, authorities to oversee the functioning of the organizations (schools or educational institutions) and different evaluation methods. The Government of India is putting efforts to stream line the education system, including the primary education system.

Excellent Schools – Perceptions of the Parents / Students

Marketing is about identifying and meeting human and social needs profitably. Marketing Management is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. (Philip Kotler). For identifying the needs of the

Stakeholders there is a need to understand their perceptions towards the Product / Service which they require. The Parents of the presently School going Children, who are the decision makers in identifying and deciding about the school for their wards, and the cost bearers, and the Students who are pursuing their Post Graduation Course, who were erstwhile students of the schools, have the first hand information about the functioning of the Schools. Hence their perceptions about what factors contribute in the making of the Excellent Schools forms an essential input for the Marketing of the Educational Services.

Definitions: The following is the brief explanation of the terms and concepts used in the Study:

➢ **School:** A School is an institution designed to provide learning spaces and learning environments for the teaching of students (or pupils) under the direction of teacher.

➢ **Parent:** A Parent is a caregiver of the offspring in their own species. In human a parent is the caretaker of a child (where child refers to offspring not necessarily age).

➢ **Student:** A Student or pupil is a learner or same who attends an educational institution. Student also refers to someone who is learning a topic or who is a student of certain topic or person.

➢ **Various types of schools**

1. State Government Schools: State Schools generally refers to primary, secondary or High schools mandated for or offered to all children without charge, funded in whole or in part by State Government.

2. Model schools are graded schools usually connected with a normal school or teachers' training college and used as a model in organization and methods of teaching.

3. Gurukulas/ashram schools are residential schools, where both teachers and students reside in the same vicinity.

4. Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools are a system of central government schools in India that have been instituted under the aegis of the ministry of human resources development (MHRD). Its objective is to educate children of the employees in the transferable jobs, including defence services.

5. Navodaya schools are run by Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, New Delhi, an autonomous organization under the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. JNVs are fully residential and co-educational

schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), New Delhi, with classes from VI to XII standard. JNVs are specifically tasked with finding talented children in rural areas of India and providing them with an education equivalent to the best residential school system, without regard to their family's socio-economic condition.

6. **Sainik Schools** are a system of schools in India established and managed by the Sainik Schools Society under Ministry of Defense. They were conceived in 1961 by V. K. Krishna Menon, the then Defense Minister of India, to rectify the regional and class imbalance amongst the Officer cadre of the Indian Military, and to prepare students for entry into the National Defense Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, Pune and Indian Naval Academy.

7.Private schools: All those schools that are not funded by Central or State Governments are considered as Private schools.

8. International school is a school that promotes international education, in an international environment, either by adopting a curriculum such as that of the International Baccalaureate, Edexcel or Cambridge International Examinations, or by following a national curriculum different from that of the school's country of residence.

9. Missionary school is a religious school originally developed and run by Christian missionaries.

10.Madrasas is a specific type of religious school or college for the study of the Islamic religion, though this may not be the only subject studied.

10.Religious Schools impart teaching of a particular religion and its varied aspects, its beliefs, doctrines, rituals, customs, rites, and personal roles.

11. Special Schools also known as **special needs education**, **aided education** or **exceptional education** imparts education to the differently-abled students.

12. Coeducation schools also known as **mixed-gender education**, **coeducation** (abbreviated to **co-ed** or **coed**), is a system of education where males and females are educated together.

13. Gender based schools also known as **single-gender education** is the practice of conducting education where male and female students attend separate classes or in separate buildings or schools.

14. Private boarding schools are schools at which most or all of the students live during the part of the year that they go to lessons.

➢   **Demographic Profile:** Table I shows the Demographic Profile of the Parent / Student Respondents.

As it can be observed from Table I, Maximum number of the Parent / Student Respondents are in the age group of 15-25 years, most of them are male, are students pursuing their PG Courses, are from Rural Areas and sticking to the Indian traditions, are living with their families.

Table I: Demographic Profile of the Respondents			
S.No	**Demographic Profile**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1.	**Age:** 15-25	259	86.33%
	26-35	28	9.33%
	36-45	8	2.67%
	46-55	5	1.67%
	Total	300	100%
2.	**Gender:** Male	202	67.33%
	Female	98	32.67%
	Total	300	100%
3.	**Education:** Un educated	6	2%
	School Education	6	2%
	Intermediate	8	2.67%
	Under Graduation	95	31.67%
	Post Graduation	172	57.33%
	Total	300	100%
4.	**Occupation:** Employee	40	13.33%
	Profession	3	1.0%
	Farmer	243	81.0%
	Student	6	2.0%
	Others	8	2.66%

	Total	300	100%
5.	**Residential Areas:** Rural	204	68%
	Urban	96	32%
	Total	300	100%
6.	**Household status:** Living alone	1	0.33%
	Living with spouse	6	2%
	Living with spouse & Children	27	9%
	Living with Children	1	0.33%
	Living with Family	265	88.33%
	Total	300	100%

Source: Primary Date

Table II shows the Perceptions of the Parent / Student respondents towards the factors that contribute in the making of an Excellent School. Majority of the Respondents agreed that the factors mentioned in the questionnaire are important in assessing or identifying a school as Excellent School. As it can be observed from Table II and also from Chart I that highest rating is given to the implementation of the CBSE Syllabus followed by good Laboratory facilities. Lowest rating is given to the easy accessibility of the school.

S.No.	**Table II: Perceptions of the Respondents towards Excellent Schools**						
S.No.		**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**	**Don't know / Can't Say**
1	Excellent School-CBSE Syllabus	1	9	27	80	177	6
2	Excellent School-State Syllabus	7	14	58	144	72	5
3	Excellent School-Adequate teaching staff	5	31	59	98	106	1
4	Excellent School-Qualified teaching staff	8	21	42	110	117	2
5	Excellent School – Discipline for staff	8	24	60	101	103	4
6	Excellent School-ICT	3	26	71	111	78	11
7	Excellent School- Discipline for Students	10	28	45	100	111	6
8	Excellent School-Laboratory Facilities	4	25	33	100	137	1

9	Excellent School-Library Facilities	4	21	49	128	96	2
10	Excellent School--Co-Curricular Activities	10	28	70	106	84	2
11	Excellent School-medium of instruction	8	23	60	111	97	1
12	Excellent School-Study hours	4	21	66	108	99	2
13	Excellent School-Producing rank holders	16	22	60	101	99	2
14	Excellent School-Competitive events	7	20	64	121	85	3
15	Excellent School-extracurricular Activities	4	13	94	102	86	1
16	Excellent School-Sports and games	7	24	73	105	91	0
17	Excellent School-Structured buildings	6	24	70	86	113	1
18	Excellent School-Class rooms	5	23	49	117	106	0
19	Excellent School-Amenities	6	17	64	103	110	0
20	Excellent School-Commutation	6	17	55	112	110	0
21	Excellent School-Hostel facilities	9	24	59	118	90	0
22	Excellent School-Location	10	30	86	96	77	1

Source: Primary Data

SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

From Table III and Chart II it can be observed that the respondents have given the highest rating to the Navodaya Schools followed by Kendriya Vidyalayas. Both are managed by the Central Government Boards / Sangathans. Least rating is given to the Religious Schools, Madrassas and State Government Schools in that order. Surprisingly State Government run Schools are rated low in almost all the factors. The respondents expressed their ignorance about the Schools that are run for Differently abled children.

CHART: I
RATING FOR VARIOUS FACTORS
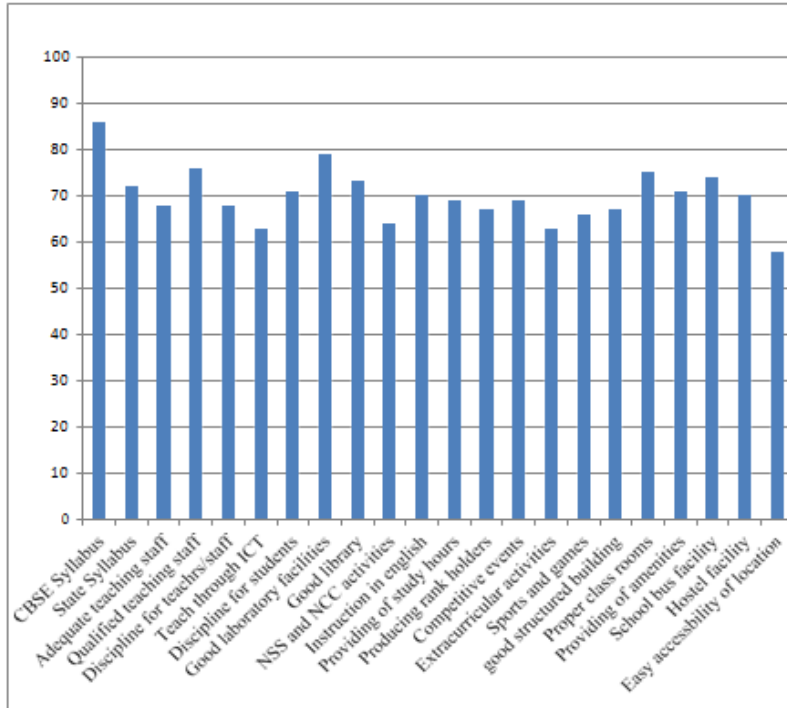
Source: Primary Data

Table III: Rating for Different Types of School

S.No.	Schools	Yes	No
1	State Government schools	10.66	76.67
2	Model Schools	74.33	7
3	Gurukulas / Ashram schools	68.67	8.67
4	Kendriya Vidyalaya School	77.33	6.66
5	Navodaya Schools	78.33	6.66
6	Sainik Schools	68.66	10.33
7	Private Schools	62	16.33
8	International Schools	63	12.33
9	Missionary Schools	52.34	9.67
10	Madrasas	7.33	5.66
11	Religious Schools	5.33	85.66
12	Special Schools	8.33	57.34
13	Co-education Schools	70.67	7

14	Gender based Schools	57.66	15.33
15	Private boarding Schools	51.34	20
16	Any other Schools	0	0
Source: Primary Data			

CHART.:II
RATING FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCHOOLS
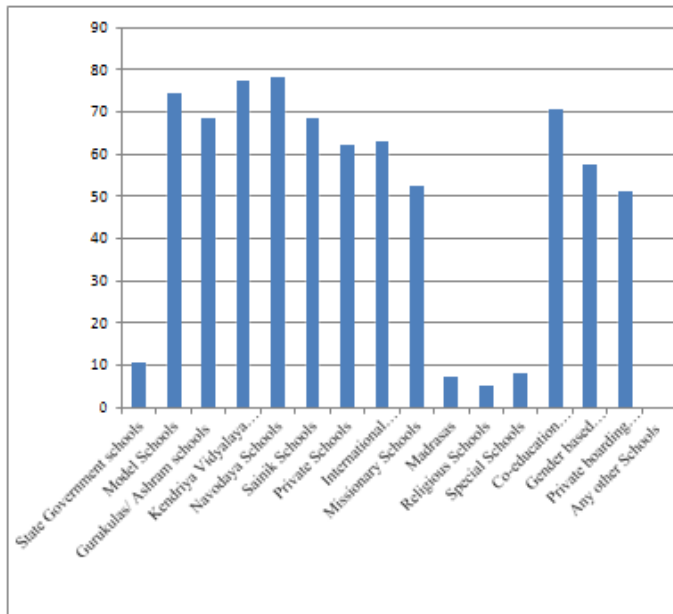
Source: Primary Data

Conclusion

The following are the conclusions of the Study:

➢ There is no uniformity in the curriculum, delivery mechanism, tangibles, regulation and the cost of Educational Services offered in India;

➢ The Students (of the schools for the previous years) and the Parents of the Students (both for the present students and the students who have completed their schooling) opine that the identified twenty two factors, that include the curriculum, teaching and the tangibles, are all important factors for the identification of the Excellent Schools;

➢ Out of the different types of Schools the Religious Schools and the State Government run schools are rated the lowest. This is an alarm for the State Governments. The Central Government regulated Schools are given higher rating.

Suggestions

"Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man (Swami Vivekananda)". The Education System has to work towards bringing out the perfection in the human being. For achieving this objective the stakeholders should invariably identify the needs of the society and fulfill those needs. Hence for properly Marketing the Educational Services the following points have to be considered:

➢ Uniformity has to be brought into the Education System, atleast in School Education;

➢ Corrective measures have to be implemented without any further delay by the State Government/s to improve the delivery mechanism, particularly in the State Government run schools.

➢ All the Stakeholders, including the Regulatory Authorities have to introduce the necessary reforms that can contribute to the overall personality development of student, more so in the Schooling Systems, and thus reach to the expectations of the Parents / Students. Such Reforms will definitely contribute in the shaping of the Young India.

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