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Increasing student engagement through digital branding in higher education marketing

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Abstract

As a result of the employment of social media, interpersonal contact and user involvement are made possible, which results in the modification of traditional hierarchical communication techniques and the introduction of an unexpected component into the decision-making process of customers. Even though it is considered to be a component of internet marketing, social media marketing is a crucial component for individuals and businesses that need to retain their competitiveness. On the other hand, the success of social media marketing is dependent on the presence of innovative items, the responsiveness of organizations to the market, and the construction of powerful online platforms.

Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook are just some of the social networking sites that have evolved into indispensable tools for marketers. Since they enable interactive contact, these platforms are of tremendous value when it comes to the marketing of companies and services. Websites that facilitate social networking play an important part in the spread of information about educational institutions of higher learning. These websites also serve as effective means for recruiting prospective students. It has not yet been determined whether or not the content that is broadcast on these internet platforms has an effect on the cognitive processes that prospective students use when making choices about their education.

The acknowledgment of user interaction on social media platforms is the most important non-financial benefit that organizations may get from their use of these platforms. When we have a thorough awareness of user interaction across a variety of platforms, we may have a better grasp of the influence that it has on how people perceive businesses. Instagram has become a significant medium for educational institutions of higher learning due to its visual-centric qualities, as well as its heightened engagement rates among a varied, youthful, and multinational community.

This article places a strong emphasis on the relevance of brand equity within the context of the marketing strategy used by educational institutions of higher learning. When it comes to the idea of brand equity, there are several elements that may have an impact on it. Some of these characteristics include, but are not limited to, the personality of the brand, social credibility, and market position. It is quite necessary for educational institutions to make certain that they provide excellent services and facilities to their students. Nevertheless, the construction of a communication system that is both competent and effective is equally important for the purpose of boosting the positioning of the university's brand and effectively managing the value of its brand. The concept of "brand soul" serves as the basis for this, and it refers to the way the teachers and staff of the educational institution become the embodiment of the brand.

Keywords: Social media marketing; Student engagement; Higher education marketing; Campus marketing; Brand engagement

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1. Introduction

The phrase "social media" refers to a wide variety of contemporary internet applications that have attracted a lot of attention and financial interest in recent years. The discussion centers on fundamental topics such as the impact that social media has on human behavior (Barker, 2006), the potential of social media to serve as a medium for education, and the effectiveness of social media as a promotional tool (Spaulding, 2010). The notion of employing social media as a promotional instrument in the realm of higher education is an attractive prospect, owing to the triumphant precedents in the corporate domain with regards to social media marketing and the extensive acceptance of social media among the younger populace (Boyd, 2008).

The employment of marketing techniques by higher education institutions has been shown to be a successful method of attracting prospective students, as proven by research that have particularly explored the decision-making process involved in picking a university (Helgesen, 2008). This implies that the utilization of marketing tactics may be an effective means of attracting prospective students.

A prolonged and beneficial economic development that Indonesia has been enjoying in recent times has resulted in an increase of the market for the education sector. This expansion has been seen by the education sector. Education is increasingly seen as a worthwhile and profitable long-term investment for the children of families whose financial situations are improving. This perception is growing as families' financial situations improve. It is predicted that school and higher education fees would increase by around 5–10% on an annual basis. However, these increases may vary depending on the market group that each tertiary institution intends to serve. As a platform for social interaction, communication, and business transactions, social media is becoming an increasingly important medium.

An ever-increasing number of businesses operating in a wide range of sectors are incorporating social media platforms into their marketing strategies or are planning to do so in the near future. Increasingly, educational establishments of a higher level are displaying a heightened interest in the potential of social media as a promotional tool. It is significant because it offers the opportunity to engage with prospective students and to lure them to the institution. One of the most important areas of research is to have an understanding of how social media may influence the choices that students make and how it can make the process of selecting a certain institution easier.

The field of marketing communications is a major study topic that focuses on the gaps that exist between the information that prospective students want and the information that institutions communicate via their standard communication methods. The authors Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) have conducted a comprehensive investigation of this subject. In the field of marketing communications for higher education, the inconsistencies that have been identified show that there is potential for development. According to Clark et al. (2017), the way higher education institutions, which operate as a service sector (Uncles, 2018), develop interactions with their stakeholders has been influenced by the changes that have occurred in the trends that are prevalent in society. It is necessary to compete for human resources, academic specialists, and financial money (Stamp, 2004) that is the driving force behind this shift. Additionally, it is the demand to build a cohesive corporate identity (Opoku et al., 2006) that is the driving factor behind this change. There is a body of work that is now prevalent in this topic that largely focuses on studying the ways in which these platforms facilitate the recruitment of students (Le et al., 2019), boost student loyalty (Garza & Royo, 2019), and promote university brand awareness. Kinsky et al. (2016) highlights the fact that several academic investigations have been conducted to investigate the efficacy of social networks as a tool for educational purposes. As a result of its ability to modify online communication in the modern day, social media platforms have brought about a significant change in the way people communicate with one another. Based on the findings of Robinson et al. (2019), it has been shown that social media platforms have evolved into highly effective instruments that facilitate communication and participation among various social groups, organizations, and businesses.

According to Kemendiknas (2017), more than one and a half million students in Indonesia graduate from secondary school each year and are offered the chance to continue their education. A positive outlook for the educational landscape of the nation in the years to come is indicated by this. With over 24,000 high schools and vocational institutions in all, Indonesia is a country that is proud of its extensive educational system. Each campus of these educational institutions has the potential to accept anywhere from 3,000 to 10,000 applicants, which means that they are able to offer admission tests to a significant number of candidates on an annual basis. There are roughly 500,000 students that take part in the SNMPTN on a yearly basis, according to the study that Dikti compiled in 2017.

The potential to arrange promotional exhibits at schools is possessed by private higher education institutions, and the frequency of these displays ranges from one hundred to two hundred and fifty each year. It is predicted that the related expenditure for each show should fall somewhere in the region of Rp 1.5 million to Rp 5 million. There is a projected

total of more than one trillion rupiah in marketing expenditures across Indonesian campuses that are aimed at attracting prospective students. Private institutions allocate an annual advertising budget that ranges from five hundred million to eight billion rupiah.

2. Literature Review

One of the most important social commerce strategies that is of value to businesses is the creation of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) within a virtual community. The findings of previous studies suggest that electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) plays a key role as a source of information for customers who participate in online shopping. A large majority of consumers, which is 91%, stated a preference for checking reviews on the web, blog contributions, and other forms of user-generated content prior to making purchases of new products or services, according to the findings of Cheung and Thadani. This preference was stated by the consumers when they were questioned about the decision-making process that they use while making purchases. Furthermore, the findings of the survey demonstrated that forty-six percent of respondents agreed that the sorts of material do in fact have an effect on the decision-making process that they engage in. An investigation that was conducted not too long ago concluded that the procedures that were used to evaluate or judge anything were absolutely devoid of reliability and openness. Because of this, there is a significant amount of doubt about the effectiveness of their performance.

There have been several research that have explored the usefulness of online social networking platforms. These studies have been conducted within the context of word-of-mouth (WOM) communication and the significance of information distribution. The academic studies that have been carried out have been carried out in a broad variety of different environments. In addition to this, it is available to a wide variety of internet users, which makes it a great deal simpler to disseminate content across a variety of digital media. There is a considerable benefit associated with this feature of the platform.

Some exploratory research has been conducted to investigate the impact that electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) via social media platforms has on the purchasing patterns and intentions of consumers. Since the first breakout of the COVID-19 virus, there has been a discernible rise in the number of individuals who have made their purchases via the convenience of the internet. This is something that has been seen by others. It is possible to acquire a broad range of reconditioned items from a few different sellers, including those who operate online as well as those who operate offline. In recent years, there has been an increasing worry over the evaluation of the legitimacy of information sources to take into consideration ideas for items that have been remanufactured. A further benefit is that it has the potential to have a direct influence on the decisions that customers ultimately make on their purchases, which is a significant advantage.

Research on the environmental consciousness of consumers and their intentions to make purchases in a way that is environmentally responsible is still in its infancy, according to the present situation. Therefore, the interaction between the effects of social media and word-of-mouth in regard to the transmission of information may have an influence on the chance that customers would acquire reconditioned equipment. This is because social media encourages people to share their experiences with others. As a result of the fact that word-of-mouth communication contains instances such as social media and word-of-mouth communication, this is the situation that exists.

Many kinds of social contact have been transformed and simplified as a result of the introduction of the Internet, which has made them much more accessible. One of the most significant benefits is the increased ease with which individuals are able to share their experiences and perspectives with one another. Recent developments in technology have introduced a fresh and creative perspective to word-of-mouth marketing. Hennig-Thurau et al. describe e-WOM as the spreading of favorable or unfavorable ideas about a service or firm by persons who are future, present, or past customers of the service or business. Both positive and negative opinions may be expressed by individuals. These declarations are accessible to a wide variety of persons and organizations because to the dissemination of the internet.

The category of online interactive programs that are collectively referred to as social media is a phenomenon that is fast developing, even though it is a phenomenon that has emerged relatively recently. According to Nambisan and Nambisan (2008) and Shankar and Malhotra (2009), the apps depend on material that is provided by users rather than by providers. This makes it easier for users to communicate with one another and collaborate with one another. In their research, Constantinides and Fountain (2008) identified many social media applications as components of the Web 2.0 platform. These applications include blogs, online communities, social networks, online bulletin boards, and content aggregators. According to O'Reilly (2005), this categorization was developed in combination with the social impacts and the technology that enabled them.

Previous studies that have been conducted on the subject of social media content categories in higher education marketing have shown that persons who follow institutions on social media have a positive attitude toward material of this kind. According to Peruta and Shields (2018), the material in question is subject to a variety of topics, some of which include sports, news relating to universities, school pride, and admissions practices. It is possible to rapidly analyze and monitor the effectiveness of postings and campaigns thanks to the capabilities provided by social media. There is an analytics tool available on every social media network, which may be used to aid social media observation. Managers have the ability to see the instant effect that their social media material has, which includes indicators like the number of views, engagement, and conversions. It is possible to use social media listening to track public data connected to the school's brand, in addition to monitoring data on the school's own web sites. According to Rouse (2013), the term "social media listening" refers to the process of taking note of and analyzing discussions that take place on the internet about a certain business, people, product, or brand. There is the potential for individuals to learn beneficial insights about attitudes and behaviors that are associated with the brand identity of the institution.

It is possible for individuals to participate in direct communication by replying to comments or engaging in debates, as well as exploring fresh kinds of material with the intention of attracting their audience. In contrast to the traditional marketing channels that are used by educational institutions of higher learning, social media offers a multitude of advantages that are intrinsic to the platform.

When included into a more comprehensive marketing and communication strategy, organic social media posting, which is a term that describes the process of creating and publishing material on social media platforms without receiving payment, may be a method that is both cost-effective and efficient. This contrasts with more conventional means of marketing, such as printing and mailing brochures or incurring server expenses for website hosting, which need the payment of fees for the creation of accounts or pages, the uploading of elements essential to brand identification, and the posting of content. In addition, the functions that are offered by these platforms may make the process of developing and distributing content quite simple and straightforward. Furthermore, the group that is comprised of university students has easy access to social media. Web 2.0 is generally considered to be the most recent phase. The general population has shown a substantial amount of support for the usage of social media, which has made it a vital factor in determining the behavior of consumers when it comes to making purchases. A considerable amount of power has been conferred onto modern-day customers because of the growth of user-generated content and peer-to-peer communication. This has led to a decrease in the consumers' dependence on push marketing and traditional ways of marketing communication.

According to Constantinides and Fountain (2008), businesses that are interested in incorporating a social media program into their marketing strategy must first acknowledge that social media is introducing an uncontrollable factor into the decision-making process of customers' purchasing behavior. This is an essential step for businesses that are eager to incorporate social media into their marketing strategy. Marketers have been reported to have recognized the growing relevance of social media, which has resulted in more market transparency and a decline in their traditional market influence and control over media and communication processes. This has led to a drop in the amount of market openness that has occurred. In accordance with Boyd and Ellison (2010), social networking sites are online platforms that enable users to construct a profile inside a restricted environment. This profile may be either fully public or partially public, depending on the user's preferences. Additionally, users could construct a list of other persons with whom they have a connection, as well as participate in browsing and communicating with themselves and their network of connections. Via the connections that are made between a person and other entities inside social networking programs, users are able to interact with one another via the construction of personal profiles, the invitation of friends and colleagues to see these profiles, and the exchange of emails and instant messages. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), personal profiles may include a variety of content, such as photographs, videos, recordings, and blogs, among other things. According to Murray and Waller (2007), social networking sites function as online communities that make it possible for individuals who have similar interests to connect with one another, interact with one another, or just socialize.

According to Kietzmann et al. (2011), the structural features of social networking sites are comprised of seven different components. A framework that is reminiscent of a honeycomb is formed by the characteristics when they are combined. This framework is comprised of seven important components, which are as follows: identification, discussions, sharing, existence, connections, reputation, and group engagement. The behavior of customers is directly influenced and influenced by these aspects to a significant degree. The use of social media has had a growing impact on a few areas of consumer behavior, such as awareness, the acquisition of information, viewpoints, attitudes, purchasing patterns, and post-purchase conversations and evaluations (Mangold & Faulstow, 2009). According to the authors, social media encompasses a wide range of digital platforms, which include but are not limited to online communities for informal communication, company-sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer email exchanges, websites and

communities for rating consumer goods or services, web-based panels for conversation and discussion, moblogs that showcase digital media like videos, audio recordings, movies, or photographs, and social networking sites consisting of Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

The students of today do not have the information to understand how the world seemed before to the introduction of the Internet. The incorporation of social media channels is a crucial component in the field of higher education since it enables educational institutions to keep their ties with their student body ongoing. A great number of educational institutions make use of social media channels to improve the connection between staff and students, to enable the sharing of materials, and to create a venue in which students may voice their thoughts and viewpoints. According to Mason and Rennie (2007), the study underscores the fact that public places and interactions between diverse groups are essential elements that drive young people. As a result, these characteristics should boost young people's resolve and passion to acquire knowledge. Based on the findings of Valenzuela et al. (2008), Facebook has emerged as the most popular platform among students, having a substantial impact on the levels of life satisfaction, social trust, civic participation, and political engagement that students experience. Using factor analysis, Park et al. (2009) was able to identify the primary motivations that inspire students to join in and make use of Facebook groups. According to the findings of this inquiry, the components that were found were sociability, amusement, the pursuit of self-status, and the retrieval of information. Using Facebook as a medium for immediate communication and social contact with their peers is something that Cheung et al. (2011) suggest students do. Additionally, their active engagement in groups inside the site has a substantial impact on the routines that they follow while using the site. It is essential to keep in mind, however, that there is a possibility that a person's social identity that is associated with a certain group might get muddled if they are members of many groups. A study conducted by De Andrea and colleagues (2012) highlights the significance of social media in terms of facilitating the transition process for college students, particularly during the pre-enrollment and beginning of the semester phases. An understanding of student motivation within the context of the learning environment is provided by Nkhoma and colleagues (2016) in the form of a theoretical framework. There are four key features of the social media network Facebook that form the basis of this notion. These components include interaction, communication, social connections, and involvement in groups and communities. In their article, the authors emphasize the potential advantages that institutions may get by incorporating these features into their instructional strategies.

From a marketing point of view, networking sites and social media provide several benefits, including the ease of use, availability, and cost-effectiveness of their implementation. At the present day, a continually expanding populace is able to simply and conveniently access them via a variety of channels at any given hour. Because of their capacity to spread like wildfire, they can achieve greater success with a less amount of financial commitment. Because they allow for interactive connection, social media networks are often considered to be ideal platforms for marketers. (2013) According to Khan. Brown (1984) stressed the significance of promotional initiatives as an essential component in the process of achieving success in education. The thesis implies that social media platforms have the potential to be an efficient way of disseminating information and recruiting prospective students. This can be accomplished by giving information about the educational establishment, the application process, and the many events and activities that take place at the university. As a result of this potential, a great number of educational institutions, particularly institutes of higher education, have begun to use social media networks as a means of effectively communicating with the academic community that they are now a part of. Additionally, this method makes it possible to include past students, and more crucially, it serves as an excellent educational promotional tool for the purpose of recruiting potential students.

Literature research was carried out by Nyangau and Bado (2012) to explore the use of social media advertising in educational institutions such as colleges and universities. They came to the conclusion that the extent to which prospective students' decisions are influenced by the material that is published on social networking sites affiliated with public higher education institutions is yet unknown. According to reports, candidates have been seen utilizing social media networks associated with universities to seek advice and help prior to making judgments about their academic interests. When it comes to the Canadian context, the study that was carried out by Belanger and colleagues discovered that Facebook (FB) is the primary social networking site (SNS) that universities use to communicate information about events and activities that take place on campus. Twitter is mostly used for the purpose of facilitating online interactions and providing answers to inquiries.

Researchers and marketing professionals have a significant issue when it comes to evaluating the advantages that are a direct consequence of the tactics that are implemented by educational institutions via the usage of social media platforms. In the context of social media platforms, the term "engagement" refers to the way a follower or user interacts with and demonstrates interest in a certain institution. According to Fitzgerald (2010), the presence of the institution on these platforms is regarded to be a non-monetary benefit. According to Bruns, Sonka, Furco, and Swanson (2019), the analytics tools of social networks evaluate several sorts of follower interaction, such as likes, shares, and comments, to determine the levels of engagement that are present. Several authors, including Buhalis and Mamalakis (2015),

Hoffman and Fodor (2010), and Peters et al. (2013), have written on this subject in their own bodies of work. The interactions are excellent instances of involvement. Because of these interactions, we can measure and evaluate the degree to which users are involved on various social media platforms for comparison purposes. One could see that the functionality that is available to users on different platforms is different from one another. The authors Hoffman and Fodor (2010) have seen that it is feasible to conduct an analysis of the incidence of retweets and responses on Twitter, in addition to the occurrence of likes and comments on Facebook and Instagram. Recently, academic study has been concentrating on determining the extent to which individuals actively participate in social networks. The findings of this research have shown that the current literature on various platforms does not provide adequate information.

We have a better knowledge of how user engagement influences brand impression when we do research across several platforms via the use of research. In their 2011 article, Malthouse and Calder stressed how important it is to acknowledge that comprehending user engagement needs an awareness of the user's experience, which is also reliant on the context. For this reason, it is very necessary to conduct an analysis of user behavior and participation across several different platforms in order to get a more comprehensive comprehension of the concept of engagement. According to research conducted by Statista in 2019, Instagram is the social network that is seeing the fastest expansion around the globe. It now has more than one billion regular monthly users. Instagram's number of active users is lower than that of Facebook and YouTube, which are the two platforms with the highest number of users. The inclusion of visual content on Instagram has shown its value in the area of higher education institutions, particularly with regard to the development of meaningful connections and the promotion of discussions with users. Because of this, Instagram has developed into a platform that is more useful for strengthening communication between these businesses and the audience they are trying to reach.

Since the advent of contemporary times, several educational establishments of higher learning, regardless of whether they are public or private, have established an online presence and used Instagram as a very effective means of disseminating and promoting their brands. Berman (2018) and Robinson et al. (2019) have shown that individuals utilize their influence on social media platforms not only to promote their educational programs and enhance the image of their institution, but also to create a more personal connection with their clients. This is something that they have uncovered. The fact that Instagram places such a strong focus on visual material makes it a more approachable social networking site than others, which in turn attracts a diverse audience, particularly students studying abroad.

A youthful and diverse global audience that has a substantial degree of connection with online companies makes up Instagram's demographics. Instagram users are more likely to interact with businesses online. Because of this, the platform is particularly useful for educational institutions that are looking to increase their presence on the internet. It is possible that utilizing Instagram as a platform for advertising might be a successful technique for targeting this highly respected demographic (Higher Education Marketing, 2018). This is in addition to keeping a regular presence on Instagram. According to the findings of Huang, Hlongwane, and Kao (2018), the most important elements that influence engagement with Instagram posts, as shown by comments and likes, are the semantic characteristics of the descriptions and the visual characteristics of the photographs that accompany them. According to Mourad, Ennew, and Kortam (2011), the university market does not have a significant amount of empirical research that is exclusively focused on the factors that drive brand equity.

For this study, an empirical framework that was established by Mourad and colleagues (2011) and validated in the context of the higher education business is used. Combining the ideas presented by Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) resulted in the development of the framework that was used in this investigation. The goal is to connect the characteristics of activities in higher education that have an impact on brand equity (BE) with the many components of brand equity that are thought to be affected by these activities. These aspects include brand awareness and reputation. According to Keller (1993), the dissemination of marketing information about a service would result in the development of brand awareness, which would then lead to recognition of the service. Consequently, this contributes to the expansion of brand knowledge, which ultimately results in an increase in brand equity. Kotler and Fox (1995) express their worry on the insufficient marketing orientation shown by several educational institutions, the primary emphasis of which is on enhancing the quality of their services and facilities. According to Sharma, Rao, and Popli (2013) and Pinar et al. (2014), the development of an appropriate communication tool is vital for the purpose of boosting the brand position of the institution and effectively managing its public image equity. In addition, research conducted at academic institutions has shown that word of mouth and prior contacts have a significant impact on the brand equity of educational institutions such as colleges and universities (Sharma, Rao, & Popli 2013).

Aaker (1991) stated that the perception of a brand is affected by numerous components, including brand personality, social repute, and market position. The academic debate on brand equity implies that these elements are responsible for shaping the perception of a brand. Williams Jr. and Omar (2014) conducted a study in which they investigated the

relationship between the notion of brand equity and the field of higher education. They came to the realization that the strategies of brand positioning, marketing, and brand identity all play an important part in the process of establishing brand equity. A further development was the establishment of the idea of "brand soul," which refers to the way the employees and instructors of the institution perceive and reflect the brand of the university. The entire image and reputation of universities, in addition to their rankings, have a significant influence on the perception of risk reduction and the development of brand equity (Keller, 1993; Byron, 1995; Cheng & Tam, 1997; Kent et al., 1993). This is because universities are ranked accordingly.

3. Methodology

Within the realm of literature review, the work that is being presented here is an example of a research study. A complete evaluation and analysis of many publications that connect to the issues of social media and how they relate to marketing in the field of higher education is carried out by the author.

4. Analysis, Finding, and Discussion

According to the research that has been done, there are several fascinating findings that may be made. The use of social media has evolved into an indispensable instrument for communication, which has resulted in modifications to the practices of marketing and the decisions that consumers make. Since social media has evolved into an extension of digital marketing, it is necessary to use innovative strategies to connect and interact with prospective customers. It is dependent on the quality of the products, the level of market experience possessed by the firm, and the dependability of their websites as to whether social media marketing is effective. Platforms for social networking play an important part in fostering interactive contact, which in turn enables marketers to efficiently disseminate information and attract new consumers.

When it comes to the area of colleges and universities, social media has shown its effectiveness as a tool for efficiently communicating with both current and prospective students, as well as for promoting institution branding and activities. Although this is the case, it is still unclear how much of an influence the content that is published on social media accounts that is associated with college education has on the decision-making processes of prospective students. Additionally, the presence of an organization on social media networks enables the organization to engage in active conversation and connection with its followers, which is a huge asset. It is essential to evaluate and contrast the level of involvement on various social media platforms to have a comprehensive understanding of the customer experience and the perception of the brand. Because Instagram is mostly focused on visual material, it has become an extremely useful tool for educational institutions to communicate with a diverse spectrum of individuals, including students from other countries. Because it allows for a substantial amount of user engagement, the platform is advantageous for educational institutions that want to improve their profile on the internet.

When it comes to marketing higher education institutions, brand equity is an extremely important factor to consider. The development of an appropriate communication tool is very necessary to effectively manage the brand value of the institution. The personality of the brand, its reputation in the community, and its position in the market are all factors that might have an impact on its image. Brand equity is significantly impacted by the feeling of and representation of the college's brand that is maintained by its faculty and staff. This concept is referred to as "brand soul." In addition, the construction of brand value for educational institutions is significantly influenced by the platforms that are made available via social media. It is possible that the dissemination of pertinent promotional materials about an institution may boost brand recognition and acknowledgment, which will, in turn, make the acquisition of brand knowledge easier. For educational institutions to effectively manage the value of their brand, they need to demonstrate a greater emphasis on marketing.

The process of watching and analyzing the various forms of follower involvement might potentially provide significant data about the level of social interaction. The gathering of this information is very necessary to mold the experiences of the users and enhance the impression of the institution's brand. To have a complete understanding of user engagement, it is essential to include user behavior and activity across all social media platforms. This is because each social media platform has its own set of indications that may be used to evaluate user engagement.

Instagram has evolved into an indispensable instrument for educational institutions, allowing them to cultivate meaningful ties with individuals and encourage conversations with them. Because of the visual-centric character of this tool, it is engaging and inclusive to a broad spectrum of individuals, which makes it a great asset for recruiting students

from other countries. In addition, the use of Instagram as a platform for advertising purposes may prove to be an effective method for directly reaching out to this group.

The findings of research indicate that word-of-mouth and previous interactions have a substantial impact on a person's reputation in the field of higher education. Strategic positioning of the brand, marketing, and the identity of the brand all play important roles in the process of developing brand equity. There is a considerable relationship between the perception, image, reputation, and rankings of universities and the reduction of risk and the development of brand equity. Consequently, it is evident that social media serves not only as a method of communication for educational institutions of higher learning, but also as a strategic platform for marketing and expanding their brand.

In the future, marketing in higher education will be significantly impacted by social media, particularly in terms of promoting participation and developing brand value. This is why social media will have an increasingly major influence. Educational institutions will have more opportunities to engage with their target demographic and cultivate a sense of community as social media platforms continue to develop and add new features. This will ultimately result in increased levels of interaction between the institutions and their target population. There is a possibility that colleges will be able to host virtual open houses, question and answer sessions with faculty members, and behind-the-scenes tours via the use of live streaming capabilities. This would allow prospective students to have a firsthand view of the campus. Additionally, the increasing prominence of ephemeral multimedia platforms like as Instagram Stories and Snapchat allows for the possibility of using these channels to display student accomplishments or give timely information.

Marketers are expected to study new techniques for contacting prospective consumers and developing effective channels of engagement with them, according to Parise and Guinan (2008), who claim that marketers fall under this obligation. Now, marketing via social media should be seen as an extension of online advertising; it is not expected that it will replace other marketing tactics. According to Constantinides (2010), the success of this marketing approach is contingent on the existence of solid foundations, namely the presence of innovative and exceptional products as well as companies that are responsive to the market. In addition, it is often seen to be a continuation of internet marketing, and it is very unlikely that it will ever replace other marketing strategies. According to Constantinides (2010), the success of this marketing approach is contingent on the availability of solid foundations. These foundations include the presence of innovative and exceptional products, businesses that are sensitive to the market, and websites that are well-designed.

Data analysis and monitoring systems have seen significant advancements in recent years, which have enabled institutions to get a more in-depth knowledge of their audience and adjust their content accordingly. In this way, engagement strategies are more likely to be effective. With the use of this information, educational institutions could design individualized marketing strategies that are tailored to prospective students by considering their interests, behaviors, and the extent to which they engage with the institution's social media content. The use of social media will continue to be an essential tool for educational institutions of higher learning to communicate the unique value propositions they provide, strengthen their brand identities, and cultivate a positive public image. For companies to maintain a prominent position in the minds of their target audience, it is essential for them to interact on social media platforms actively and continuously. This is because social media is becoming more integrated into daily life experiences. Furthermore, the rise of social commerce may present educational institutions with new opportunities to make income from their social media platforms. One example of this is the possibility of directly selling branded things via their social media accounts. However, as the use of social media as a marketing tool for higher education becomes more widespread, educational institutions will increasingly face obstacles. These challenges include concerns over data security, the danger of undesired exposure, and the need for constant content production. There is a positive perspective for the use of social media in marketing for higher education, even though there may be obstacles in the future. This is because social media provides several opportunities for engagement and the establishment of brand value.

5. Conclusion

When it comes to marketing, social media marketing is becoming an emerging issue that is attracting an increasing amount of interest from both industry marketers and academics. Now, educational establishments of a higher level are conducting experiments with various social media marketing tactics. It is important to note that there is a dearth of research publications that investigate the effectiveness of social media marketing, especially in the setting of higher education.

With the help of this study, marketers can get a better knowledge of the structure of the market as well as the purchasing patterns of prospective students, which enables them to build more efficient digital advertising strategies for educational institutions. The significance of social media, particularly social networks, in facilitating the connection between prospective students and those who may be able to provide academic help and information is a topic that

merits more exploration. Given the widespread usage of social networks among young people and the significance of these networks, it is reasonable to suppose that a portion of the feedback obtained from family members, close friends, and even strangers is transmitted via these platforms. It is common knowledge that social networks have been shown to be very efficient tools for social media marketing and word-of-mouth advertising.

5.1. Limitations

Comprehensive marketing strategies that consider these three criteria should be developed for educational institutions of higher learning. To construct a more attractive image and attract a broader pool of potential students, educational institutions like colleges and universities may choose to improve their promotion on social media platforms and make optimal use of all types of digital advertising.

A large research vacuum has emerged because of the absence of study results in the field of higher education marketing. This gap has to be filled, especially with regard to the dearth of studies that investigate the efficacy of various marketing strategies. To entice prospective students, educational institutions of higher learning use a wide variety of marketing strategies. On the other hand, there is a notable lack of research that investigates the efficacy of these strategies. To get a more comprehensive knowledge of the decision-making process of prospective students and to devise effective marketing strategies to attract them, educational institutions like colleges and universities need to address this research gap.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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