

RELATIONS WITH STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING AND END USERS SATISFACTION MEASURING

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Abstract

The aim of paper was to determine satisfaction of the relations between students and professors and assistants in the communication channel, their teaching process satisfaction, equipment, student exchange programs, practice and value elements of the education institution which are considered to be important by the end users – students. Aspect of measuring the teaching process quality and communication relations is significant because of the overall satisfaction of students which has direct reflection on the value of the Higher Education Institution (HEI). The significance of getting information from users for HEI represents meeting the needs and demands of their end users and other target groups, as much as generating the conditions for improving all teaching processes. Main outcome of the study was that the idea of marketing communication based on key information about advantages and disadvantages within the teaching process, it is possible to set up a value platform improvement in two-way communication channel and promote market value.

Keywords: **marketing communication, target groups, communication channels, teaching processes, market value**

Introduction

Entering the sphere of marketing communication for any kind of institution or organization represents one important ongoing process which has an aim of improving relations both with real and those potential target groups. That improving part can be seen as exchanging processes, products or services, feelings, thoughts and ideas, appreciating Kotler's idea that: „*Modern marketing calls for more than developing a good product, pricing it attractively, and making it available to target groups.*“ (Kotler and Armstrong, 2007). Marketing communication eventually aims to contribute to the improving satisfaction of end users. „*Marketing communication is a management process being used for communication between an organization and different audiences*“ (Brkić, 2003), and this is also the reflection of marketing function. Making a long-lasting good communication with target groups, as well as with stakeholders, provides the value which improves competitive advantage and helps the public to create the image of the institution. Word communicate comes from Latin *communicare* which means „*to share, transmit, make common*“ (Vukajlija, 2012). In one of the crucial aims of marketing communication, Solomon said: „*Informing real and potential consumers and building the consciousness about the firm and its products/brands*“ (Solomon, 2012). Making a decision on the target groups is being done on the basis of products i.e. services provided by the company, whether it refers to

products or services. For HEIs, primary target group are students mainly (Bonacin, 2011) judging the professors level of education (Mašala, 2013). To communicate with other institutions, private sector, non-governmental organizations and media is important as well. It impacts on the public information, creating the image, promotion and making a brand (Solomon, 2014). End users are primary group for the business orientation. According to online business dictionary, end user is a person or organization that actually uses a product, as opposed to the person or organization that authorizes, orders, procures, or pays for it.

Characteristics that affect the determination of the target groups are: location structures, demography, labor market, laws, technological achievements (Đurić, 2015).

HEI target groups according to their relevance can be classified in five major groups: students, partners, NGO sector, government institutions and media (Đurić, 2015; Rađo, 2010). Primary group, students ensure the existence of the institution. Depending on the study programs offered, universities show how their students are ready to meet the needs of the market, and how much of their knowledge can be used in practice and what kind of it. Common projects with NGO and openness towards local community provide promotion of the university and stimulate students to participate in some extracurricular

activities. Connection with government institutions in the process of implementing the strategy as well as it is communication with the media which are directly placing activities done by the HEI in public are important. Students satisfactions has been studied by several authors (Astin, 1977; Noel, 1978; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Peters, 1988; Tinto, 1987). Study outcomes suggesting that students were very satisfied, folglich with a bigger probability of staying at university, graduate and participate in improving the values of HEI. They can improve the managing of quality by pointing out directly their attitude about teaching process if the gathered information are used for improving the overall teaching process and guarantees their satisfaction.

Investigation was designed in a way to assess satisfaction and relations between students and academic staff according to the quality in communication channel, their teaching process satisfaction, equipment, student exchange programs, practice and value elements of the education institution.

Methods

Research was done during the 2015. Academic year. Students of the first and second cycle of studying were asked to fulfill the specific questionnaire made for this research. Categories of general satisfaction were assessed with obligatory data needed: (I) subject usage, curriculum information, communication with professors and assistants, amiability for consultation, cooperation with the local community, extracurricular activities, financial acceptability, recommendation, loyalty and elements that HEI should have, (II) realization of the activities of the contracts from international cooperation and (III) participating in projects and practice. Questionnaire had objective metric characteristics and reliability.

Subjects

In overall there has been included 446 full-time, part-time and DL students (I and II cycle of studying) from 9 faculties in Sarajevo Canton and Central Bosnia Canton. Male share was 56 % follows. The biggest age group of respondents was 22 – 24 (30%), then 18 – 21 (28%), 28 – 37 (19%), and over 37 (12%). The smallest number of respondents was at the age 25 – 27 (11%).

Statistical analysis

Data processing was done using software program SPSS 22.0 (IBM Corp). The data are presented as percentages, while frequencies were used for statistical analysis. Answer frequencies difference and their significance was performed using Chi-squared test (χ^2). Factorial analysis method of principal component was performed as well. Keiser Mayar Olkin test was used for determining sample adequacy, while Bartlett test assessed homogeneity of variance. Factor structure featured projections with eigenvalue higher than one. Oblimin rotation was used for projecting factor vectors in space to generate component matrix. A p value of $p < 0.05$ was eligible as significant.

Results

No structural differences were for gender, age, type of study, year of study, class presence of students, range of index marks and subject usage for students. Largest share of respondents were second year students 38,3%, fourth year 21,5%, first year 20,2%, third year 18,8% and fifth year 1,1%. More than 75% of the respondents were present at classes. The highest index mark of the respondents was 8 (37%), then 7 (30%), 9 (12,8%), 6 (13%). The number of respondents with the mark 10 (7,2 %) was the smallest. Out of all the respondents, 58,2% of students totally agree that subjects that are a part of their studies are useful for them, 27,1% mostly agree, 9,9% of students have no opinion about that, 2,7% partially agree and 2% totally disagree. Most of the students around 42% of the respondents totally agree with the promptness of maintaining records and documents, 31% mostly agree, 14% nor agree nor disagree, 8% partially agree and 5% disagree. The results for the following question „Students are regularly informed by the faculty about the timetable changes, exam schedule, and cancelled lectures. Out of all the respondents, more than 60% is totally satisfied which is 268 answers, 9% disagree which is 42. Out of all the respondents, 42% students think that professors and assistants are completely motivated for work, 35% mostly agrees, 15,2% nor agrees nor disagrees, 4% partially agrees and 2,7 % disagrees. Analyzing the satisfaction of accuracy, 49,3% students are totally satisfied, 23,5% mostly agree, 13,5% have no clear attitude on this, 7% partially agree, and 6,3% is not satisfied. On a cumulative basis, the percentage of satisfaction for accuracy is bigger with 72,8%. A 48% of students totally agree, 28,5% mostly agree, 12,8% nor agree nor disagree, 7% partially agree and 3,8% with the communication relations with assistants and atmosphere. 75,6% of respondents mostly or totally agree and 3,4% disagree with the statement that assistants have good communicational skills and that they create nice atmosphere during classes. Using the Chi-squared test, it was determined the level of satisfaction with the extracurricular activities according to the mode of studying and differentiations can be viewed. Out of all the respondents, primary research shows that on the cumulative basis 54% totally or mostly agree that studying is acceptable, 21% nor agree nor disagree, 15% partially agree, 9% disagree and 1%. Differences between study mode and extracurricular activities was significant ($\chi^2 = 38,7$, $p < 0,001$) for full-time students compared to associate and DL students.

Table 1. Chi squared Test of Study mode and extracurricular activities

Compared groups	χ^2	df	P - value
Full time students*#	38,69	8	<0,001
Associate students#			
DL students			

* - different compared to associate students

- different compared to DL students

Table 2. Image elements important for students expressed in percentage by relevance

	Valid %	Cumulative %
Good knowledge	0,2	0,2
Good passing rate	12,7	12,9
Eminent professors	32,2	45,1
Student exchange	2,7	47,8
Better possibility for employment	13,2	61,0
Good student practice	9,3	70,2
Equipment and capacity	14,6	84,9
Curriculum quality	5,9	90,7
Types of Classes	6,8	97,6
Administration	1,7	99,3
Students' competitions	0,2	99,5
Other	0,5	100
Total	100	

Ranking first three elements in the frequency as elements of image, most frequent were: eminent professors, better possibility of employment and equipment and capacity. 5% of students disagree with the statement that faculty provides good practice and a chance to improve their knowledge by doing some projects. Factorial analysis was performed as valid. According to results of Keiser Mayar

Olkin test (score = 0,94) and Bartlett test ($p < 0.001$) analysis meet presumptions. In overall, eight factors satisfied threshold of eigenvalue higher than 1, cumulatively explaining 67,08% of variance. Highest component loadings was on non-educational, administrative staff and communication with them.

Tabela 3. Keiser Mayar Olkin test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin		0,94
Bartlett's Test	χ^2	9973,1
	df	666
	P	0,0002

Table 4. Factor score structure

	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	14,54	39,3	39,3
2	2,29	6,19	45,49
3	1,87	5,05	50,54
4	1,52	4,11	54,65
5	1,33	3,59	58,24
6	1,14	3,08	61,33
7	1,09	2,94	64,26
8	1,04	2,81	67,08

Eigenvalue higher than one

Table 5. Matrix of components – oblimin rotation

Selected elements:	Component		
	1	2	3
Professors and teachers motivate students to learn	0,77		
Motivation of professors and assistants	0,75		
Classroom equipment	0,75		
Raising the quality of teaching by professors and assistants	0,74		
Interest for practice work	0,73		0,30
Correct attitude of staff	0,73	0,30	
Performance of obligations on time by teachers and assistants	0,73		
Interest in practice	0,73	-0,38	
Classes on time	0,72		
Expressing knowledge of the matter	0,71		
Good communication skills of teachers and assistants	0,71		
Willingness administrative staff	0,71	0,46	
Satisfaction readiness assistants	0,70		
Good information for students	0,70	0,42	

Discussion

Subliming the results, active students are satisfied within most of the categories. Most of the respondents were males 56%, most of the respondents were between the ages 22-24, according to the mode of studying most of the students are part-time students 43% and when it comes to their academic year most of the students are second year students, with the highest index mark 8 and 75% of presence at classes. This was important because the quality view and relations to the personnel are better acceptable with its credibility if it is analyzed by the students who are present at the most of classes and lectures. They are very satisfied with the administrative processes, support services and communication between them. If there are any variations or deviations, it is relatively small percentage 7% of disagreement for availability of administrative staff. The analysis shows that the learning results and acquired qualifications respond to the purpose in the great scope and that the usefulness for end users is satisfied. When it comes to the information about relevance in the process of education, they agree that they are visible, available, and accurate, more than 60%. Students are totally satisfied when it comes to the process of communication with professors and assistants during the teaching process. Students evaluated the satisfaction for motivation, communication, availability for consulting, understandable approach, use of modern aids for the process of improvement, etc. In all categories, complete satisfaction about these questions goes over 70%. The rest 30% have no clear opinion on this, are partially or not satisfied at all. When it comes to teaching personnel, students are inclined to the fact that one of the most important elements in the process of creat-

ing values for HEI. If we compare certain results of the research done in 2014 in which some students from this one were included, there can be seen some similarities in answers about teaching personnel. Tendencies in the dissatisfaction of the research and results that some faculties got, some elements can be seen: practice, extracurricular activities, participation in projects. If we compare the research results with those from the UK universities (Douglas et. al., 2006) that were done with the specimen of 864 respondents, the most important areas that were pointed out by students in the UK as the most valuable ones are about the services related to learning and teaching. Teaching quality, professors' approach and course books initially contribute to their satisfaction and classify them as important aspects of values of HEI. However, determination of service satisfaction depends on the mode of studying, whether students are full-time, part-time or DL students. According to the mentioned researches, to those students who do not spend much time at university (faculty), more important is satisfaction to get the service information on the website, communication with administrative offices, than quality of the lectures and teaching process. Which is not the case with those students who attend classes and lectures. These researches determined that the quality of practice and extracurricular activities can be seen with those full-time students. They are related to the learning motivation, teaching motivation, classroom equipment quality, amiability of professors and assistants, determination of complete communicational skills in the process of studying. From this can be seen that connection of relations of human capital with relational capital should be constant and regularly tested. From the primary

researches it is discovered that certain faculties are constantly testing the satisfaction of students, however some of them do it but without any clear and representative results, which is not a good message to students

Conclusion

Measuring students' satisfaction through a survey is one of the ways for HEI to identify their needs, see dissatisfaction and use the results of the survey in order to improve the processes that made them dissatisfied. Institutional efficiency means constant monitoring and quality improvement in all segments of HEI business.

The most important segment in the communication chain with students is maintaining their satisfaction. By missing it, students leave universities. These University values as a „market institution“ were described by Bryant 2006.; Miller 2003. and Schertzer & Schertzer, 2004. Separation from competition is possible only by motivation of excellence through consistent receiving of key information in two-way communication chain. Universities exist for students as their end purpose with intense contribution to the scientific creation. Communication process with students is a reflection of marketing function, undersetting their needs, wants and continuous market monitoring. Using the inputs of the results is used for strategic quality planning of HEI providing important guidelines/instructions for operative goals and program planning. Finally, reputation and perception of image that HEI creates through internal and external communication chain. Students prefer the feeling of being connected to the HEI where they are studying and the reflection of their satisfaction represents fulfillment of socio-academic integration of students.

Two-way communication and separation of all the structures needed for the set goals represent big picture with a perspective if it is approached meticulously. To simplify, HEI should be thinking about the leaders who would lead them through a vision, prognosis, procedures and criteria, who would integrate employees and end users, who would make a positive communication by developing business network. Universal model does not exist, and if it existed than researches wouldn't be needed. Time and needs are changing. With them, study programs and market needs, too. Differentiation from competition and approaching target groups for HEI in the future won't be easy. The effects of end users satisfaction and employee satisfaction create the image of HEI in public.

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