CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed at studying the relationship between CRM Strategies and level of Customer Relationship achieved. Diagnostic and Descriptive type of Research study is conducted for the topic “A critical study of Customer Relationship Management in Management institutions, with reference to Student – Institution relationship, in Pune city.” As the name implies, the major objective of descriptive research is to describe something - usually sector characteristics or functions.

Descriptive research can be conducted to determine the degree to which marketing variables are associated and also to make specific predictions. In this type of study it is clearly defined that what is to be measured and adequate method for measuring along with a clear cut definition of population to be studied. Since the aim is to obtain complete and accurate information, the procedure is carefully planned.

A descriptive design requires a clear specification of who, what, when, where, why, & way (the six Ws of the research). The same is explained in the context of this study.

i) Who: The management students.

ii) What: The information is sought on factors considered in selection of a management institute by the students. The information is also obtained from the respondents pertaining to CRM initiatives taken by the colleges and the importance given by the management students to each CRM initiatives.

iii) When: The information is collected from students who are currently undergoing various management courses at various management institutes in Pune city.

iv) Where: The students who are studying in various management institutes in Pune city have been contacted.

v) Why: The information is obtained for understanding if there is a relationship between CRM strategies and the level of Relationship with the students. Also to understand the expectations of management students from their management institutes. The study tries to find out the CRM
initiatives taken by the colleges to keep student – institute relationship going on even after the students leave the college. It also aims to construct a CRM model.

vi) Way: The information is obtained from the respondents by way of Personal Interviews.

This study incorporates the major methods such as analysis of secondary data and Survey method. The study of secondary data was collected from various Journals, Articles, International and National Conference proceedings, Newspaper and internet. The survey method (Personal Interviewing) of obtaining the information is used for this study, which was based on the questioning of the respondents.

a) Research Context:

The research context of this study focuses on the management colleges and their students in Pune city. Since the key question pertained to how CRM implementation helps in Relationship building with the students on long term basis. This also tries to find out whether management colleges are following CRM for college – student relationship. The context is the timing of the research work. This is carried out when the number of student enrolment for MBA course is on steep decline and most of the management colleges are facing a threat of lesser enrolment of students. The situation is so bad that many management colleges have be closed or facing threat of being closed due to lesser or no admissions of students. This research work is an endeavor to bring out what it takes to establish and continue student – institution relationship with reference to management students. The outcomes may be useful for the management institutions to understand students’ requirement and help the institutes to cater to the needs of the management students. This will help all the stake holders and also the society at large.

b) Research Approach:

This study combines qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Given the contemporariness and complexity of the subject of Customer Relationship Management, a quantitative component of the study was conducted in conjunction with and as a part of the instrument development. The qualitative arm of the project was intended as a major support foundation of evolution of CRM component of the project.
3.2. Information needs, Measurement Scales & Scaling procedure

The information needed for this study is obtained by focusing on each component of the problem and analytical framework, research questions, and hypothesis. The Measurement scales used is Likert scale.

3.3 Construct, Questionnaire Development and pretesting of Questionnaire

A questionnaire can be defined as sequence of questions asked by the researcher to individuals to get statistically useful information on a selected topic. If a questionnaire is well constructed and administered, it can be an vital instrument by which statements can be made about respondent group. It is an effective method of gathering information. They are ideal for large sample sizes, or when the sample comes from a wide geographic area.

3.4 Sources of data:

Primary data is collected through questionnaire from management students in Pune city, about application & importance of CRM in their institutions. This was to understand the efficacy of CRM in management institutions. The factors considered by management students in selection of a management institute for admission is also collected. On the other hand the study was to find out steps taken by management institutions for a long lasting relationship with the students. The questionnaire was to find out the role of CRM Process Implementation, Organizational Alignment and Technology on Student – Institution relationship.

3.4.1 Primary Data:

Sample Size: 2000 students

Sampling method: Non Probability Convenience Sampling

Technique used: Close ended Questionnaire, Descriptive & Diagnostic

3.4.2 Sources of secondary data: are journals, conference proceedings, reference books, internet, Business dailies etc.
3.5 Sampling Process & Sample Size

3.5.1 Sampling Design:

Sampling design process includes steps that are closely interrelated and relevant to all aspects of marketing research project, from problem definition to the presentation of the results. The steps are as follows:

a) Target population for this study is defined as follows:

Elements: Management students (for finding CRM Implementation and its effect on relationship, CRM and its relation with Organizational alignment, CRM and its relation with Technology), also to find out criteria that are considered while choosing a management institution.

Extent: Pune city

Time: (2009-2011)

b) Sampling Frame: A sampling frame is the representation of the elements of target population. The sampling frame for management students from various management institutions of Pune. The sampling frame for academic institutions consisted of management students, in Pune city. The methodology adopted in this research is based on questionnaire, the issues to be addressed and also on the theory. By way of data collection from this research, we get information which directs us in designing customer relationship management strategy thereby increasing customer relationship with reference to management institutions - student relationship.

c) Sampling Method: A sample of 2000 management students is selected in Pune. Selection of these management students in Pune city, is done on the basis of convenience sampling by the researcher.

d) Sample size: Sample size refers to the number of elements to be included in the study, which is 2000 management students. The study was conducted with the following objectives:
3.6 Objectives of the study

3.6.1 To identify the CRM practices being implemented in management institutions with reference to students and its effect on Student-Institution relationship.

   Education sector has been a laggard in CRM implementation. Most of the management institutions have not recognized that there is any customer-client relationship between management institutions and its students. Though, profit is not the only motive of educational institutions.

3.6.2 To identify and analyze the parameters for selection of management institutes by management students.

   This study will try to bring out basis of selection of colleges by aspiring management students, but it is important to understand what these students are looking for in a college.

3.6.3 To find out the factors leading to affinity & relationship between management institutions and its students.

   This has to do with efforts taken by the management institutes to build relationship with management students on a long term basis. It does not end with the students passing out of management institutes and becoming Alumni. The relationship actually begins in favour of institutions. Alumni network helps institutions in many ways like financial help, placements and branding.

3.6.4 To address the above problems by using appropriate model.

   The model will try to address the loop holes in the CRM in management institutions in Pune.

3.6.5 To suggest measures to tackle the problem.

   This will help management institutions to draft and adopt policies which incorporate CRM in it. This will help a shift in how we see our management students as customers and cater to their needs accordingly.
To find out factors affecting selection of management colleges for admissions & to find out steps taken by management institutions in Pune for better Customer Relationship Management a sample size of 2000 respondents (management students) is considered. This study was conducted in Pune city. Non Probability convenience Sampling is used for this study.

3.7 Hypothesis

H1: Higher level relationship with students is associated with greater implementation of CRM processes.

H2: The greater the level of CRM compatible organizational alignment, the stronger is the relationship with students.

H3: The greater the level of CRM technology, the stronger is the relationship with the students.

Development of the questionnaire took place in two stages:

i) A review of the relevant marketing literature and of practitioner literature on CRM.

ii) A final pretest for measuring purification Given that a number of constructs in the study had some measurement history, instrument development began with the academic literature.

A five page long instrument was crafted for preliminary testing; The preliminary version of the questionnaire was pretested during the qualitative interviews. The following aspects were observed: the time taken to complete the questionnaire, obstacles or problems in the physical layout of the questionnaire, and any problems in the comprehension of items.