Chapter-3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Designs

The study was undertaken with exploration of current trends and practices in education institutions and thereafter synthesizes the findings and move on to a descriptive approach. This was followed by a thorough and critical analysis of the same.

Under exploratory research the researcher wanted to confirm the problem that was in the mind of the researcher. The researcher adopted lot of techniques like review of literature, case studies, and observation. University news, websites, articles from newspapers gave lot of insights that the scope of conducting research in this context emerged. Moreover the researcher is practicing all possible techniques of services marketing principles and has achieved excellent results. The articles, advertisements that are appearing in newspapers and brochures from other institutions, both domestic and foreign institutions confirmed that there will be severe competition between the institutions to get ‘quality’ students for their courses. There are innumerable problems. The reduction in the enrollment of students in the higher education is a major issue in every country. It is felt very badly at country like India. Secondly, the increase in educational institutions is another major road block to attract students to the institutions.

An attempt is made to understand the current situation and provide solution to ‘proactive’ education institutions. The word marketing may misguide many readers of this humble work. Marketing activity is universally applicable for business and non business activity.

The researcher is astonished to see the progress achieved by public sector banks, insurance and transport sector, especially after the opening of these sectors to private players. A minute examination of their success story revealed the fact that their adoption of all ‘tools’ of service sector marketing and management led to their success.
3.1.2. Sources of Study

The study undertaken was a combination of quantitative and qualitative method and therefore depth interview and the primary survey method of data collection was undertaken i.e., questionnaire was administered to the respondents. While conducting literature review statistical figures from referred journals and other secondary sources were also used by the researcher. Due care was taken to acknowledge the original authors, books and websites.

3.1.3. Sampling Method and Sample Size of the Study

The researcher collected information from a sample of about 300 people including the professors and students of undergraduate colleges affiliated to Mumbai University. The mode of sampling was non random. The researcher felt that an ideal sampling method will be Quota Sampling and therefore allocated 100 samples of teaching fraternity and 200 samples of students.

3.1.4. Tabulation of Data and Interpretation of Data

The researcher had used appropriate statistical techniques i.e., non parameter, uni-variate, and bi-variate analysis, with SPSS software to analyze the challenges and opportunities of educational services.

3.1.5. Other Areas of Research

1. Change in the People- Much of the quality of the education service depends upon the quality of the people who deliver it at the ground level. The entry of foreign universities offers both opportunities and challenges. We need to upgrade ourselves in terms of qualification, knowledge, information and attitude. We need to master our communication skills. Each student will now have to be treated with dignity. Performance appraisal by the students’ will be the order of the day.
2. Product-Economic reforms have widened the scope for new courses starting from event management to a combined engineering and management degree. The institution need to develop new courses with better curriculum and practical applications in the global perception.

3. Price-The researcher visualizes complete self funding by the year 2020. Government will be completely out of higher education funding. With the arrival of competition we educators will be challenged to offer global standards at local prices.

4. Promotion -According to researcher, the only promotion tool would be ‘every satisfied student’. Complaint handling will play a very important role. No faculty can ignore any student. Each dissatisfied student will be a terrorist bombing the course and the institution ‘when’ outside it. One needs, therefore to delight the students.

5. Place-To quote Bill Gates- “e-education can never replace a wonderful teacher and a thinking classroom”. No software can replace a flesh and bone teacher. However, a teacher needs to improve his/ her approach to the service. Teacher has to reach the students rather than expecting them to come to him/her. Place also includes making oneself approachable to students from anywhere at any time. The teacher has to listen rather than doing all the talking. Listening should be followed by positive actions.

6. Physical Evidence-This appears to be more of the management’s responsibility. State of the art facilities are to be offered. Most of the colleges are beginning to provide this. To the researcher’s mind the additional challenge would be ‘to be presentable to the students’. The teachers are in a creative show business. This includes body language, a pleasant attitude and even a good sense of humor.

7. Process- Process will expect from the professors greater performance demanding best of communication and teaching skills. Interactive classrooms with a manageable size of class will be the new environment. None of us can ‘teach’ and the challenge would be to facilitate learning. Teaching would no longer be a process of giving information. The role
of the teacher will be a friend, mentor and philosopher to students. The process would begin right from the admission till the student leaves the institution. The process can even go beyond this. The teacher – student relationship will be long term.

Unless educators, administrators at institutions, government authorities, politicians and society in general, wake up the transition of higher education from *elite to masses* will be a distant dream.