



Proposed Marketing Plan for ICT-ED Institute of Science and Technology, Inc.

Jojie R. De Ramos^{ID},

ICT-ED Institute of Science and Technology Inc., Philippines

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Abstract

In today's private higher education landscape, effective marketing strategies are vital for institutions to strengthen their market presence, enhance service quality, and sustain student enrollment. This study was conducted in 2024 at the ICT-ED Institute of Science and Technology, Inc., with the objective of developing a comprehensive marketing plan to improve brand positioning and support student attraction and retention. Anchored in the Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning (STP) framework and guided by the SERVQUAL model, the study emphasizes a service-driven marketing approach that aligns promotional initiatives with quality improvement. A descriptive-quantitative research design was employed, with the sample size determined using Slovin's formula. Using random sampling, a total of 162 respondents participated in the study, consisting of 140 students and 22 personnel. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The study demonstrates that marketing practices are strongly associated with the core dimensions of service quality, such as tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy, which indicates that effective marketing functions are a critical driver of students' trust, perceived care, and responsiveness of institutional services. Based on these findings, a marketing plan was developed that integrates targeted promotional strategies and clearly defined marketing goals to ensure consistent messaging across market segments. The proposed plan, projected for implementation from the 2024–2025 to 2026–2027 academic years, aims to enhance stakeholder trust, reinforce student satisfaction, and strengthen ICT-ED's competitive position in the private higher education sector.

Keywords: *Higher Education Marketing, Private Higher Education Institutions, SERVQUAL Model, STP Model, Brand Positioning, Service Quality, Student Retention*

INTRODUCTION

In the modern landscape of higher education, institutions are increasingly required to refine their marketing strategies and enhance service quality to stay competitive. As global expectations for educational quality rise, especially in an era marked by technological advancements and shifting societal needs, educational institutions must focus not only on academic offerings but also on the overall student experience (Darmayanti et al., 2023). This holistic approach to education, including academic support, extracurricular activities, and service quality, plays an important role not only in achieving student satisfaction but also in shaping institutional reputation and marketing outcomes.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of marketing strategies in higher education, particularly in well-established systems where institutions employ sophisticated techniques such as digital marketing, alumni engagement, and international collaborations (Rahmi et al., 2021). The STP (Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning) model, for instance, has been instrumental in helping institutions identify and effectively reach their target audiences. Despite its wide application, the STP model often overlooks the critical relationship between marketing practices and service quality, a gap that may significantly affect student satisfaction and retention (Kotler, 2017).



Service quality, as assessed through models such as SERVQUAL, has also been a focal point in higher education research. SERVQUAL, as stated by [Alemu \(2023\)](#), measures the gap between expected and perceived service quality across dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility. SERVQUAL has been a widely recognized tool for assessing service quality, and the complexity of educational services, especially in higher education, presents opportunities to enhance and expand its application as a foundation for strategic marketing decisions.

The existing body of literature on higher education marketing and service quality frequently addresses these elements as distinct, isolated domains, often neglecting the central interplay between them. Marketing strategies are typically explored in terms of how they attract and retain students, while service quality is examined in terms of its impact on student satisfaction and loyalty. However, there is limited research on how these two reinforce each other to drive overall institutional success. For instance, effective marketing can set expectations for service quality that must be met or exceeded to maintain student satisfaction, and high service quality can amplify the effectiveness of marketing efforts by promoting positive word-of-mouth and student loyalty. This underexplored connection presents a significant research gap, particularly in the context of smaller, resource-constrained institutions where service quality may directly shape institutional branding.

Furthermore, much of the research in this field is context-specific, with a predominant focus on institutions in developed countries, where higher education systems, market dynamics, and student expectations often differ markedly from those in developing regions. In developed countries, institutions generally have access to more resources, established infrastructures, and a broader range of tools and strategies for both marketing and service quality enhancement ([Dâmaso & Lima, 2020](#)). This focus has led to a significant gap in the literature on the unique challenges and dynamics faced by institutions in other regions, particularly in developing countries such as the Philippines.

In particular, the Philippine higher education landscape presents contextual factors that make the connection between marketing and service quality even more critical. The educational environment is shaped by a complex set of cultural, economic, and regulatory factors that differ significantly from those in more developed countries. Cultural factors, such as expectations and values, play a significant role in students' educational choices, while economic considerations, including the cost of education and the availability of financial support, are critical in a country where income disparities are common ([Bucad Jr & Perez, 2021](#)). Additionally, the regulatory environment in the Philippines, governed by local and national education policies, adds another layer of complexity to how institutions operate and strategize.

In the context of a private higher education institution with 20 years of experience in the academe, which started as a tutorial center before becoming a technical-vocational school under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). And in 2016, it began offering senior high school programs under the Department of Education (DepEd) and tertiary programs recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). Over the years, they have undertaken multiple marketing initiatives, including participating in career guidance events at neighboring schools, distributing promotional materials, and maintaining a social media presence.

However, despite these efforts, challenges persist in increasing enrollment and retention rates. According to the records, their enrollment has declined significantly over the past five years, with a corresponding 40% drop in re-enrollment. This trend suggests that current marketing strategies may not be resonating with prospective and current students, potentially due to mismatches in perceived service quality.

Thus, this study aims to determine the extent to which marketing practices are influenced

by the perceived quality of services in a small private higher education institution. It later proposes a marketing plan that addresses the gap between what the institution communicates to its target market and what it delivers in terms of service, arguing that a service-quality-driven approach to marketing can improve the institution's image, attract new students, and encourage student retention.

This study is anchored in the assumption that a significant relationship exists between the institution's marketing practices and the perceived level of service quality, and it tests the hypothesis that improvements in service quality can lead to more effective and sustainable marketing outcomes. By bridging this gap, the institution may better align its marketing with its internal strengths, respond more effectively to student needs, and reinforce its competitiveness in the local educational market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This presents a comprehensive review of related literature from various sources to provide a more thorough understanding of the current topic. The review focuses on marketing practices in HEIs, the STP Model, and service quality.

STP Model in HEI Marketing

The STP Model—Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning—serves as a cornerstone for marketing strategy in education. It emphasizes the importance of aligning marketing goals with targeted segments defined by demographics, psychographics, and behaviors. The model's structured approach helps institutions differentiate themselves in a competitive landscape, enhancing student satisfaction and retention through continuous improvement in marketing strategies

[Ing et al. \(2020\)](#) stated that Kotler's STP Model is a cornerstone in marketing strategy, unveiling four of the pivotal variables in marketing, such as target market, goals, promotion, and initiatives. The concept of the target market serves as the foundational pillar, resulting from the segmentation process that divides the market by demographics, psychographics, and behaviors. This target market signifies the specific group within these segments that an organization aims to serve. It's the linchpin that directs all subsequent actions, dictating the audience for the strategies and campaigns.

Aligned with the target market are the marketing goals. These are carefully articulated aims that intersect with the chosen segment. They stem from the targeting process, ensuring that the organization's strategies align precisely with the identified market. Marketing goals, when aligned with the target market, serve as a roadmap guiding promotional activities and initiatives ([Wilhelm, 2020](#)).

Promotion forms the fulcrum around which the marketing efforts pivot. Apart from advertising, it's a comprehensive strategy encompassing tailored campaigns and communication methods. These promotional activities are meticulously designed to resonate with the identified market's characteristics and preferences. In essence, promotion aligns with the selected target market, amplifying the brand's voice and message to resonate powerfully within that segment ([Rusmaini et al., 2022](#)).

SERVQUAL Model

Pioneered by [Parasuraman et al. in 1988](#), this model defines the specific scope of service quality evaluation. To capture the complexity of service quality, this model evaluates five dimensions: tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy ([Alemu, 2023](#)). The focus on disconfirmation provides the theoretical foundation for evaluating the alignment between

expectations and service delivery. Including the SERVQUAL model provides the framework with a comprehensive, multidimensional analysis of service quality, thereby improving its analytical capacity.

The SERVQUAL model is widely recognized for its comprehensive approach to evaluating service delivery within specific dimensions. Each dimension offers a distinct perspective on how well an institution meets the expectations of its stakeholders, particularly students (Leonnard, 2018). By applying SERVQUAL, the study will pinpoint specific areas where service quality may excel or fall short, thereby guiding institutions in enhancing their service offerings. This model not only helps identify strengths and weaknesses in service quality but also emphasizes the importance of aligning service delivery with student expectations (Gregory, 2019).

Marketing Practices

Marketing is fundamentally about meeting human needs through the creation and exchange of products, involving both individuals and organizations. Models like the 4Ps and 4Cs emphasize aligning products with consumer needs, pricing them appropriately, ensuring accessibility, and effective communication (Idris, 2021). The discipline is dynamic and has a broad societal impact, in which ethical and sustainable practices are crucial. Marketing has evolved from production and sales orientations to a customer-centric approach, with service-dominant logic emerging as a leading paradigm shift (Elliot, 2017). In the context of customer value, achieving competitive advantage in new markets requires a well-designed marketing program tailored to customer preferences, where perceived benefits are weighed against associated costs and alternatives (Dutta, 2016).

Marketing in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

Relational marketing strategies are becoming essential in higher education, shifting focus from product-centered to customer-centric approaches. In Colombia and Spain, universities are increasingly adopting these strategies to enhance brand positioning, communication, and stakeholder engagement (Gómez-Bayona et al., 2020). Total quality improvement (TQI) in education, particularly in instructional departments, is also emphasized, though faculty resistance remains a challenge. Integrating marketing concepts tailored to education is vital for enhancing competitiveness and addressing institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Sandoval, 2018).

Currently, social media plays a significant role in the marketing practices of HEIs, with challenges including engaging a diverse online community and balancing performance demands with resource constraints. Larger universities attract more followers, yet individual engagement decreases as the fan base grows, highlighting the need for tailored social media strategies (Brecht et al., 2017). Social media engagement is crucial for fostering quality relationships between universities and students, necessitating multi-platform engagement and investment in social media management (Clark et al., 2017).

Service Quality in HEIs

Service quality, a key driver of customer satisfaction, revolves around the alignment between customers' perceptions and expectations. Introduced by Parasuraman, this concept evaluates how well an organization's service delivery meets customer needs through five key dimensions: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Mukherjee, 2019). Unlike manufacturing, service quality is more complex due to the intangible nature of services and the intertwined roles of providers and consumers (Alzaydi et al., 2018).

In higher education, rising competition and evolving demands from students and employers

underscore the importance of service quality for institutions seeking to remain competitive (Sugilar, 2019). Student satisfaction, closely tied to timely course completion and academic success, is influenced by various factors such as organizational performance, leadership quality, and communication (Vesce et al., 2021). The pandemic accelerated shifts to remote learning, posing challenges but also opportunities for innovation in service quality (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021).

To meet rising expectations, institutions must adopt a holistic approach that includes student affairs and support services, underpinned by effective communication and a student-centric perspective (Cinkir et al., 2022). Various models, like SERVQUAL, which evaluates service quality across five dimensions, provide a framework for assessing and improving service delivery in educational settings (Vieira et al., 2023).

Marketing and Service Quality

Marketing and service quality are essential elements in attracting and retaining students in HEIs. The strategic alignment of these two components ensures that institutions not only draw in prospective students but also maintain their satisfaction throughout their academic journey, ultimately fostering long-term loyalty (Kotler, 2017). Research highlights that a strong marketing strategy, combined with high service quality, creates a compelling value proposition for students (Azizi, 2020).

Marketing initiatives that accurately convey the institution's strengths, such as its academic reputation, campus facilities, and student support services, set the expectations that are later fulfilled through the quality of services provided (Białoń, 2015). The SERVQUAL model, with its dimensions of tangibility, assurance, reliability, responsiveness, and empathy, is often employed to assess and improve service quality within HEIs. This model helps institutions tailor their services to meet student expectations, thereby enhancing overall satisfaction.

Moreover, the synergy between marketing and service quality directly impacts student retention. Studies show that when students perceive high service quality, coupled with effective communication and marketing efforts, they are more likely to remain enrolled and recommend the institution to others (Nguyen, 2020). Thus, the interplay between these two factors is crucial in creating a positive student experience, which is essential for the sustainable growth of any educational institution. By leveraging both marketing and service quality, HEIs can not only attract a larger pool of prospective students but also ensure their continued satisfaction and engagement, leading to higher retention rates and a stronger institutional reputation (Gibbs, 2018).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to examine the relationship between current marketing practices and service quality within a private higher education institution. This design was deemed appropriate as it focuses on describing existing conditions and determining relationships among variables without manipulating them. By capturing the present situation, the design provided a clear and systematic understanding of how marketing practices are associated with perceived service quality among institutional stakeholders (Laco et al., 2024).

Participants

The study's respondents consisted of students and institutional personnel of the ICT-ED Institute of Science and Technology, Inc. The total population was 217, from which a sample size of 162 was determined using Slovin's formula. Student participants were required to be officially enrolled during the Academic Year 2024–2025 and to have completed at least one academic year at ICT-ED. This criterion ensured that students had sufficient exposure to the institution's services,

facilities, and marketing initiatives to provide informed responses.

Personnel participants were required to be officially employed by the institution for at least 6 months prior to data collection, ensuring they had adequate familiarity with institutional marketing practices and service delivery processes. This sample provided reliable and representative data for the study, as established guidelines note that samples derived using such formulas are adequate for meaningful statistical analysis (Hasan & Kumar, 2024). The dataset thus allowed for accurate examination of the relationships between marketing practices and service quality.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants

Participants	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BS in Computer Science	40	25
BS in Office Administration	35	22
Bachelor of Technical Vocational Teacher Education	20	12
BS in Entrepreneurship	18	11
BS in Accounting Information System	12	8
Grade 12	15	9
Teaching Personnel	17	10
Non-Teaching Personnel	5	3
Total	162	100

Research Instrument

The primary data-gathering instrument was a structured survey questionnaire developed by the researchers and validated by experts in education, marketing, and research. The instrument measured respondents' perceptions of marketing practices based on the Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning (STP) framework, as well as service quality using the SERVQUAL dimensions. Each dimension consisted of 10 items and used a 4-point Likert scale to ensure clarity and consistency in responses.

Validity and Reliability

To establish content validity, the questionnaire underwent expert validation by four professionals with relevant expertise. A pilot test was subsequently conducted to assess the instrument's reliability and clarity. The results yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.793, indicating acceptable internal consistency. After validation and reliability testing, the finalized questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents.

Statistical Treatment

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Weighted mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the level of marketing practices and service quality. Prior to correlation analysis, the normality of the data was assessed and found to be consistent with parametric assumptions, supporting the use of Pearson's correlation coefficient (r). Pearson's r was then used to examine the relationship between marketing practices and service quality, thereby determining the strength and direction of the associations.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the purpose of the research prior to data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, and all responses were used solely for academic and

research purposes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected through the survey questionnaire have been presented, analyzed, and interpreted to support the study's objectives.

Extent of Marketing Practices

Table 2 reveals that all four dimensions of marketing practices were rated as moderate by both personnel and students. Among these, marketing goals received the highest composite mean of 3.3, suggesting that the institution is relatively more consistent in defining and aligning its goals with its strategies. The target market dimension followed, indicating some level of targeted engagement, while promotion and initiatives both tied at 3.2, reflecting moderate but steady efforts in executing campaigns and adapting strategies. The overall composite mean across all dimensions was 3.2, indicating that respondents generally acknowledge that the institution's marketing practices are present but not fully optimized. These findings point to a consistent but improvable implementation across all areas, with opportunities to enhance communication, responsiveness, and personalization.

Table 2. Extent of Marketing Practices

Marketing Practices	Personnel			Student			Overall		
	CM	SD	VI	CM	SD	VI	CM	SD	VI
Target Market	3.5	0.4	ME	3.2	0.6	ME	3.2	0.6	ME
Marketing Goals	3.4	0.5	ME	3.3	0.5	ME	3.3	0.5	ME
Promotion	3.3	0.5	ME	3.2	0.6	ME	3.2	0.5	ME
Initiatives	3.2	0.5	ME	3.2	0.6	ME	3.2	0.6	ME
Overall Composite	3.3		ME	3.2		ME	3.2		ME

Legend: CM- Composite Mean, SD- Standard Deviation, VI – Verbal Interpretation, GE - Great Extent (3.5 - 4); ME - Moderate Extent (2.5 – 3.49); LE - Less Extent (1.50 – 2.49); LX - Least Extent (1.00 – 1.49)

These results support the existing literature emphasizing the essential link between effective marketing and institutional success. Kotler (2016) highlighted that defining a clear target market and aligning services accordingly is foundational to marketing effectiveness. Ding (2022) further stressed that setting well-articulated marketing goals improves institutional performance by guiding strategic communication and resource allocation. Meanwhile, Safdar et al. (2018) emphasized that adaptive promotional efforts and initiative-based planning are vital in creating student-centered campaigns that resonate with the audience. Together, these studies validate that while ICT-ED's marketing practices are recognized, strengthening these strategies through improved service alignment and internal coordination could yield better outcomes.

Level of Functioning of Service Quality

The findings in Table 3 show that all four dimensions of service quality were rated highly by both personnel and students, as indicated by their overall composite means. Among these, responsiveness received the highest mean score of 3.30, indicating that the institution is particularly attentive to timely communication and support services. Empathy and assurance followed closely, with a score of 3.25, indicating that students and personnel perceive a strong sense of care, reliability, and competence within the institution. Tangibility, while still in the high range, had the lowest score of 3.09, indicating a need for improvement in physical resources and facilities. Overall, with a composite mean of 3.23 for both personnel and students, the data indicate that the

institution consistently delivers high-quality service across all measured dimensions, though enhancements in the learning environment and infrastructure may further elevate perceptions.

These results emphasize the crucial role of service quality in shaping institutional reputation and student satisfaction. Darawong & Widayati (2022), through the SERVQUAL model, identified reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility as key drivers of perceived service excellence. Further supporting this, Ong (2022) argued that consistent responsiveness and empathetic engagement are critical predictors of student loyalty in higher education settings. Bwachele et al. (2023) also highlighted that educational institutions that invest in service quality, especially in communication, personalization, and environment, achieve higher student satisfaction and retention rates. These studies affirm that the institution's current high-level performance in service quality provides a solid foundation for reinforcing its marketing effectiveness and institutional appeal.

Table 3. Level of Functioning of Service Quality

Service Quality Dimensions	Personnel			Student			Overall		
	CM	SD	VI	CM	SD	VI	CM	SD	VI
Tangibility	3.1	0.5	H	3.1	0.6	H	3.1	0.6	H
Assurance	3.3	0.5	H	3.3	0.5	H	3.3	0.5	H
Responsiveness	3.4	0.4	H	3.3	0.5	H	3.3	0.5	H
Empathy	3.3	0.5	H	3.3	0.5	H	3.3	0.5	H
Overall Composite	3.3		H	3.2		H	3.2		H

Legend: CM- Composite Mean, SD- Standard Deviation, VI – Verbal Interpretation, GE - Great Extent (3.5 - 4); ME - Moderate Extent (2.5 – 3.49); LE - Less Extent (1.50 – 2.49); LX - Least Extent (1.00 – 1.49)

Relationship between the Extent of Marketing Practices and the Level of Functioning of Service Quality

Table 4 shows that all four dimensions of service quality are highly significant when related to the institution's ability to target its market, with correlations ranging from moderate to strong and p-values consistently below 0.01. This means that when an institution clearly understands and defines its target market, it can better align its facilities, reliability, care, and responsiveness to meet student expectations. From this perspective, the results emphasize that effective targeting not only broadens promotional reach but also directly improves students' experience and evaluation of service quality. The data suggest that marketing practices are not isolated efforts but are fundamentally tied to shaping student perceptions of the institution's credibility and service standards.

Supporting this, Camilleri (2018) pointed out that institutions must align their physical facilities and tangible elements with the expectations of their target market, as these often form the first impression of service quality. Sameena (2020) further reinforced the importance of assurance, noting that trust and credibility can be built when marketing efforts clearly communicate institutional reliability. Similarly, Ismail et al. (2021) stressed that empathy in service is heightened when institutions understand and act upon the needs of their specific market, enabling more personalized student experiences. Finally, Rivera et al. (2023) highlighted responsiveness as a vital factor, showing that institutions attentive to their market are better positioned to provide timely and efficient services.

Table 4. Relationship Between Target Market and Service Quality

	Pearson R	R Square	P Value	Significance
Tangibility	0.55	0.30	<0.01	Highly Significant

Assurance	0.60	0.35	<0.01	Highly Significant
Empathy	0.66	0.43	<0.01	Highly Significant
Responsiveness	0.64	0.41	<0.01	Highly Significant

Table 5 reveals that marketing goals are significantly related to all service quality dimensions with consistently strong statistical results. This indicates that when schools set and achieve clear marketing objectives, there is a ripple effect that enhances stakeholders' experience of their services. Tangibility is evident in well-maintained facilities and visible improvements; assurance is reinforced by dependable academic and administrative systems; empathy is felt in how students are treated with genuine concern; and responsiveness is evident in the speed and efficiency of institutional support. In this sense, the pursuit of marketing goals directly shapes not only the school's external reputation but also its students' experiences.

[Campos and Campos \(2023\)](#) emphasized that the credibility and professionalism of faculty play a decisive role in student trust. While [Smolyaninova et al. \(2020\)](#) highlighted empathy as a core factor; they explain that learners often equate quality education with personalized attention and emotional support. [Alemu \(2023\)](#), on the other hand, emphasized responsiveness, noting that schools that provide quick and effective assistance gain a stronger competitive edge. It only affirms that marketing goals, when integrated with quality service delivery, help institutions not only attract new enrollees but also sustain long-term satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 5. Relationship Between Marketing Goals and Service Quality

	Pearson R	R Square	P Value	Significance
Tangibility	0.53	0.28	<0.01	Highly Significant
Assurance	0.62	0.38	<0.01	Highly Significant
Empathy	0.63	0.39	<0.01	Highly Significant
Responsiveness	0.61	0.38	<0.01	Highly Significant

Table 6 confirms a highly significant relationship between promotion and service quality, with p-values less than 0.01 across all dimensions. This indicates that effective promotion consistently enhances stakeholders' perceptions of both the physical and non-physical aspects of an institution's services. Tangibility benefits when promotions highlight visible upgrades in facilities and equipment. Assurance grows as campaigns communicate credibility, accreditation, and faculty competence, while empathy is reinforced when marketing portrays the school as attentive and student-centered. Responsiveness is strengthened when promotions stress quick support and adaptability.

Table 6. Relationship Between Promotion and Service Quality

	Pearson R	R Square	P Value	Significance
Tangibility	0.60	0.36	<0.01	Highly Significant
Assurance	0.66	0.44	<0.01	Highly Significant
Empathy	0.66	0.43	<0.01	Highly Significant
Responsiveness	0.65	0.42	<0.01	Highly Significant

These findings establish that promotional efforts do more than attract attention but directly shape perceptions of reliability, care, and institutional excellence. As [Mahajan and Suresh \(2022\)](#) emphasized, promotion amplifies tangibility by spotlighting infrastructure improvements that increase perceived value, while [Dally et al. \(2021\)](#) note that assurance is heightened when

institutions promote trust and transparency through their promotional activity.

Karacaoğlu (2024) also highlights empathy, noting that promotional content that reflects personalized care strongly appeals to students seeking individualized support. Wati et al. (2021) further stress responsiveness, showing that timely communication and quick services, when effectively promoted, signal institutional agility. For smaller institutions in particular, promotion becomes a strategic lever not only to compete with larger schools but also to reinforce a reputation for quality that is both visible and felt by students.

Table 7 shows that marketing initiatives have a highly significant relationship with all four service quality dimensions, with p-values all less than 0.01. This means that marketing strategies directly influence how stakeholders perceive an institution's qualities. Tangibility improves when campaigns showcase modern facilities, technology, and clean environments; assurance rises as initiatives emphasize faculty expertise, accreditations, and institutional credibility; empathy strengthens when marketing communicates a student-centered approach; and responsiveness is reinforced when promotions highlight timely support and adaptability. These findings confirm that marketing initiatives are not just about visibility but also drive perceptions of efficient service quality.

Similarly, Kanori et al. (2020) underlined the role of tangibility in decision-making, noting that highlighting physical assets builds strong impressions of quality. Bwachele et al. (2023) stress that assurance is essential in education, where trust is fundamental, and institutions that promote transparency and competence boost credibility. Showing that smaller schools benefit from advertising personalized attention, close faculty-student interaction, and supportive services (Leuwol et al., 2023).

Finally, Briones et al. (2023) identifies responsiveness as a cornerstone of service quality, with marketing able to strengthen perceptions of efficiency and agility. For institutions like ICT-ED, which compete against larger counterparts, emphasizing these dimensions through strategic marketing creates an advantage that communicates reliability, care, and excellence in both physical and service-oriented terms.

Table 7. Relationship Between Initiatives and Service Quality

	Pearson R	R Square	P Value	Significance
Tangibility	0.66	0.43	<0.01	Highly Significant
Assurance	0.72	0.51	<0.01	Highly Significant
Empathy	0.67	0.45	<0.01	Highly Significant
Responsiveness	0.64	0.41	<0.01	Highly Significant

Proposed Marketing Plan

This marketing plan outlines strategies based on the STP Model to enhance service quality and address market needs. Segmentation identifies distinct market segments, ensuring that initiatives are tailored to target groups with the highest potential for engagement. Targeting then focuses on selecting these key segments and setting clear goals and promotions to effectively capture their attention and loyalty. Positioning emphasizes how the institution is perceived, using strategies that address tangibility, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy to strengthen the brand's appeal. The plan is recommended for implementation from the 2024-2025 academic year through 2026-2027.

Table 8. Proposed Marketing Plan

Area	Objective	Strategy	Success Indicator
Segmentation	Identify and understand the needs of potential students.	• Conduct surveys and interviews with prospective students and parents. • Collaborate with nearby schools to gather insights. • Utilize social media analytics to refine segmentation.	• Comprehensive understanding of prospective students' needs. • Clear segmentation profiles developed.
	Align marketing goals with student expectations and institutional objectives.	• Implement regular feedback mechanisms. • Develop cross-functional teams for alignment. • Integrate goals into planning and decision-making.	• Marketing strategies reflect feedback and institutional goals. • Increased student satisfaction.
Targeting	Tailor marketing efforts to specific segments to maximize impact.	• Create targeted campaigns based on segmentation data. • Leverage digital platforms to reach specific student groups.	• Higher engagement and conversion rates among targeted segments.
	Enhance student experience through targeted service quality improvements.	• Upgrade physical facilities and learning environments. Strengthen communication of institutional commitments and credibility. • Improve response times and accessibility of services. • Personalize student support and foster a welcoming environment.	• Positive feedback on service quality. • Improved student satisfaction ratings.
Positioning	Increase awareness and engagement through promotions.	• Organize events like open houses and career fairs. • Provide marketing team training on social media. • Collaborate across departments for creative campaigns.	• High event attendance and positive feedback. • Consistent brand messaging. • Increased inquiries and applications.
	Establish the institution as a provider of quality educational experience.	• Launch technology-focused programs to showcase innovation.	• Successful program implementation. • Modernized

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- Highlight faculty expertise and institutional achievements in marketing campaigns.
 - Ensure quick adaptation to student feedback and needs.
 - Develop initiatives that demonstrate care for student well-being.
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CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals a significant relationship between targeted marketing practices and the dimensions of service quality within a small private higher education institution. The analysis demonstrates that effective targeting, clear marketing goals, strategic promotions, and well-executed initiatives significantly enhance perceptions of service quality, including tangibility, assurance, empathy, and responsiveness. The data underscores the importance of aligning marketing strategies with service quality efforts, suggesting that institutions that effectively identify and target their market can meaningfully improve student and personnel satisfaction.

The strong correlations observed between marketing efforts and service quality dimensions highlight the critical role of personalized, responsive, and strategic marketing in building a positive institutional reputation. These findings suggest that small institutions like ICT-ED can leverage their focused market approach and agility to implement marketing practices that resonate with their audience, ultimately enhancing service quality and strengthening institutional competitiveness.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The small sample size and the focus on a single private higher education institution may limit the generalizability of the results. The reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, and the cross-sectional nature of the study restricts our ability to observe changes over time. Furthermore, the study only explored selected dimensions of service quality, potentially overlooking other relevant aspects.

To improve future research, it is recommended to increase the sample size and expand the geographic scope to ensure broader applicability of the findings. Conducting longitudinal studies would allow for the observation of changes over time, providing a deeper understanding of how marketing practices and service quality perceptions evolve. Additionally, exploring additional dimensions of service quality and addressing potential biases in self-reporting would yield more comprehensive and reliable results.

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