

Service Marketing Trends and Service Quality: Advances in Student Satisfaction of Coaching Institutes of Kota through PLS-SEM Approach

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ABSTRACT

Purpose—The purpose of this study is to ascertain how the elements of the service marketing mix affect the characteristics of service quality in private coaching institutes located in Kota District. This study builds upon, enhances, and consolidates the empirical research conducted in the field of education service quality in Kota coaching institutes, while also acknowledging the critical role that service quality plays in raising student satisfaction. For managers of these coaching facilities, it has a number of implications, including the importance of strategies related to enhancing service quality, which will affect how satisfied students are.

Methods—Empirical research served as the study's foundation. The study's independent variables are the components of the service marketing mix, while its dependent variables are aspects of service quality such as assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibleness. The data gathered from structured questionnaires given out at five coaching centres in Kota—Allen Career Institute, Resonance, Bansal Classes, Aakash Institute, and Vibrant Academy—is analysed quantitatively. 400 respondents provided information (384 using Morgan formulas and 16 as contingency respondents). The trustworthy data was gathered using the stratified simple random sample technique. SPSS and PLS-SEM were used for data analysis.

Results—The findings demonstrate that every independent variable has a strong correlation with the dependent variable, indicating that every component of the service marketing mix affects every aspect of the coaching institutions of Kota's service quality. The results give organisations a clear road map for improving the quality of their services. Businesses can increase customer happiness and loyalty by mitigating the poor performance of the "People" aspect, utilising the crucial role of "Place," and concentrating on important quality characteristics like assurance and empathy. Measurable gains in customer perceptions and service delivery are anticipated when strategic changes are made in light of these insights. Additionally, the report provides crucial direction for upcoming research projects.

Keywords

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary education system has witnessed a profound shift, with a notable transition from traditional schools to coaching institutes. This trend is particularly prevalent among students preparing for competitive entrance exams in fields like engineering and medicine. Many opt for private schooling or part-time schooling, and numerous schools have established partnerships with prominent coaching institutes to offer specialized classes. Private tutoring is now considered supplementary education, as these coaching institutes provide personalized attention, aiding students on their journey to success. Today, private coaching institutes are thriving nationwide, with Kota, a city in Rajasthan, emerging as the epicentre of the Indian coaching industry. Students who flock to Kota for coaching

programs prioritize their exam preparations above all else, often leaving behind their families, friends, and hometowns. For those aspiring to become doctors or engineers, Kota's coaching institutes, such as Allen, Bansal, Career Point, Resonance, Vibrant, and Motion, are the preferred choice. Kota has become synonymous with preparing for the IIT-JEE and medical entrance exams, providing essential facilities and services to cater to the needs of these ambitious students. The city, once known primarily for its industrial endeavours, has transformed into a renowned educational hub. Over time, a multitude of coaching institutions gradually came into existence in Kota, each contributing to the city's reputation as a coaching capital. Here are the establishment years of some major coaching institutes. These institutions collectively shaped Kota into a hub of competitive coaching, attracting students from across the country and solidifying its status as an educational powerhouse.

Table 1.1 Major Coaching Institutes of Kota.

S.NO	NAME OF COACHING	YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT
1	BANSAL CLASSES	1984
2	ALLEN CAREER INSTITUTE	1988
3	AAKASH INSTITUTE	1988
4	RESONANCE	2001
5	VIBRANT ACADEMY	2009

Resources for advertising are included in the sales combination of resources. Implementing the service marketing mix, also known as the 7Ps definition, can be quite difficult. Combining the methods of advertising items and services is a reasonable way to obtain the goal or gain. Applying the 7Ps definition entails working to enhance marketing's contribution to generating the most revenue possible (Sadq, 2019). The 4Ps and 3Ps marketing mix models (people, physical proof, and process) are two ways to model the marketing service mix, which includes product, price, promotion, and place. A marketing tactic used to accomplish the target market goal is the product marketing mix. (2018)

Among the several stakeholders, the student is seen as the primary client. Other educational societies and coaching (Abdullah, 2006a). Discussions about high-quality education put a strong emphasis on stakeholder-related quality. The primary interest group in Students are the main component of total teaching and learning in educational institutions, and process of learning (Gallifa&Batalle, 2010). Consequently, it is crucial to consider the opinions of regarding every facet of their educational experiences. The coaching profession is answerable for providing kids with the highest-quality services. the level of service quality has drawn considerable attention (Abdullah, 2006a).

The services offered by a trainer can be experienced from the perspective of students as major customers (Hill, Lomas & MacGregor, 2003). The debate about quality education give emphasis on the quality associated to the stakeholders. As per Stakeholders Theory, students are the major stakeholders of the educational institutes and are the key constituent in the learning and teaching process (Gallifa&Batalle, 2010). Service quality has drawn significant attention, and coaching establishments are responsible for providing students with the highest level of service (Abdullah, 2006a).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Role of the service marketing mix on the tangible aspect of coaching Institutes' service quality

Previous studies on the quality of services offered in the education industry have focused on several elements. It may be claimed that all of these studies concentrated on generally important components,

such as academics, support services, and physical facilities, even though each researcher highlights a different facet of service quality. The majority of the important aspects of the coaching industry were covered by the instrument used in this study, which was modified from a number of previous studies (Lagrosen, Seyyed-Hashemi, & Leitner, 2004; Sohail & Shaikh, 2004; Telford & Masson, 2005; Douglas et al., 2006; Parker, 2008; Maimunah, Kaka, & Finch, 2009; Tsinidou et al., 2010). A number of factors have been the focus of earlier research on the calibre of services provided in the education sector. Tangibles are the tangible proof of the service, such as the state of the facilities, tools, and study materials, even though each researcher focusses on a different part of it. This covers the state of the classrooms, the availability of study materials, and the general infrastructure of Kota coaching centres. Modern, well-maintained facilities can have a favourable effect on how well services are perceived.

H1: Service marketing mix has a positive relationship with tangible dimension of coaching institutes.

2.2 Role of the service marketing mix on the Reliability aspect of coaching Institutes' service quality

The quality of services offered by institutions and student happiness are two very different concepts. Quality can be viewed as a general attitude, whereas satisfaction is linked to particular transactions. The relationship between student satisfaction and service quality in educational institutions is a contentious issue. One perspective holds that offering high-quality education is a "service," and that quality is determined by assessing expectations (Rowley, 1996; Kahu, 2013). Marzo-Navarro, Pedraja Iglesias, and Rivera-Torres (2005) found a strong correlation between quality and student satisfaction. Reliability assesses the consistency of services. Students go to the coaching centre for dependable and regular information, class schedules, and top-notch instruction. Any variations in the quality of instruction or course material could have a negative impact on reliability and student satisfaction. In coaching facilities, punctuality is crucial. Timely class start times, adherence to the schedule, and prompt feedback on assignments and tests all affect reliability. Students rely on the institute to deliver services as promised.

H2: Service marketing mix has a positive relationship with Reliable dimension of coaching institutes.

2.3 Role of the service marketing mix on the Responsiveness aspect of coaching Institutes' service quality

opinions of providing quality education are challenging to generate and frequently highly subjective. Therefore, providing quality education can be seen as the development of a student who is aware of the many services provided by teachers, administrators, the institute, and additional services provided by the institute including support services (2011) Bruggen, Foubert, and Gremler. As a result, it can be claimed that student satisfaction has become a key goal for educational institutions and is used to inspire students and support a culture of continuous quality improvement. The institute's readiness to assist and address questions and issues from students is referred to as responsiveness. Open lines of communication with teachers, prompt issue resolution, and attentive customer service are all examples of effective communication channels. Prompt answers to questions and requests show that you care about the achievement of your students.

Coaching centres ought to provide pupils with individualised support and direction, taking into account their unique requirements and difficulties. Student satisfaction and response are improved through mentorship programs, counselling, and customised study schedules.

H3: Service marketing mix has a positive relationship with Responsiveness dimension of coaching institutes.

2.4 Role of the service marketing mix on the Assurance aspect of coaching Institutes' service quality

Scholars have already discussed the relationships between a quality education and long-term student satisfaction. They have all underlined the significance of many elements, such as the curriculum or content, the faculty, the support services that are accessible, the correlation between the institute, the library, and other physical facilities, and the management of student happiness. A number of variables, including situational and individual characteristics, affect how happy students are. Browne et al. (1998) assert that how students perceive the calibre of their services has an impact on their level of satisfaction. The findings of previous studies highlight how contented students might use their kind comments to draw in new students through recommendations to friends and coworkers, and they may return to educational institutions to enrol in more courses (Wiers-Jenssen et al., 2002; Mavondo et al., 2004). Assurance has to do with the coaching center's instructors' expertise and abilities. Students expect their teachers to be well-versed, experienced, and able to adequately explain the subject matter.

By providing information about their professors' histories and achievements, students may feel more confident.

H4: Service marketing mix has a positive relationship with Assurance dimension of coaching institutes.

2.5 Role of the service marketing mix on the Empathy aspect of coaching Institutes' service quality
a few studies also suggest that it is challenging to define satisfaction in terms of specific results, as it may instead be experienced by students as a sense of accomplishment and mental state following the observation of an outcome that meets their expectations (Kotler & Clarke, 1987; Baron & Corbin, 2012). For instance, students may like the material provided but be unhappy with the cost of coaching or the availability of support services (Kotler & Fox, 1995; Tuan, 2012). As a result of evaluating students' specific experiences at a particular time rather than their overall lasting experiences, pleasure may be viewed as a transient attitude (Summers, Waigandt, & Whittaker, 2005). Understanding and meeting each student's individual requirements is a key component of empathy. Both good and negative student comments should be carefully listened to by coaching centres in order to enhance their offerings. Support that is more sympathetic might result from an understanding of the difficulties that students encounter, such as the demands of exams.

Empathy is demonstrated by providing individualised study materials, flexible learning options, and support services based on each student's interests and goals. Student satisfaction can be raised by acknowledging that every student is different and modifying services appropriately.

H5: Service marketing mix has a positive relationship with Empathy dimension of coaching institutes.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection

The information for this study was gathered using a standardised questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into three pieces. Statements regarding the demographics of the students are presented in the first section. Name, course, age, gender, class/qualification, and enrolment institution are all required. In section two, the seven Ps of service marketing—product, pricing, place, promotion, people, process, and concrete evidence—were the subject of questions for the students. The third section contains statements regarding the components of service quality, such as tangibility, assurance, focus, compassion, and reliability. The survey consists of closed-ended questions on a five-point Likert scale. (Kothari, CRM).

The sample size for the current study is 384 for a limited population at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, as determined by Krejcie and Morgan's algorithm. The sample, which accounts for the backlog, consisted of 400 respondents. The total sample would be divided into discrete strata in order to collect questionnaire responses based on various branches and streams within the five coaching institutes—Allen Bansal Classes, Resonance, Aakash Institute, Vibrant Academy, and Bansal Classes of the Kota District. Distribution of data by coaching institute: The pupils from the top five coaching schools selected for the study are listed below.

Table 3.1 Coaching wise distribution of data

Coaching Institute	Proportionate sample percentage%	Proportionate sample size	Actual responses received
Allen Career Institute	20%	80	80
Resonance Academy	20%	80	80
Aakash Institute	20%	80	80
Vibrant Academy	20%	80	80
Bansal Classes	20%	80	80
TOTAL	100%	400	400

Source: Data collected from December 2019 till April 2020

3.2 Data Analysis Approach

The study employs a quantitative approach based on theories, models, and presumptions. This study is based on descriptive, exploratory, empirical-experimental, and observational analysis. Examining the

elements of the service marketing mix and their effects on the quality of services offered by Kota's executive coaching institutes is the aim of exploratory research. This study also makes use of empirical analysis and descriptive statistics. The top five coaching centres in Kota, along with the students' ages, classes, and branches, are described by descriptive data. Conversely, empirical analysis gathered trustworthy information from a survey that helps evaluate the hypotheses with a variety of statistical methods.

4. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

4.1 PLS SEM ANALYSIS

Table 4.1 : Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Service Quality	0.980	0.981	0.985	0.929
people	0.832	0.840	0.899	0.749
physical evidence	0.821	0.862	0.892	0.734
place	0.934	0.935	0.958	0.885
price	0.764	0.790	0.893	0.807
process	0.899	0.963	0.935	0.829
product	0.768	0.777	0.865	0.682
promotion	0.752	0.973	0.807	0.602

INTERPRETATION: The analysis shows that all constructs demonstrate acceptable to excellent reliability and strong convergent validity, with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding 0.7 and AVE values above 0.5. Service Quality, Place, and Process exhibit exceptional reliability and validity, while Promotion, although slightly lower in these metrics, still meets the minimum acceptable thresholds. Overall, the constructs explain a significant portion of the variance in their indicators, supporting their robustness.

Table 4.2: Outer loadings matrix

	Service Quality	people	physical evidence	place	price	process	product	promotion
ASSURANCE	0.989							
EMPATHY	0.986							
RELIABILITY	0.974							
RESPONSIBILITY	0.986							
TANGIBILITY	0.879							
PEOPLE1		0.869						
PEOPLE2		0.904						
PEOPLE3		0.821						
PHYSICAL1			0.790					
PHYSICAL2			0.886					
PHYSICAL3			0.891					
PLACE1				0.900				
PLACE2				0.956				
PLACE3				0.965				
PRICE1					0.922			

PRICE2					0.875			
PROCESS1						0.951		
PROCESS2						0.939		
PROCESS3						0.837		
PRODUCT1							0.832	
PRODUCT2							0.843	
PRODUCT3							0.802	
PROMOTION1								0.454
PROMOTION2								0.828
PROMOTION3								0.956

INTERPRETATION: The PLS-SEM model demonstrates robust convergent and discriminant validity across most constructs, with indicators loading strongly on their associated latent variables and showing minimal cross-loadings on others. Constructs like Service Quality and Physical Evidence exhibit particularly strong validity, while PROMOTION1 (loading = 0.454) stands out as a weak point, potentially requiring refinement or exclusion. Overall, the model is well-validated, with PROMOTION1 being the only notable area for improvement.

Table 4.3 : Fornell larcker criteria

	Service Quality	people	physical evidence	place	price	process	product	promotion
Service Quality	0.964							
people	0.384	0.865						
physical evidence	0.305	0.157	0.857					
place	0.650	0.528	0.265	0.941				
price	0.231	0.079	0.112	0.147	0.898			
process	-0.440	-0.273	-0.208	-0.400	-0.073	0.910		
product	0.611	0.059	0.191	0.311	0.075	-0.326	0.826	
promotion	0.094	0.064	0.064	0.056	-0.027	-0.012	0.136	0.776

INTERPRETATION: The PLS-SEM model demonstrates strong discriminant validity according to the Fornell-Larcker criterion. For all constructs—Service Quality, People, Physical Evidence, Place, Price, Process, Product, and Promotion—the square root of the AVE exceeds the highest correlations with other constructs, confirming that each construct is distinct and well-defined within the model.

Table 4.4 : HTMT MATRIX

	Service Quality	people	physical evidence	place	price	process	product	promotion
Service Quality								
people	0.421							
physical evidence	0.323	0.184						

place	0.675	0.599	0.294					
price	0.263	0.124	0.222	0.176				
process	0.448	0.314	0.224	0.427	0.081			
product	0.696	0.162	0.221	0.358	0.147	0.367		
promotion	0.075	0.083	0.116	0.064	0.061	0.054	0.125	

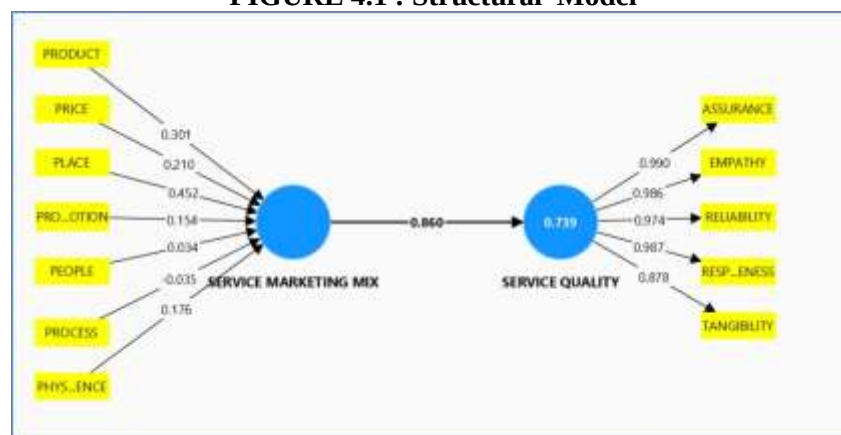
INTERPRETATION: The HTMT analysis confirms good discriminant validity for most constructs in the PLS-SEM model, as their HTMT values are well below the 0.85 threshold. While Service Quality shows relatively higher HTMT values with Place (0.675) and Product (0.696), these still fall within acceptable bounds, indicating the constructs remain distinct. Overall, the model satisfies the HTMT criterion for discriminant validity.

TABLE 4.5: COLLINEARITY STATISTICS (VIF)- OUTER MODEL

	VIF
ASSURANCE	1.832
EMPATHY	2.458
RELIABILITY	1.890
RESPONSIBILITY	2.648
PLACE	2.248
PRICE	1.582
TANGIBILITY	2.940
PRODUCT	1.450
PEOPLE	1.704
PHYSICAL EVIDENCE	1.880
PROCESS	1.087
PROMOTION	2.100

INTERPRETATION: The VIF analysis confirms that multicollinearity is not a concern in the PLS-SEM model, as all VIF values fall below the commonly used threshold of 3.3. Tangibility (VIF = 2.940), Empathy (VIF = 2.458), and Responsibility (VIF = 2.648) show relatively higher but still acceptable values, indicating their contributions remain distinct. The lowest VIF (1.087 for Process) highlights excellent independence in that construct. Overall, the indicators contribute unique information, and the model maintains good collinearity control, with minor areas for monitoring.

FIGURE 4.1 : Structural Model



Source: Self compiled Questionnaire data

The PLS-SEM analysis highlights the strong explanatory power of the model, with the Service Marketing Mix explaining 73.9% of the variance in Service Quality ($R^2 = 0.739$). The relationship

between the constructs is robust, with a path coefficient of 0.860. Service Quality indicators demonstrate excellent convergent validity, with high loadings (>0.878). Most Service Marketing Mix indicators also show moderate to strong loadings, except for *People*, which has a negative and very low loading (-0.035), suggesting it may not significantly contribute to the construct. Overall, the model effectively captures the dynamics between Service Marketing Mix and Service Quality, though *People* warrants further investigation.

Summary of the Model: The analysis highlights a strong relationship between the Service Marketing Mix and Service Quality, with a path coefficient of 0.860, indicating that an optimized marketing mix significantly enhances perceived service quality. The Service Quality construct is well-explained by the marketing mix, as reflected in the high R^2 value of 0.739, meaning 73.9% of its variance is accounted for by the mix elements. Indicator loadings show that "Place" (0.452) has the most substantial impact, underscoring the importance of distribution and accessibility. However, "People" has a negative loading (-0.035), suggesting potential issues with staff performance or customer interactions, which require attention. Other elements, such as "Product" (0.301) and "Price" (0.210), contribute moderately, while "Promotion," "Process," and "Physical Evidence" have relatively smaller impacts. Service Quality dimensions like Assurance, Empathy, and Reliability demonstrate extremely high loadings (>0.97), signifying their critical role in shaping customer perceptions of quality.

4.1.3 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.6 Hypothesis Testing Results

	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-value	Significance
Service marketing mix-> Tangibility	1.423	0.061	23.498	0.000	Significant
Service marketing mix-> Reliability	0.986	0.050	19.590	0.000	Significant
Service marketing mix-> Responsiveness	1.338	0.060	22.212	0.000	Significant
Service marketing mix-> Empathy	1.203	0.057	21.226	0.000	Significant
Service marketing mix-> Assurance	1.066	0.051	20.	0.000	Significant

- For all five dimensions (Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Empathy, and Assurance), the p-values are less than 0.05, meaning each of these relationships is statistically significant.
- The coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between service marketing mix elements and each dimension.
- All variables have relatively high t-statistics, indicating that the coefficients are far from zero and strongly significant in predicting each dependent variable.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The main conclusions of the analysis are briefly outlined, emphasising the substantial influence of the Service Marketing Mix on service quality. It provides practical recommendations that might help companies focus on improving customer satisfaction and overall service quality. With a path coefficient of 0.860 and an R^2 value of 0.739, the research shows a strong, positive association between the service marketing mix and service quality, with the marketing mix accounting for 73.9% of the variation in service quality. The People part of the marketing mix has a negative influence, suggesting possible discontent with employee performance or customer interactions, whereas Place has the most impact on perceived service quality, followed by Product and Price. Key drivers of

Service Quality include Assurance, Empathy, Reliability, and Responsibility, which are highly valued by customers, while Tangibility also plays a meaningful role.

To improve service quality, organizations should focus on enhancing the People component by investing in staff training and refining service protocols. They should also leverage the importance of Place by improving accessibility, physical environments, and service delivery channels. Strengthening intangible aspects like trust, personalized care, and consistency will further enhance service perceptions. While Product, Price, Promotion, Process, and Physical Evidence are less impactful, they still influence service quality and should be managed to align with customer expectations. By addressing these areas, businesses can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty, with strategic adjustments leading to measurable improvements in service delivery.

Therefore the findings provide a clear roadmap for organizations to enhance service quality. By addressing the weak performance of the "People" element, leveraging the critical role of "Place," and focusing on key quality dimensions like Assurance and Empathy, businesses can drive customer satisfaction and loyalty. Strategic adjustments based on these insights are likely to yield measurable improvements in both service delivery and customer perceptions. To improve service quality, businesses can take practical steps to address key areas:

Improve the "People" Aspect: Since the "People" element shows dissatisfaction in interpersonal communication, focus on targeted employee training to improve communication and customer engagement. Additionally, review and refine service processes to ensure timely, consistent communication, and introduce employee rewards to incentivize outstanding service.

Leverage "Place": Given that location has the highest impact on service quality, focus on enhancing the accessibility and convenience of service delivery points (e.g., better parking, closer proximity). Also, improve the physical environment by ensuring comfort, cleanliness, and modern facilities, and streamline service delivery through online platforms or home delivery options.

Enhance Intangible Service Qualities: Strengthen key aspects of service quality such as trust and reliability. Foster transparent communication and proactive problem resolution (Assurance), provide personalized care tailored to customers' needs (Empathy), ensure consistent service delivery (Reliability), and demonstrate a commitment to addressing customer concerns (Responsibility).

Track and Improve Other Marketing Mix Components: While less impactful, Product, Price, Promotion, Process, and Physical Evidence still play a role in service quality. Ensure that the service offering aligns with customer expectations (Product), pricing reflects perceived value (Price), marketing effectively communicates service benefits (Promotion), processes are transparent and efficient (Process), and tangible elements consistently reflect the service brand (Physical Evidence). By focusing on these areas, businesses can significantly enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, leading to improvements in both service delivery and overall perceptions of service quality.

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