



BEST STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF THE BUSINESS INSTITUTES IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Pakistan's HEIs are struggling to improve the quality and meets international standards. International students perform a vital part in the globalization of universities. The ratio of international students in Pakistan is increasing but still there is a room for the country's HEIs to internationalize through recruitment of international students. This paper aims to explore various strategies implemented in the Pakistan's business institutes to attract the international students.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The quantitative methodology is applied through using five Likert scale. The data was collected from twelve business institutes in Pakistan. The data was supplemented through interviews from head of the QECs. Twelve best strategies are extracted, and the implementation of these strategies are evaluated through creating groups on dendrogram presentation in group analysis. **Findings:** Results highlight three groups; First group has ten strategies that are mostly implemented. Second group have one strategy that is moderately implemented, and third group have also one strategy that is never implemented in the business institutes in Pakistan. **Implications/Originality/Value:** This study is limited for only business institutes so similar studies can be done with other disciplines to enhance its generalizability.

KEYWORDS: Internationalisation, International Students, Best strategies, Group Analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Internationalisation is a system of assimilating a global dimension, the focused aim of Internationalisation is to transfer the education (Zakaria, Janjua and Fida, 2016). Now a days top universities are more conscious in term of Internationalisation. They are continuously struggling to recruit international students and send their students abroad (Kayani, Ahmed, and Shah, 2015). During the 21st century, education system has undergone many significant changes, one of them being the incorporation of many foreign students into the classroom. Students of different nationalities, different economic and socio-educational background are becoming enrolled because of the migratory phenomenon that is currently taking place. The phenomenon of immigration has grown due to the strategic geographical situation of the country and its attractiveness as a nation (Máiquez, Fontes and Martínez, 2017). The higher education institutes are improving their quality standards through many ways, and one is to improve the quality standard is to internationalize themselves (Roga, Lapina and Mürsepp, 2015).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Internationalisation is a way to discuss and share the faculty, graduate, disciplines, organisation and courses with each other institutions (Zakaria, Janjua and Fida, 2016). There are several ways to attract the international students such as offering English learning program, and development programs on IT (Zakaria, Janjua and Frida, 2016). The ratio of enrolled students in reputed higher education institutes is increasing day by day. This exchange of human capital on temporary basis have educational, social and cultural merit and can be done through exchange of students or faculty like the case of the controversial and withdrawn HEC program of foreign faculty or the still operational faculty development program. (Junaidi, 2012). Most of the foreign students choose the US and United Kingdom for higher studies. On the opposite hand, mostly, foreign students are coming back from China and Bharat. Interest for

abroad coaching within the 2 countries is driven by a developing professional category. The advanced education frameworks in each nation cannot provide quality instruction. Bharat as opposed to China doesn't have a long-standing Government strategy resulting in the outbound movement of the academia (Kayani, Ahmed, and Shah, 2015).

Higher education commission of Pakistan take initiatives to globalize and standardize their academic standards that not only Pakistani students, but foreign students are also enabling to compete internationally (Zakaria, Janjua and Fida, 2016). Literature discusses various strategies to recruit international students such as: offer the utilization of academic resources, give an opportunity to attend and participate international events like conferences, workshops, trainings and symposiums (Özturgut, 2013). Foreign students can be recruited through networking and friendship: friendship making strong bonding of international students with host nationals. There are so many barriers for the institutes to recruit international students one of which is cultural shock or mismatch when international students belong to diverse types of social environments and it is very difficult them to adjust with the environment of the institute effectively and quickly. Literature discussed that there are three major motives to recruit international students: a) create a culture of 'academic internationalism' in the higher education institutions to recruit international students, b) higher education institutes can earn and increase their economic capitals through offering various trainings and other programs for the international students c) launch various types of academic entrepreneurship activities like humanizing, governing, training and developing for the International students (Özturgut, 2013).

Nations have designed numerous strategies to recruit international students such as to recruit international standards the universities enable to compete globally. In Pakistan, no reliable and productive strategies are designed to invite the international students to get education in Pakistani universities. Another major issue was that the degrees offered by Pakistani universities do not possess international acceptance due to lack of quality standers. In that scenario there is a need of an effective system that execute and monitor the degree requirement, its compliance and fulfilment in respect to international standards (Zakaria, Janjua and Fida, 2016). The higher education institutes in Pakistan provide admission opportunities for international students. Currently a respectable number of international students get education in the Pakistani universities. Most of foreign students belongs to developing countries and getting admissions through scholarships in which expenses are offered by government. The HEC and government of Pakistan is continuously taing initiatives to turn country as knowledge-based economy. To achieve this purpose the universities offers various international programs in a variety of disciplines for the international students. The aim is to make Pakistan a centre of international higher education in Asia and worldwide (Zakaria, Janjua and Fida, 2016).

Literature suggests various strategies to endorse Internationalisation of higher education in the country, such as: Pakistani embassies in other countries should advertise the courses and disciplines offered by higher education institutions in Pakistan, Pakistan launch offshore campuses of their universities abroad, the international students are facilitated with all affordable comforts, institutions create linkages with well-known universities to boost the capacity of research and development, design courses according to international standards, offers English language training programs and courses for candidates coming from non-English speaking countries, facilitate student with the easily fund transfer services, offers workshops and culture and tradition regarding short courses (Kayani, Ahmed, and Shah, 2015). Group analysis is a method to categorise the variables in same group within a data set (Holand, 2006). It classifies the similarity of same groups and develops groups per similarity since this is an amalgamation of discriminant and factor analysis which form the data reduction technique. Group analysis minimize the number of variables by categorizing them into same groups (Yim and Ramdeen, 2015).



Table 1: Twelve Best Strategies implemented to recruit international students globally

| | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------|--|
| Strategy No.1 | The university or institute have updated and advanced curriculum that possess the international standards and helpful for the international student to pursue their carrier. | Strategy No.7 | English Linguistic trainings and Strong support program organize for foreign students. |
| Strategy No.2 | Faculty and Students are encouraging to participate in international events like conferences, workshops, trainings and student fairs in different countries | Strategy No.8 | International students and faculties are facilitated with linguistics placement programs, economic useful resource, health offerings, spiritual help, and immigration aid. |
| Strategy No.3 | Expert group of workers specifically for worldwide scholar recruitment -provide scholarships. | Strategy No.9 | Outreach email expanding to dispensing constrained and centered flyers and marketing substances for international universities, schools, and organizations that encourage to get education in other countries. |
| Strategy No.4 | International alumni and their parents served as component-time recruiters in several international locations. | Strategy No.10 | Faculty members and students encourage to work with a domestic and global organization with a nearby worldwide employer with ties abroad -networking with community corporations. |
| Strategy No.5 | Strong support programs organize for foreign candidates like -Pairing native programs with foreign and local students. | Strategy No.11 | Global alumni prompted to help with their efforts in recruitment and establishing alumni chapters and recruitment facilities abroad. |
| Strategy No.6 | Diverse office works with many events like Kitchenette, social areas, clubs, bicycle and car condominium and visits with local students. | Strategy No.12 | Immigration strategy and the advantages and demanding situations in sponsoring international teachers, students and employees with an immigration reput. |

3. METHODOLOGY

In this paper the data is collected from business institutes in Pakistan. There are more than fifteen business education institutes which exist in Pakistan. From that twelve business education institutes are randomly selected as sample. Data is collected from the QECs of the institutes. Only quantitative methodology is used for this paper. Data is collected through designed questionnaire from twelve business education institutions in Pakistan. Three-point Likert scale (1=never/rarely, 2=moderately and 3= mostly/completely) is used to measure the implementation of international student's recruitment strategies. Data is analysed through descriptive statistics, charts and group analysis using dendrogram through SPSS.

4. RESULTS

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of twelve best strategies implemented in the business institution in Pakistan to recruit international Students

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of twelve best strategies implemented to recruit international students globally

| Descriptive Statistics | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Sr# | Practice | Mean | St. Deviation |
| 1 | Strategy No.1 | 4.8333 | .38925 |
| 2 | Strategy No.2 | 4.0833 | .79296 |
| 3 | Strategy No.3 | 3.5833 | 1.16450 |
| 4 | Strategy No.4 | 4.4167 | .90034 |
| 5 | Strategy No.5 | 4.2500 | .96531 |
| 6 | Strategy No.6 | 2.7500 | 1.13818 |
| 7 | Strategy No.7 | 3.9167 | .99620 |
| 8 | Strategy No.8 | 3.9167 | .99620 |
| 9 | Strategy No.9 | 4.3333 | 1.15470 |
| 10 | Strategy No.10 | 4.2500 | .86603 |
| 11 | Strategy No.11 | 4.4167 | .90034 |
| 12 | Strategy No.12 | 1.4167 | .79296 |

Table shows that strategy no.1 that the business education institutes should revise their academic course contents and curriculum in a way that it encompasses the international standards that can attract and retain foreign students by ensuring that their career is in safe hands. The above-mentioned strategy has high mean value 4.8333 that shows that it is highly implemented. Strategy no.4 that states that the International alumni and their family also help in the Internationalisation process and according to strategy no.11 the vast alumni network and their efforts to support and guide interested and high potential candidates helps in this process. It has same mean value means their mode of implementation is same. However, strategy no 12 is rarely implemented according to which institutes support the movement and settling of students with immigration status through various policies like sponsorships, scholarships financial aids and loans etc as it has low mean value that shows it is rarely implemented. The standard deviation shows that strategy no.1 has lowest St. deviation value and it is very near to mean value however strategy no. 12 proves to show the opposite trend because of its high standard deviation.

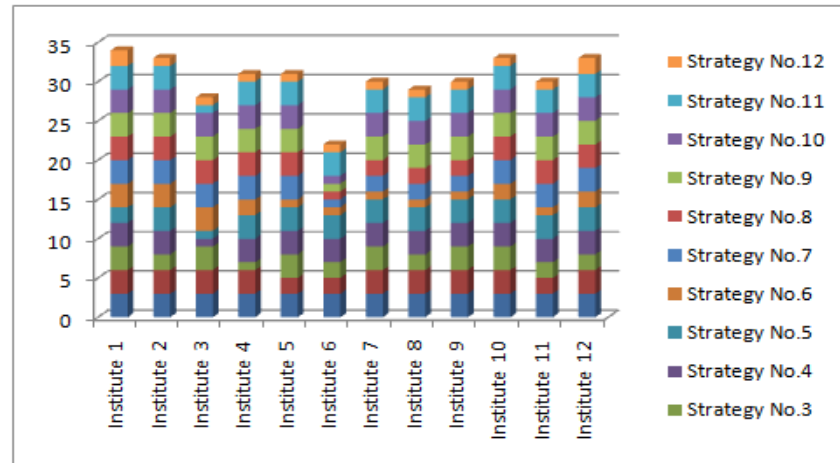


Fig. 1: Stacked Bar Charts of best international student recruit Strategies

Fig. 1 show the Stacked Bar chart of best strategies implement to recruit international students in the twelve business education institutions in Pakistan. Strategy No 1 is completely implemented in all business institutes. Strategy No 2 is moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 5,6 11 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 3 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 1, moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 2,6,8,11 and 12 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 4 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 3 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 5 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 3, moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 1 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 6 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 5,6,7,8,9, and 11, moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 4,10 and 12 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 7 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 6, moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 7,8, and 9 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 8 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 6, moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 7,8, and 9 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 9 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 6 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 10 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 6 and completely implemented in others. Strategy No 11 is never implemented in Business Education Institute 6 and completely implemented in others and Strategy No 12 is moderately implemented in Business Education Institute 1 and 12 and never implemented in others.

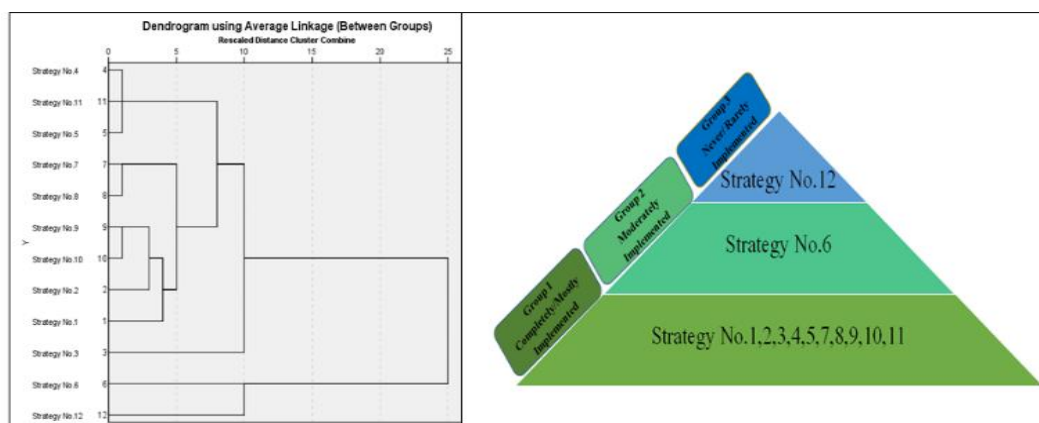


Fig. 2: Dendrogram and Pyramid Graphic Presentation of best international student recruit Strategies

Fig.2 shows that three groups are developed according to dendrogram group analysis. The pyramid graphic presentation show the detail of groups. Group1 has ten strategies that are completely or mostly implemented in the buisness education institutes. These ten strategies are that higher education instututes have revised their course contents in a way that it can meet the global standards that facilitiate international student to polish their future. Then, teachers and candidates need to be motivated to share their vision and their expertise at international platforms like take a part in international talks, symposiums, conferences, concerts and other events. Those international students who passed and got degrees from the Pakistani institutes should work as part time recruiters in several countries. Informative programs are advertised and organized for international students. Since, language is a major barrier for the international students, different type of language programs are offered for the foreign students. Outreach email increasing to dispensing forced and centred flyers and promoting substances for international universities, schools, and organizations that encourage to impart education in different countries. School members and students are encouraged to figure with a domestic and world organisation with a close-by worldwide leader with ties abroad - networking with community firms. Group 2 has one strategy (Various types of facilities should be provided to the international students such as Pantry, social zones, clubs, bicycle etc) that is moderately implemented in the buisness institutes in Sindh and Cluster 3 has one practice (Immigration strategy and the advantages and demanding situations in sponsoring international teachers, students and employees with an immigration repute) that is never or rarely implemented in the buisness institutes in sindh.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results reveal that ten strategies are considered as best strategies implemented by buisness institutes:

Higher education instututes have revised their course contents in a way that it can meet the global standards that facilitiate international student to polish their future, teacher and candidates are motivating to participate in international events like conferences, workshops, trainings and student fairs in different countries, scholarships and other funding are provided to the international students specially who belongs to low outreach background, foster the international student alumni and their parents to serve as part-time recruiters in several countries, various programs are designed and offered to international students like teaching native programs, including but not limited to native and high demand language programs and other academic and general awareness and guidance sessions. Numerous facilities are also provided for the attraction and retention of international students which cater to their health, financial subsistence abroad and their mental wellbeing along with providing them quality educational opportunities. All these facilities are translated in to basic level linguistic programs, scholarships, financial aid like easy repayment loans or subsidies, health allowance or better insurance, family and spousal support on temporary basis and networking opportunities with developed world academia. However, such facilities are deficient in local context. Therefore, business education institutes in Pakistan need to take steps to recruit international standards and improve quality of their offerings by removing the hindrances for the institute to be internationalize. The business institutes In Pakistan need to put more efforts to develop and polish their culture through the complete implementation of these strategies.

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