

# To Assess The Brand Image of The MBA Institutions in Tamil Nadu With Reference to Coimbatore City

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**Abstract** - In India, the development of higher education has been accorded priority as the society becomes increasingly knowledge-based. Its progress has become essential to educate and train responsible and enlightened citizens as well as qualified specialists for the overall progress of the society. The Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) attracts people from a wide range of academic disciplines. The MBA nomenclature was originated in the United States of America during the late 19th century as the country got industrialized and companies sought scientific approaches to managing their businesses. Objective of the study is: To Assess the Brand Image of the MBA Institutions in Tamil Nadu with reference to Coimbatore City. Methodology of the study: the study is mainly based on primary and secondary data. 700 questionnaire were distributed and 601 have responded. Out of the questionnaire received from 601 respondents, only 500 were complete and have been taken for the study. Cluster analysis is used to determine the factors influencing the brand image of MBA institutions. From this study, it is suggested that For getting admission to an MBA program, students may be done through National level tests containing tests of aptitude for management education and higher Ranking be the only criteria. Or Ranking be based on 50 per cent marks be allotted based on the marks scored from 10th to the bachelor degree level and remaining 50 per cent marks in the NLTests; Similarly, in order to maintain parity amongst the passing out students, an all India test of competence may be made compulsory to rank the students for being eligible for various jobs in government as well as private sector units.

**Key words:** Brand image, Cluster analysis, Admission etc.,

## I. INTRODUCTION

During the late 19th century, as USA got industrialized and the companies sought scientific approaches to managing their businesses, management courses were floated and promoted with MBA designation. The course, in India attracts people from a wide range of academic disciplines and needs re-orientation with advent of the new century. The core courses in the MBA program are designed to introduce students to various areas of business such as accounting, finance, marketing, human resources, and operations management; option for taking general business courses throughout the program are also provided. Provision is there to select an area of focus which may be approximately one-fourth of the subject to make avenues for specialized studies are wide. Business schools in many countries offer MBA programs in full-time, part-time, executive, and distance learning streams. To ensure consistency and quality of graduate business education, accrediting agencies came into existence, especially for MBA programs.

## II. BUSINESS EDUCATION IN INDIA

According to a study by the Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS), there are about 2500 business schools in India offering two year management programs. The students are a mix of fresh graduates without any work experience and graduates with significant work experience. The Indian Institutes of Management (IIM), the oldest and highly accredited institutions for management education in India, came into existence through an Act of the Parliament. While admission into business schools require passing any one of the all India admission tests viz., CAT, XAT, GMAT, MAT etc and state level joint entrance examinations, admission to any of the IIMs require passing Common Admission Test (CAT). Apart from these, few schools conduct their own aptitude tests for admission.

The IIM and other autonomous business schools offer postgraduate diploma in management (PGDM) or Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGPM). These programmes are recognized in India as equivalent to MBA degree if they got the clearance from the Association of Indian Universities (AIU). According to the stricture, a

full post-graduate degree can be awarded only by a university as a two-year full-time program. The curriculum of the PGDM or PGPM and MBA degrees are equivalent. The MBA degree is examination oriented and concentrates on theoretical aspects of management; whereas the PGDM or PGPM is industry-oriented. PGDM and PGPM usually utilize the case method of instruction, and mainly focus on building soft skills. However, a PGDM or PGPM holder cannot pursue PhD since they are not full post-graduates, but can pursue Fellowship programs instead. Non-government accredited one-year fast-track programs, commonly known as Post Graduate Programme for Executives (PGPX or Ex PGP) in Business Management, have proliferated in India, for candidates with work experience.

### III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India, the ranking of Business Schools are based on infrastructure, industry inter-face, intellectual capital including faculty publication and B-School governance. Sometimes, ranking becomes synonym with Brand Image; Once ranked, the brand image takes over the ambassador's role. Journals like *Indian Management*, *Outlook*, *Competition Success Review* and *Business World* generally go every year for ranking of business Schools. The ranking is discussed in special articles as well as on academic Web sites.

What counts as quality is often contested. Quality may mean different things to different people who would demand different quality outcomes and methods of assessing quality. So, Quality can be seen as a 'relative concept'. It is relative to the user of the term and the circumstances in which it is used. For education, there are numerous performance and efficiency indicators such as completion rates, unit costs, student staff ratio, curriculum planning, resource available, placement of students and other financial data, which indicate quality of an institution that can be expressed by a simple Brand image. The problems that are confronted by the B-Schools are mainly because of the wide variations in performances and efficiency, So few are flourishing, some are thriving and many are struggling for survival and existence. The problem is to find out the reasons for such disparity in the brand image built-up by Business Schools.

### IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To Assess the Brand Image of the MBA Institutions in Tamil Nadu with reference to Coimbatore City

### V. METHODOLOGY

The study is mainly based on primary and secondary data. The major sources of data analyzed and interpreted in this study are from questionnaires distributed and collected. After preparation of the questionnaire, Pilot study was initiated. Some changes have been done after completion of pilot study. Coimbatore is the sampling unit. MBA students are respondents. The researcher has collected

information directly and through phone. 700 questionnaires were distributed of which 601 were received back. Out of the 601 questionnaires received only 500 were completed in all respects. They were taken-up for in-depth study. Factor analysis was used to determine the factors influencing the brand image of MBA institutions

## VI. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 6.1 Classification of MBA Students Based on Factor of Overall Play Role for Brand Image of the Institution

The statistical procedure used to form groups that share similar characteristics is called cluster analysis. The choice of variables is crucial to cluster analysis since only those used will determine the clusters or groups. The concepts of DISTANCE and SIMILARITY are key ingredients in this statistical procedure. Distance is the measure of how far apart cases are, whereas, similarity measures the closeness of cases within a specific group or cluster. Distance measures are SMALL while similarity measures are LARGE. Within cluster analysis, cases are grouped together on the basis of their "nearness". Cluster Analysis usually employs the DISTANCE measure (how far apart cases are) in defining the clusters or groups.

Cluster analysis technique is employed in this study to segment the respondents into two or more similar groups. The factors derived are from, factors that are influencing the overall play role for brand image while selecting MBA Institutions. The main purpose of this classification is to see whether respondents can be grouped under similar patterns. These groups will be further used to analyze whether there is association between respondents of different segments based on personal variables of respondents. At this juncture K- means cluster analysis was applied to classify the students' perception of brand image of the institution. Hierarchical cluster method with agglomeration schedule decides the number of clusters. It was found that three large coefficients in the agglomeration schedule were significantly large in their differences. Therefore, it was concluded that there was an existence of three clusters which have been presented as follows:

### 6.2 K-Means Cluster Analysis

There are different classification techniques to perform cluster analysis. K-means cluster attempts to identify relatively homogeneous groups of cases based on selected characteristics, using an algorithm that can handle large numbers of cases. However, the algorithm requires specifying the number of clusters. Number of initial cluster centers can be specified well in advance if this information is known. Alternatively, the procedure is repeated by increasing the number of clusters from 2 to the required number of clusters, until the procedure, differentiates well between the clusters, and the cases within each cluster are homogenous as far as possible. There are two methods for classifying cases, either updating cluster centers iteratively or classifying only. For the study, the cluster centers are

updated iteratively till meaningful clusters are arrived at. Once the numbers of clusters are arrived at, then analysis of variance was applied to find whether the clusters significantly differ from their group means. Since the cases or respondents were forced into similar groups, the ANOVA conducted is seen as method of verification of the cluster procedure. For the purpose of cluster analysis the 29 factors (factors related to brand image of institution) were used for analysis. The classification procedure was repeated

to find some meaningful clusters. After repeated iterations and increasing the cluster groups one by one, 3 cluster groups were finally formed. The initial cluster centers are formed by selecting the means of the groups of each variable as centers. The table given below gives the initial cluster center values for each variable selected for this purpose. The scores calculated for each factor were used for this purpose.

**TABLE 1 Initial Cluster Centers**

	Initial Cluster Centers		
	Cluster		
	1	2	3
I am very happy to complete the rest of my education at this college	1	5	5
Strong sense of belonging	1	1	4
Emotionally attached	1	5	3
Like part of the family	1	1	4
College has great deal	1	5	2
College was my priority	1	1	5
Brand of your institution	1	5	2
Students easily identify and relate	1	1	5
Institution educates students	1	5	2
Logo of your institution	1	1	5
All members of your institution	1	5	2
Branding has been important aspect	1	1	5
Branding has helped to market institution	1	5	2
Educational institutions to invest in a branding campaign	1	2	5
Branding the institution has been a worth of funded for the institution	1	1	2
Creating a recognizable brand for college	4	3	4
Branding should be part of a college strategic plan and budgeting process	1	3	4
Logo, mission statement are displayed all over the college	3	3	3
College sponsors community reach programmes	1	5	2
College given frequent advertisements in TV	1	5	5
College given frequent advertisements in Newspaper	1	2	2
College organised social programmes for the welfare	1	3	5
The college events are frequently reported in news	1	5	2
Students of this college are placed in leading business organisations	1	4	4
Students of this college are preferred by corporate for projects	1.	4	1
This college charge premium fees	1.	5	3
To what extent you are satisfied after joining this college	1.	1	2
Branding has helped your institution with visibility	5	2	4
Branding has helped to market your institution	1	3	2

As the procedure evolved by adding the cases into the nearest cluster, the cluster centers vary for each cluster. Thus the final cluster centers are arrived when all the cases are grouped into one of the clusters which has nearest distance. The table given below gives the details of the final cluster centers.

Table 2

	Final Cluster Centers		
	Cluster		
	1	2	3
I am very happy to complete the rest of my education at this college	2	4	4
Strong sense of belonging	2	3	4
Emotionally attached	2	3	4
Like part of the family	2	3	4
College has great deal	2	3	4
College was my priority	2	3	4
Brand of your institution	2	3	4
Students easily identify and relate	3	3	4
Institution educates students	2	4	4

Logo of your institution	2	3	4
All members of your institution	3	3	4
Branding has been important aspect	3	4	4
Branding has helped to market institution	2	3	4
Educational institutions to invest in a branding campaign	2	3	4
Branding this institution has been a worth of funded for the institution	2	3	4
Creating a recognizable brand for college	3	4	4
Branding should be part of a college strategic plan and budgeting process	3	3	3
Logo, mission statement are displayed all over the college	3	3	3
College sponsors community reach programmes	3	3	4
College given frequent advertisements in TV	3	4	4
College given frequent advertisements in Newspaper	3	3	4
College organised social programmes for the welfare	2	3	4
The college events are frequently reported in news	2	3	4
Students of this college are placed in leading business organisations	3	3	4
Students of this college are preferred by corporate for projects	3.21	3.06	3.01
This college charge premium fees	2.62	3.29	2.87
To what extent you are satisfied after joining this college	3.15	2.82	3.01
Branding has helped your institution with visibility	3.38	3.12	2.97
Branding has helped to market your institution	3	3	4

In order to study the effectiveness of the clustering procedure and how effectively it has grouped the cases, the distances between the cluster centers are calculated. This will show how different each cluster is from the other one and also how close one cluster is to the other. It is seen from the table that clusters 1 and 3 have highest difference and the closest are the clusters 1 and 2.

**TABLE No. 3** Distances between Final Cluster Centers

Cluster	1	2	3
1		4.797	8.092
2	4.797		3.664
3	8.092	3.664	

ANOVA was applied to find whether the cluster groups differ significantly among themselves based on the variables selected. The ANOVA table is presented below.

Table No.4

ANOVA						
	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	d.f	Mean Square	d.f		
I am very happy to complete the rest of my education at this college	75.502	2	.650	497	116.074	.000
Strong sense of belonging	64.978	2	.529	497	122.803	.000
Emotionally attached	83.820	2	.809	497	103.553	.000
Like part of the family	83.672	2	.841	497	99.529	.000
College has great deal	100.177	2	.756	497	132.542	.000
College was my priority	79.358	2	.891	497	89.021	.000
Brand of your institution	78.572	2	.683	497	115.118	.000
Students easily identify and relate	56.139	2	.746	497	75.303	.000
Institution educates students	50.822	2	.841	497	60.431	.000
Logo of your institution	57.448	2	.762	497	75.413	.000
All members of your institution	67.967	2	.742	497	91.606	.000
Branding has been important aspect	46.752	2	.829	497	56.428	.000
Branding has helped to market institution	62.996	2	.657	497	95.924	.000
Educational institutions to invest in a branding campaign	48.857	2	.816	497	59.850	.000
Branding this institution has been a worth of funded for the institution	51.502	2	.735	497	70.117	.000
Creating a recognizable brand for college	.864	2	.897	497	21.964	.000
Branding should be part of a college strategic plan and budgeting process	10.383	2	1.829	497	5.676	.004
Logo, mission statement are displayed all over the college	.635	2	1.089	497	21.584	.000
College sponsors community reach programmes	50.537	2	.886	497	57.047	.000
College given frequent advertisements in TV	54.716	2	.777	497	70.431	.000
College given frequent advertisements in Newspaper	68.672	2	.785	497	87.458	.000
College organised social programmes for the welfare	84.495	2	1.017	497	83.062	.000
The college events are frequently reported in news	97.153	2	.914	497	106.250	.000

Students of this college are placed in leading business organizations	66.960	2	.920	497	72.752	.000
Students of this college are preferred by corporate for projects	.657	2	1.979	497	31.332	.000
This college charge premium fees	13.662	2	1.876	497	7.283	.000
To what extent you are satisfied after joining this college	2.831	2	2.133	497	21.327	.000
Branding has helped your institution with visibility	3.531	2	1.883	497	41.875	.000
Branding has helped to market your institution	80.538	2	.964	497	83.574	.000

\*\* - Significant at 1% level

The ANOVA table given above shows that the cluster procedure has differentiated the groups significantly on all of the factors. Finally, the number of respondents who were grouped into each cluster is given in the following table.

**Table No.5**

	No.	Percent
<b>Cluster – 1 High Level</b>	41	18.2
<b>Cluster – 2 Medium Level</b>	198	39.6
<b>Cluster – 3 Low Level</b>	261	52.2
	500	100

### 6.3 Defining the clusters:

**1 High level cluster groups** – High level on Satisfaction. More satisfied, very much attracted towards factors influencing to brand image of the institution.

**2 Medium level cluster group** – Moderate in their opinion on the brand image of the institution; Moderately satisfied about institutions' activities; moderate interest in attraction towards factors influencing to brand image of the institution.

**3 Low level cluster group** – Low on Satisfaction in admission to institution; less interest in services and more dissatisfied on institutions' activities

## VII. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

As the progress of higher education has become essential to educate and train responsible, knowledgeable and enlightened citizens as well as qualified specialists, priority is accorded to develop higher education. The limitations of access, equity, content, quality, relevance of brand and resource crunch need to be discussed for arriving at some fruitful decision points. Some of the following suggestions may be considered to ensure quality in business education:

1. Quality ensured Training , Research and Syllabi in MBA program should be designed on par with international standard.
2. Each and every institution offering MBA be advised to create its own Brand with logo, motto, mission and vision statements which will ensure consistency in developing /in attracting students towards their institution.
3. With rapid expansion of business programs, student enrolment has become lopsided. As private players

from India and abroad entering the field, this problem seems more acute.

4. Admitting accrediting bodies from across the world to accredit the program of a B-School may also be considered to ensure the quality.
5. The fee-structure may be regulated such that, in the long run, there will be no much difference in the fees and facilities between private, Govt. aided and Govt. owned institutions; Concessions offered to socially disadvantaged groups incl. women be extended on case by case basis.
6. For admission into MBA programs (in branded institutions), students should be mandated to enter through National level tests of management aptitude; Ranking be the only criteria, however, with due weightage to the scores secured from 10<sup>th</sup> to bachelor degree level. Similarly, tests of competence be made compulsory for the passing outs to become eligible to enroll for lucrative jobs in government.
7. To ensure the presence of both faculty (wherever essential) and students in the project site and classes, attendance be made compulsory and centralized and using electronic devices.
8. MBA also may be made a Brand on par with CA, doctors, lawyers and company secretaries, which it deserves, to attract more students. This would ensure good inputs for MBA education

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