



CATERING STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND RETAINING DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Dr. P. S. Aithal* & P. M. Suresh Kumar**

* Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangalore, Karnataka

** Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Pandeshwar, Mangalore, Karnataka

Abstract

The programmes and strategies adopted by higher educational institutions should be directed to satisfy the needs of the students from diverse backgrounds including religious, cultural, linguistic, and geographical diversities. Gender equity and opportunity for differently-abled students should be ensured. A penchant for diversity often creates diversities of standards. In order to balance it and build uniformity, institutions have to deploy strategy to assess the students' needs in terms of knowledge and skills before the commencement of the programme, the strategies drawn and deployed by the institution to bridge the knowledge gap of the enrolled students to enable them to cope with the programme of their choice, the strategy to sensitize its staff and students on issues such as gender, inclusion, environment etc. The institution also has to identify and respond to special educational/learning needs of advanced learners, and the strategy to collect, analyze and use the data and information on the academic performance of the students at risk of drop out. By providing undergraduate and postgraduate education in Business Management, Computer Applications and Social Work, Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS), Mangalore has been providing education service in major areas of importance to the society. In this paper, we have analysed the strategies followed by Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, for catering diversity while student enrollment and profile. This include the efforts of the college to ensure publicity and transparency in the admission process, criteria adopted and process of admission, the minimum and maximum percentage of marks for admission at entry level for each of the programmes offered by the college and strategies adopted to increase/improve access for various categories of students.

Index Terms: Catering Diversity in Higher Education Institution & Quality in Higher Education

1. Introduction:

The process of admitting students to the higher education programmes should be through a transparent, well-administered mechanism, complying with all the norms of the concerned regulatory/governing agencies including state and central governments. Apart from the compliance to various regulations, the admission process also considers the institutions efforts in ensuring equity and wide access as reflected from the student profile, having representation of student community from different geographical area and socio-economic, cultural and educational backgrounds. The programmes and strategies adopted by higher educational institutions should satisfy the needs of the students from diverse backgrounds including backward community as well as from different locales. Gender equity and admission opportunity for differently-abled students should be also considered. Diversity of learners in respect of their background, abilities and other personal attributes will influence the extent of their learning. The teaching-learning modalities of the institution should be rendered to be relevant for the learner group. The teachers should employ interactive and participatory approach creating a feeling of responsibility in learning and makes learning a process of construction of knowledge. As part of imparting quality higher

education for undergraduate and post graduate students, Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS) developed an education service model for integrated academic support. Backed by the presumption that knowledge is power and information is fundamental to knowledge building and knowledge sharing, the college is aimed to provide quality education to its students for improved academic performance. By providing under graduate and post graduate education in business management, computer applications and social work, the college has providing education service in major area of importance in the society [1-7]. Srinivas Institute of Management Studies (SIMS) is established with the vision of imparting quality education and expanding opportunities to all the aspirants and across all realms of knowledge. It envisages to become a centre of excellence to serve as change agent in the society by generating a pool of human resources trained in science and technology, management and social service. The college offers bachelor and master degree programmes in Business Management and Computer Science and Bachelor degree in Commerce and Masters Degree in Social Work [8-12].

Various studies on innovations and quality in higher education including Strategic Planning in Higher Education Institutions [3], Innovations and Best Practices can Transform Higher Education Institutions [4], quality in higher education [5-6], Internal Quality Assurance Cell and its Contribution [7], Enhancement of Graduate attributes in Higher Education Institutions through Stage Models [8], Quality Enhancement in Higher Education Institutions [9], Effective Leadership and Governance [10], Strategy Development and Deployment in Higher Education Institutions [11], Faculty Empowerment Strategies in Higher Education Institutions [12], Unique & Successful Model in Integrated Development [13], Applying SWOC Analysis to an Institution of Higher Education [14], Techniques for Electric Energy Auditing in Education System [15], Societal Expectation And Institutional Accountability in Higher Education [16], Methods and Approaches for Employability Skill Generation in Higher Educational Institutions [17], Quality Enhancement in Higher Education Institutions through Best Practices in Library [18], Analysis of Academic Administrative System Implemented in Higher educational institution [19], Learning through Team Centric Exercise & Key Point Pedagogy - An effective Learning Model for Slow Learners in Higher Education Training [20], Opportunities and Challenges for Private Universities [21], Innovations in Private Universities [22], Creating Innovators through setting up organizational Vision, Mission and Core Values : a Strategic Model in Higher Education [23], Comparative Study on MBA Programmes in Private & Public Universities [24], Impact of On-line Education on Higher Education System [25], Innovations in Higher Education - A new model implemented in MCA degree programme [26], Environmental Consciousness in Higher Educational Institutions [27], Analysis of Choice Based Credit System in Higher Education [28], Innovations in Student Centric Learning – A Study of Top Business Schools [29], Innovations in Experimental Learning – A Study of World Top Business Schools [30], How to Increase Research Productivity in Higher Educational Institutions [31], Academic Support through Information System [32], and Quality Teaching and Learning as Practice Within Different Disciplinary Discourses [33], Innovative Education Model to realize Ideal Education System [34], ABCD analysis of Stage Model in Higher Education [35],) Analysis of NAAC Accreditation System using ABCD framework [36], Application of ABCD Analysis Framework on Private University System [37], The Study of New National Institutional Ranking System using ABCD Framework [38], Educational institutions quest for service quality: customers“

perspective [39], Comparative study of quality practices in higher education institutions [40], Quality in higher education-a survey [41] are studied and published.

In this paper, we have analysed the strategies followed by Srinivas Institute of Management Studies, Mangalore for catering diversity while student enrollment and profile. This include the effort of the college to ensure publicity and transparency in the admission process, criteria adopted and process of admission, the minimum and maximum percentage of marks for admission at entry level for each of the programmes offered by the college, strategies adopted to increase/improve access for various categories of students, and the admission policy of the institution towards the national commitment to diversity and inclusion. This also include effort of the institution cater to the needs of differently-abled students, details of institutional strategy to assess the students' needs in terms of knowledge, skills and experience before the admission to the programme. The strategies adopted by the institution to bridge the knowledge gap of the enrolled students to enable them to cope with the programme of their choice, the strategy of the institution to sensitize its staff and students on issues such as gender, inclusion, environment etc., and the institutional effort to identify and respond to special motivation needs of advanced learners are studied. The strategy of the institution to collect, analyze and use the data and information on the academic performance of the students at risk of drop out are also discussed.

2. Student Enrolment and Profile:

Effort of the Institution to Ensure Publicity and Transparency in the Admission Process: One of the ways by which student enrollment is enhanced is through publicity and transparency in admission process. Prospectus, institutional websites, notifications in regional / national news papers are mostly resorted to in the drive for admissions.

- ✓ This apart, the college is a regular test centre for many institutions such as banks, other govt. exams, international exams like TOEFL, distance mode of studies of various universities etc, This also provides a means of publicity to attract admissions.
- ✓ The institute periodically conducts mega job fair for youth and employers are represented for recruitment. Hosting such events also give publicity and attract admissions.
- ✓ Srinivas Institute of Rural Reconstruction Agency (SIRRA) which is an NGO functioning under the college conducts community programmes through which many people come to know about the college, courses, and admission.
- ✓ The college is also represented in several education fairs held in different parts of the country.
- ✓ Banners are put up in the vicinity of the institute marking the commencement during the admission season for public view.
- ✓ Educational consultants spread the information on the college and courses far and wide.

The college has basic degree courses and professional courses. Basic degree courses are Bachelor of Business Management (BBM), Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) and Bachelor in Commerce (B.Com.). Professional courses are Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Computer Applications (MCA) and Master of Social Work (MSW). The following presents the feedback obtained from students enrolled in 2013 as the primary source of information.

Course	Website	Prospectus/ Brochure	News paper	Banners/ Flex board/ Placement Fest	Alumni	Educational Consultants	Others
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M.B.A.	20	20	10	10	20	10	10
M.C.A.	20	15	05	05	45	05	05
M.S.W.	10	05	05	10	40	20	10
B.B.M.	05	10	50	10	15	05	05
B.C.A.	05	10	45	10	20	05	05

Table 1: Feedback of Students on source of information of the courses offered by the college: Year- 2013

Figures provided are in percentage and correspond to the year 2013.

Criteria Adopted And Process of Admission: Admission to the following professional courses are made with cut-off percentage marks at the entry level and admission test for eligibility as shown in table 2.

S.No	Name of the Course	Cut-off Marks (%) for Merit	Admission Test
1	MBA	50 % aggregate Marks in any Graduation	50% Govt. Quota through PG CET Counseling 50% Management Quota through either MAT/K-MAT/
2	MCA	50 % aggregate in Graduation with Maths/Computer Science in Graduation	50% Govt. Quota through PG CET Counseling 50% Management Quota through either MAT/K-MAT/
3	MSW	45 % aggregate Marks in any Graduation	50% Govt. Quota through PG CET & Counseling 50% Management Quota through Written Test Conducted by the College
4	BBM	35 % aggregate in 12 th Standard	Written Test Conducted by the College by following Roster system
5	BCA	35% aggregate in 12 th Standard	Written Test Conducted by the College by following Roster system
6	B.Com.	35% aggregate in 12 th Standard	Written Test Conducted by the College by following Roster system

Table 2: Admission criteria adopted

The Minimum and Maximum Percentage of Marks for Admission: The minimum and maximum percentage of marks for admission at entry level for each of the programmes offered by the college is provided in table 3.

Year 2012-13				
Sl. No	Name of the Course	Min. marks in %	Max. marks in %	Average marks %
1	MBA	50%	84%	61%
2	MCA	52%	81%	67%
3	MSW	45%	79%	57%
4	BBM	48%	95%	65%
5	BCA	53%	92%	68%
Year 2013-14				
Sl. No	Name of the Course	Min. marks in %	Max. marks in %	Average marks %
1	MBA	50%	86%	68%
2	MCA	50%	89%	73%
3	MSW	45%	82%	65%
4	BBM	49%	87%	63%
5	BCA	45%	86%	61%
6	B.Com.	51%	94%	62%

Table 3: Year wise student marks for last two years admission

While comparing the admission of students to similar courses in other colleges, the average percentage of marks of students admitted in this college is higher. However, the

college follows a policy of providing opportunity to academically poor students from socio-economically backward sections of the community, which often requires to admit students with low marks also.

Strategies Adapted to Increase/Improve Access to Various Categories of Students:

Some of the strategies adopted to increase/improve access to various categories of students and the admission policy of the institution towards the National commitment to diversity and inclusion:

- ✓ The college admits SC/ST students to various courses over and above the required minimum number set by the existing admission regulations.
- ✓ SC & ST students admitted to various courses under management seats are also provided concession at par with similar students admitted through Govt. quota.
- ✓ As per the admission regulations, the College allow relaxation of 5 % marks for entry level eligibility for the students belonging to SC/ST category.
- ✓ The College supports SC/ST students to utilize the boarding facility of Govt. Hostels keeping in view their affordability.
- ✓ The College promotes and guides the SC/ST students to avail scholarships and other benefits offered by Govt. and Quasi Govt. institutions.
- ✓ Out of the 50% seats reserved under Govt. quota, reservation of seats is also extended to OBC and the college strictly follows the roster system in admissions.
- ✓ Fee concession is also provided to the students admitted from OBC groups.
- ✓ The college follows a policy to support the differently abled applicants, provided they meet the minimum eligibility criteria.
- ✓ Students from economically weaker sections are attracted to seek admission to the college by availing financial loans from banking institutions with low interest to be repaid after completion of the course and obtaining employment. For this purpose, an MOU has been signed with several Public sector banks.
- ✓ The college believes that opportunity to minority promotes national integration which is reflected in its admission policy and student profile. The following table gives a profile of the students admitted to various courses during the last two years.
- ✓ Gender and regional balance is kept in mind for admission to various courses as revealed in following table for the year 2012 – 13.

Years 2012

S.No.	Course	Hindus (%)	Muslims (%)	Christian (%)	Others (%)
1	MBA(99)	64	20	15	-
2	MCA (26)	20	2	4	-
3	MSW (73)	63	4	4	2
4	BBM (167)	58	90	18	1
5	BCA (137)	71	33	33	-

Years 2013

S.No.	Course	Hindus (%)	Muslims (%)	Christian (%)	Others (%)
1	MBA	68	18	14	-
2	MCA	78	4	18	-
3	MSW (73)	63	5	4	1
4	BBM (102)	35	57	10	-
5	BCA (131)	78	24	28	1
6	B.Com. (75)	22	47	6	-

Table 4: Student profile of the admission to various courses during last two years

Student In-take region-wise during the year 2012

Course	Gender		Mangalore	Other parts of Karnataka	Other states	Other Countries
	Male	Female				
M.B.A.	65	35	27	28	65	-
M.C.A.	36	22	20	04	34	-
M.S.W.	37	32	06	51	12	-
B.B.M.	127	18	02	-	142	02
B.C.A.	62	20	13	02	67	-

Student In-take region-wise during the year 2012

Name of the Course	Gender		Mangalore	Other parts of Karnataka	Other states	Other Countries
	Male	Female				
M.B.A.	65	34	15	22	62	-
M.C.A.	12	15	05	06	16	-
M.S.W.	49	21	23	42	05	-
B.B.M.	155	11	06	01	156	03
B.C.A.	91	47	15	01	122	-

Table 5: Student In-take region-wise during last 2 years

3. Catering to Student Diversity:

Effort of the Institution Cater to the Needs of Differently-abled Students: The institutions effort to cater to the needs of differently-abled students and ensure adherence to government policies in this regard:

- ✓ Two seats in each of the courses is reserved for orthopedically challenged students. If there is no eligible applicant during a particular year, it is merged into the general quota.
- ✓ There is ramp provision for upstairs in addition to lift facility.
- ✓ Provision for additional time in writing the internal exams and University Exams.

Details of Institutional Strategy to Assess the Students' Needs in Terms of Knowledge and Skills before the Commencement of the Programme:

- ✓ In order to equip the students with the mind set required for the new subject of study and to bridge the knowledge gap of the incoming students for enabling them to cope with programme to which they are enrolled, orientation programme is conducted. Usually it covers 3 to 4 days with classroom lectures, field visits and film shows.
- ✓ A sample orientation programme schedule of the last year for MSW & MBA courses is provided below:

Department of Social Work Orientation Programme		
Date:		
Inauguration	10.00 am- 11.30 am	
Welcome by the MSW students		
Lighting the lamp		
Inaugural address by the Principal, SIMS		
Date:		
Event	Time	Topic and Resource person
Orientation Talk	11.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	"Structure of the MSW course"
Orientation Talk	10.00 a.m. - 11.00 am.	"What people expect from a Social Worker"
Orientation Talk	11.30 a.m. -12.30 p.m	"Social Work professional as a Social Healer"
Orientation Talk	2.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.	"Social Problems and Social Work"
Orientation Talk	3.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.	"Law, Social Work and Advocacy"
Date:		
Orientation Talk	9.30 a.m.- 10.30 a.m.	"Field Work reporting"

Field visit	10.30 a.m.	Field Visit to Srinivas Super Speciality Hospital & Research Centre, Mukka.
Field visit	2.00 p.m.	Industry visit

Table 6: Orientation program plan

MBA Orientation Programme		
Date:		
Event	Time	Topic and Resource person
Orientation talk	9.10 – 10.10 a.m.	"Srinivas Group of Colleges"
Orientation talk	10.20 – 11.20 a.m.	"Ice Breakers"
Date:		
Orientation talk	9.10 – 10.10 a.m.	"MBA Program at SIMS"
Orientation talk	10.20 – 11.20 a.m.	"The Orientation Programme Schedule and Activities"
Orientation talk	11.30 – 12.30 a.m.	"Importance of understanding Environment in Decision making "
Orientation talk	2.00 – 3.00 p.m.	"Computerization and Business"
Orientation talk	3.00 – 4.00 p.m.	"General Management "
Date:		
Orientation talk	9.10 – 10.10 a.m.	"Current Business Scenario in India"
Orientation talk	10.20 – 11.20 a.m.	"Banking Industry: Prospects for MBA Graduates"
Orientation talk	11.30 – 12.30 a.m.	"Activity Based Learning"
Orientation talk	2.00 – 3.00 p.m.	"How to Discipline Ourselves"
Orientation talk	3.00 – 4.00 p.m.	"General Management"
Date:		
Field visit	9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.	Industrial Visit to KMF Nandini Plant, Mangalore
Date:		
Orientation talk	9.10 – 10.10 a.m.	"Blue Ocen Strategy"
Orientation talk	10.20 – 11.20 a.m.	"Team Work: Essential Ingredient for Managers "
Orientation talk	11.30 – 12.30 a.m.	"Organisation Culture"
Orientation talk	2.00 – 3.00 p.m.	Law and Management
Orientation talk	3.00 – 4.00 p.m.	"E-Business - Applications and Issues"

Table 7: Student orientation programme plan

The Strategies Drawn and Deployed by the Institution to Bridge the Knowledge Gap of the Enrolled Students to Enable Them to Cope With the Programme of Their Choice: The College offers variety of Bridge/Remedial/Add-on/Enrichment Courses to bridge the knowledge gap of the enrolled students and to enable them to cope with the programme of their choice like:

- ✓ Bridge course in Mathematics for MBA students
- ✓ Add-on course in Economics for MBA students
- ✓ Add -on course in Accountancy for MBA students with science background
- ✓ Enrichment course in Computer Science for all the PG students
- ✓ Remedial course in English Language for undergraduate students.
- ✓ Tutorial classes are engaged for weak students individually.
- ✓ Faculty identify weak students on the basis of class test papers and internal exams.
- ✓ Sometimes, students also approach faculty individually with doubts in any subject handled by the corresponding faculty. Non teaching hours are spent on giving special attention to them.
- ✓ The college functions for extended hours on all Saturdays, particularly to provide opportunity to facilitate tutorial sessions.
- ✓ The mentor chart used during counseling of the students provide source for identifying weak students who require tutorial sessions.

Mentoring of Students: At the beginning of the semester students are divided in small groups and placed under each faculty for mentoring. This is widely done in undergraduate programme. Students fill in a Proforma known as mentor chart which conveys essential basic information pertaining to the personal and family details of the student. The mentors identify the strength and weaknesses of the students and guide the students throughout their period of study focusing on rectifying mistakes without fault finding attitude. Additionally, weak students are recommended to be admitted in the college hostels situated nearby the college and faculty members are provided accommodation in the same hostel to provide mentoring services to the needy.

Mentor Chart	
Year / Semester	
Class	
Name of the mentor	
Name of the student	
Name of the Parent & Occupation	
Full residential address	
Residential land phone No. & Mobile of the Parents	
Qualifying Exam for admission	
Class/division/percentage in qualifying exams	
Future Ambition/Plan/ Goal	
Student's hobbies	
Family back ground	
Plus Points.	
Minus points.	
Academic performance:	
Internal examination.	Very Good/ Good/ Average / Weak
University examination.	Very Good/ Good/ Average / Weak
Performance in the class	
Submission of assignment	On-time/Late/very late
Presentation Skills	Good/Average/poor
Attendance	High/Low/Very low
Attention in the class/ session	Very attentive / Some Times/Not Attentive
Participation in college programmes	Active / Passive
Overall Discipline in the class	Very good / Good/ Poor
Self Control habits/Behavior	Very much / Somewhat /Not at all
Student's Feedback	
Personal Problems	
College Infrastructural problem	
Have you received teaching Plan	Yes/No
Have you received study material?	Yes/ No
Did you receive college calendar	Yes/ No
Any other problem	
Mentor's Remarks on Students Improvement	1. Studies : 2. Attendance 3. Discipline 4. Participate 5. Assignment submission 6. Overall goal /Ambition
Signature of the Student:	Signature of the Mentor:

Table 8: Format of mentor chart

The Strategy of the College to Sensitize Its Staff and Students on Issues Such as Gender, Inclusion, Environment Etc: The College provides equal opportunity to both staff and students from both gender.

- ✓ Minority community are allowed to practice their customs and their culture.
- ✓ Religious groups are allowed to cherish their belief and worship without antagonizing each other.
- ✓ Students and staff are made to live in an environment free of fear inside the campus.
- ✓ The college promotes co-education and has enough number of male and female staff in all capacities.
- ✓ The College recruited staff members belonging to all major communities, religions of this region and fosters an inclusive academic ambience.

The Institutional Effort to Identify and Respond to Special Educational/Learning Needs of Advanced Learners: The slow learners in the different subjects are identified and assisted throughout the course. Poor performance in class test papers and lag in submission and poor quality of assignments give a clear hint in identifying the slow learners.

- ✓ Study material is provided with simplified information which are otherwise available in the text books.
- ✓ Classroom test papers conducted very frequently are appraised without assigning marks so that the low performers are not discouraged.
- ✓ Assignment submission deadlines are keenly followed up and slow learners are identified to fulfill their task with relaxed time.
- ✓ Presentations made on various topics by individual students are prepared in consultation with the faculty and slow learners receive greater help and assistance.
- ✓ The advanced learners are encouraged to consult reference books largely and make use of internet access.
- ✓ Marks are awarded to submission of assignments and presentation so that slow learners are motivated to learn.
- ✓ Mentors in undergraduate courses conduct counselling for slow learners, late comers, absentees etc.
- ✓ Absenteeism is one of the preliminary symptoms of a slow learner. An atmosphere of seriousness in studies is maintained by the college with ample avenues for extra-curricular activities to create interest among students that derive satisfaction and avoid absence.
- ✓ Progress reports of weak students are sent to their parents to ensure that they keep better care of their ward.
- ✓ Additional classes are provided on request for those who participate in extra-curricular activities including who represents the College in sports & games.
- ✓ Advanced learners are encouraged to get special training through online advanced courses NPTEL and of EDX Global University which is a joint venture of Harvard University & MIT.

The Strategy of the Institution to Collect, Analyze and Use the Data and Information on the Academic Performance of the Students at Risk of Drop Out:

- ✓ Monthly attendance statement is prepared and attendance status is put on the notice board for the information of the students.
- ✓ Identifying poor performers based on periodic examinations conducted in the class. Such students are offered additional study hours with teachers/monitors supervision.
- ✓ Tutorials are conducted for slow learners.

- ✓ Periodic assignments are given to the students and students failing to submit on time are identified and counselled.
- ✓ Grievance box helps to collect the grievances relating to academic performance for rectification.
- ✓ The college allows more time for students of economically weaker section in payment of tuition fee. This helps to reduce risk of drop-outs.

4. Conclusion:

Through various efforts like, widely publicized and transparent admission process, periodic reviews of students' enrolment profile and the outcomes used for improvement of the admission process, the institute is following an inclusive admission policy catering to diverse student groups, A well devised orientation programme serves to introduce the enrolled students into the multi-cultural larger whole with ease. The institution deploys strategies to bridge the knowledge gap of the enrolled students to enable them cope with the programme of their choice. The institution also assesses the learning levels of the students, after admission and designs programmes for advanced learners and slow learners and analyses the academic growth of differently-abled students and provides tutorials for needy students to fosters an inclusive academic ambience.

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