

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

**“We owe a lot to the ancient Indians for teaching us how to count. Without which most modern scientific discoveries would have been impossible.” - Albert Einstein**

In today's day and age, the premise that quality higher education is crucial for sustainable human development is undeniable. Higher education leads to acquiring analytical and problem-solving skills, ultimately helping humans to develop intellectual curiosity and character. It pushes the students to identify and set career goals that make them ready for professional setups. Therefore, a refined higher education enables economic, physical and social well-being to a student.

In today's global marketplace, the role of brand management has been elevated to a new level of importance. Brands as powerful assets represent the essence of a company; therefore, they must be carefully developed and managed. As one of a company's most valuable intangible assets, a brand functions as a powerful differentiator for the business and as a decision-making tool for customers (Aaker, 1996, 1991; Keller, 2013, 1993). Because brands represent consumers' perceptions and feelings about a product and its performance (Kotler and Keller, 2006), the real value of a strong brand is its ability to capture customer preference and loyalty. At their best, brands represent promises kept, and build loyalty through trust which in turn maintain profitable customer relationships (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012; Reichheld, 2001, 2006). Branding efforts are no longer limited to consumer products. Firms and organizations in various service industries have been trying to utilize branding strategies to build stronger brands. In this regard, higher education and universities are not exceptions; they have also begun to realize the need to develop sustainable brand strategies. In fact, branding has increasingly become a strategic imperative for universities and other post-compulsory educational institutions in order to develop meaningfully differentiated brands to communicate their strengths (Jevons, 2006).

As the recent economic environment has had a major negative impact on the financial situation of most higher education institutions, colleges and universities have begun to realize that the relatively simple promotional tools of the past no longer work as they once did. As a result,

they are turning to branding as they seek to thrive, and in some cases to survive, in the current marketplace for higher education. For example, in the UK, because of increased competition within the education sector and diminishing university funds, there has been a growing recognition for importance of branding among British universities and educational institutions (Mazzarol and Soutar, 1999; Mok, 1999). In fact, the UK government supported a worldwide re-branding campaign to establish a clear and competitive identity for UK universities in order to attract more international students (Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana, 2007). The goal of re-branding the UK institutions was to attract students and to differentiate British education from its major competitors in the USA and Australia. Universities in the United States face the same competitive pressures, especially as various universities in China and India strive to develop into world-class institutions (Silverstein and Singhi, 2012). Given the increasingly complex and highly competitive marketplace, universities and colleges have turned to branding as a solution in coping with today's global challenges (Whisman, 2007).

In fact, it is becoming increasingly apparent that multiple brands may exist for many universities given the complexity of most schools (Stripling, 2010; Waeraas and Solbakk, 2009). As Waeraas and Solbakk state, Universities may be too complex and fragmented to both understand and express as single identity organizations (2009, p. 459). For example, different university brands for a single school may exist for the following stakeholders: undergraduate students, graduate students, alumni, corporate recruiters, local community, members, parents of students, organizations that rely on specialized academic research and knowledge, fans of sports teams (in the USA), and so on. Even so, as complex as this situation is, it becomes even more challenging when one takes into consideration perspectives involving different colleges within a university. For example, does University X have different brands when various stakeholders think about its college of engineering versus its college of business? Or, even more tightly defined, its college/department of mechanical engineering versus its college/department of electrical engineering?

Clearly, the presence of multiple brands (i.e., sub-brands) is possible, although there may be shared meanings and identity elements across the various brands (i.e., university brand). At this time, as Waeraas and Solbakk (2009) note, there are more questions than answers given the state of the literature and actual university experience.

## **1.1 GLOBAL SCENARIO OF HIGHER EDUCATION:**

Higher education is a rich cultural and scientific asset which enables personal development and promotes economic, technological and social change. It promotes the exchange of knowledge, research and innovation and equips students with the skills needed to meet ever changing labour markets. For students in vulnerable circumstances, it is a passport to economic security and a stable future.

Higher education has changed dramatically over the past decades with increasing enrolment, student mobility, diversity of provision, research dynamics and technology. Some 254 million students are enrolled in universities around the world – a number that has more than doubled in the last 20 years and is set to expand. Yet despite the boom in demand, the overall enrolment ratio is 42% with large differences between countries and regions. More than 6.4 million students are pursuing their further education abroad. And among the world's more than 82 million refugees, only 7% of eligible youth are enrolled in higher education, whereas comparative figures for primary and secondary education are 68% and 34%, respectively (UNHCR). The COVID-19 pandemic further disrupted the way higher education was provided.

There are around 20000 universities across the world, which means that competition between higher education institutions is intense and every year, each of them is trying not just to recruit a big number of students, but to recruit the best creative brains or in other words, top student talent. In order to survive and flourish, each university has an opportunity to win these battles. This opportunity is called marketing. Today as never before, higher education institutions focus on marketing strategies. Many of the best universities design their plans with the most prestigious marketing professionals and invest a lot of time and money to achieve a significant competitive advantage. The average amount spent on marketing strategies has increased by over 50% since 2000.

All over the world, those who shape and fund the higher education systems are engaged in a dramatic period of reform. Their interests have converted higher education into a priority sector within society, relevant for the productive sector and capable of leading the economic, social and human development of their respective societies.

**Table 1.1: Top Ten Universities across the World**

<b>Universities</b>	<b>THE World University Rank 2024</b>
University of Oxford	1
Stanford University	2
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	3
Harvard University	4
University of Cambridge	5
Princeton University	6
California Institute of Technology	7
Imperial College London	8
<a href="#">University of California, Berkeley</a>	9
<a href="#">Yale University</a>	10

**Source: Times Higher Education Rankings 2024**

## **1.2 THE LANDSCAPE OF INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW**

India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world that stands second in terms of the higher education network. The term ‘higher education’ with respect to India denotes the tertiary level education that is imparted after 12 years of schooling (10 years of primary education and 2 years of secondary education). The entire higher education ecosystem in India comprises around 1000+ universities and 42,000+ colleges imparting exceptional education. All these institutions fall under the purview of the Ministry of Education.

Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges since Independence. The number of universities has increased 34 times from 20 in 1950 to 988 in 2021. The sector boasts of 54 Central Universities, 429 State Universities, 380 Private universities, 125 Deemed to be Universities.

In India, "University" means a university established or incorporated by or under a Central Act, a Provincial Act or a State Act and includes any such institution as may, in consultation with the University concerned, be recognised by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in accordance with the regulations made in this regard under the UGC Act, 1956. Every year, millions of students from within the country and abroad, enter these portals mainly for their graduate, post graduate studies while millions leave these portals for the world outside.

Higher Education is the shared responsibility of both the Centre and the States. The coordination and determination of standards in Universities & Colleges is entrusted to the UGC and other statutory regulatory bodies.

The Central Government provides grants to the UGC and establishes Central Universities/Institutions of National Importance in the country. The Central Government is also responsible for declaring an educational institution as "Deemed-to-be University" on the recommendations of the UGC.

Over the years with the combined efforts of public and private players, Indian higher education has grown impressively. The top-notch learning methodology opted in Indian institutes lets the students expand their visualizing ability and encourages them to think out of the box. During the entire course of their higher education, the students can improve their critical thinking, oral and communication skills. Higher education is pivotal for all and the Government of India makes constant efforts to upgrade it. As a result, the Indian institutes invest significant resources and efforts to provide the students with experimental learning opportunities by arranging visits to real-world set-ups such as industrial sites. Such activities help the students to broaden their learning horizons and they are not limited to the conventional classroom education system. After the completion of their respective degree, the students come out as independent, passionate, skilled, learned and responsible individuals who are equipped to take up professional roles.

### **1.2.1 Types of Universities:**

The structure of Indian Higher Education is three-layered, consisting of Universities, Colleges and Courses. The universities and colleges work in unison

with regulatory as well as accreditation bodies to deliver standardized education.

Based on management, the universities are classified as under:

**Table 1.2: Types of Universities**

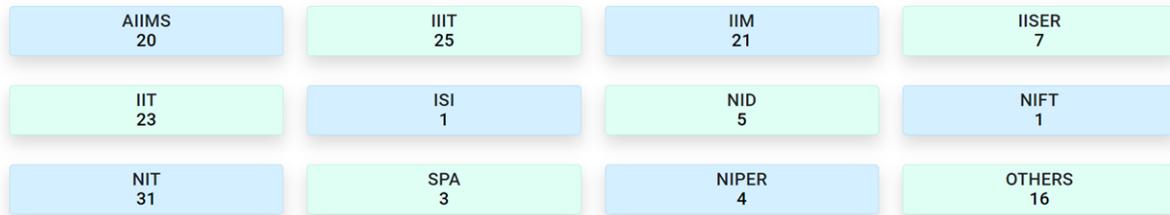
<b>Central Universities</b>	A university established or incorporated by a Central Act. The establishment and operation are funded by the Union Government
<b>State Universities</b>	A university established or incorporated by a Provincial Act or by a State Act.
<b>Private University</b>	A university established through a State/Central Act by a sponsoring body viz. A Society registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, or any other corresponding law for the time being in force in a State or a Public Trust or a Company registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956.
<b>Deemed-to-be University</b>	An Institution Deemed to be University, commonly known as Deemed University, refers to a high-performing institution, which has been so declared by Central Government under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956.
<b>Institution of National Importance</b>	An Institution established by Act of Parliament and declared as Institution of National Importance.
<b>Institution under State Legislature Act</b>	An Institution established or incorporated by a State Legislature Act.

**Table 1.3: Higher Education Institutions as per AISHE**

<b>Universities:1,301</b>	<b>Colleges: 50,642</b>	<b>Standalone: 13,968</b>
Central University: 54	Affiliated Colleges: 46817	Hotel Management and Catering: 90
Institute of National Importance: 158	Constituent / University College: 2267	Institute under Ministries: 118
State Public University: 461	PG Centre / Off-Campus Centre: 244	Nursing: 4209
State Private University: 470	Recognized Centre: 1302	Paramedical: 1131
State Open University: 17		PGDM Institute: 371
Deemed University – Govt.: 39		Teacher Training: 3554
Deemed University – Private: 83		Polytechnic: 4495
Central Open University: 1		
State Private Open University: 1		
Institute under State Legislature Act.: 6		
Deemed University – Govt. Aided: 11		
Others: 0		

*Source: dashboard.aishe.gov.in*

*Fig.1 Institutes of National Importance (158)*



*Source: dashboard.aishe.gov.in*

### 1.2.2 Colleges:

The colleges enabling higher Study in India can be affiliated either with central or state universities. The private colleges are mostly affiliated with state universities. Further, there are autonomous colleges as well that enjoy autonomy in terms of deciding curriculum, admissions and examination process. But they are also affiliated with a government university (central or state).

### 1.2.3 Courses

The courses offered in Indian higher education institutions can be generally classified into two categories:

**STEM Courses** - STEM is a broad term that stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and it encompasses all the courses providing education in these disciplines. Instead of teaching the four disciplines separately, the purpose of STEM courses involves cohesive learning and it focuses on the practical application of the subjects. Effective education in STEM courses is not limited to theoretical learning but extends to experimental and research-based learning too. The well-equipped laboratories of Indian institutes enable the same and help the students to inculcate innovative, problem-solving and competent skills.

**Non- STEM Courses** - The courses offered in disciplines such as Commerce, Arts, Business Management, Humanities, and Social Affairs are termed non-STEM courses. Yet again, the Indian institutions are well equipped to provide education in these disciplines wherein the students can gain expertise in the subject of their choice. Non-

STEM majors like humanities open a wide range of career opportunities where the skills, knowledge and deeper understanding are made applicable. Similarly, education, accounting, marketing, English, journalism, language studies, etc degrees all have plenty of uses for various professions. A few examples for career options under non-STEM courses include counsellors, education administrators, teachers, clinical psychologists, art or creative director, etc.

#### **1.2.4 Key Regulatory and Assessment Bodies in Indian Higher Education:**

The entire ecosystem of higher Study in India is primarily overseen by the following apex bodies:

- **University Grants Commission (UGC)**

The University Grants Commission is a statutory organization established by an Act of Parliament in 1956 for the coordination, determination, and maintenance of standards of university education. Apart from providing grants to eligible universities and colleges, the Commission also advises the Central and State Governments on the measures which are necessary for the development of Higher Education. It functions from New Delhi as well as its six regional offices located in Bangalore, Bhopal, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Pune.

- **All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)**

The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was set up in 1945 as an advisory body and later on in 1987 given the statutory status by an Act of Parliament. The AICTE grants approval for starting new technical institutions, for introduction of new courses and for variation in intake capacity in technical institutions. The AICTE has delegated to the concerned state governments powers to process and grant approval of new institutions, starting new courses and variations in the intake capacity for diploma level technical institutions. It also lays down norms and standards for such institutions. It also ensures quality development of technical education through accreditation of technical institutions or programmes. In addition to its regulatory role, the AICTE also has a promotional role which it implements through schemes for promoting technical education for women, handicapped and weaker section of the

society promoting innovations, faculty, research and development, giving grants to technical institutions.

The technical institutions under the AICTE include post-graduate, under-graduate and diploma in the whole spectrum of technical education covering engineering/technology, pharmacy, architecture, hotel management and catering technology, management studies computer applications and applied arts and crafts. The AICTE has its headquarters in New Delhi and seven regional offices located at Kolkata, Chennai, Kanpur, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Bhopal and Bangalore. A new regional office at Hyderabad has been set up and is to be operational soon. The Council discharges its functions through an Executive Committee.

- **National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC):**

India has one of the largest and diverse education systems in the world. Privatization, widespread expansion, increased autonomy and introduction of Programmes in new and emerging areas have improved access to higher education. At the same time, it has also led to widespread concern on the quality and relevance of the higher education. To address these concerns, the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) and the Programme of Action (PoA, 1992) spelt out strategic plans for the policies, advocated the establishment of an independent National accreditation agency. Consequently, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established in 1994 as an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission (UGC) with its Head Quarter in Bengaluru. The mandate of NAAC as reflected in its vision statement is in making quality assurance an integral part of the functioning of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The NAAC functions through its General Council (GC) and Executive Committee (EC) comprising educational administrators, policy makers and senior academicians from a cross-section of Indian higher education system. The Chairperson of the UGC is the President of the GC of the NAAC, the Chairperson of the EC is an eminent academician nominated by the President of GC (NAAC). The Director is the academic and administrative head of NAAC and is the member-secretary of both the GC and the EC. In addition to the statutory bodies that steer its policies and core staff to support its activities NAAC is advised by the advisory and consultative committees constituted from time to time.

- **NIRF (National Institutional Ranking Framework)**

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) is a methodology adopted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, to rank institutions of higher education in India. The Framework was approved by the MHRD and launched by Minister of Human Resource Development on 29 September 2015. This framework provides a methodology for ranking institutions across the country. It is based on the overall recommendations and insights from a Core Committee established by the MHRD to identify the key parameters for ranking various universities and institutions. The parameters include “Teaching, Learning and Resources,” “Research and Professional Practices,” “Graduation Outcomes,” “Outreach and Inclusivity,” and “Perception.”

*Table 1.4: India Rankings 2023: Top Ten Universities*

Name of Universities	Rank (For the Year 2023)
Indian Institute of Science Bangalore	1
Jawaharlal Nehru University	2
Jamia Millia Islamia	3
Jadavpur University	4
Banaras Hindu University	5
Manipal Academy of Higher Education-Manipal	6
Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham	7
Vellore Institute of Technology	8
Aligarh Muslim University	9
University of Hyderabad	10

**Source:** [www.nirfindia.org](http://www.nirfindia.org)

- **Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)**

Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) was established in the year of 1969 by the Government of India to promote research in social sciences in the country.

ICSSR provide grants for projects, fellowships, international collaboration, organizing seminar / conference, capacity building, survey, publications etc. to promote research in social sciences in India.

Documentation center of ICSSR - National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) - provides library and information support services to researchers in social sciences.

ICSSR has developed ICSSR Data Service to serve as a national data service for promoting powerful research environment through sharing and reuse of data among social science community in India.

- **Association of Indian Universities (AIU)**

The formation of the Inter-University Board (IUB) of India as an Apex Inter-University Organization on March 23, 1925, in a meeting of Vice Chancellors/their representatives at Bombay University was the culmination of the need to bring together all the universities in India on a common platform through a coordinating body, to protect the interest of the students as well as the universities. The objective was to promote university activities, especially by way of sharing information and increasing co-operation in the field of education, culture, sports and allied areas. Prior to this, having such an organization in India was recommended by the Sadler Commission in 1919 followed by a resolution, made in the Conference of Vice Chancellors of the Indian Universities convened at Shimla in 1924.

The Inter-University Board acquired a legal status with its registration as a Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, on September 29, 1967 and was renamed as Association of Indian Universities (AIU) in 1973. Since its inception AIU is actively engaged in the growth and development of Higher Education. The membership of AIU includes all types of universities e.g. Conventional Universities, Open Universities, Deemed to be Universities, State Universities, Central Universities, Private Universities and Institutes of National Importance. In addition to Indian Universities, 13 Universities/Institutes from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Republic of Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom are its Associate Members.

### **1.2.5 Indian Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges:**

Indian higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. Since independence, India as a developing nation is contentiously progressing in the education field. Although there have been lot of challenges to higher education system of India but equally have lot of opportunities to overcome these challenges and to make higher education system much better. With ample of Higher education Institutions across India the competition has increased and every institution is putting all their efforts to sustain and achieve a competitive edge over the competitors. The numbers of institutions are proliferating at a high rate and simultaneously it's posing a challenge to maintain the quality of education which is the core of higher education institutions. UGC is continuously working and focusing on quality education in higher education sector. To name a few some of the basic challenges in higher education system in India are: Enrolment, Equity, Quality, Infrastructure, Faculty, Research and Innovation, Accreditation, Political Interference against the opportunities against the huge market size which offers great opportunity for the development of higher education in India.

Higher education Institutes comes under the service sector and it is often said that marketing in the service sector is relatively challenging due to the unique characteristics of the service such as Intangibility, Inseparability, Variability, Perish ability and the dominance of experience and credence qualities. Selling a service is very different from that of selling a product. A service is a form of a relationship, and providing value in a service is a more abstract concept and it's challenging to make people believe about the quality, credibility and value of your service in advance before they experience. The perceived risk is generally higher in a service selection decision because consumers find services more difficult to evaluate in advance of purchase. Differentiating your service will go a long way towards making you stand out among the competition. In this situation, the brand can play an important as a risk reliever, giving consumers greater confidence in their decision making and increasing trust. The competition is intense and in order to remain top of mind and to be known for their differentiated services higher education institutes have realized the importance of understanding the holistic complexity of university experience and its impact on creating strong university brands and brand equity. Understanding stakeholder's expectations and fulfilling their expectations is something higher education institutes are striving for and the better and smartly they do it the better it is for education institutes.

### **1.3 AISHE 2021-22: KEY RESULTS:**

- The All-India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE), 2021-22 was conducted with reference period as academic session 2021-22. The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of India have filled their data using an entirely online data collection platform through the Web Data Capture Format (Web DCF) developed by the Department of Higher Education and the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- A total of 1,168 Universities/University level Institutions, 45,473 Colleges and 12,002 Stand Alone Institutions were registered in AISHE 2021-22. Of them, 1,162 Universities, 42,825 colleges and 10,576 Stand Alone Institutions have responded in the survey

#### **Number of Institutions:**

- In all, 341 Universities/University level institutions have been established since 2014-15.
- Out of 1168 Universities registered, 685 are Government managed (Central Govt. 240, State Govt. 445), 10 are Private Deemed (Aided) and 473 are Private (Un-aided).
- There are 17 Universities exclusively for Women. It was 11 in 2014-15.
- In 2021-22, there are 18 Open universities (1 Central University, 16 State Universities and 1 State Private University).
- Of the 1,162 Universities who responded in the Survey, there are 655 General, 192 Technical, 57 Agriculture & Allied, 79 Medical, 27 Law, 19 Sanskrit and 8 Language Universities. The remaining 125 Universities were of other specialized categories.
- In 2021-22, the registered colleges are 45473. In 2014-15 there were 38498 colleges registered with AISHE (an increase of 6975 colleges).
- During 2021-22, 1677 colleges have been registered with AISHE.
- Out of 42825 responded colleges, 21.5% Colleges are Government Colleges, 13.2% are Private (Aided) and 65.3% are Private(un-aided).
- 10.4% Colleges (4470) that have responded in the survey are exclusively for Females.

### **Student Enrolment in Higher Education:**

- Total enrolment in higher education has increased to nearly 4.33 crore in 2021-22 from 4.14 crore in 2020-21 (increase of 18.87 Lakh, 4.6%) and 3.42 crores in 2014-15 (an increase of 26.5%).
- Female enrolment in Higher Education increases to 2.07 crore (32% increase since 2014-15).
- Of the 4.33 crore students enrolled in 2021-22, 15.3% belong to Scheduled Caste, 6.3% belong to Scheduled Tribe, 37.8% are from Other Backward Class and remaining 40.6% students are from other communities.
- Enrolment of Scheduled Caste students has increased to 66.23 lakh in 2021-22 from 58.95 lakh in 2020-21. There is a 25.4% increase in SC enrolment during last 5 years (i.e. since 2017-18). Overall increase in SC Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 44%.
- The enrolment of Scheduled Caste Female students has increased to 31.71 lakh in 2021-22 from 29.01 lakh in 2020-21. 26.6% increase in SC Female enrolment is seen in last 5 years. The overall increase in SC Female Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 51%.
- In case of Scheduled Tribe students, the enrolment has increased to 27.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 24.12 lakh in 2020-21. 41.6% increase in ST enrolment is observed since 2017-18 and overall increase in ST Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 65.2%.
- The enrolment of Scheduled Tribe Female students has increased to 13.46 lakh in 2021-22 from 12.21 lakh in 2020-21. Substantial increase of 47.6% in ST female enrolment is observed during last 5 years and 80% increase since 2014-15.
- Enrolment of students from Other Backward Class has increased to about 1.63 crore in 2021-22 from 1.48 crore in 2020-21. There is 27.3% increase in OBC enrolment since 2017-18. Also, overall increase in OBC Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 45%.
- Enrolment of OBC Female students has increased to 78.19 lakh in 2021-22 from 72.88 lakh in 2020-21. There is 27.2% increase in OBC female enrolment since 2017-18 and overall increase in OBC female Student enrolment since 2014-15 is 49.3%.
- The Minority enrolment has increased to 30.1 lakh in 2021-22 from 21.8 lakh in 2014-15 (an increase of 38%). Female Minority enrolment has increased 42.3% since 2014-15 (15.2 lakh in 2021-22 from 10.7 lakh in 2014-15.)
- The total Student Enrolment in North East States is 12.02 lakh in 2021-22 as compared to 9.36 lakh in 2014-15. The female enrolment in North East States is 6.07 lakh in 2021-22, higher than the male enrolment of 5.95 lakh

- The top 6 States in terms of Student Enrolment are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Rajasthan. They constitute 53.3% of the total Student Enrolment.
- In the year 2021-22, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education for age group 18-23 years has increased to 28.4, from 27.3 in 2020-21 and 23.7 in 2014-15 (as per population projection based on 2011 census.)
- Female GER has increased to 28.5 in 2021-22 from 27.9 in 2020-21 and 22.9 in 2014-15. Female GER continues to be more than male GER for fifth consecutive year as per AISHE 2021-22
- SC student GER has increased to 25.9 in 2021-22 from 23.1 in 2020-21. There is also a significant improvement in GER from 2014-15 (18.9).
- SC female GER has increased to 26 in 2021-22 from 23.9 in 2020-21 and 18.1 in 2014-15.
- ST student GER has increased to 21.2 in 2021-22 from 18.9 in 2020-21. There is also a significant improvement in GER from 2014-15 (13.5).
- ST female GER has increased to 20.9 in 2021-22 from 19.1 in 2020-21 and 12.2 in 2014-15. • Notably, Government Universities constituting 58.6% of total Universities, contribute 73.7% of total enrolment, Private Universities account for 26.3% of total enrolment.
- Further, Government Colleges constituting 21.5% of total colleges contribute 34.8% of total enrolment. Private (Aided) colleges constituting 13.3% of total colleges account for 20.6% enrolment, whereas the 65.2% Private (Un-aided) Colleges account for only 44.6% of total enrolment.
- About 78.9% of the students are enrolled in undergraduate level courses and 12.1% are enrolled in postgraduate level courses.
- Based on actual response at undergraduate level, enrolment is highest in Arts (34.2%), followed by Science (14.8%), Commerce (13.3%) and Engineering & Technology (11.8%).
- Total Ph.D. enrolment has increased 81.2% in 2021-22 (2.13 lakh) from 2014-15 (1.17 lakh)
- Female Ph.D. enrolment has doubled in 2021-22 (0.99 lakh) from 2014-15(0.48 lakh).
- At postgraduate level, the maximum students are enrolled in Social Science stream (21.1%) followed by science (14.7%) based on actual response.

- At Ph.D. level, enrolment is highest in Engineering & Technology (24.8%) followed by Science (21.3%) based on actual response.
- Of the total enrolment in 2021-22, the number of Student enrolment in STEM for UG, PG, Ph.D. and M.Phil. levels is 98.5 lakh (25.6%) based on actual response. In Science stream Females have outnumbered Males.
- The total number of foreign students enrolled in higher education is 46,878. The foreign students have come from 170 different countries.
- In 2021-22, highest share of foreign students is from Nepal (28%), followed by Afghanistan (6.7%), United States (6.2%), Bangladesh (5.6%), UAE (4.9%), and Bhutan (3.3%). The top 10 countries constitute 64.7% of the total foreign students.

### **Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff in Higher Education:**

- The total number of faculty/teachers in 2021-22 are 15.98 lakh, of which about 56.6% are male and 43.4% are female.
- Number of teachers has increased by 46,618 in 2021-22 over 2020-21.
- There is a marginal betterment of female per 100 male faculty from 75 in 2020-21 to 77 in 2021-22.
- Female faculty/teachers have increased to 6.94 lakh in 2021-22 from 5.69 lakh in 2014-15 (an increase of 22% since 2014-15)
- For Regular Mode, Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in Universities and Colleges is 24 whereas PTR for Universities and its Constituent Units, in regular mode, is 18.
- The number of non-teaching staff is 12,08,446 out of which about 56.3% are male and 43.7% are female. The average number of females per 100 male non-teaching staff is 78

### **Out-Turn:**

- Out-Turn • The total number of pass-outs has increased to 1.07 Crore in 2021-22 as against 95.4 Lakh in 2020-21.
- At the undergraduate level, the highest out-turn is in Bachelor of Arts with 24.16 Lakh, followed by Bachelor of Science with 12.53 Lakh, Bachelor of Commerce with 11.08 Lakh and 8.47 Lakh in Bachelor of Engineering & Bachelor of Technology combined.
- At Post-graduate level, the highest out-turn is in Master of Arts (7.02 Lakh), followed by Master of Science (3.56 Lakh), Master of Business Administration ( 2.32 Lakh) and

Master of Commerce (1.9 Lakh).

- In Diploma, the total number of pass-outs is 9.2 Lakh.
- 32,588 students were awarded Ph.D. during 2021-22 with 18,464 males and 14,124 females. The highest number of Ph.D. was awarded in science 7,408 followed by Engineering & Technology 6,270.

#### **1.4 BRANDING IN SERVICES:**

Branding means the use of marketing and communication tools to create a perception of value in the minds of your target customers. Company's name, logo and symbols typically serve as the centrepieces of branding efforts. The goal is to create an image that resonates with customers when they see company's identifying marks. Differentiating brand as top quality, most innovative, best value, most wholesome or lowest cost are common objectives of branding. Branding gives greater meaning to a company's name and its products. Through effective emotional appeals and market messages, business can help the market identify brand and differentiate it from competitors based on benefits such as better quality, services or tools.

The practice of branding is thought to have begun with the ancient Egyptians, who were known to have engaged in livestock branding as early as 2,700 BCE.[5] Branding was used to differentiate one person's cattle from another's by means of a distinctive symbol burned into the animal's skin with a hot branding iron. If a person stole any of the cattle, anyone else who saw the symbol could deduce the actual owner. However, the term has been extended to mean a strategic personality for a product or company, so that brands now suggests the values and promises that a consumer may perceive and buy into. Over time, the practice of branding objects extended to a broader range of packaging and goods offered for sale including oil, wine, cosmetics and fish sauce. Branding in terms of painting a cow with symbols or colours at flea markets was considered to be one of the oldest forms of the practice.

Companies now build brands using memorable names, symbols such as logos and other images and phrases. Catchy slogans, for instance, sometimes become strongly connected to brand so that people easily recall the brand from hearing the slogan.

One can consider a brand as the idea or image people have in mind when thinking about specific products, services and activities of a company, both in a practical (e.g. - the shoe is light-weight) and emotional way (e.g. - the shoe makes me feel powerfull). It

is therefore not just the physical features that create a brand but also the feelings that consumers develop towards the company or its product. This combination of physical and emotional cues is triggered when exposed to the name, the logo, the visual identity, or even the message communicated. A product can be easily copied by other players in a market, but a brand will always be unique. For example, Pepsi and Coca-Cola taste very similar, however for some reason, some people feel more connected to Coca-Cola, others to Pepsi.

To a consumer, brand means and signifies:

- Source of product
- Delegating responsibility to the manufacturer of product
- Lower risk
- Less search cost
- Quality symbol
- Deal or pact with the product manufacturer
- Symbolic device

Brands simplify consumers purchase decision. Over a period of time, consumers discover the brands which satisfy their need. If the consumers recognize a particular brand and have knowledge about it, they make quick purchase decision and save lot of time. Also, they save search costs for product. Consumers remain committed and loyal to a brand as long as they believe and have an implicit understanding that the brand will continue meeting their expectations and perform in the desired manner consistently. As long as the consumers get benefits and satisfaction from consumption of the product, they will more likely continue to buy that brand. Brands also play a crucial role in signifying certain product features to consumers.

To a seller, brand means and signifies:

- Basis of competitive advantage
- Way of bestowing products with unique associations
- Way of identification to easy handling
- Way of legal protection of products' unique traits/features
- Sign of quality to satisfied customer
- Means of financial returns

A brand, in short, can be defined as a seller's promise to provide consistently a unique set of characteristics, advantages, and services to the buyers/consumers. It is a name, term, sign, symbol or a combination of all these planned to differentiate the goods/services of one seller or group of sellers from those of competitors. Some examples of well-known brands are Mc Donalds, Mercedes-Benz, Sony, Coca Cola, Kingfisher, etc.

A brand connects the four crucial elements of an enterprise- customers, employees, management and shareholders. Brand is nothing but an assortment of memories in customers' mind. Brand represents values, ideas and even personality. It is a set of functional, emotional and rational associations and benefits which have occupied target market's mind. Associations are nothing but the images and symbols associated with the brand or brand benefits, such as, The Nike Swoosh, The Nokia sound, etc.

Branding a service is very different from branding a product for a variety of reasons, such as:

- Products are made where services are delivered
- Products are used where services are experienced
- Products are tangible where services are emotional

Products are impersonal physical items that can be evaluated before you buy them. Services, on the other hand, are very personal. Customers don't just buy a service, they buy an experience.

Services don't even exist until we buy them. There has to be a level of trust or even a leap of faith from the customer before they will buy a service. Many service businesses think that their customers are actually buying their expertise but customers can't evaluate expertise. What they're actually buying is a relationship and only they can tell you if the relationship is good. This is why a competent, likeable consultant will attract far more business than a brilliant but introverted expert.

## **1.5 THE BRANDING OF HIGHER EDUCATION:**

The role of the brand in HEIs has been considered as very important. The brand is possibly the most important connection a prospective student has with an institution. The brand of a university carries with it a promise of a particular level of service and student outcomes. In the case of education, the service is more than a simple set of tangible features but is a

complex bundle of benefits that satisfy customer's needs (Ivy 2008; Dermol et al. 2013). The level of satisfaction in a customer will influence the level of brand equity. Further, brand image and reputation help to conjure up a level of brand equity in a prospective student. Image and reputation are critical in developing customer loyalty among university students. In the context of the, loyalty can include a student's decision to stay on for advanced (postgraduate) studies following the completion of a bachelor (undergraduate) degree (Nguyen and LeBlanc 2001).

The concept of branding, as applied to HEIs, is somewhat different from branding in the commercial sector. Most notably, branding in HEIs is about who we are, and is not limited to what a particular product offers the market place. An educational brand is often equated to an institution's academic reputation. But that explanation is far too limiting. Think of a college or university brand as being synonymous with the institution's personality-congruent with its mission, defined by its values. Perhaps the most significant benefit of branding in HEIs is the focus it brings to an institution. The values-centric approach inherent in branding provides an institution with an anchor to guide responses to constituent needs and expectations. The brand is defined by where the institution's values and the constituents' expectations intersect. In this paradigm, the brand becomes the filter through which everything is vetted (e. g., strategic directions, resource allocations, hiring decisions, and curriculum development). It serves as a lens to strategically focus the institution in the midst of fluid internal and external pressures as well as opportunities.

HE represents a context in which brand image potentially plays a major role in reducing the risk associated with such service largely because the assessment of quality takes place after consumption (Binsardi and Ekwulugo 2003; Chen 2008). Hence, having a strong brand is important as a risk reliever that simplifies the decision-making process (Erdem and Swait 1998). That is to say, the brand represents a differentiation tool that gives cues to the consumers during the decision-making process (Lockwood and Hadd 2007). In addition, there are a number of other factors that directly influence the evaluation of the educational quality and hence the perception of the university brand (Kurz, Scannell, and Veeder 2008). These factors include the quality of the staff, location, size, history and international agreements (Mazzarol and Soutar 2008; Mourad 2010). It was noted that many universities adopt a brand management strategy in order to improve their ranking in the he market (Brunzel 2007). Finally, the social image of the educational institution as

well as its overall position in the market are important in influencing the he brand and thus impact on the selection process (Paden and Stell 2006).

There has been a great deal of research conducted on marketing of HE institutions internationally (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2006; Ivy 2008). However, there has been limited research into the notion of branding in HEIs (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka 2006). More specifically, there has been minimal, if any, amount of research conducted into establishing what builds Consumer-based brand equity within this specific industry.

## **1.6 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:**

- **Brand and Brand Equity:**

A brand is a name, term, sign, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors. A brand is a complex symbol. It can convey up to six levels of meaning, such as attributes, benefits, values, culture, personality and the user of the brand.

Brands are very important and stand at the very heart of business and in advertising. A brand has a peculiar characteristic in its growth. The essence of every brand has its own uniqueness. The marketers can build up a bright image of their enterprise around the brand; repeat sales are stimulated whereas product substitutions by competitors become difficult. In marketing, brand management is the analysis and planning on how a brand is perceived in the market. Developing a good relationship with the target market is essential for brand management. Tangible elements of brand management include the product itself; its look, price, and packaging, etc. The intangible elements are the experiences that the consumers share with the brand, and also the relationships they have with the brand.

Brand equity is a brand's power derived from the goodwill and name recognition that it has earned over time, which translates into higher sales volume and higher profit margins against competing brands.

The brand equity occurs due to the factors like awareness, reputation/perceived quality, loyalty, associations, and other proprietary brand assets. Higher equity brands are preferred by the consumers since they are easier to interpret what the brand stands for, benefits it offers and the confidence it deals with. Ultimately they get more satisfaction from a high equity brand.

Brand equity management concerns those activities that take a broader perspective of the brand equity, understanding how branding strategies should reflect corporate concerns and be adjusted, if at all, over time or over geographic boundaries of market segments. Managing brand equity involves managing brands within the context of other brands along with managing brands over multiple categories, over time and across multiple market segments.

Following is some of the popular definitions of 'Brand Equity' given by some eminent scholars in marketing:

*Aakar (1991)* defines it as a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customer (Aaker 1991, 1 5)

Srivastava and Shocker (1991) proposed that brand equity comprises two components: brand strength, which consists of the set of associations and behaviours on the part of the brand's customers, channel members and parent company that allows the brand to enjoy a competitive advantage; and brand value, which is the financial outcome of management's ability to strategically leverage brand strength (the basis of brand value) to produce profits. Keller (1993) defined brand equity as the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand and also views CBBE as a process, that occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favourable, strong and unique brand associations in memory. The favourable, strong and unique associations are termed as "primary" associations that include brand beliefs and attitudes encompassing the perceived benefits of a given brand.

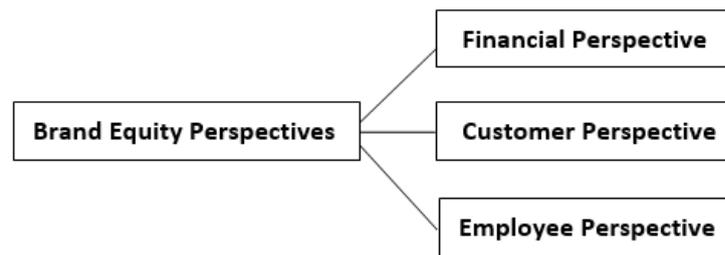
*Upshaw (1995)* defined brand equity as the total accumulated value of brand in both tangible and intangible assets as well as one that contributes to the corporate parent.

However, Upshaw has divided brand equity into two broad aspects. Brand valuation is the first one which relates to the bearing value of the brand including its financial worth to the company. Brand identity is another aspect which refers to how the brand is viewed by its current and potential purchasers since it is the bonding of brand positioning and personality.

According to *Feldwick (2002)* brand equity represents a long overdue shift in business and advertising thinking: from focus on making a sale, to creating and keeping a customer; from a purely short-term perspective to one that includes the longer-term profitability of the business; away from volume alone to recognize the importance of price and loyalty.

## 1.7 PERSPECTIVES OF BRAND EQUITY:

*Figure 2: Perspectives of Brand Equity*



We can evaluate the brand equity from different perspectives; As Baalbaki (2012) mentioned brand equity can be seen from three different perspectives.

### *Financial perspective (Financial- based brand equity)*

Brand equity in the 1980s, as seen from the financial perspective, was viewed as a method that gave managers guidance in understanding brand enhancement. In this perspective, the measures focused on stock prices or brand replacement (Myers, 2003). Simon and Sullivan (1993) defined brand equity as - the incremental cash flows which accrue to branded products over and above the cash flows which would result from the sale of unbranded products. Supporters of the financial perspective (FBBE) define brand equity as the - total value of a brand which is a separable asset – when it is sold or included in a balance sheet

(Atilgan et al., 2005). Wood (2000) discussed that from a financial perspective it is possible to give a monetary value to the brand that can be useful for managers in case of merger, acquisition or divestiture. Estimating a financial value for the brand is certainly useful but it does not help marketers to understand the process of building brand equity. Wood (2000) believes that marketing perspective of brand equity can help marketers to understand the brand in the minds of customers and to design effective marketing programs to build the brand.

### ***Customer perspective (Consumer-Based brand equity)***

Extant literature on brand equity has focused on the perspective of cognitive psychology (Christodoulides and de Chernatony, 2010) known as consumer-based brand equity. The Consumer-Based brand equity (CBBE) approach is the dominant perspective and the one preferred by a majority of academics and practitioners in marketing research because if a brand has no meaning or value to the consumer, it is ultimately meaningless to investors, manufacturers, or retailers (Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995). Motameni (1998) also mentioned this perspective as a marketing perspective. He used the concept of brand equity in the context of marketing decision-making.

Keller (1993) used the term consumer-based brand equity to refer to brand equity and noted that Consumer-Based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favourable, strong and unique brand associations in their memory. Positive Consumer-Based brand equity has many advantages like long term revenues, customers' willingness to seek out for themselves new channels of distribution, the ability of firms to command higher prices and the effectiveness of marketing communications (Keller, 2003).

Several scholars (e.g. Cobb-Walgren et al, 1995; Yoo and Donthu, 2001) have theorized brand equity similar to Aaker (1991). Although Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) conceptualized brand equity in a different way, both defined brand equity from customer perspective. Szócs (2012) mentioned that Consumer- based brand equity is referred in literature as a decision support tool that sets up a useful diagnosis for the managers about the ideas consumers have about the brand. Consumer- based brand equity can be best formulated as a construct caused by brand-related associations in which the effect of brand-related associations is concentrated. In order to be able to make recommendations to

managers on how to manage their brand equity or study the nomological network of its constituent components, we need to generate a better understanding of the composition of brand equity in disparate cultural contexts and distinct product categories (Christodoulides et al., 2015). The CBBE model is developed by Kevin Lane Keller which tells how to build a brand by understanding customers. A detailed explanation of the model is given in the section of Brand equity models below.

### ***Employee perspective (Employee-based brand equity)***

Youngbum Kwon (2013) discussed that the definitions of Employee-based brand equity and Consumer-Based brand equity are similar in respect that they are both values that come from the innate nature of the brand. Employee-based brand equity is defined from the employee perspective and is based on the differential effect that brand knowledge has on an employee's response to his or her work environments and cultures (King and Grace, 2009). Youngbum Kwon (2013) presented a three dimension model based on King and Grace (2009, 2010) and Aaker (1991) research.

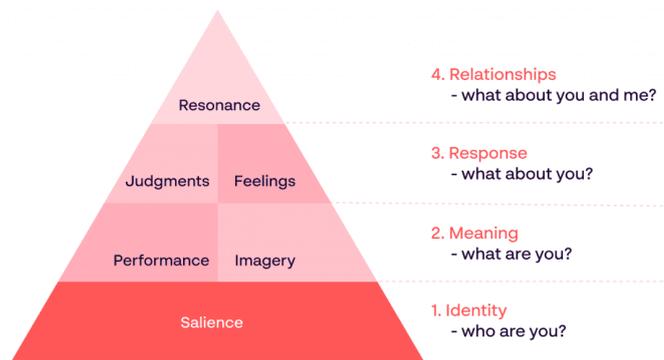
## **1.8 MODELS OF BRAND EQUITY:**

### **1.8.1 Keller's Customer Based Brand Equity Model – CBBE**

Keller's Brand equity model is also known as the CBBE model which stands for Customer based brand equity. The CBBE model or the Brand equity pyramid is actually a pyramid which tells us how to build brand equity by understanding your customers and implementing strategies accordingly. If there is a connection between the brand and the consumer, it results in positive brand equity & has a better chance of acquiring and sustaining customers, thereby giving a huge advantage to the companies and products which are considered as – brands.

By using the Brand equity pyramid or the CBBE model, brands know which strategies to implement and how to give the right experiences to their audience so that they create the WOW factor.

**Fig.3 Keller's Brand Equity Model**



### **Level -1 - Brand Identity or who you are**

Brand identity is the way the customers look up to a brand and how they distinguish each brand from another. It is how the brand defines itself in the eyes of the customer. Imagine a human being introducing himself to another. Mostly this includes telling people about yourself and what you do. A similar concept applies to building a brand identity. Brand identity is built when customers are unaware of your products. The work for the brand here is to build a strong brand identity for the benefit of the brand and to attract the customers. Brand identity is the first step in Keller's Brand equity model; it is the most important step and the base of the Brand equity pyramid. If the base is strong, the pyramid will be stronger. Thus, the stronger the brand identity you build from the start, the better it is for your brand.

### **Level - 2 – Brand Meaning – What are you?**

Once you meet a human being and know who they are, there are other questions which are formed in your mind. What do they do? Where are they working? How well is their life? So on and so forth. Just like these questions come to the mind for a human being, customers want to know more about brands as well. Once a customer is aware of the brand, he wants to know more about the brand. He would like to know whether the brand is reliable, whether it is good to use over a long period of time if it has good customer service and other such important information. The customer is understanding what the brand is and trying to know more about it. This second level of Keller's Brand equity model is divided into 2 parts – factors which define the brand meaning for customers a) Brand Performance b) Brand Imagery

### **Level 3 – Brand Response – What are the feelings for the brand?**

Once a customer buys your product, he builds up expectations towards the brand and the purchase. If the reality matches his expectations, then the customer is very happy and has positive feelings about the brand. If the product goes beyond expectations, it generates huge word of mouth and may turn the customer to become a brand advocate. Such positive experiences generate - Feelings in the minds of customers. However, if the experience is bad, the customer is left with negative feelings for the brand which can also be known as —Judgements. As per Keller's Brand equity model, a brand which has more feelings than judgements is a brand which benefits in building brand equity. Hence, the Brand response is higher up in the Brand equity pyramid.

### **Level – 4 – Brand Resonance – A strong relationship**

We mentioned becoming a brand advocate several times in the above paragraphs. A brand advocate is one who has reached the final level of the Brand equity pyramid in Keller's Brand equity model. There are very few brands which reach this level. This is a level where there is a huge social and psychological connect of the brand with the customer. If you ask me, I love my Mac Book and I am doubtful of buying any windows laptop in the near future. In fact, due to my recommendations, many of my friends have also bought the Mac Book.

Harley Davidson is a brand which is the epitome of Brand resonance in the CBBE Model. Harley Davidson bikers are known to love their bikes and the feeling of the ride and generally Harley is the only bike they ride. Not only are the customers connected with the brand, if they find another user using the same brand, a connection is built between the 2 customers as well. It's like finding another friend just because he uses a brand you love.

### **1.8.2 David Aaker Brand Equity Model:**

Aaker Brand Equity model was developed by Professor David Aaker of the University of California. His model viewed the brand equity as a combination of awareness, brand and brand associations, which then combines with each other to finally offer the value provided by a product or service. For Aaker, brand management begins with

building up a brand identity, which is one-of-a-kind arrangement of brand affiliations speaking to what the brand stands for and offers to consumers a desiring brand picture.

#### ***Four Elements of Brand Identity as per Aaker Brand Equity Model***

Aaker primarily sees brand identity as a combination of 8-12 elements which fall under four perspectives:

- Brand as Product – This consists of product scope, product attributes, quality or value of the product, uses, users and country of origin.
- Brand as Organization – it consists of organizational attributes, local workings versus global activities.
- Brand as Person – it consists of brand personality and consumer brand relationships.
- Brand as Symbol – it consists of audio and visual imagery, metaphorical symbols and brand heritage.

The motive of the Aaker Model is to help in making a brand strategy comprising of various brand components or patterns, in order to illuminate, advance and separate a brand from its rivals. An organization deliberately utilizes a few of these components to impart to the buyers what their brand stands for.

#### **1.8.3 Brand Asset Valuation Model:**

Brand asset valuation evaluates a brand's value, strength, and performance as compared to other brands in the market. An agency named Young and Rubicam developed a metric called Brand Asset Valuator (BAV), which measures brand vitality, which is the brand's potential in terms of its future growth and brand power.

The brand is analyzed in the following terms –

- Differentiation – How different and better is the brand from its competitors?
- Relevance – How closely the target audience can relate with the brand offer?
- Esteem – Has the brand built its esteem by keeping all promises it made to the target audience?
- Knowledge – How many of the target audience know the brand?

#### **1.8.4 Brandz Model – Measuring Brand Equity (Developed by: Millward Brown and WPP):**

Marketing research consultants Millward Brown and WPP have developed the BRANDZ model of brand strength, at the heart of which is the Brand Dynamics pyramid. According to this model, brand building involves a sequential series of steps, where each step is contingent upon successfully accomplishing the previous step. The objectives at each step, in ascending order, are as follows:

- Presence. Do I know about it?
- Relevance. Does it offer me something?
- Performance. Can it deliver?
- Advantage. Does it offer something better than others?
- Bonding. Nothing else beats it.

Research has shown that bonded consumers, those at the top level of the pyramid, build stronger relationships with the brand and spend more of their category expenditures on the brand than those at lower levels of the pyramid. More consumers, however, will be found at the lower levels. The challenge for marketers is to develop activities and programs that help consumers move up the pyramid.

#### **1.9 CONSUMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY (CBBE):**

Consumer-Based brand equity is the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand (Keller 1993). It occurs when the consumer holds some favorable, strong and unique brand associations in their memory. A brand is said to have positive Consumer-Based brand equity when consumers react more favorably to an element of the marketing mix for the brand than they do to the same marketing mix element when used by a fictitiously named or unnamed version of the product or service (Keller 1993). In other words, it can be defined as how much a customer likes the brand and how much this affinity toward the brand influences purchase behavior. A true measure of the strength of a brand depends on how consumers think, feel, and act with respect to that brand (Keller 2008). Further, a key consideration when defining brand equity is that it is not absolute but relative to competition, i.e. it is the amount of confidence consumers place in a brand relative to its competitors and is thus the consumers' willingness to pay a

premium price for that brand (Lassar, Mittal, and Sharma 1995).

Consumer-Based brand equity is said to have been achieved when the consumer has a high level of awareness and familiarity with the brand and holds some strong, favorable, and unique brand associations in memory (Keller 2008). This is an important factor when applying it to HE as it could take a number of years for a student to achieve these feelings. For example, a prospective student may be aware of a university as a brand but may not be familiar with the product having never used it.

Furthermore, the student may not achieve strong, favorable and unique associations with the brand until they have completed a degree, or even longer, possibly years after graduation. The key focus of Keller's statement should be in achieving a high level of awareness, as students' decisions on study destinations are quite often made on recommendations from family, friends and current teachers (Maringe 2006).

