



Proposed Strategic Operational Plan On the Marketing Mix of Emilio Aguinaldo College

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ABSTRACT

The study proposed a Strategic operational plan on the Marketing Mix of EMILIO AGUINALDO COLLEGE. A survey method was used, surveying 60 students of EAC Manila from varying years of study, degree programs, and nationalities to gather data related to the 4Ps.

Results showed that many students feel that the educational quality, value for money of their education, location of EAC, and the promotional activities of EAC are good. Other aspects need improvement such as scholarships, etc.

Significant differences in responses were observed across degrees and nationalities. A strong positive correlation was found between operational efficiency and admissions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is made up of 7017 islands covering a land area of 115,739 sq. m (299, 764 sq. km.). Main island groups are Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Capital is Manila Time Zone is GMT +8 hours. With its numerous islands, the country is expanding and improving its' education system. With the growing population, economic growth, support from the government, and increasing OFWs, the education sector is growing at a steady pace despite the ups and downs due to the COVID-19 situation.

In a brief paper on the history of Operations Management, Wilson (1995) stated, "An explicit recognition of the past is essential to a proper understanding of the present and for informed speculation about the future." In line with this quote, this paper will review the past and existing operations of EAC graduate school to determine what are the existing drawbacks and what operations are needed to be changed or improved.

As stated by Krajewski, Ritzman& Malhotra (2013), the concept of operation management applies to all productive organizations across the world. Being a diversified topic, the aspect is recognized as one the most crucial factors that affects decision making and developmental processes. Apart from a focus on production and value addition processes, the operations management highlights application of methods and various strategies. Moreover, operations, marketing, financing, and delivery management all form part of the widely spread concept as well. It is noted that in comparison to the present times, the future will present



educational institutions with more developed resources.

Kotler (1992) coins the idea of “a new paradigm” in marketing - he emphasizes that organizations need to practice “wrap-around marketing”, which encompasses both getting and retaining customers. Educational institutions should therefore build stronger relationships with their profitable students. Grönroos (1994) strengthens Kotler's suggestions by arguing that trends in business and modern research into industrial marketing, services marketing, and customer relationship economics, demand a relationship-oriented approach to marketing. These views could be of relevance to EAC marketing.

Marketing strategy is a significant driving force that distinguishes the success of many organizations not only by well-developed marketing strategies outlining where, when, and how the firm will compete but also by their ability to execute the marketing strategy decision options chosen (Day and Wensley 1988; Varadarajan 2010). The appropriate and effectively implemented marketing strategies are required to productively guide the deployment of the limited available resources via the firm's marketing capabilities in pursuit of desired goals and objectives (Black and Boal 1994; Varadarajan and Clark 1994).

Marketing management involves an ongoing cycle of research, planning,

implementing, deploying, and measuring. Marketing managers are involved at every stage of the process, ensuring efforts are in line with the company, or campaign's, overall strategy and goals. Aluise, V. (2021). To generate sales, it is essential to provide value to existing and potential new customers. This is one of the fundamental tenets of marketing. This requires conducting in-depth research and analysis on the customers and the product. To begin, you should learn the discomfort issues that your customers are experiencing so that you may address them through content marketing or other forms of advertising. Baker, R. (2023).

A marketing strategy refers to a business's overall game plan for reaching prospective consumers and turning them into customers of their products or services. A marketing strategy contains the company's value proposition, key brand messaging, data on target customer demographics, and other high-level elements. A clear marketing strategy should revolve around the company's value proposition, which communicates to consumers what the company stands for, how it operates, and why it deserves their business. This provides marketing teams with a template that should inform their initiatives across all the company's products and services. Barone, A. (2023) For example, Walmart (WMT) is widely known as a discount retailer with “everyday low prices,” whose business operations and marketing efforts are rooted in that idea. Similarly, EAC is known for quality and affordable education.

The single most important thing every educational institution must do to remain competitive is to develop innovative teaching methods and student services. Most educational institutions know the importance of continuous improvement objectives and teams. Continually review and set objectives for system improvement, capacity increases, application of material handling, improved workflow and cost reduction. Barry, C. (2022)

A CMO is bent on creating lasting relationships between faculty and students. These co-relations are determined by:

- Collaboration and interconnection
- Leadership skills
- Communication and empathy

Collaboration and interconnection. A collaborative relationship occurs when people work together to accomplish like objectives. Working around complexities may lead to work alignment through numerous



debates, unanimity, and sharing of different views to achieve a common goal. Developing a focus that is student-based builds strong relations with students. This is made possible through co-creation. Fostering trust between an educational institution and the students drives up the institution's position in the market.

Leadership skills. Creating end-to-end experiences and anticipating

student needs offers a holistic approach in analyzing, defining and understanding individual student partialities. Analytical skills are important in problem-solving. A leader does research to figure out how many students are searching for solutions for problems the institutions can solve. Leadership, being a relevant market strategy, offers advocacy for students. Ensuring that students gain the promised benefits is the nub for return new admissions.

Communication and empathy. In this digital and marketing age, students want to have a personalized approach with institutions. Research study conducted by Confident Writers shows that by the year 2018 organizations that humanize their services will have an elevated success rate of 30% compared to those that don't interact with consumers and tapping into the customer base, understanding that consumers are not rational but predictable will help deliver exceptional experiences. Bates, P. (2018).

According to Jim Stengel, former CMO of P&G, brands that focus on customers are more successful than the ones that focus on themselves. He based this theory on the stock market. Investments made at the same time had different stock rates 10 years down the line. Purpose-driven brands had 400% higher gross rate in stock than the brand focused ones. Understanding the shifting student demographics, targeting relevant market segments and effective problem solving is the thin line between success and failure in education business. Leaders who harness insights on student preferences, representing student wants and needs and developing a greater level of strategic influence translate success to the educational institution. There is a change in student preferences from distant to human interaction. Students prefer faculty that engage them as they would a friend. These strategies are made possible through leaders in the institution. The current marketing community has shifted from business-to-business and business-to-consumer to consumer-to-business.

A strategic marketing plan is a document created by a company's management team outlining their goals for the coming year. It will detail strategies for brand enhancement as well as ways to increase sales. This will cover what goes into developing one and why they're important for any company looking to grow their customer base. Cross, V. (n.d).

Business Marketing is the process of bringing products, services, or ideas to consumers with the intention that they will be interested. A Strategic Marketing Plan helps business owners determine who they want as customers (i.e., niche markets) and then plan how best to make this happen using selective intent in order to maximize returns on investment while shortening sales cycles through ROI analysis; all done strategically.

Strategic marketing takes what you know about your business and uses that knowledge to create a plan of action. A Strategic Marketing Plan looks at all aspects of your marketing including strategies, tactics, resources, timeframes, and responsibilities.

A Strategic Marketing Plan can help you define what you are trying to accomplish by giving focus, direction, and proof of business need. You can't improve what you don't measure, so measurable goals are crucial to the success of your planning process.

Developing a strategic marketing plan serves a variety of purposes in businesses, including to:

1. Clearly defines the purpose of the business and establishes realistic goals and objectives consistent with that mission in a defined time frame within the organization's capacity for implementation.



2. Communicates those goals and objectives to the business's target markets.
3. Develops a sense of ownership of the plan.
4. Establishes a clear picture of the business's identity and how it is differentiated from its competitors.
5. Examines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the business.
6. Ensures the most effective use is made of the business's resources by focusing the resources on the key priorities.
7. It provides a benchmark from which progress can be measured and establishes a mechanism for informed change when needed.
8. Consider everyone's opinions to build consensus about where the business is going.
9. It provides a clearer focus for the organization, thereby producing more efficiency and effectiveness.
10. Bridges staff/employees and managers.
11. Builds strong teams on the board and in the staff/employees.
12. It provides the glue that keeps the leadership.
13. Produces great satisfaction and meaning among planners, especially around a common vision.
14. Increases productivity from increased efficiency and effectiveness.
15. Solves major problems in the business.

You will want to make sure that everyone who is involved knows what they are supposed to be doing and when they are supposed to do it. When you have a plan in place, people know exactly what their roles are. This plan will help you get the most return on your marketing efforts, which is one of the most efficient ways to grow yourself and your business. With a Strategic Marketing Plan in place, you can measure the effectiveness of each marketing tactic so that you know what works best for your business's particular needs. You won't waste money promoting yourself or your business in ways that do not work. You will also be able to figure out what works best for you so that no matter who is doing the marketing, they know exactly what is expected of them and how they can help your business grow.

Strategic marketing relates to the action plans used by a company when allocating its resources to implement competitive strategies, which is the way it competes to strengthen its market position. In a market-focused business culture, the aim is to increase competitive advantages and profitability. This involves continuous adaptation to customer needs and expectations. Core elements include matters related to customer and competitor analysis, distribution methodologies, pricing, brand management and marketing communication.

Customer Analysis

Strategic marketing should ultimately fulfill the business goal to enhance quality customer service. It is primarily a customer-centric marketing framework that involves an ongoing evaluation of customer preferences, which can be derived from qualitative and quantitative tools like focus groups, surveys and sales data. By understanding a customer's buying decision process, a marketing manager is able to better understand the needs of prospective customers and gain insights on customer values.

Competitor Analysis

Managers and administrators must know how competitors are both performing and addressing marketing



needs. Competitive marketing strategies require a close evaluation and comparison of industry benchmark data for key competitors against internal business data to assess market position. Here, strategic planning techniques like SWOT analysis helps elucidate prospective strategies. Strengths and weaknesses relate to a company's internal assessment, while opportunities and threats relates to external factors like competitors. In operations management, competitive priorities are a crucial decision variable for operations managers. Competitive priorities signify a strategic focus on building specific manufacturing capabilities that can improve a plant's position in the market. Such focus may guide decisions with regards to the capacity, technology, production process, planning, control, etc. In fact the strength of an operations strategy is dependent on the level of consistency between emphasized competitive priorities and matching decisions concerning operational structure and infrastructure. Fitting a plant's practices to the competitive priorities is important to developing operations as a competitive advantage.

According to Porter, there are two primary routes for competitiveness: cost leadership or differentiation. Competitive advantage is the leverage a business has over its competitors. This can be gained by offering clients better and greater value. Advertising products or services with lower prices or higher quality piques the interest of consumers. This is the reason behind brand loyalty, or why customers prefer one product or service over another. Each organization needs to have a deep understanding of their customers and what drives their customers to make purchases. We refer to these as key purchasing criteria. They are the factors which students evaluate and consider when making an admission decision.

Professionals in operations management positions are responsible for the success of their organizations and take on important tasks. When it comes to making judgments on product innovation, risk assessment, and reducing costs, operations managers benefit from having a solid foundation in financial management skills. Operations managers are equipped with the tools to launch initiatives, engage with employees, and accomplish critical deadlines when they have a thorough understanding of company processes and management.

Many significant responsibilities and projects may be assigned to an operations manager, depending on your talents and knowledge in a variety of sectors of the company, such as management and production. Strategic business development is the alignment of business development processes and procedures with your firm's strategic business goals. The role of strategic business development is to acquire ideal clients for your highest priority services using brand promises that you can deliver upon. Deciding which targets to pursue and strategies to employ to develop business is actually a high stakes decision. A good strategy, well implemented, can drive high levels of growth and profitability. A faulty strategy can stymie growth and frustrate valuable talent. Yet many institutions falter at this critical step. They rely on habit, anecdotes and fads — or worse still, “this is how we have always done it.”

Student requirements and behaviors, technology, and competition are changing rapidly, and educational institutions cannot rely on existing tools to stay ahead of the market. They need to innovate, and that means to develop and successfully launch new products or ideas. New Product Development refers to the complete process of bringing a new product to market. This can apply to developing an entirely new product, improving an existing one to keep it attractive and competitive, or introducing an old product to a new market.

The emergence of new product development can be attributed to the needs of companies to maintain a competitive advantage in the market by introducing new products or innovating existing ones. Gastaldello, G. (2021). In the design of goods and services, the objective is to develop the best product, given the resources and limitations Gregory, L. (2022).



Many institutions have successfully transformed their business functions, improved their performance while stripping out cost. Yet far fewer have optimized their service operations. When service levels and costs are properly balanced and optimized, they can deliver a substantial and sustainable competitive advantage that competitors will find hard to match. By their nature, service operations in education sector are often intensive and complex to manage. Repetition and consistency, typical hallmarks of excellence in service operations, can work against an institution that is trying to achieve step-change improvements in processes and behaviors. Additionally, executives across many industries are finding it increasingly challenging to keep service costs in check (especially labor costs, the single largest cost component of any service operation) while maintaining service levels. Hawkes, H., Bailey, C., & Riedl, P. (2011).

A digital marketing strategy will help EAC in many ways. For example:

A strategy gives you direction. Many companies without a digital marketing strategy lack clear strategic goals. This makes it difficult to allocate sufficient resources to individual marketing activities and even more difficult to measure, through analytics, whether you're hitting your targets.

It enables you to better understand your market share. It doesn't matter if you have a digital marketing degree. Without a clear strategy, you could easily underestimate the demand for your digital services. Moreover, it's likely that you won't fully understand the dynamics of the online marketplace including student behaviors, competitors, and customer profiles. It helps you develop an effective value proposition. The online marketplace is very competitive. To succeed, you need to differentiate yourself and stand tall among the crowd. Only a well-thought digital marketing strategy can help you with this. You'll better understand your customers. Understanding your digital customers requires more than just analytics. You need to utilize other forms of website feedback tools to identify and address your weak points.

Avoid time and resource-wasting duplication. Sometimes you'll find different parts of a marketing department purchasing different tools or using different agencies to accomplish similar marketing tasks. You can eliminate such costly duplication with an effective digital marketing strategy.

Avoid the risks that come with disintegration. Marketing that is accomplished in silos, where the digital marketer sits in the IT department, is a disaster waiting to happen. Digital marketing is most productive when integrated with traditional media and response channels. Heart, S. (2022). Operation managers play a key role in the structure of a business. Backend office services such as operation managers are just as vital in your business as front-facing professionals such as marketing and salespeople. Operation managers carry an essential role in the business. There are five components under the operations umbrella: operations strategy, project management, human resources and team leadership, financials, and data analysis. Houston, M. (2021).

Forecasting in operations management assures a business with a defined plan to overcome risks and contingencies that might otherwise affect revenue and financial allocation. Forecasting allows businesses to identify and control factors in operations that can create short- and long-term impacts. It also helps companies to balance production based on demand forecasts. Kiran, R. (2023). Ethics is critical to the success of any business organization. All decisions made in operations must be framed from an ethical point of view. Ethics in business operations should be viewed as the responsibility of every manager concerned. Upholding ethical standards ensures a healthier business atmosphere that helps to boost brand image, gain public trust and enjoy market share and reputation. Ethics in business management involves the social responsiveness of any company or business unit during its course of operation. It tags the business discipline of carrying out the business activities with moral responsibility and social commitment. It comprises of a set of moral principles and behavior that should guide and lead business decision makers



and management in their day-to-day operations. Kiran, R. (2023). Product is one of the four elements of the marketing mix; the other three being price, place and promotion, which are all geared towards serving and satisfying the target market. Companies fix the product's price, promote and distribute it to the target market. Therefore, a product is the basic element of marketing mix. The word "Product" has several meanings, but it is generally a bundle of satisfaction that customers purchase or patronize to solve a problem. In our day-to-day life, we use many goods, such as soap, biro, book, ball, etc., as well as services like banking transport, healthcare, or legal services. The term product has been defined differently by various authors and authorities in the field. Product maybe defined as the sum of the physical and psychological satisfactions the buyer receives when he makes a purchase. It is thus a tangible and/or intangible attribute that is offered to the market for sales. Kuka, M. G. K. (2018). Every year, a large majority of product launches fail. There's debate about exactly what percentage—some say it is 75%, others claim it's closer to 95%. Regardless of which number is right, there is no doubt that a lot of time and energy go into marketing products that will no longer exist in a year. Why is this? Some of the failure is likely attributable to the fact that many company leaders, including executives, have what's called marketing myopia—a nearsighted focus on selling products and services, rather than seeing the "big picture" of what consumers really want. Levitt, T. (2017).

Operations management influences every part of how you run a company. That includes how you produce a product or service, how you track and improve your efficiency and how you contribute to the bottom line. Simply put, operations management drives efficient workforces, processes and supply chains. Luther, D. (2022).

Risk is the major cause of uncertainty when it comes to marketing. You may wonder whether your message will reach the intended target, whether potential customers will respond positively, or whether your brand will gain recognition. With a marketing risk management plan, you can curb these risks. Here's why such a plan is important. The most important role of a risk management marketing plan is that it enables the identification and definition of all the hurdles your marketing team might come across. By knowing what you are up against, you can make the right decisions to avoid the threat or minimize the negative effects. With this knowledge in mind, you will feel more confident when developing and implementing a marketing strategy. A risk management plan will provide you with significant insights into the risk you are set to encounter during the planning phase and after your marketing efforts are implemented. Analyzing each potential risk, allows you to tell how likely they are to occur, their magnitude, and how frequently they may occur. You can then tweak your marketing strategy to overcome any challenges that lay on the way. That's why analyzing all risks before launching your marketing efforts will set you up for success. Risk management is a critical process that every company should integrate into its business operations. Implementing a risk management plan in your marketing strategy can help you foresee any challenges, get ready to face them, and avoid them altogether. Lynch, K. (2022).

Brand strategy is built on a platform of differentiation, where a company can use its value prop to create competitive advantages and satisfy customer needs. The key to long-term success is using brand strategy to define your market position in order to create market share and revenue growth. A brand marketing strategy is a set of guidelines that help businesses determine their core values and what they want to achieve with the business. More importantly, it also helps outline how those values can be applied to the marketplace. For one branding strategy to be successful, it's not enough to simply have a few bullet points of what you want to do. To develop a great brand strategy today, you need both a thorough understanding of why you choose certain types of brand strategies and a detailed outline of what your strategies will be.



The more detailed your brand strategy framework is, the easier it will be to succeed when you execute those strategies. Martinez, A. (2018).

It's important to note that whilst the marketing mix can direct your strategy and give you a greater understanding of the wider market, as well as your business internally, this is not just a one-stop-shop. The marketing mix is a tactic that works best when it's implemented regularly or semi-regularly as a structure for planning, executing, evaluating and re-evaluating your marketing activities. With the right set of guidelines, marketers are able to strategize and develop campaigns that work towards gaining and retaining highly valuable customers. The 7Ps of the marketing mix can act as a well-structured checklist for marketers who aim to create an effective strategy that achieves their goals and evolves the business to the fullest extent. Whatever your pricing strategy is, ensure that it's in line with your brand, it's a price that your customers are willing to pay and that you can make a profit. It's always a good idea to keep an eye on the wider market, the economy and, of course, your competitors. McCabe, A. (2022).

All organizations, regardless of industry, size, or maturity, have a set of foundational activities required to run the business — often called business operations. Successfully managing your business' operations strategy requires juggling many moving parts across multiple groups — with limited time and resources. You need diligent maintenance, well-informed strategic planning, and disciplined execution to succeed. Success is achieved by defining great strategies and implementing them relentlessly. Whereas, failure is almost always caused by one of two things: bad strategy or ineffective implementation. Execution without strategy is chaos, so you want to start with setting your strategy and establishing targets at regular intervals, as well as developing and maintaining effective operations. Finally, it means ensuring you have the right team in place to prioritize, support, and execute strategic initiatives. Those initiatives will help drive your strategy and overall success. When executed well, these practices allow your teams to focus on more important initiatives. In other words: “effective operations make the small things easy, so the big things become possible.” Overgaag, D. (2022).

To give a consumer a reason to choose you requires a combination of better service, better pricing, and unique products that tie effectively with other products you're selling. But getting to that point requires being able to work with suppliers seamlessly. Ranjan, A. (2021).

The role of operations management is essential in every organization. It serves as the “engine room” of an organization. The success of an organization solely depends on its operations and how they are effectively managed. For organizations to compete in a constantly changing market, their operations managers have to maximize productivity, efficiency, and profit—these three are essential to a company's survival. Varon, L. (2021).

Global Trends in Graduate Education

With the acceleration of globalization and the rise of the knowledge economy, the graduate education market is undergoing profound changes. A graduate degree has become an important competitive advantage in the global job market, prompting more individuals to pursue master's or doctoral degrees to enhance their professional skills and career prospects. Additionally, the advancement of online education technologies and the widespread adoption of remote learning have made graduate education more accessible, providing students worldwide with flexible learning opportunities.

In Southeast Asia, the demand for graduate education has been steadily increasing. As an important educational hub in the region, the Philippines has attracted a growing number of domestic and international students seeking postgraduate studies because of the medium of instruction - English. To capture a larger share of this expanding market, universities and educational institutions have been expanding their graduate



programs, improving teaching quality, and adopting innovative marketing strategies. However, this has also intensified market competition, making it imperative for institutions to develop effective marketing strategies to enhance student enrollment and brand recognition.

Competitive Landscape of the Philippine Higher Education Market

The graduate education market in the Philippines consists of public universities, private universities, and international partner institutions, resulting in a highly competitive environment. Leading universities such as the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, and De La Salle University hold significant market shares and have established strong brand recognition. Additionally, international institutions have entered the Philippine market through collaborative programs and online courses, further intensifying competition.

In recent years, the Philippine government has implemented policies to support the growth of higher education. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has actively promoted quality assurance systems for graduate education and encouraged universities to engage in international collaborations to enhance global competitiveness. Against this backdrop, developing precise marketing strategies to attract students and strengthen brand awareness has become a key priority for graduate schools in the Philippines.

Background of the Study

In today's competitive educational landscape, higher education institutions must adopt strategic marketing practices to attract and retain students. Among the most recognized frameworks for evaluating and developing effective marketing strategies is the 4Ps of Marketing—Product, Price, Place, and Promotion—originally proposed by Philip Kotler. These elements collectively influence how institutions present their offerings and engage with their target audience. For colleges and universities, understanding how students perceive these marketing components is vital in tailoring services and communications that align with their expectations and needs.

Emilio Aguinaldo College (EAC), located in Manila, is one of the leading private higher education institutions in the Philippines, offering a wide range of academic programs in health sciences, business, education, and the liberal arts. As the institution continues to grow in both enrollment and program offerings, it becomes increasingly important to assess how its marketing mix is received by its primary stakeholders—its students. Understanding the perspectives of current students regarding the 4Ps provides a data-driven basis for refining EAC's marketing strategies to remain competitive and student-centered.

The Product, in the context of higher education, refers to the academic programs, learning environment, support services, and overall student experience. Students evaluate these aspects not only in terms of academic quality but also in relevance to their future careers and personal development. Price represents the tuition fees, financial aid options, and perceived value for money. Students are increasingly cost-conscious, making it essential for institutions to ensure their pricing strategies align with their perceived academic value and market demand.

Place pertains to the accessibility and convenience of the college's physical and digital learning environments. EAC's central location in Manila offers strategic advantages, but its effectiveness must also be measured against student preferences and commuting patterns. Promotion, the fourth P, encompasses how the college communicates its brand, academic offerings, and institutional values to prospective and current students. This includes advertising, social media engagement, campus events, and word-of-mouth, all of which significantly influence enrollment decisions.



This research seeks to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila Campus's marketing mix from the perspective of its student respondents. By analyzing how students assess each component of the 4Ps, the study aims to identify strengths, uncover areas for improvement, and provide actionable recommendations for the college's marketing team. The findings will serve as a valuable resource for institutional planning and policy formulation, ultimately enhancing the college's ability to attract and retain students in a dynamic educational environment.

Theoretical Framework

This study anchored on the 4Ps of Marketing, conceptualized by Philip Kotler, form the foundation of a successful marketing strategy. These four elements—**Product**, **Price**, **Place**, and **Promotion**—are essential in understanding and responding to customer needs and competitive environments. The **Product** refers to the goods or services a company offers to satisfy consumer needs or wants. It includes features, design, quality, branding, and after-sales service. By carefully designing the product to meet market demands, businesses can establish a strong value proposition that sets them apart from competitors.

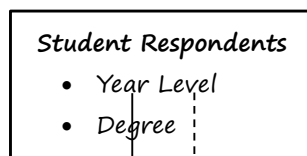
Price represents the amount customers are willing to pay for a product or service. It is a critical component that affects profitability, market share, and brand perception. Kotler emphasizes the importance of pricing strategies such as penetration pricing, skimming, and competitive pricing to position a product effectively in the market. The price must align with the perceived value of the product while considering factors like cost, competition, and target market behavior. A well-calculated price strategy can enhance customer acquisition, retention, and satisfaction.

The remaining Ps—**Place** and **Promotion**—deal with how a product is delivered and communicated to the customer. **Place** involves distribution channels, logistics, and accessibility, ensuring the product is available where and when the customer wants it. This can range from physical stores to online platforms. **Promotion**, on the other hand, encompasses all communication strategies used to inform and persuade the market, including advertising, public relations, personal selling, and digital marketing. By effectively integrating the 4Ps, marketers can craft a coherent strategy that enhances customer experience and drives business growth.

Research Framework

Figure 1 is the research paradigm of the study. The first box is the demographic profile of student respondents in terms of the year level, degree and nationality. The second rectangular shape is the 4Ps of marketing in terms of product, place, price, and promotion.

The significant difference in the assessment of respondents represented by the dotted lines. The ultimate objective of this study is to come up with a proposed strategic operational plan.



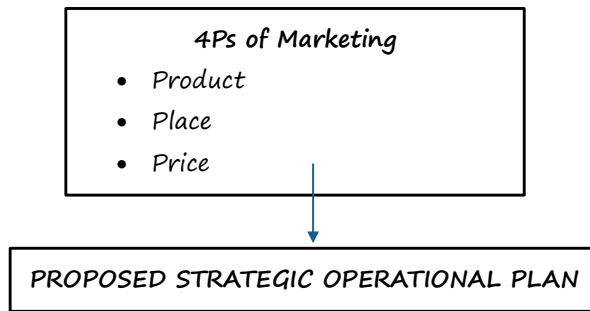


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

Statement of the Problem

This study assessed the marketing mix of Emilio Aguinaldo College with the end view of a proposed strategic operational plan. Specifically, it answered the following:

1. What is the demographic profile of student respondents in terms of the following:
 - 1.1 year level,
 - 1.2 degree, and
 - 1.3 nationality
2. What is the assessment of student respondents on the marketing mix of EAC in terms of the following:
 - 2.1 Product,
 - 2.2 Price,
 - 2.3 Place, and
 - 2.4 Promotion?
3. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of student respondents on the marketing mix of EAC when their profile is taken as test factor?
4. Based on the results of this study what strategic operational plan can be proposed?

Scope and delimitation of the study

This study conducted at Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila campus, focused marketing mix in terms of product, price, place, and promotions. Student respondent employed in this study.



Significance of the study

This study is beneficial to the following stakeholders

Emilio Aguinaldo College. The findings of this research will serve as a basis for data-driven improvements in institutional marketing and operational planning. By identifying strengths and weaknesses in the current marketing mix, the college can formulate more responsive strategies that will attract prospective students, retain current ones, and strengthen the college's overall brand image. This will also support institutional goals in enrollment management, program development, and service delivery.

Future Researchers and Academicians who are exploring the application of marketing principles in educational institutions. It contributes to the growing body of literature on educational marketing in the Philippine context and may serve as a reference for comparative studies across different campuses or institutions. Ultimately, the study supports continuous improvement and innovation in student-centered marketing practices in higher education.

This Researcher - This study will serve as his valuable contribution to the body of knowledge as this can serve as a reference for those students undergoing research studies particularly those enrolled in the graduate schools.

Definition of Terms

For better understanding the following terms and phrases are operationally define:

Marketing Mix refers to the combination of four strategic components—product, price, place, and promotion—used by Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila Campus to attract, satisfy, and retain students. It is assessed based on how students perceive the effectiveness and relevance of the institution's academic offerings, pricing structure, campus accessibility, and promotional strategies.

Operational Plan pertains to the implementation framework of Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila Campus that ensures the consistent delivery of its educational services and marketing strategies. In this study, it refers to the structured execution of the institution's marketing mix elements as experienced by students.

Product refers to the tangible and intangible educational services offered by the college, including academic programs, quality of instruction, campus facilities, student support services, and the overall learning experience. It is measured by student satisfaction with the relevance, quality, and effectiveness of these offerings.

Price pertains to the financial cost of studying at Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila Campus, including tuition, miscellaneous fees, and related expenses. It also includes students' perceptions of affordability, available financial aid, and value for money in relation to the quality of education provided.

Place refers to the accessibility, location, and delivery channels through which the college provides its services. This includes the convenience of the campus location, availability of transportation, quality of physical and virtual learning environments, and ease of access to school facilities and services.

Promotion covers the communication strategies and tools used by the college to inform, persuade, and engage students. This includes advertising, digital marketing, social media presence, word-of-mouth, school events, and the overall clarity and effectiveness of the college's public messaging.



2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher will utilize the evaluation survey research design. Creswell, John W. and J. David, Creswell, 2018, explain that evaluation research study is a “process used to determine and identify the purpose of the survey research and accordingly, the primary purpose is to answer questions about variables of interest to the researcher. Since the main objective of the study is to assess the operations and marketing strategies with a focus on operations and marketing strategy of EAC, existing students and staffs’ survey will provide crucial information. Apart from that inputs from students of nearby schools and academic experts will be taken. All this will be done to identify the gaps in the existing operations and marketing strategies, which can be addressed by EAC management to make improvements in the future.

A survey method is the preferred type of approach for this study. In this case, it can be beneficial to acknowledge the advantages of survey designs, through the use of the assessments of the respondents who have direct knowledge about EAC operations and marketing.

This study is generally quantitative. Quantitative descriptive research design provides a description of an event or define a set of attitudes, opinions, or behaviours, that are observed or measured at a given time and environment (Creswell, John W. and J. David, Creswell, 2018). This design will be employed to gather information from the respondents on the operations and marketing strategies of EAC and similar institutions.

Research Locale

The locale of the study will be Manila. During the actual conduct of survey, the respondents were from EAC where it is principally located and nearby colleges. The respondents will randomly be selected but only those who are students and staff from EAC and similar institutions in this field.

Sample and Sampling Design

The population and sampling procedure (Babbie, 2015; & Fowler, 2014 cited by Creswell, John W. and J. David, Creswell, 2018) provide for the essential aspects of the population and sample describe in a research plan. The population of this study was taken from Manila.

Research Instrument

As part of the data collection, this researcher will make a survey questionnaire in the assessment of respondents on the EAC’s performance.

An introductory letter to the respondents will likewise be prepared, requesting them to answer all the items needed to completely gather the data required. The letter will also explain the objective of the study to the respondents. The main body of the survey questionnaire will consist of the variables and indicators/statements concerning EAC and similar colleges.

The following rating scales will be used by the respondents in their assessments:



Scale	Range	Degree
4	3.51-4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)
3	2.51-3.50	Agree (A)
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree (DA)
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree (SD)

Data Gathering Procedure

In the gathering of data, the researcher initially wrote a letter to the concerned staff of the different colleges where the respondents are actually assigned. The respective approval of those personnel in charge is extremely necessary. After their respective approval, the questionnaires were distributed to and retrieved from selected respondents by the researcher.

Upon the distribution of the questionnaires to the individual respondents, the researcher may make some explanations to the participants on the objective of the study as well as how they would fill up the same. Thereafter, the respondents were given time to complete the questionnaire and send it back to the researcher. The researcher made personal calls or messages for follow-ups to retrieve the filled-up survey instruments.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The collected data was tallied, classified and tabulated. Listed in the columns are the responses per item of the questionnaire and the rows representing the respondents. Data responses coming from the respondents were considered for statistical analysis using the following statistical tools.

Weighted Mean. The weighted mean scores were computed to measure the assessment of the respondents. To obtain the weighted mean scores, the computed weighted mean scores on the EAC's performance will be interpreted using the following scales:

Scale	Range	Degree
4	3.51-4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)
3	2.51-3.50	Agree (A)
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree (DA)
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree (SD)

ANOVA. To test the hypotheses of no significant difference in the assessment of the respondents, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) will be utilized.



3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research also owed its integrity, respect, and fairness to the ethical considerations that were involved in its execution. All procedures of this study were in accordance with the ethical standards to protect the rights, privacy, and welfare of participants.

All respondents provided informed consent before data collection. All participants were given clear information regarding the purpose of the study (aim, objectives, and potential impact). Also, information was provided that their participation was completely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

The researcher guaranteed that there would be no personally identifiable information collected and not be disclosed to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. To protect the identity of the EAC students, their names are not included in the study, and their details will not be disclosed. Some of the responses were only for academic purposes and were treated with a high confidentiality level.

The study also adhered to ethical principles of data collection and storage. Data will be collected, stored securely, and will only be accessible by the researcher. If sensitive information was saved to a digital file, it was password-protected to prevent unauthorized access.

It is important to note that these ethical guidelines ensured the integrity of the study's findings by respecting the rights and dignity of all participants involved.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Summary and findings

Total number of Respondents - 60

Profile of the respondents in terms of Study Year level

Year level	Frequency	Percentage
1st year	18	30
2nd year	24	40
3rd year	6	10
4th year	12	20
Total	60	100

Table 1



Profile of the respondents in terms of Degree

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Allied health	32	53.33
Non-health allied	14	23.33
Graduate school	14	23.33
Total	60	100

Table 2

Profile of the respondents in terms of Nationality

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Filipino	26	43.33
Chinese	8	13.33
Indian	6	10
Nepalese	10	16.66
Others	10	16.66
Total	60	100

Table 3

Product

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The academic programs offered by EAC Manila meet my educational needs and career goals	3.3	0.70	A
The quality of instruction provided by faculty members is excellent	2.93	0.52	A



The college offers adequate laboratory and classroom facilities	3	0.74	A
EAC Manila provides sufficient academic support services such as tutorials and counseling	3.1	0.88	A
The course curriculum is relevant to current industry standards and practices	3.03	0.76	A
The extracurricular activities enhance my overall student experience	2.86	0.93	A
I am satisfied with the college's efforts to maintain a conducive learning environment	2.8	0.76	A
Composite	3.00	0.76	A

Table 4

Price

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The tuition fees at EAC Manila are reasonable for the quality of education provided	2.9	0.84	A
I believe I am receiving value for my money at this institution	2.6	0.66	A
There are enough scholarship opportunities and financial aid available for students	2.4	1.041	DA
The school provides flexible payment schemes for tuition and other fees	3.3	0.95	A
The total cost of studying at EAC is affordable compared to other private colleges in Manila	2.83	0.83	A
I am well-informed about the breakdown of fees and how they are used	3.13	0.86	A
The cost of additional learning materials and services is manageable	2.73	0.73	A
Composite	2.84	0.84	A

Table 5

**Place**

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
The location of EAC Manila is convenient and accessible for me	3.56	0.67	SA
The campus is strategically located near transport terminals and essential services	3.6	0.67	SA
The learning environment within the campus is safe	3.4	0.62	A
The learning environment within the campus is comfortable	3.13	0.68	A
The availability of online learning platforms supports my academic needs	2.93	0.69	A
Classrooms and study areas are conducive to learning	3.13	0.77	A
Library and lobby areas are conducive to learning and academic growth	3.26	0.69	A
Composite	3.28	0.68	A

Table 6

Promotion

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
I first learned about EAC Manila through effective promotional materials (e.g., social media, brochures)	2.89	1.01	A
The college communicates announcements and updates clearly and regularly	3	0.70	A
The school's website and social media pages provide relevant and timely information	3.03	0.68	A
The promotional efforts of the college highlight its strengths and unique features	2.82	0.61	A
EAC Manila uses online and offline platforms effectively to reach students	2.79	0.77	A



I feel that the college's image in the public reflects its actual performance	3	0.80	A
I am influenced by student testimonials and peer recommendations about EAC	2.79	0.81	A
Composite	2.90	0.76	A

Table 7

Significant Difference in the Respondents' Assessment according to year level

Dimension	year level	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Product	1st	2.74	0.32	A
	2nd	3.25	0.15	A
	3rd	3	0.3	A
	4th	2.9	0.27	A
Price	1st	2.66	0.21	A
	2nd	3	0.3	A
	3rd	2.95	0.48	A
	4th	2.83	0.54	A
Place	1st	2.66	0.212	A
	2nd	3.53	0.134	SA
	3rd	3.42	0.37	A
	4th	3.32	0.47	A
Promotion	1st	2.64	0.18	A
	2nd	3.17	0.22	A
	3rd	2.71	0.35	A
	4th	2.80	0.22	A

Table 9



Mean Range	Interpretation
3.51-4.00	Strongly Agree(SA)
2.51-3.50	Agree(A)
1.51-2.50	Disagree(DA)
1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree(SD)

The results of the study indicate that students across all year levels generally recognize and are aware of the marketing strategies implemented by the institution.

Across the four dimensions, mean scores consistently fall within the "strongly agree" to "agree" range, suggesting that students do notice and respond to the marketing.

Product and Price were seen as "agree", implying the institution is providing products (such as programs, services, or educational tools) and pricing (tuition or financial schemes) that meets expectations but do not significantly stand out to students.

Place, which refers to accessibility and convenience of the services (e.g., location, online systems, physical environment), showed the highest mean scores, particularly among 2nd and 3rd-year students. This suggests that as students advance in their academic years, they become more aware of how accessible and organized the institution is.

Promotion, which includes advertisements, announcements, social media presence, and other forms of institutional communication, was also moderately evident, indicating that while promotional efforts are reaching students, they are not always impactful or memorable, possibly signaling a need to enhance the creativity or frequency of campaigns.

Significant Difference in the Respondents' Assessment according to Degree

Dimension	Degree	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Product	Allied health	3.05	0.22	A
	Non health	2.59	0.209	A
	Graduate	3.306	0.323	A
Price	Allied health	2.82	0.37	A
	Non health	2.61	0.31	A
	Graduate	3.20	0.28	A
Place	Allied health	3.26	0.25	A
	Non health	3.14	0.41	A
	Graduate	3.48	0.13	A



Promotion	Allied health	2.94	0.31	A
	Non health	2.57	0.24	A
	Graduate	3.16	0.27	A

Table 9

The results of the study indicate that students across degrees/ programs generally recognize and are aware of the marketing strategies implemented by the institution.

Across the four dimensions, mean scores consistently fall within the "strongly agree" to "agree" range, suggesting that students do notice and respond to the marketing positively.

Product and Price were seen as "agree", implying the institution is providing products (such as programs, services, or educational tools) and pricing (tuition or financial schemes) that meet expectations but do not significantly stand out to students.

Place, which refers to accessibility and convenience of the services (e.g., location, online systems, physical environment), showed the highest mean scores, particularly among allied health and graduate school students. This suggests that students taking up professional courses become more aware of how accessible and organized the institution is.

Promotion, which includes advertisements, announcements, social media presence, and other forms of institutional communication, also showed "agree", indicating that promotional efforts are reaching students and students do benefit from EAC promotional activities, especially for health related and graduate degrees,

Significant Difference in the Respondents' Assessment according to Nationality

Dimension	Nationality	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Product	Filipino	2.84	0.16	A
	Chinese	3.35	0.377	A
	Indian	3.04	0.299	A
	Nepalese	3.08	0.42	A
	Others	3.02	0.35	A
Price	Filipino	2.85	0.36	A
	Chinese	3.21	0.33	A
	Indian	2.66	0.33	A
	Nepalese	2.74	0.47	A
	Others	2.82	0.31	A



Place	Filipino	3.07	0.25	A
	Chinese	3.5	0.144	A
	Indian	3.57	0.37	SA
	Nepalese	3.28	0.44	A
	Others	3.51	0.27	SA
Promotion	Filipino	2.59	0.1	A
	Chinese	3.39	0.37	A
	Indian	3.04	0.52	A
	Nepalese	3.11	0.32	A
	Others	2.97	0.35	A

Table 10

The results of the study indicate that students across all nationalities generally recognize and are aware of the marketing strategies implemented by the institution.

Across the four dimensions, mean scores consistently fall within the "strongly agree" to "agree" range, suggesting that students aware and respond to the marketing.

Product and Price were seen as "agree", implying the institution is providing products (such as programs, services, or educational tools) and pricing (tuition or financial schemes) that meet the expectations of international students but not so much for the Filipino students.

Place, which refers to accessibility and convenience of the services (e.g., location, online systems, physical environment), showed the highest mean scores, particularly among international as well as Filipino students. This suggests that the institution is located conveniently for students of all nationalities.

Promotion, which includes advertisements, announcements, social media presence, and other forms of institutional communication, was also moderately evident, indicating that while promotional efforts are reaching students, they are not always impactful or memorable, possibly signaling a need to enhance the creativity or frequency of campaigns.

Conclusions

1. Product

EAC Manila is perceived to offer comprehensive educational experience with several key strengths:

- Academic Programs: EAC aligns with student educational needs and career goals, particularly at the graduate level, with curriculum relevance to industry standards.
- Quality Instruction: Faculty members are recognized for delivering excellent quality teaching. The Professors are doing great with their jobs.



- Facilities: The college has sufficient laboratories, classrooms, and learning environments that are safe, comfortable, and conducive to academic growth.
- Support Services: Strong academic support, including tutorials, counseling, and extracurricular activities that enhance student experience.

Improvement Opportunity: Continue innovating ideas to meet evolving industry trends and expand student-centric academic support and facilities.

2. Price

Students generally feel that EAC offers good value for money:

- Tuition Fees: EAC tuition is seen as reasonable given the quality of education.
- Financial Aid & Scholarships: Scholarships might be Perceived as adequate, with flexible payment schemes helping affordability but there needs to be more especially for foreign students not just locals.
- Transparency: Students feel informed about tuition breakdowns, and the cost of learning materials is manageable.

Improvement Opportunity: Increase awareness and access to scholarship opportunities and consider offering more flexible financial options to further support diverse student backgrounds.

3. Place

The strategic location and campus environment are strong aspects of EAC's value proposition:

- Location: The campus is accessible and near essential services and transport terminals, making it convenient for students.
- Environment: Safe, comfortable, and conducive to learning, with both physical and online platforms effectively supporting academics.

Improvement Opportunity: Enhance the online learning infrastructure further and promote hybrid learning options to cater to evolving student needs.

4. Promotion

EAC Manila demonstrates effective use of promotional strategies to attract and retain students:

- Promotional Materials: Social media, brochures, and testimonials are influential in attracting students.
- Communication: Regular updates and clear announcements enhance engagement, and the website and social media channels are effective and informative.
- Image: The college's public image aligns well with its actual performance, further strengthened by student and peer recommendations.



Improvement Opportunity: Strengthen digital marketing efforts with targeted campaigns highlighting unique features, engaging online presence and expand student engagement on emerging platforms.

Recommendations

EAC Manila's marketing strategy should continue to leverage its quality education, affordability, convenient location, and strong communication channels to attract prospective students. To refine its market position further, EAC can:

Enhance digital and hybrid learning offerings.

Expand scholarship and financial aid options.

Strengthen promotional campaigns that showcase unique selling points, such as quality instruction and supportive learning environments.

Leverage on online presence to push promotions for international students.

LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondents,

The undersigned is taking up Master in Business Administration at Emilio Aguinaldo College and is now preparing for her thesis entitled **“PROPOSED STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN ON THE MARKETING MIX OF EMILIO AGUINALDO COLLEGE”**.

In this regard, the undersigned requests your kind support and assistance by honestly answering the needed information below.

Rest assured that your answers shall be dealt with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you and God Bless.

Respectfully yours,

XU SHUYUN

Researcher



5. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTION: Please complete this survey questionnaire completely. Rest assured that the data you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Part 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Year level

- ☐ 1st year
☐ 2nd year
☐ 3rd year
☐ 4th year
☐ 5th year

Degree

- ☐ Allied health
☐ Non-health allied
☐ Graduate School

Nationality

- ☐ Filipino
☐ Chinese
☐ Nepalese
☐ Indian
☐ Others (please specify) _____

Commented [MOU1]: Insert additional nationality of students

Part 2 Assessment on the Marketing Mix. Kindly put a check (✓) mark on the space provided for your assessment using the following:

- 4 Strongly Agree
3 Agree
2 Disagree
1 Strongly Disagree

Variables/indicators	1	2	3	4
Product				
1. The academic programs offered by EAC Manila meet my educational needs and career goals				
2. The quality of instruction provided by faculty members is excellent				
3. The college offers adequate laboratory and classroom facilities				



4. EAC Manila provides sufficient academic support services such as tutorials and counseling				
5. The course curriculum is relevant to current industry standards and practices				
6. The extracurricular activities enhance my overall student experience				
7. I am satisfied with the college's efforts to maintain a conducive learning environment				
Price				
1. The tuition fees at EAC Manila are reasonable for the quality of education provided				
2. I believe I am receiving value for my money at this institution				
3. There are enough scholarship opportunities and financial aid available for students				
4. The school provides flexible payment schemes for tuition and other fees				
5. The total cost of studying at EAC is affordable compared to other private colleges in Manila				
6. I am well-informed about the breakdown of fees and how they are used				
7. The cost of additional learning materials and services is manageable				
Place				
1. The location of EAC Manila is convenient and accessible for me				
2. The campus is strategically located near transport terminals and essential services				
3. The learning environment within the campus is safe				
4. The learning environment within the campus is comfortable				
5. The availability of online learning platforms supports my academic needs				
6. Classrooms and study areas are conducive to learning				
7. Library and lobby areas are conducive to learning				
Promotion				
1. I first learned about EAC Manila through effective promotional materials (e.g., social media, brochures)				
2. The college communicates announcements and updates clearly and regularly				
3. The school's website and social media pages provide relevant and timely information				



4. The promotional efforts of the college highlight its strengths and unique features				
5. EAC Manila uses online and offline platforms effectively to reach students				
6. I feel that the college's image in the public reflects its actual performance				
7. I am influenced by student testimonials and peer recommendations about EAC				

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STRENGTHS AND CAREER OBJECTIVE

I have previous experience working as an accountant and cashier, where I handled financial reporting, cash management, and budgeting.

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Accountant — Bayin Art Training School Co., Ltd — Changsha, July 2018 – December 2023
- Cashier—Eastern Power Construction Co., Ltd — Changsha October 2017 – July 2018

EDUCATION

- Master Business Administration—Ongoing
Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila
- Bachelor of Financial Management — December 2018
Changsha University of Science & Technology