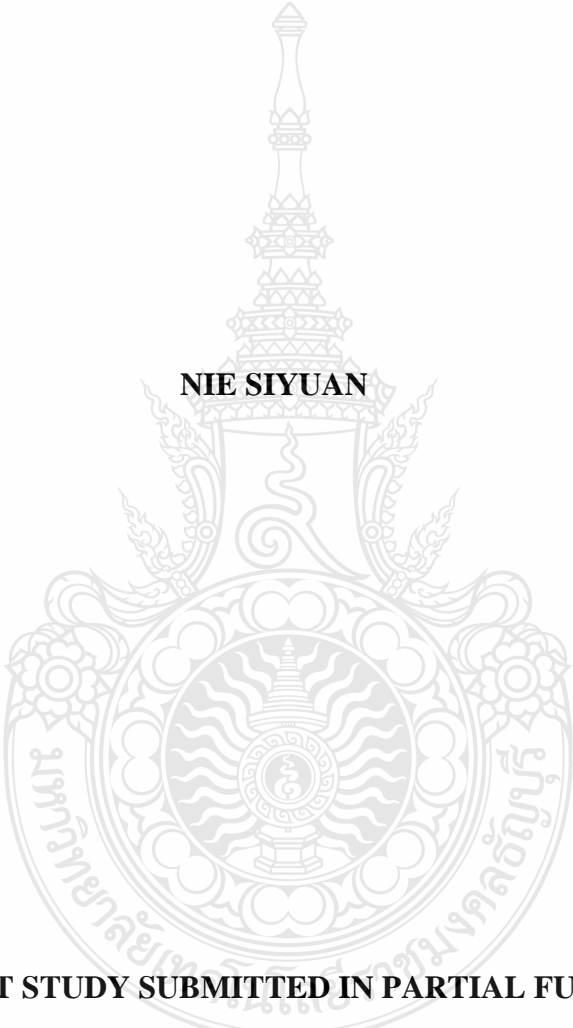


**EFFECT OF MARKETING STRATEGY AND SERVICE QUALITY ON  
CONSUMERS' SELECTION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

**NIE SIYUAN**



**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
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**Independent Study Title** Effect of Marketing Strategy and Service Quality on  
Consumers' Selection of Educational Institutions  
**Name - Surname** Ms.Nie Siyuan  
**Major Subject** General Management  
**Independent Study Advisor** Assistant Professor Suraporn Onputtha, Ph.D.  
**Academic Year** 2023

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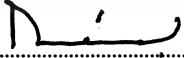
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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of marketing strategies and service quality on consumers' decisions to choose educational institutions.

The application of relevant theories such as the 4Ps marketing strategy theory, and the perception gap theory to consumer decision-making in combination with the marketing service models and characteristics of the education and training market, culminated in a questionnaire survey as the research tool. Statistical analysis of the data collected by the questionnaire was performed using various methods including frequency, percentage, one-way analysis of variance, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis.

The study results indicated that among several well-known training institutions in Jiangxi province, each dimension of the marketing strategies and the service quality of educational institutions individually had a positive impact on consumer decision-making. Therefore, this study suggests that improving marketing strategies and service quality levels can help promote consumer decision-making.

**Keywords:** marketing strategy, service quality, consumer decision-making

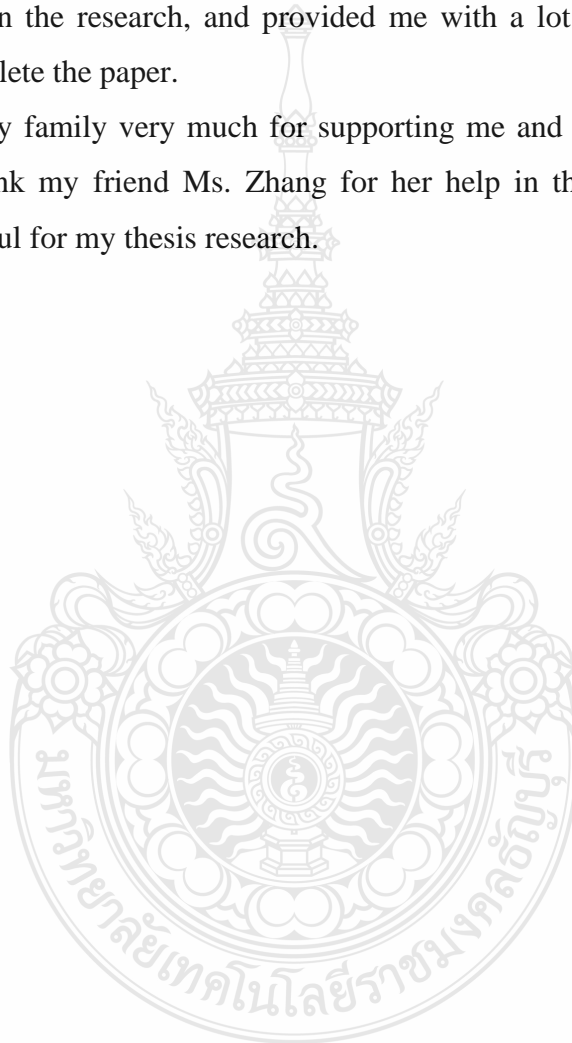
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Nie Siyuan



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sustainable development. This paper analyzes the influence of marketing strategy and service quality on customer decision making based on sorting out the research background and the current status of research. The questionnaire survey is used to select educational institutions by combining the characteristics of the education industry and educational institutions.

In today's highly popular culture, more and more parents have a certain educational philosophy and cultural level, and have high expectations for their children's education, hoping that their children will develop morally, intellectually, physically and aesthetically in an all-round way. In addition to traditional school education, more and more parents will let their children participate in some off-campus training courses, such as art training, physical training, etc. The high demand brings prosperity to the market, but also promotes competition among the market, and various off-campus training courses are springing up to cater to the market.

## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

In recent years, the education industry has mushroomed, but along with the increasing knowledge of parents and students about tutoring education, the competition among educational institutions has become more and more fierce, and many educational institutions will encounter some problems in their development, such as difficult enrollment, low renewal rate and weakening recognition, and most of them end up with a dismal end. Therefore, marketing strategy and service quality are especially important under the challenge of increasingly severe pressure in the education industry. Marketing strategy and service quality are important components of the education market. In this paper, we will study what are the main factors for customers to choose educational institutions and the impact of marketing and service quality on the education market. Therefore, the objectives of the study can be written as follows.

1.2.1 Study the marketing mix strategy, service quality and level of customer decision making chosen by educational institutions.

1.2.2 Compare consumers' decisions to choose educational institutions based on personal factors, including gender, age, educational background, occupation, and monthly income.

1.2.3 To explore the impact of marketing mix strategies on consumers' decision to choose an educational institution.

1.2.4 To explore the influence of service quality on customers' decision to choose an educational institution.

### **1.3 Research questions and hypotheses**

In order to study what are the main factors of consumers' choice of educational institutions and the impact of marketing and service quality on the education market, the research questions can be summarized as follows.

Question 1: Do different personal factors influence different clients' decision to choose an educational institution? And, why?

Question 2: Does the marketing mix strategy influence the customer's decision to choose an educational institution? And, why?

Question 3: Does the quality of service influence the customer's decision to choose an educational institution? And, why?

Question 4: To what extent do customers agree with the marketing mix strategy, quality of service and customer decisions chosen by the educational institution? And, why?

Therefore, the hypothesis can be written as follows.

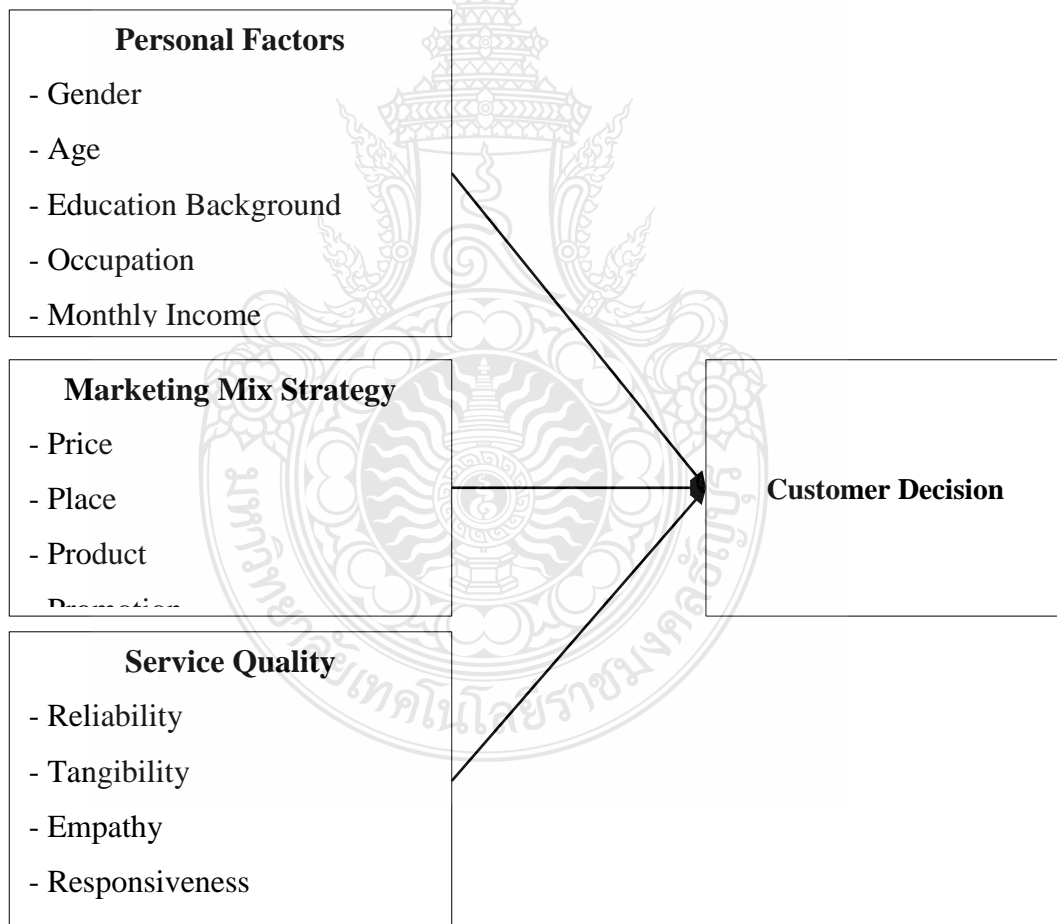
Hypothesis 1: Different personal factors influence different customers' decisions to choose educational institutions.

Hypothesis 2: Marketing mix affects customer choice of education Institution.

Hypothesis 3: Service quality affects customers' decision to choose educational

## 1.4 Basic Concept

The education market has grown rapidly in recent years, but remains in a precarious state. This study analyzes the drawbacks of the education market by examining the problematic factors of the education market. Theoretical studies show that customers' personal factors, marketing mix factors and service quality all influence customers' decisions. Accordingly, the theoretical framework of this study can be shown in Figure 1.1. The independent variables include personal factors (gender, age, educational background, occupation, and monthly income), marketing mix strategies (price, location, product, and promotion), and service quality (reliability, tangibility, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance). Meanwhile, the dependent variables include customer's decision making.



**Figure 1. 1** Conceptual Framework

## 1.5 Definition of Terms

**Educational institution:** It is an organization specializing in the education industry that is run by individuals or social organizations to provide training and learning for people of the appropriate age in accordance with relevant laws and regulations. In this paper, training institution refers to a training institution that provides quality education for students. Since educational training topics have different nature and scale of schooling, they can be called training activity centers, educational groups, etc. Because there are many related in the market name, this paper uses the name "institution" to summarize these subjects. The training institutions defined in this study are commercial in nature, and their registration authority is the Industrial and Commercial Bureau. Therefore, the training courses of commercial training machines are the goods of the company, which is a commercial institution for profit. In view of this, commercial training machines cannot provide educational training for those employed in the labor sector, nor can they provide education related to the education sector.

**Personal factor:** This refers to general information about the customer who chooses to study at an educational institution, including gender, age, educational background, occupation, and monthly income.

**Marketing mix strategy:** It is the process by which a company obtains information about customer needs and purchasing power based on market experience and coordinates product strategy, price strategy, channel strategy and promotion strategy by organizing various business activities in a planned manner to provide customers with satisfactory goods and services so as to achieve the company's objectives. The American Marketing Association defines marketing as: Marketing is the process of planning and implementing ideas, pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods, services, and concepts to create exchanges that meet individual and organizational goals (Mullen, 2008). Marketing strategy is the process by which a company takes the needs of its customers as the starting point, obtains information about their needs and purchasing power and the expectations of the business community based on experience, and organizes various business activities in a planned manner to provide customers with satisfactory goods and services through a coordinated product strategy, price strategy, channel strategy, and promotion strategy (Fill, 2000)

**Service quality:**Service quality is the sum of the characteristics and features of the services provided by the service provider that can meet the requirements or potential needs of customers, and it is the degree to which the service work can meet the needs of customers (Winwin, 2010). The quality of educational services referred to in this paper refers to the extent to which the quality of services of educational institutions can meet the requirements of society and students. Service quality is not only the sum of the characteristics of the service itself, but also a reflection of the consumer's perception. It is the result of comparing the service expected by customers with the actual perceived service (Xiao, I. and Xiao, P., 2005).

**Customer decision making:** is the process of consumer behavior in which consumers carefully evaluate the attributes of a product, brand or service and then make a rational choice, i.e., consumers seek to purchase the product, brand or service that meets their needs at the lowest cost.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

### **Educational institutions studied.**

The research sample for this study was drawn from five well-known educational institutions in Jiangxi Province: New Oriental Education, Leishi education, Hundred Tree Education, Tomorrow Advancing Life, and FIRSTLEAP.

**Population and Sample:**The resident population of Jiangxi Province is 45,174,000, and there are 105 colleges and universities in the province, including 97 general colleges and universities (including 13 independent colleges) and 8 adult colleges and universities, including 42 general undergraduate colleges and universities (including 13 independent colleges and universities) and 55 general higher education colleges and universities. The total number of students enrolled in all types of higher education is 1,261,400. the population aged 18-22 is about 3,455,600, and the gross enrollment rate of higher education is 36.5%. However, the subjects of this study are the parents of the students, as they are the ones who influence the students' choice of higher education institutions, and approximately how many are unknown. Therefore, this study used Cochran's sample size formula, which resulted in a sample size equal to 383; however, the recurrence number was 400.

Research area: This paper will take Jiangxi province as the research object. Jiangxi Province is located in southeastern China, on the south bank of the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River. Jiangxi has 11 district cities, 27 municipal districts, 12 county-level cities and 61 counties, with a total of 100 county-level divisions.

**Variables:**

Independent variables: It includes 1) personal factors, including gender, age, educational background, occupation, and monthly income; 2) marketing mix strategy, including price, location, product, and promotion; and 3) service quality, including reliability, tangibility, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance.

Dependent variable: Includes the customer's decision.

## **1.7 Research Contribution**

### **1.7.1 For Academicians**

This paper clarifies the current situation of educational institutions, identifies the factors that influence customers' choice of educational institutions, analyzes and studies them, and identifies appropriate strategies to improve marketing performance by studying the factors that influence marketing strategies and service quality of educational institutions on customers' decisions.

### **1.7.2 For Practitioners**

Educational institutions can use the results of this study to understand the needs of their customers, adjust their schooling model according to market demand, and improve the quality of teaching and students.

Educational institutions can use the results of this research to analyze the current state of the education market industry and help them develop future trends based on their market characteristics.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEWS**

In this section, the researcher presents a related concept consisting of marketing mix factors. In addition, the study includes service quality. Finally, the study reviews the customer's decision. The details can be presented as follows.

#### **2.1 4P marketing theory**

4P marketing theory emerged in the United States in the 1960s. Along with the high development of the market economy, marketing has new characteristics, inspired and promoted by information technology, marketing mix theory has a new development and innovation, the American scholar Jerome McCarthy in 1960 for the first time the core elements of corporate marketing is reduced to a combination of four basic strategies: product, price, channel and promotion<sup>[1]</sup>. Companies use the 4P marketing theory to form marketing strategies at the macro level of marketing efforts, and sales tactics at the micro level of marketing efforts. Market strategy and sales tactics are one and the same, can not be rooted in the strategy is paper. 4P marketing theory advocates the enterprise sales tactics to the enterprise market strategy upgrade, enterprise development is bound to need to upgrade from tactics to battle to war to strategy, in line with the principles of the PDCA cycle.

The world today is at a stage where profound and complex changes continue to take place, with natural, economic, cultural, scientific and technological. The increasing influence of political, legal and regional factors on enterprises, the profound changes in human psychology, the rapid development of information technology and the fierce collision of various cultures have further accelerated the process of global economic integration. It is the inevitable choice of every enterprise to integrate into the global economy, explore the international market and take the initiative to bear the huge competitive pressure<sup>[2]</sup>. Using the 4P marketing theory to guide sales behavior has a strong focus and practicality, the perfect interpretation of sales tactics, product, price, channel and promotion of each of the four basic strategies shine the light of Jerome McCarthy's wisdom<sup>[3]</sup>. 4P marketing theory laid the cornerstone of modern marketing

theory, with a strong vitality, the long-term evolution of subsequent scholars to promote the discipline of innovation and the application of theory, to improve the The long-term evolution of subsequent scholars has driven disciplinary innovation and theoretical application to improve the efficiency of corporate sales tactics and support corporate development, continuing to provide profound theoretical guidance.

### **Content of 4P theory**

Philip Kotler in 1967 in Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning and Control further identified the 4Ps as the core of the marketing mix theory, as shown in Figure 2.1.

Includes.

- Product: Propose the function of product development, put the product's function claim first, and require the product to have a unique selling point.
- Price: When specifying a price strategy, it needs to be developed according to different market positioning.
- Place: The means by which consumers obtain goods.
- Promotion: Mainly refers to the form of stimulating consumers to buy taken by companies.



**Figure 2. 1** 4P Portfolio Theory

-Product

Mainly refers to the enterprise for the target customers, clear service project scope, service product positioning and other technical elements, Pulling and meeting customer needs and closing sales. Product strategy includes the combination and use of technical elements such as advancing the technology path,



presenting solutions, and conducting demonstration validation<sup>[4]</sup> .

The product is the crystallization of enterprise technology, which is the concentrated embodiment of enterprise research foundation, professional background and professional direction.

It is a direct reflection of the enterprise's technology level and a direct tool for the enterprise to tract and meet the customer's professional and technical needs; while tracting the needs, the customer's needs are introduced into the enterprise's technology system. Enterprises are in the professional field and create products; customers are in the non-specialized field and apply products; the difference between enterprises and customers' professional fields leads to the formation of information asymmetry .

#### -Price

It is mainly for companies to expand the budget of their customers by influencing their decision making process for target customers; We protect the price system by countering the tendency of customers to reduce their budgets; we complete sales tasks by recognizing contract revenues, base prices, discounted prices, and payment methods.

Price and cost are closely related, and price is neither a sufficient nor necessary condition for cost (and vice versa), but two parallel conditions that are closely linked, mutually influencing, contemporaneously rhythmic, and initiate resonance; there is no logical relationship in which one condition determines the other .

The enterprise's price system is one of the bases for customers' decisions; the enterprise's price system involves trade secrets and is not open to customers. Information asymmetry is formed between the enterprise and the customer in the field of financial management.

#### -Place

Mainly refers to the enterprise for the target customers, mobilize channel resources, extend the influence of the enterprise, and promote the channel as the support conditions and security conditions of the enterprise, to assist the enterprise to complete the sales task. In the process of enterprise customer relationship management, customer identification is a very important link. The target customers of the enterprise

refers to the object of products and services provided by the enterprise, and the target customers are divided into end customers and channel customers. Enterprises targeting channel customers to launch sales tactics, also face the countermeasures of procurement tactics, also formed the top design system.

Broadly speaking, channels are everywhere and any third party can perform channel functions actively or passively . No Whether it is a direct channel or an indirect channel, it is a tactical encirclement of the target customer by mobilizing third-party resources and building a three-way relationship posture based on the relationship posture of both the company and the target customer<sup>[9]</sup> .

#### -Promotion

Mainly refers to the use of advertising, personnel, public relations and other means of communication for the target customers, to provide customers with a better understanding of the market.

We deliver psychological suggestion and psychological offense to customers, take Maslow's hierarchy of needs as the traction, enter the inner world of customers, bring a variety of complex psychological feelings for customers, prompt customers to make decisions as soon as possible, and complete the sales task.

Companies have psychological advantages in the field of products, prices and channels, but not in the field of pushing customers to make decisions, expanding budgets and funding payments . Promotional tactics drive customers to make decisions as soon as possible, and in the process of sales tactics and purchasing tactics counteracting each other, the psychological state of the company and the customer forms a strong and weak contrasting posture.

## **2.2 Perceived Gap Theory of Educational Service Quality**

### **2.2.1 Service quality perception gap theory**

Service quality perception gap theory suggests that a company's ability to deliver services in a manner that meets or exceeds consumer expectations is what constitutes its service quality. Customers purchase services to satisfy a variety of needs. They have specific standards and expectations about how well a company's

service offerings meet those needs, whether they are consciously or unconsciously aware of them. Companies with high service quality provide services that meet and even exceed their customers' needs.

As early as 1972, Levitt<sup>1</sup> pointed out that service quality is the degree to which the results experienced by customers conform to the standards expected in the mind. Swan and Combs argue that consumers' perception of product performance can be divided into two parts: mechanical performance, which refers to the technical quality of a product, and expressive performance, which is a psychological performance. mechanical performance refers to the outcome of the service, while psychological performance refers to how good or bad it is during the service. Lewis and Booms<sup>[12]</sup> (1983) argue that Service quality is a measurement tool to measure the gap between the quality of service provided by a company and the customer's expectation". Parasuraman<sup>[13]</sup> believes that service quality is the gap between the degree of good or bad service quality experienced by customers and the degree of expectation in their hearts. In China, He Yongqing and Su Yunhua (1995), from the perspective of consumer satisfaction, consider service quality as the degree of customer satisfaction for a certain service over a long period of time. According to Lei Jiang-sheng (2007), from the consumer's point of view, service quality is the actual perceived level of service consistent with the expected effect; from the provider's point of view, service quality is the level of service it provides up to the previously set level. Both the service product itself and the process of service product delivery need to be considered. Table 2.1 summarizes the definitions of service quality by relevant scholars, as follows.

**Table 2. 1** Definition service quality

<b>Researcher (year)</b>	<b>Definition of service quality</b>
Levitt (1972)	Service results meet previously set standards
Churchill&Suprenant(1982)	The degree of difference between actual service levels and expectations
Gronroos (1982)	Comparison of customer's expected and actual perceived services
Olshavsky (1985)	Service quality is an overall evaluation attitude of consumers towards things
Cronin & Tylor (1992)	Service quality must be consistent with the actual perceived service quality
He, Yongqing and Su, Yunhua (1995)	Long-term and stable customer satisfaction as determined by the customer for a service
Lovelock (1996)	A customer experience in the process of consumption
Bateson & Hoffman (2002)	Long-term and overall assessment of the service provider's performance by the customer
Lei, Jiang-Sheng (2007)	From the consumer's point of view, service quality is the actual perceived level of service that is consistent with the expected results; from the provider's point of view, service quality is the level of service provided to the extent previously set
Sun, Ying, and Du, Jian-Gang (2011)	Customer's service expectations and perceived actual service performance

The first study of customer perceived service quality was made by the Swedish researcher Professor Gronroos<sup>[16]</sup> (1982), who derived the concepts related to customer perceived service quality and the basic model of perceived service quality according to the theory of cognitive psychology, and classified them scientifically. He considered that the evaluation criteria for measuring perceived service quality are the degree of conformity between customer service experience and customer difference structure, and

between service results and customer expectations, and this conclusion laid the theoretical research premise of service quality management research. 1985, PZB (A. Parasurflman, Leonard L Betry, Valarie AZeithaml) developed and refined Gronroos' theory of customer perceived service quality. The details are shown in Table 2.2.

**Table 2. 2** SERVQUAL Metrics and Descriptions

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Description</b>
Tangibility (Tangibles)	Tools, meters and service related accessories
Reliability (Reliability)	Delivering the promised services correctly and reliable service performance is the expectation of customers
Responsiveness (Responsiveness)	Quickly respond to the relevant needs of customers, when the service fails, can quickly correct and provide satisfactory service, reduce losses
Guaranteed (Assurance)	Professional skills, attitude and execution of service personnel to ensure the best interests of the customer
caring heart (Empathy)	Understand customer needs and provide personalized service with the best attitude

The SERVQUAL measurement model includes 21 categories for evaluating service quality, as shown in Table 2.3

**Table 2. 3** The 5 attributes measured by SERVQUAL and the corresponding 21 entries

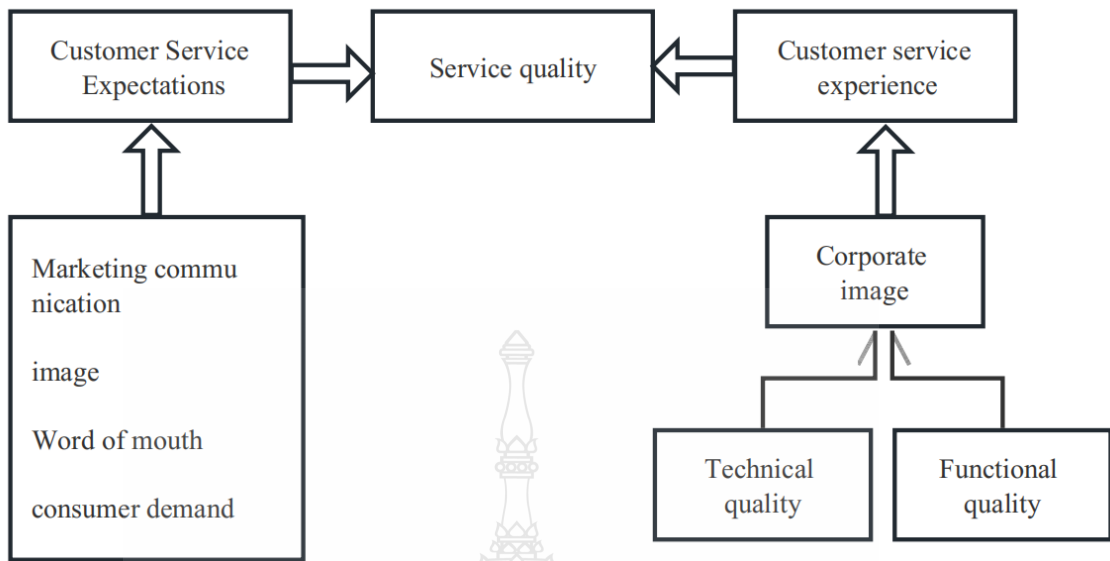
<b>Properties</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Serial number</b>
Reliability	To achieve the previously agreed matters within the agreed time.	1
	To try to help solve problems when customers encounter them.	2
	A company should provide good service from the beginning to the end	3
	To provide services within the agreed time frame.	4
	Customers should be informed of the time when the service will be provided.	5
Responsiveness	Customers expect service providers to deliver prompt and on-time service.	6
	Service providers to help deal with customers' various problems in a timely manner.	7
	Service providers respond to various customer needs in a timely manner.	8
Assurance	Trustworthiness in what the service provider is doing.	9
	Service providers should be trustworthy to customers.	10
	Service providers are always enthusiastic about their customers.	11
	Service providers should have the relevant professional skills to handle customer concerns.	12

**Table 2. 4** The 5 attributes measured by SERVQUAL and the corresponding 21 entries

<b>Properties</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Serial number</b>
Empathy	Customer care by service providers.	13
	Customer attention from service providers.	14
	Service providers should be aware of the needs of their clients' interests	15
	Service providers should recognize the needs of their customers.	16
Tangibility	Service providers have modern facilities.	17
	A company should have modern equipment.	18
	Service providers should be appropriately dressed and neatly maintained.	19
	Information related to the services provided should be complete.	20
	Service providers should facilitate the time of customers.	21

In terms of service quality theory, the customer perception service quality theory proposed by Professor Grolsch is the most pioneering and far-reaching.

Grolsch views service quality as a subjective category and believes that service quality is determined by the quality perceived by the customer and is largely a product of the customer's subjective will. Service quality depends on the comparison between the customer's expectation of service quality and the actual service level perceived by the customer. In 1998 and 2000, Grose revised the model twice and included the factor of "corporate image" into the model. <sup>[18]</sup>Figure 2.2 shows the latest revision of the model of customer perception of service quality.



**Figure 2. 2** Grolsch's customer perception service quality model

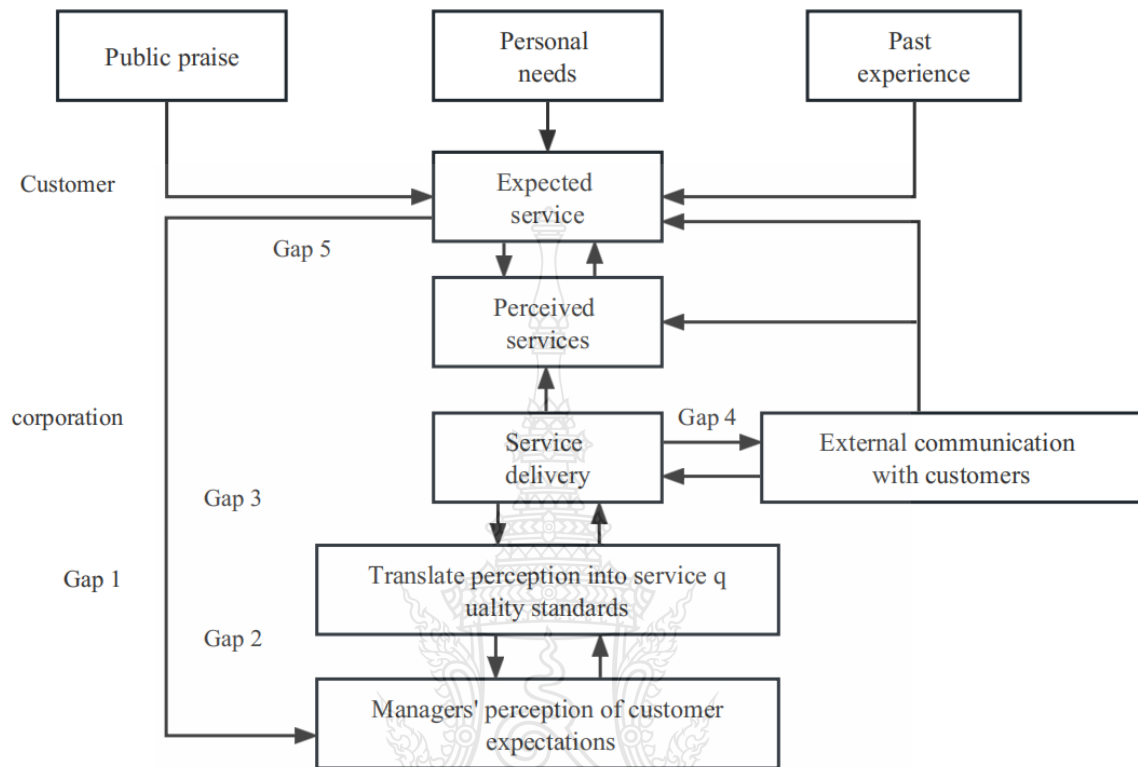
In the model, technical quality is what the customer actually gets after receiving the service. Service quality refers to how the service provider works and how the service is provided; corporate image quality is the overall impression of the company providing the service in the public mind. Technical quality can often be measured by objective standards, while service quality depends largely on the subjective perception of customers. Technical quality and service quality are the two basic components of service quality, and corporate image is the "filter" of service quality perceived by customers. At the same time, the quality of customer service expectation is influenced by marketing communication, image, word of mouth, price, customer demand and value, etc.<sup>[18]</sup>.

The service quality component model proposed by Professor Grolsch has further enabled the concept of service quality. It is an authoritative model in the field of service quality evaluation, and has laid the foundation for the subsequent theoretical research on service quality evaluation.

In 1985, American marketing researchers Parasuramam, Zeithaml and Berry (PZB research group) proposed the "service quality gap" analysis model, in which the key to customer perceived service quality is the difference between the customer's experience of the service and the psychological expectation of the service. The difference between the customer's experience of the service and the expected result of



the service. The five service quality gaps expressed in the PZB research group's service quality gap model are shown in Figure 2.3.



**Figure 2. 3** Perceived service quality gap model

-Gap 1: The quality perception gap, i.e., managers' perceptions of customers' likely service expectations versus customers' actual. The gap between the expectations of the service, the gap exists because the business managers can not well understand the service expectations of customers.

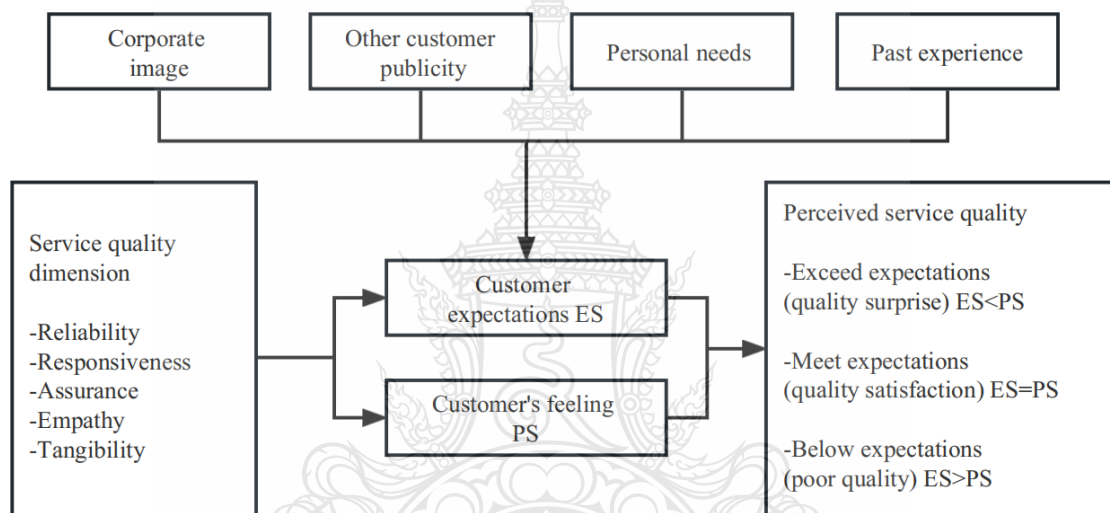
-Gap 2: Quality standard gap, i.e. the gap between managers' awareness of possible service expectations of customers and the quality of services they actually provide. This gap may exist due to managers' negligence, resource constraints, etc. This gap will result in the standard of service quality provided by the company failing to meet the expected needs of customers.

-Gap 3: Service delivery gap, that is, the gap between the service quality specifications originally developed by the enterprise and the actual service quality specifications delivered by the enterprise, which may be caused by the interference of many uncertain factors in the service process.

-Gap 4:Market communication gap, i.e., the gap between the quality of service advertised by the company to which consumers are subjected and the quality of service actually provided by the company.

-Gap 5: The perceived service quality gap, i.e., the gap between the service expected by customers and the service actually perceived by customers, is generated by the comparison between customers before and after consumption.

In Figure 2.3, the gap between customer expectations and perceived service is defined as Gap 5. The process of Gap 5 formation is shown in Figure 2.4.



**Figure 2. 4** Formation of customer gap

### 2.2.2 Service quality gap theory of educational institutions

The term "service quality" is widely used today, and the concept is also used in the education industry. Frazer (1994) argues that there is a need to agree on terms such as standards, criteria, effectiveness and efficiency.<sup>[19]</sup> Shank, Walker and Hayes (1995) argue that services in educational institutions are intangible, heterogeneous, inseparable from the service delivery process, variable, fragile and involve customers (students) in the service process. The multiple characteristics of educational institution services, such as intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability from the service delivery process, variability, fragility, and customer (student) involvement in the service process, are<sup>[20]</sup>. The dimensions of service quality in educational institutions have been studied extensively, but no unified standard has been established yet. They

are based on a comprehensive understanding and analysis of the quality characteristics of software, products and services, etc., and then apply the perception scale to understand the concept<sup>[21]</sup>.

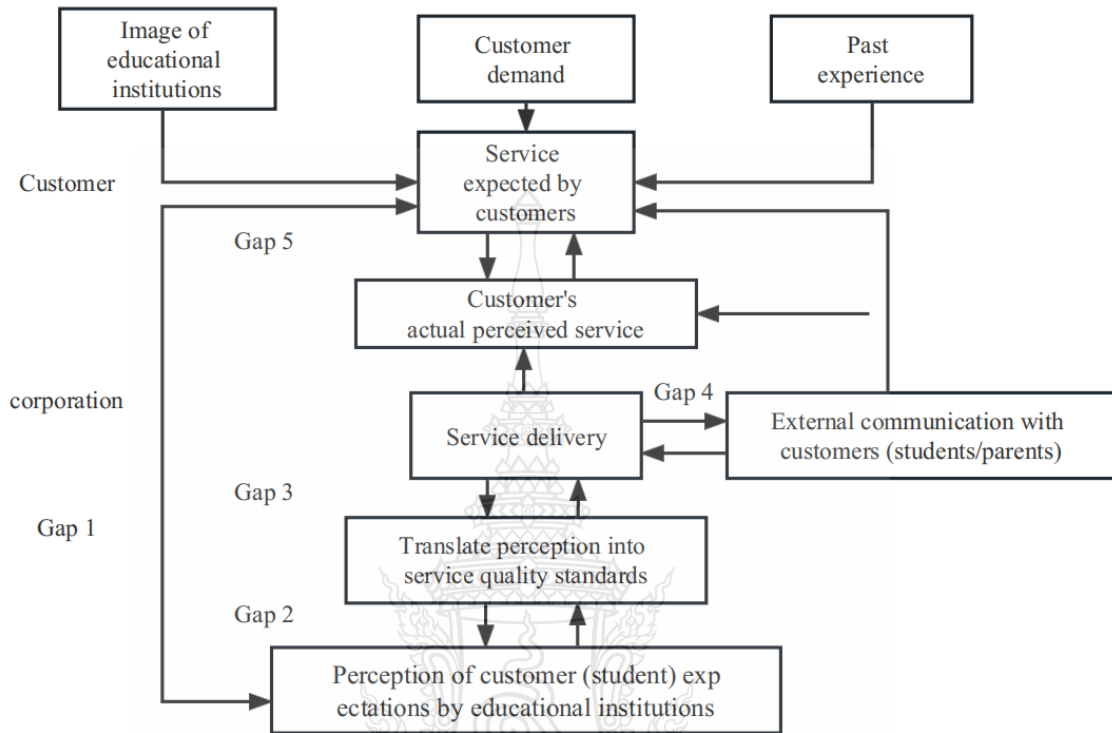
As a member of the education system, educational institutions have their own uniqueness compared to compulsory education. Since the services they provide are not specific products, and the subjects of evaluation are more diverse, such as society, parents, students, and various departments of educational institutions, and are more subjective, it is difficult to form a unified standard to measure and evaluate their quality in the first place.

Most foreign researchers have used the modified SERVQUAL model to study the quality of educational services. The other three dimensions are Attitude, Transfer and Competence.<sup>[22]</sup> Domestic research on education service quality evaluation started late and innovative research results are few, but there is no lack of various empirical research analyses by scholars.

In the context of today's education market in China, Gronroos<sup>[23]</sup> proposes that the "Customer Perceived Service Quality Model" is just as applicable to the service quality model of educational institutions, which is basically the same as the Customer Perceived Service Quality Model. Technical quality is related to the qualifications and strengths of the service provider in order to complete the whole service process, which are necessary to provide the service to the customer in order to achieve customer satisfaction. And service quality refers to the service results shown by the service provider in the service process, how effective the results are, how customers actually feel, etc.

Therefore, the level of service quality of educational institutions that customers experience offline is inseparable from the service provider's teaching style, management style and business activities. The service provider anticipates consumer expectations based on market feeds and develops relevant marketing strategies and service standards, which are implemented by the service staff to serve customers. In the process of implementing the service, due to the variability and complexity of individual characteristics, the degree of implementation of the standards varies, leading to various differences in the service delivery process, resulting in a low level of service

quality, Figure 2.5 shows the 5Gaps theory that affects the service quality of educational institutions.



**Figure 2. 5** Service Quality Gap Model for Educational Institutions

According to Figure 2.5 PZB quality gap model, the service quality gap model for educational institutions can be interpreted as

-Gap 1: The gap between students' expectations of the educational institution and the educational institution's perception of students' expectations. This gap is caused by the fact that the administrators of educational institutions do not fully understand students' expectations; educational institutions can close this gap by adopting methods such as research, creating better communication between student administrators and students such as opening principal's mailboxes, BBS, etc. and using various channels to enhance communication to bring the distance between educational institutions and students as close as possible.

-Gap 2: The reason for this is that the institution's administrators do not develop and translate into a realistic plan service quality standards that meet the perceived level of student expectations in a timely manner; or the institution's

administrators lack commitment to the quality of educational services; or believe that it is simply not possible to meet student expectations. To close this gap educational institutions should set goals and provide standardized services whenever possible.

-Gap 3: This refers to the service performance gap. This gap arises when the actual service provided by the educational institution does not meet the standards set by the educational institution's managers. This gap can be caused by a lack of teamwork among staff and inappropriate work design within the institution.

-Gap 4: Arises when educational institutions exaggerate promises in enrollment and when faculty and staff are unaware of specific circumstances that make the actual services provided inconsistent with external promises.

-Gap 5: is the quality gap i.e. the gap between students' expectations and their actual perception of services. This gap is influenced by the size and direction of the four gaps mentioned above. Therefore by reducing or eliminating the first four gaps helps to reduce the quality gap.

### **2.3 Theories and models related to consumer decision making**

In order to study consumer decision making, concepts related to consumer decision making including theory of rational behavior, theory of planned behavior, motivated goal theory and consumer decision model can be explored as follows.

#### **Theory of Rational Behavior**

Rational behavior theory was created by American scholars Fishbein and Ayers in 1975. It is primarily used to analyze how individual attitudes consciously influence individual behavior, with a particular focus on the process of attitude formation based on all cognitive information. Its basic assumption is that people are rational and think about the meaning of their actions and consequential activities by synthesizing all information before implementing them. This theory states that an individual's behavior can be correctly inferred to some extent based on his intention to act, but his intention to act is determined by his attitudes and subjective criteria. A person's intention to act is a measure of his intention to perform a particular action, and this attitude refers to the positive or negative emotions that a person has when performing a target action. It is determined by the person's subjective beliefs about the

outcome of the action and his evaluation of the importance of this outcome. The subjective criterion is the degree to which the person who believes he has a significant and far-reaching influence expects himself to apply the new system, which is based on the level of trust in others and his level of motivation to identify with the ideas of others. The above factors combine to form behavioral intentions (preferences) and ultimately behavioral change. Rational behavior theory is a general model that posits that various causes can indirectly influence the use of behavior through attitudes and subjective criteria, providing a clear understanding of the rational generation of behavior. This theory has a key implicit assumption: People are capable of fully managing their own behavior. However, under organizational conditions, individual behavior should be subject to the intervention of internal management and the control of the external environment. Therefore, in order to satisfy the requirements of scientific research, some external variables, such as contextual and self-controlled variables, must be used.

### **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a successor to the Theory of Rational Behavior (TRA) proposed by American scholars Fishbein and Ajzen. TPB can help us understand how people adjust their behavior patterns. TPB believes that human behavior is the result of careful planning. It includes the following five basic elements.

1) Attitudes are defined as one's positive or negative feelings about this behavior, i.e., the attitude formed by the individual's conceptualization of the evaluation of this particular behavior, and thus the components of attitude are often viewed as a function of the individual's important beliefs about the outcome of this behavior.

2) Subjective norms refer to the degree of social pressure individuals feel about their ability to perform a particular behavior, i.e., the degree to which those individuals or organizations that have influence on their behavioral decisions have influence on their own ability to perform a particular behavior in anticipation of the behavior of others.

3) Perceived behavioral control refers to barriers that reflect a person's past experiences and expectations. When a person feels that the more information and opportunities he has in the past and the fewer obstacles he expects, the more control he

will have over his cognitive behavior. There are two ways to influence it, one is to create motivational meaning to behavioral intentions; second, it also intuitively anticipates actions.

4) Behavioral intention is an individual's judgment of the subjective probability of adopting a particular behavior and reflects the individual's intention to adopt a particular behavior.

5) Behavior is the performance of an individual who actually takes action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977).

### **Motivational goal theory**

Motivation goal theory (Jiang, Guo, 2003):The theory is concerned with purposeful and goal-oriented behavior, stating that individual behavior is conducted and organized around goals and that people are an organized goal system. Basic concepts such as task, attention, planning, and effort all form the everyday concept of motivation. Goals, in turn, have the function of interconnection with cognition, emotion, motivation, and behavior, and have the function of integrating personality activities, organizing and shaping actions. At the same time, goals are hierarchical structures, suitable for measuring and studying individual differences. Motivation is often a relationship between personal goals. Motivation inspires and sustains behavior guided by goals, which refer to individualized motivation in an individual's life.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this section, this study will present the methodology, population size and sampling, questionnaire and data collection, validity of the measurement, and model estimation.

#### **3.1 Population, sample, and sampling**

This data collection was carried out in the form of a questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to provide statistics on questions related to consumer decision making behavior when choosing an educational institution. The scale questions designed to measure observable variables yielded measures of each attribute of the decision factor based on the consumer's perspective.

The questionnaire was divided into five main sections.

- Basic personal information
- The impact of marketing mix on customers' decision to choose educational institutions
- Influence of service quality on customers' decision to choose educational institutions
- Influence of customer decisions
- Other comments from the interviewees

The basic personal information section mainly investigates the educational institutions attended by the survey respondents, parents' age, students' age, childbirth status, education level, occupation and monthly household income.

The section on the influence of marketing mix on customers' decision to choose an educational institution investigates the influence of price, product, channel, and promotion on consumers' choice of educational institution.

The section on the influence of service quality on customers' decision to choose educational institutions investigates the influence of Reliability, Tangibility, Empathy, Responsiveness, and Assurance on consumers' choice of educational institutions.



In the consumer decision information section, the dominant factors in the survey were selected as matrix questions.

**Table 3. 1** Factor matrix scores

<b>Degree of influence</b>	<b>Totally disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>General agreement</b>	<b>Compare and agree</b>	<b>Totally agree</b>
Score	1	2	3	4	5

Questionnaires are used as a research tool to obtain information from consumers who have influence on the decisions of young people preparing for college. Therefore, the following methods were used to construct the questionnaire for this study to ensure that it was filled out correctly and that accurate measures were taken:

Step 1: The researcher studied the concepts and theories related to personal factors, marketing mix strategies, service quality and customer decision making and defined the conceptual framework of the study.

Step 2: Researchers use resources including ProQuest, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and many university libraries to learn more about personal influence, marketing mix strategies, service quality, and consumer choice in order to formulate appropriate research questions.

Step 3: For the initial investigation, the researchers referred to similar theories and ideas, as well as previous investigations for inspiration. Here, the researchers crafted these questions with the help of sample questions from earlier stages of the research process. Then, the researchers sent the first draft to their advisors and waited for their feedback and suggestions.

Step 4: After reviewing the consultant's comments and ideas in step 3, the researcher revised the initial draft of the questionnaire and resubmitted it for the next round of evaluation.

Step 5: After getting the consultant's feedback on the questionnaire and questions, the researcher sent them to professionals in the field of marketing and business management for their comments and suggestions. Three professionals were

selected for this phase. The Item-Object Consistency Index (IOC) was used to consider and validate the questions of the questionnaire. According to Rovinelli and Hambleton (1977) and Miller (2003), the Index of Item-Object Consistency (IOC) was divided into three categories of responses and scores as follows:

This statement is inconsistent.	-1
This statement is somewhere between inconsistent and consistent.	0
This statement is consistent.	+1

After the experts gave the assessment results, the researcher calculated the scores. The scores for the calculation of the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) are categorized as follows.

0.00-0.49 indicates that the statement is consistent at low levels.

0.50-0.69 implies that the statement is consistent at the neutral level.

0.70-0.79 indicates that the statement is consistent at a satisfactory level.

0.80-1.00 indicates that the statements are consistent at a very satisfactory level.

The IOC score for each question should be greater than 0.70. if any question is scored below 0.7, the question must be removed or reconsidered (Teprapit & Yuvanont, 2015).

Step 6: In step 5, the researcher considered the feedback from the three experts and adjusted the questionnaire accordingly. After rethinking and revising the questions, the researcher translated one of the questions into Chinese and convened a meeting with relevant Chinese experts to study its meaning. The researcher then distributed the questionnaire to the study participants. The number of questionnaires sent out was 30. When 30 sets of questionnaires were returned, the questionnaire and its questions were considered reliable, which was determined by using the Cronbach coefficient. In order to pass, the total correlation of the modified items for each question had to be higher than 0.20.(Faraii, 2008). In addition, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for each dimension should be better than 0.70.(Devis, 1991; Hajjar, 2014).

Step 7: The researchers created 400 questionnaires and, after ensuring their reliability and validity, sent them to the residents of the selected areas.

### **3.2 Data collection procedures**

#### **3.2.1 Original information**

The questionnaire is a research tool for the researcher because it is based on primary data. Data from parents of students in Jiangxi province were collected through 400 questionnaires distributed online.

#### **3.2.2 Secondary Information**

By relying on secondary data, the researchers were able to compile all the necessary information about individual variables, marketing mix approaches, service quality, and customer choice for higher education institutions. Secondary data come from a variety of places, including university libraries, Internet resources (ProQuest), government websites, Web sites, and more. In addition, quantitative analysis may also benefit from secondary data.

### **3.3 Data processing and analysis**

In order to process the data for analysis, the study did the following steps:

1. The researchers verified the accuracy and completeness of the information obtained from the pretest questionnaire, which was distributed to clients who selected educational institutions for the study.
2. The researcher prepared the data and basic statistical processing by introducing the information obtained from the questionnaire into the data analysis software SPSS.
3. The researcher verifies the data recorded in the data analysis software to detect data entry errors. In addition, missing data is evaluated in this step.

To analyze the data, the researcher organized as follows:

- 1) To study the level of marketing mix strategies, service quality and customer decisions chosen by educational institutions, the researcher used descriptive statistics, including maximum, minimum, mean, median and standard deviation.

2) In order to compare customer decisions on educational institution choice by individual factors (including gender, age, educational background, occupation, and monthly income), the researchers used inferential statistics, including one-way analysis of variance (LSD) with minimal significant differences.

3) To explore the impact of marketing mix strategies on consumers' decisions to choose educational institutions, the researchers used correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis.

4) To explore the influence of service quality on customers' decision to choose an educational institution, the researchers used correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis.

5) After analyzing the relevant statistics, the researcher draws conclusions and discusses the results. In addition, the researcher provides research insights.

### **3.4 Statistical Analysis**

In order to study and investigate the relationship between personal factors and customer decisions in the choice of educational institutions, the researcher used the following statistical data for analysis.

**Frequency:** It was used to study discrete variables to calculate how many respondents agreed with the statements provided in the questionnaire. This includes educational institution, age of students, age of parents, occupation, and monthly income.

**Percentages:** Used to provide the percentage of frequency of respondents who agreed with the statements provided in the questionnaire. This includes educational institution, age of students, age of parents, occupation, and monthly income.

**Means:** It is used to study concentration trends and provides information about the distribution of values given by respondents (Larson, 2006).

The data transformation based on Best and Kahn (2006) shows the results of the study variables and is described by the descriptive writing model. The transformation is based on Best and Kahn (2006) using  $(5-1)/5 = 0.80$ , as follows.

Between 1.00 and 1.80 means that the item is not affected at all.

Between 1.81 and 2.60 means that this item has no impact.

Between 2.61 and 3.40 means that the program usually has no impact.

A range between 3.41 and 4.20 means that the program has relative influence.

A range between 4.21 and 5.00 indicates that the program is fully influential.

**Reliability:** Reliability refers to the consistency, stability and reliability of test results, and is generally expressed in terms of internal consistency. The higher the reliability coefficient is, the more consistent, stable and reliable the test results are.

**Validity:** The degree to which a measurement instrument can accurately measure what is to be measured. Validity refers to the extent to which the measured results reflect the content to be examined. The more the measurement results match the content to be examined, the higher the validity; conversely, the lower the validity.

**Descriptive statistics:** Used to quantify the dispersion of data by calculating the standard deviation of the mean. When the standard deviation is small, the data tend to be concentrated around the mean, but when the standard deviation is large, the data tend to be dispersed. In fact, the data should be close to a small dispersion.

**One-way ANOVA:** One-way ANOVA is a method that can be used in the field of statistics to determine if the means of two samples are substantially different. Thus, it is used to compare customers' decision classifications over two sets of variables

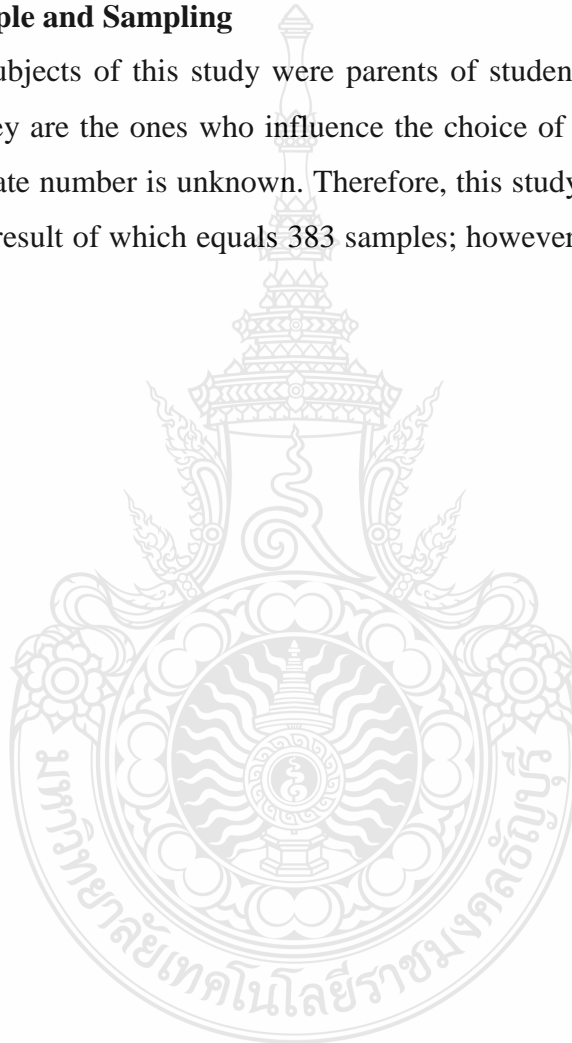
**Least Significant Difference:** In ANOVA, the least significant difference (LSD) test is used to determine whether the overall population has means that are statistically different from each other.

**Multiple regression analysis:** This is a statistical analysis method that can be used to investigate the relationship between a dependent variable and multiple

independent variables. In multiple regression analysis, the objective is to predict the value of a single dependent variable using independent variables of known value. Here, it is used to investigate the impact of 1) marketing mix strategies including price, location, product and promotion; and 2) service quality including reliability, tangibility, empathy, responsiveness and grasp of customer decisions.

### **3.5 Overall, Sample and Sampling**

The subjects of this study were parents of students attending educational institutions, as they are the ones who influence the choice of educational institutions, and the approximate number is unknown. Therefore, this study used Cochran's sample size formula, the result of which equals 383 samples; however, the recurrence number is 400 samples.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **STUDY RESULTS**

This study mainly used SPSS statistical software for data analysis, which was divided into two parts: pre-questionnaire data analysis and formal questionnaire data analysis, and data processing mainly included reliability validity analysis, descriptive statistical analysis, analysis of variance, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

#### **4.1 Questionnaire pretest**

In order to ensure the accuracy of the large sample in the formal survey, the researcher designed a pre-survey step. This step can help the researcher to identify the shortcomings of the questionnaire design and make timely changes and improvements to the questionnaire to increase the accuracy and scientific accuracy of the formal survey process.

##### **4.1.1 Objective Consistency Analysis (IOC)**

The content validity of this section was assessed by experts, and the researcher sent the questionnaire to three experts: Dr. Xinyu Chen and Dr. Xiaofeng Zhang from Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics, China, and a senior consultant manager, Mr. Kecong Tu from Jiangxi Zhengxue Consulting Management Co. The assessment was performed through the IOC (Index of Item-objective Congruence) method, where each question was scored according to the theoretical model, the research purpose and the precise definition. After expert testing of the questions, an IOC score of 0.89 was obtained, with scores ranging from 0.80 to 1.00, indicating that the statements were consistent at a very satisfactory level.

##### **4.1.2 Predicted specimens - Descriptive statistical analysis**

Based on the questionnaires collected in the pre-testing phase, descriptive statistics were conducted on the sample information such as the educational institution attended by the respondents, age of parents, age of students, occupation, and monthly income, and the results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4. 1** Statistics of personal factors

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
Educationa l Institutions	New Oriental Education	9	30.0%	30.0%
	Leishi education	7	23.3%	53.3%
	Hundred Tree Education	3	10.0%	63.3%
	Tomorrow Advancing Life	6	20.0%	83.3%
	FIRSTLEAP	5	16.7%	100.0%
Parental age	Below 30	4	13.3%	13.3%
	30-40	17	56.7%	70.0%
	40-50	8	26.7%	96.7%
	51 and above	1	3.3%	100.0%
Student Age	4-7 years old	8	26.7%	26.7%
	8-11 years old	13	43.3%	70.0%
	11-14 years old	7	23.3%	93.3%
	15 years old and above	2	6.7%	100.0%
Career	Private company employees	14	46.7%	46.7%
	Government Staff	11	36.7%	83.3%
	Business owners	5	16.7%	100.0%
Monthly household income	Less than 10,000 RMB	6	20.0%	20.0%
	10,000 - 20,000 RMB	10	33.3%	53.3%
	30,000 - 40,000 RMB	9	30.0%	83.8%
	RMB 50,000 and above	5	16.7%	100.0%

In terms of the distribution of educational institutions, Hundred Tree Education accounts for a relatively small proportion of 10.0%, while the proportion of other institutions is more balanced. In terms of the distribution of parents' occupation, the proportion of business owners is low at 16.7%, while private company employees and



government workers account for more; in terms of the distribution of monthly household income, the proportion of income is mainly concentrated in RMB 10,000-20,000 and RMB 30,000-40,000, with 33.3% and 33.3% respectively. In terms of the distribution of monthly household income, the proportion of income is mainly concentrated in RMB 10,000-20,000 and RMB 30,000-40,000, 33.3% and 30.0%, respectively, while less than RMB 10,000 and RMB 50,000 and above account for less income.

This shows that parents are younger in age, and their occupations are mainly concentrated in private company employees and government workers, with more stable incomes, of which 16.7% are high-income people, the same proportion as high-income occupations. Educational institutions, except Hundred Tree Education, have a more balanced distribution. In summary, the distribution of the sample selected for this pretest is in line with common sense. Therefore, the sample has good representativeness.

#### **4.1.3 Pretest Scale - Reliability Analysis**

Reliability indicates the degree of consistency of results when the same object is repeatedly measured by the same method, and is divided into three main indicators: equivalence coefficient, stability coefficient, and internal consistency coefficient. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to verify the reliability of the scale. When the CITC (Corrected Item Total Correlation) is less than 0.5, the item will be excluded, and when the Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.7, the reliability is good and no modification is needed. In this section, the reliability of each variable of the model (including marketing mix, service quality, and customer decision) will be analyzed.

The reliability analysis of the marketing mix scale is shown in Table 4.2. Its Cronbach'  $\alpha$  coefficient is between .850-.900, which is greater than 0.7, so the internal consistency of the total scale can be considered high. The CITC of all the major items in it is greater than 0.5, thus maintaining a good correlation between the items and the items are retained.

**Table 4. 2** Marketing Mix-Confidence Analysis

	<b>CITC</b>	<b>Delete the alpha coefficient after this question term</b>	<b>Alpha factor</b>
Price-1	.874	.791	
Price-2	.662	.874	
Price-3	.624	.895	.879
Price-4	.824	.810	
Channel-1	.768	.777	
Channel-2	.638	.885	.859
Channel-3	.827	.716	
Product-1	.783	.859	
Product-2	.774	.864	
Product-3	.648	.904	.894
Product-4	.886	.815	
Promotion-1	.714	.832	
Promotion-2	.680	.842	
Promotion-3	.773	.818	
Promotion-4	.692	.838	.867
Promotion-5	.598	.860	

The reliability analysis of the service quality scale is shown in Table 4.3. Its Cronbach'  $\alpha$  coefficient is between .820-.880, which is greater than 0.7, so the internal consistency of the total scale can be considered high. The CITCs of all the major items in it are greater than 0.5, so good correlation is maintained among the items and each item is retained.

**Table 4. 3** Service Quality - Confidence Analysis

	CITC	Delete the alpha coefficient after this question term	Alpha factor
Reliability-1	.651	.803	
Reliability-2	.682	.778	
Reliability-3	.693	.774	.832
Reliability-4	.655	.790	
Tangibility-1	.715	.788	
Tangibility-2	.618	.822	
Tangibility-3	.687	.793	
Tangibility-4	.699	.789	.841
Empathy-1	.615	.811	
Empathy-2	.691	.774	
Empathy-3	.612	.809	.832
Empathy-4	.733	.755	
Responsiveness-1	.747	.825	
Responsiveness-2	.701	.867	
Responsiveness-3	.847	.737	.871
Assurance-1	.666	.777	
Assurance-2	.609	.803	
Assurance-3	.770	.729	.828
Assurance-4	.578	.816	

#### 4.1.4 Pretest Scale - Correlation Test

This study used correlation analysis to test whether the variables of the pretest questionnaire were significantly correlated with each other. The means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients of the variables (marketing mix, service quality, and customer decision) are shown in Table 4.4. The correlation coefficient between marketing mix and customer decision is 0.946 ( $p < 0.01$ ), and the correlation coefficient between marketing mix and service quality is 0.952 ( $p < 0.01$ ), which is consistent with

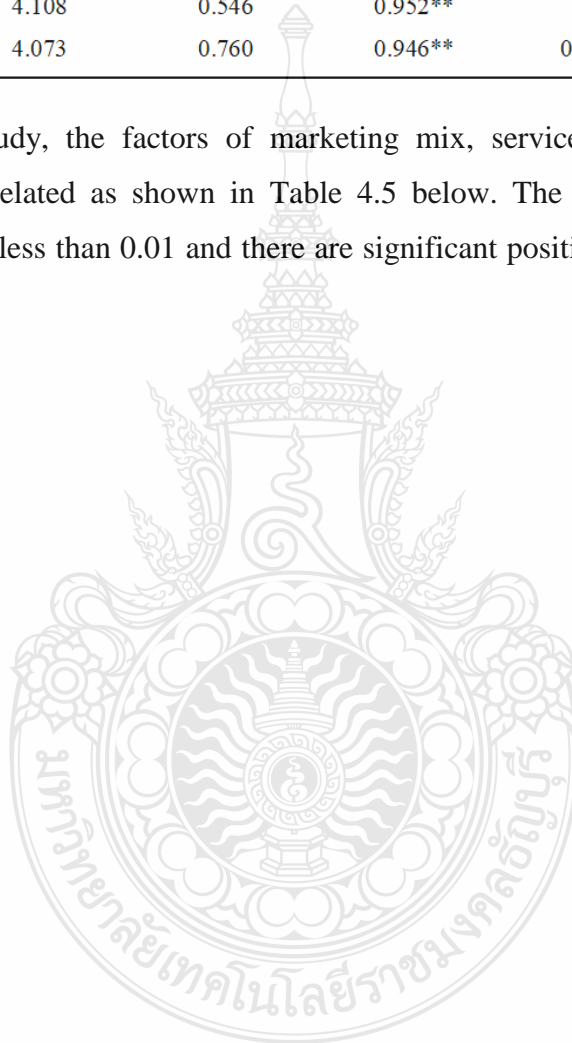
the theoretical expectation of this study. This significant correlation result laid the foundation for the later empirical analysis.

**Table 4. 4** Prediction Questionnaire - Correlation Analysis

	Average value	Standard deviation	Marketing Mix	Service Quality	Customer Decision Making
Marketing Mix	3.935	0.559	1		
Service Quality	4.108	0.546	0.952**	1	
Customer Decision Making	4.073	0.760	0.946**	0.951**	1

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$

In this study, the factors of marketing mix, service quality and customer decision were correlated as shown in Table 4.5 below. The results show that the r coefficients are all less than 0.01 and there are significant positive correlations between the factors.



**Table 4. 5** Marketing Mix and Service Quality - Correlation Analysis

	Price	Channels	Products	Promotion	Reliability	Tangibility	Empathy	Responsiveness	Safeguarded	Customer Decision Making
Price	1									
Channels	0.585**	1								
Products	0.787**	0.461*	1							
Promotion	0.691**	0.809**	0.654**	1						
Reliability	0.812**	0.607**	0.697**	0.700**	1					
Tangibility	0.753**	0.807**	0.758**	0.794**	0.706**	1				
Empathy	0.759**	0.726**	0.801**	0.821**	0.750**	0.775**	1			
Responsiveness	0.759**	0.469**	0.723**	0.660**	0.692**	0.642**	0.771**	1		
Safeguarded	0.768**	0.661**	0.768**	0.776**	0.726**	0.851**	0.781**	0.684**	1	
Customer Decision Making	0.855**	0.775**	0.814**	0.837**	0.806**	0.900**	0.875**	0.718**	0.919**	1

\* p<0.05 \*\* p<0.01

## 4.2 Formal questionnaire data analysis

The results of the questionnaire pretest were good, so the questions were not removed at this stage, and the official questionnaire was distributed based on the final questionnaire formed after the pretest.

### 4.2.1 Reliability analysis

Reliability analysis is the analysis of reliability to determine the fit of the model and the validity of the hypothesis test, and this study used Cronbach's alpha coefficient to test the reliability of the collected data. According to the research criteria, the minimum criterion of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for the reliability test of questionnaire data is 0.7, and the reliability of questionnaire data is high if it reaches 0.8. Among them, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of customer decision making is 0.894, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of marketing mix is 0.879, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of service quality is 0.903. The larger the coefficient is, the higher the reliability of the scale, which can be seen that the data have good reliability. The results of the reliability analysis of the scale are shown in Table 4.6 below:

**Table 4. 6** Reliability Analysis

<b>Total reliability of the questionnaire and the reliability test of each dimension</b>		
<b>Projects</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
Total questionnaire	41	0.943
Customer Decision Making	5	0.894
Marketing Mix	16	0.879
Service Quality	20	0.903
Price	4	0.842
Local	3	0.818
Products	4	0.855
Promotion	5	0.878
Service Quality Reliability	5	0.878
Service quality tangibility	4	0.86
Service quality empathy	4	0.856
Service Quality Responsiveness	3	0.799
Service Quality Assurance	4	0.849

### 4.2.2 Validity analysis

This study first verified the correlation between the questions by using KMO sample measure and Bartlett sphere test. According to previous research, the KMO value is 0.7 or higher for factor analysis, and the data in the model are suitable for factor analysis when the Bartlett's test for correlation is less than 0.05. Table 4.7 below shows:

**Table 4. 7** Validity Analysis

<b>KMO and Bartlett's test</b>		
KMO Sampling suitability quantity		0.93
Bartlett's sphericity test	Approximate	17223.94
	cardinality	
	Degree of freedom	82
	Significance	.000

After the validity test, the KMO value of the questionnaire was greater than 0.9 and the significance level was 0.00, which was less than 0.05, and all of its results met the criteria. Therefore, the content of the questionnaire met the criteria of the study.

### 4.2.3 Descriptive statistics

According to the theoretical review in Chapter 2, we can learn that the factors affecting consumers include educational institutions, parents' age, students' age, occupation, and income. Different consumers have different needs, judge marketing strategies and service quality differently, and make different purchasing decisions. Therefore, in this study, consumers' educational institutions, parents' age, students' age, occupation, and income are used as control variables for the study population. The statistical results of these variables are summarized separately.

#### 4.2.3.1 Descriptive statistics of control variables

##### **Educational Institutions**

Among the 393 valid questionnaires returned, as shown in Table 4.8, New Oriental Education sample percentage was 17.0%, Leishi education sample percentage was 21.9%, Hundred Tree Education sample percentage was 21.4%, Tomorrow Advancing The results show that New Oriental Education and FIRSTLEAP have the least number of students among the consumers attending these educational

institutions, with a small difference compared to the other educational institutions.

**Table 4. 8** Educational Institutions - Descriptive Statistics

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Effective	New Oriental Education	67	17.0%
	Leishi education	86	21.9%
	Hundred Tree Education	84	21.4%
	Tomorrow Advancing Life	95	24.2%
	FIRSTLEAP	61	15.5%
	Total	393	100.0%

#### **Parental age**

Among the 393 valid questionnaires returned, as shown in Table 4.9, the percentage of the sample with parents under the age of 30 was 24.7%, 49.1% between the ages of 30-40, 18.6% between the ages of 40-50, and 7.6% aged 51 and above, with a mean value of 2.09. The results indicate that among the parents of students attending these educational institutions, the the largest proportion of parents aged 30-40, followed by parents of students under 30 years old, and only 7.6% of parents aged 50 and above. This shows that the overall age of parents is young.

**Table 4. 9** Parental age - descriptive statistics

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Effective	Below 30	97	24.7%
	30-40	193	49.1%
	40-50	73	18.6%
	51 and above	30	7.6%
	Total	393	100.0

#### **Student Age**

Among the 393 valid questionnaires returned, as shown in Table 4.10, the sample proportion of students aged 4-7 years was 40.5%, 28.0% between 8-11 years, 16.3% between 11-14 years, and 15.3% aged 15 years and above, with a mean



value of 2.06. The results indicate that the largest proportion of students enrolled in these educational institutions The largest percentage of students is between the ages of 4-7 years old, followed by a larger percentage of students between the ages of 8-11 years old. The older the age group, the lower the percentage of students. It is clear that these institutions mainly cater to students in the younger age groups.

**Table 4. 10** Student Age - Descriptive Statistics

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Effective	4 weeks to 7 years old	159	40.5%
	8 weeks to 11 years old	110	28.0%
	11 years old to 14 years old	64	16.3%
	15 years old to above	60	15.3%
Total		393	100.0

**Career**

Among the 393 valid questionnaires returned, as shown in Table 4.11, the percentage of government workers was 41.5%, the number of business owners was 14.0%, the number of employees of private companies was 23.7%, and the number of people working in other jobs was 2.9%%, with a mean value of 2.6. Overall, the number of business owners and employees of private companies was low, and the parents of educational institutions Most of them are in government workers.

**Table 4. 11** Occupation - Descriptive Statistics

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Effective	Private company employees	93	23.7%
	Business owners	55	14.0%
	Government Staff	163	41.5%
	Other	82	20.9%
Total		393	100.0

### Monthly household income

Among the 393 valid questionnaires returned, as shown in Table 4.12, 29.5% of households had a monthly income of less than RMB 10,000, 42.0% of those with RMB 10-20,000, 15.5% of those with RMB 30-40,000, and 13.0% of those with RMB 50,000 and above, with a mean value of 2.12. This indicates that most households had a monthly income of RMB 10-20,000, followed by those with less than RMB 10,000, not many households have a monthly income of more than RMB 30,000, and more balanced households have an income of RMB 30-40,000 and RMB 50,000 or more.

**Table 4. 12** Monthly household income - descriptive statistics

		Frequency	Percentage
Effective	Under 10,000 RMB	116	29.5%
	10,000 - 20,000 RMB	165	42.0%
	30,000 - 40,000 RMB	61	15.5%
	50,000 yuan and above	51	13.0%
	Total	393	100.0

#### 4.2.3.2 Descriptive statistics of variables

To ensure the authenticity and reliability of the data from the 393 questionnaires studied, the questionnaires were analyzed for descriptive statistics on marketing mix, service quality, and customer decision making, respectively. SPSS statistical software was used to calculate the maximum, minimum, mean and standard deviation of each factor for each dimension in order to understand how consumers of educational institutions reflect on each of the studied variables.

#### Marketing Mix Analysis

The results of the marketing mix for each measurement item, as shown in Table 4.13 below, show that the mean value of each dimensional measure is around 3, with no extreme values. And the standard deviation is between 0.9-1.2, indicating that the data has a large variation, the data scores are widely distributed and have a certain dispersion, in line with the requirements of the study.

**Table 4. 13** Marketing Mix - Descriptive Statistics

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
Reasonable pricing for courses at educational institutions	3.407	1.135
Educational services have a large discount on courses	3.359	1.141
Reasonable overall cost of services for educational institutions	3.435	1.135
Educational institutions offer larger course renewal discounts	3.458	1.120
Educational institutions have a diversity of channels to publish	3.387	1.192
Good sales pitch of sales team of educational institutions	3.468	1.145
Higher number of channels released by educational institutions	3.399	1.132
Educational institutions have quality educational services quality	3.387	1.099
The education model meets expectations	3.392	1.147
The distance and transportation between your place of residence and the educational institution is convenient	3.392	1.191
Educational institutions have safe settings (grounds, food, personal safety)	3.379	1.114
Educational institutions invest significantly in online advertising	3.394	1.149
Educational institutions invest in offline advertising with significant effect	3.415	1.164

**Table 4. 14** Marketing Mix - Descriptive Statistics

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
Good messaging from sales staff	3.433	1.172
Holiday promotions held by educational institutions are effective	3.501	1.154
The educational institution launched an activity experience course with good results	3.407	1.181

#### **Service Quality Analysis**

The results of the service quality measurement items, as shown in Table 4.14 below, show that the mean value of each dimensional measure is around 3, and there are no extreme values. Moreover, the standard deviation is above 1.1, which indicates that the data has a large variation, and the data scores are widely distributed and have a certain dispersion, which is in line with the research requirements.

**Table 4. 15** Quality of Service - Descriptive Statistics

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
Educational institutions provide accurate and reliable services	3.372	1.171
The educational institution provided timely assistance when customers encountered problems	3.372	1.138
Educational institutions provide error-free services	3.384	1.177
Educational institutions respond to customer requests in a timely manner	3.341	1.176
Educational institutions protect the privacy of their customers	3.420	1.156

**Table 4. 16** Quality of Service - Descriptive Statistics

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
Educational institutions are equipped with advanced equipment and technology	3.372	1.210
Atmosphere, safe and comfortable environment of educational institutions	3.417	1.164
Staff grooming, proper demeanor	3.399	1.225
Educational institutions have more promotional materials, educational philosophy, honors and other displays	3.422	1.167
Educational institutions give customer care	3.405	1.196
Educational institutions offer a personalized service	3.440	1.157
Reasonable course schedule	3.407	1.168
Educational institutions realize the needs of their customers	3.461	1.149
Educational institutions provided services on time	3.372	1.136
The educational institution has informed the customer of the exact time of the class	3.356	1.178
Employees are not too busy to ignore customers	3.313	1.114
Employees are trustworthy	3.410	1.140
The educational institution itself is reliable	3.318	1.133
The staff's courtesy and attitude are very good	3.425	1.134
Teachers have adequate business skills, knowledge and experience	3.341	1.152

#### **Customer decision analysis**

The measurement results of each measurement item in the customer's decision are shown in Table 4.15 below. The mean values of each dimension measurement item are around 3, and there are no extreme values. And the standard

deviation is above 1.1, indicating significant differences in the data. The distribution of data scores is relatively wide and has a certain degree of discreteness, which meets the research requirements.

**Table 4. 15** Customer decision - Descriptive Statistics

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
I would be willing to consider choosing this educational institution	3.35	1.171
My overall impression of this educational institution is good	3.41	1.166
I think the overall level of this educational institution is high	3.39	1.186
I think this educational institution can meet my needs	3.38	1.161
I would like to recommend this educational institution to people around me	3.36	1.180

#### **4.2.4 Variance analysis**

This section of the study will measure the significance of differences between sample data using a one-way ANOVA.

##### **One-way ANOVA**

The researchers tested the hypothesis of differences in the influence of personal factors on consumers making purchase decisions by One-Way ANOVA for educational institution, age of parents, age of students, fertility status, occupation, education level, and monthly household income, as shown in Table 4.16 below.

**Table 4. 16** One-way ANOVA

		ANOVA				
		Square and	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Educational Institutions	intergroup	849.808	4	212.452	9.384	.000**
	Within	8784.039	388	22.639		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			
Parental age	intergroup	10.733	3	3.578	.145	.933
	Within	9623.114	389	24.738		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			
Student Age	intergroup	19.894	3	6.631	.268	.848
	Within	9613.953	389	24.715		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			
Fertility	intergroup	1.799	1	1.799	.073	.787
	Within	9632.049	391	24.634		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			
Education level	intergroup	438.364	3	146.121	6.181	.000**
	Within	9195.483	389	23.639		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			
Career	intergroup	948.010	3	316.003	14.152	.000**
	Within	8685.838	389	22.329		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			
Monthly household income	intergroup	646.286	3	215.429	9.324	.000**
	Within	8987.561	389	23.104		
	the group					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9633.847</b>	<b>392</b>			

The different individual difference profiles in customer decision making are depicted in Exhibit 4.15. Through One-Way ANOVA test, Table 4.15 shows the P-values of different individual differences in customer decision making, four of them are less than 0.05, which means that only educational institution, education level, occupation, and monthly household income are significantly different in customer decision making, and the rest are not significant.

The test revealed significant differences in customer decisions in terms of educational institution ( $F=9.384$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$ ); in terms of parental age ( $F=0.145$ ,  $p=0.933>0.05$ ), no significant differences; in terms of student age ( $F=0.268$ ,  $p=0.848>0.05$ ), no significant differences. There is no significant difference in childbearing status ( $F=0.073$ ,  $p=0.787>0.05$ ); in education level ( $F=6.181$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$ ); in parental occupation ( $F=14.152$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$ ); in monthly household income ( $F=9.324$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$ ), there was a significant difference.

#### **4.2.5 Correlation analysis**

The correlation analysis is to test whether the three variables of service quality, marketing mix strategy and consumer purchase decision are significantly correlated with each other, and Pearson correlation analysis is conducted between each variable and each factor. The Pearson correlation analysis was used to verify the correlation between the indicators in order to make the analysis more comprehensive and reflect the real situation, and the default data obeyed normal distribution. Therefore, when the correlation coefficient exceeds 0.5, it indicates that there is a certain correlation between the two variables. The significance level test was also conducted, and if the path coefficient between the two variables passed the significance test, that is, the path coefficient was statistically significant and non-zero, it indicated that the two variables were correlated, otherwise it indicated that the two variables were not correlated. The results show that: In the correlation between service quality, marketing mix strategy and consumer purchase decision, as shown in Table 4.17 below, the  $r$  coefficients are 0.726, 0.545, and 0.554, respectively, and the significance is less than 0.01, which is statistically significant, and there is a significant positive correlation between the three variables.

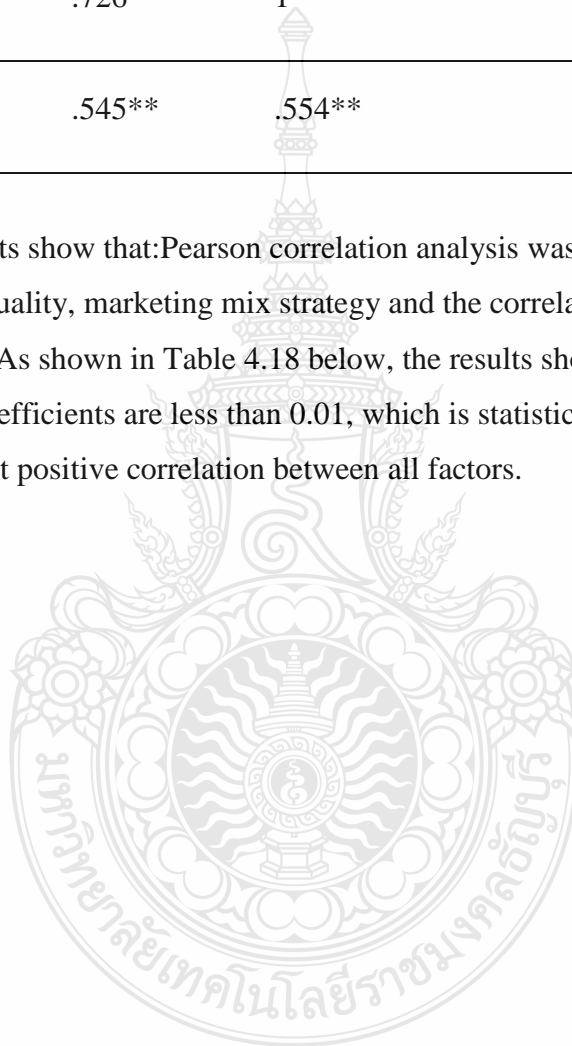


**Table 4. 17** Correlation analysis between variables

<b>Correlation analysis between variables</b>			
	<b>Service Quality</b>	<b>Marketing Mix Strategy</b>	<b>Customer Decision Making</b>
Service Quality	1.00		
Marketing Mix Strategy	.726**	1	
Customer Decision Making	.545**	.554**	1

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$

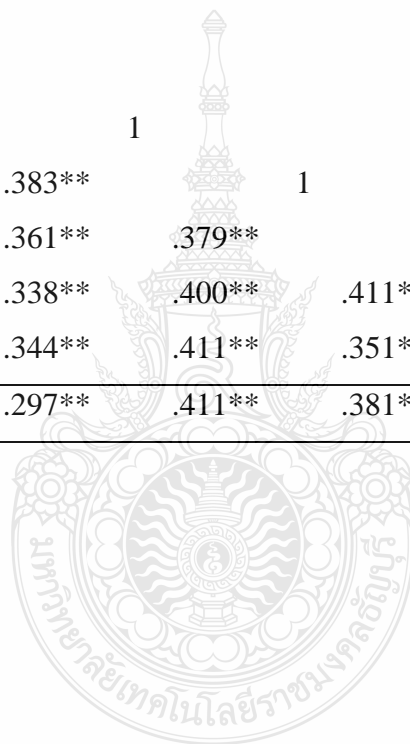
The results show that: Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between the factors of service quality, marketing mix strategy and the correlation of consumer purchase decision. As shown in Table 4.18 below, the results show that: The significance of r coefficients are less than 0.01, which is statistically significant, and there is a significant positive correlation between all factors.



**Table 4.18 Correlation analysis between marketing mix and service quality factors**

Correlation analysis of each factor of marketing mix strategy and service quality									
	Price	Channels	Products	Promotion	Reliability	Tangibility	Empathy	Responsiveness	Safeguarded
Price	1.00								
Channels	.420**	1							
Products	.279**	.350**	1						
Promotion	.337**	.364**	.339**	1					
Reliability	.427**	.398**	.426**	.383**	1				
Tangibility	.393**	.408**	.360**	.361**	.379**	1			
Empathy	.405**	.411**	.363**	.338**	.400**	.411**	1		
Responsiveness	.393**	.349**	.284**	.344**	.411**	.351**	.335**	1	
Safeguarded	.356**	.377**	.318**	.297**	.411**	.381**	.342**	.347**	1

\* p<0.05 \*\* p<0.01



#### 4.2.6 Regression analysis

Correlation analysis indicates whether there is a relationship between two variables and the closeness and direction of the relationship, and regression analysis can further indicate the direction of this relationship and the degree of influence between the variables. Using multiple regression analysis, the factors of the variable service quality were firstly put into the model and secondly the factors of marketing mix strategy were put into the model in the study. In this study, the independent and dependent variables were centered to prevent the problem of model multicollinearity.

The first is a multiple regression analysis of marketing mix strategies and customer decisions, as shown in Table 4.19 below.

Price has a significant effect on customer decision ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the standardized regression coefficient is 0.20, so price has a significant positive effect on customer decision, in line with hypothesis H2a.

Similarly, the main effect of channel on customer decision making is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.39, thus channel has a significant positive effect on customer decision making, which is consistent with hypothesis H2b.

The main effect of product on customer decision is significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.21, thus product has a significant positive effect on customer online purchase decision, which is consistent with hypothesis H2c.

The main effect of promotion on customer decision making is significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level and the standardized regression coefficient is 0.23 which is greater than 0. Therefore, promotion has a significant positive effect on customer decision making, which is consistent with hypothesis H2d.

Through regression analysis, it can be concluded that: customer decision =  $3.30 + 0.20 * \text{price} + 0.39 * \text{channel} + 0.21 * \text{product} + 0.23 * \text{promotion}$

**Table 4. 19** Marketing Mix Multiple Regression Analysis

<b>Multiple Regression</b>							
<b>Predictive variables</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>F</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>tolerances</b>	<b>VIF</b>
(Constant)	0.73	0.53	856.92***	3.30	4.43***		
Price				0.20	4.57***	0.78	1.29
Channels				0.39	6.77***	0.73	1.36
Products				0.21	4.85***	0.82	1.23
Promotion				0.23	6.61***	0.79	1.27
Dependent variable: customer decision							

The results of the multiple regression analysis using service quality on customer decision making are shown in Table 4.20 below. Service quality reliability has a significant effect on customer decision making ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the standardized regression coefficient is 0.187. Therefore, service quality reliability has a significant positive effect on customer decision making, which is consistent with hypothesis H3a.

Similarly, the main effect of service quality tangibles on customer decision making is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.234, therefore service quality tangibles has a significant positive effect on customer decision making, which is consistent with hypothesis H3b.

Similarly, the main effect of service quality empathy on customer decision making is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.148, thus service quality empathy has a significant positive effect on customer decision making, which is consistent with hypothesis H3c.

The main effect of service quality responsiveness on service quality was significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.206, thus service quality responsiveness has a significant positive effect on customer decision making, in line with hypothesis H3d.

The main effect of service quality assurance on service quality is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level and the standardized regression coefficient is 0.202, which is greater than 0. Therefore, service quality assurance has a significant positive effect on customer

decision making, which is consistent with hypothesis H3e.

Through regression analysis, it can be concluded that: customer decision = 3.716 + 0.187\* service quality reliability + 0.234\* service quality tangibility + 0.148\* service quality empathy + 0.206\* service quality responsiveness

**Table 4. 20** Multiple Regression Analysis of Service Quality

Predictive variables	Multiple Regression						
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	β	t	tolerances	VIF
(Constant)	0.547	0.299	65.326***	3.716	4.999***		
Service Quality Reliability				0.187	4.985***	0.69	1.449
Service quality tangibility				0.234	5.355***	0.723	1.383
Service quality empathy				0.148	3.339***	0.734	1.362
Service Quality Responsiveness				0.206	3.48***	0.754	1.326
Service Quality Assurance				0.202	4.414***	0.74	1.352
Dependent variable: customer decision							

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this section, the researcher summarizes the research methodology and findings of this paper and provides further discussion and recommendations on the existing problems in the current education market.

#### **5.1 Research findings**

By using the 4P marketing theory, the gap theory model and the consumer decision model as the basis for the research adoption, the model and data results used in this study were finally formed by considering the feedback from consumers based on their actual experience in the context of the education market in Jiangxi Province based on extensive search and combing of literature. The researchers conducted questionnaire surveys on personal factors, marketing strategies and service quality of five educational institutions in Jiangxi Province, and the results showed that consumers consider whether the educational institution's product pricing is reasonable, whether the price is favorable, and whether it will provide quality service quality subsequently when making purchase decisions.

#### **5.2. Results of the research questions**

This section provides an explanation of the problem, discussion and results.

This paper focuses on four questions.

Question 1: Do different personal factors influence different clients' decision to choose an educational institution? And, why?

Question 2: Does the marketing mix strategy influence the customer's decision to choose an educational institution? And, why?

Question 3: Does the quality of service influence the customer's decision to choose an educational institution? And, why?

Question 4: To what extent do customers agree with the marketing mix strategy, quality of service and customer decisions chosen by the educational institution? And, why?

Methodology A quantitative design was used. The researcher used a questionnaire as a survey instrument that was distributed to consumer groups in five educational institutions, New Oriental Education, Leishi education, Hundred Tree Education, Tomorrow Advancing Life, and FIRSTLEA. The questionnaires collected personal information from consumers and analyzed and discussed the importance that consumers place on marketing strategies and service quality. The results of the study show that some of the consumers' personal factors, marketing strategies and service quality have an impact on customer decisions.

Consumer personal factors, marketing strategies and service quality are the independent variables and customer decisions are the dependent variables.

In order to determine the answers to the above research questions, the researcher proposed the following three hypotheses. h1:different personal factors influence different customers' decision to choose educational institutions. h2:marketing mix influences customers' choice of educational institutions. h3:service quality influences customers' decision making institutions to choose educational services. Hypothesis H1 is divided into seven sub-hypotheses, which are H1a: educational institution itself has a positive influence on customer decision making, H1b: parents' age has a positive influence on customer decision making, H1c: students' age has a positive influence on customer decision making, H1d: parents' childbirth has a positive influence on customer decision making, H1e: parents' occupation has a positive influence on customer decision making, H1f: education level has a positive influence on customer decision, and H1g: monthly household income has a positive influence on customer decision. Hypothesis H2 is divided into four sub-hypotheses, which are H2a: price has a positive influence on customer decision, H2b: channel has a positive influence on customer decision, H2c: product has a positive influence on customer online purchase decision, and H2d: promotion has a positive influence on customer decision. Hypothesis H3 is divided into five sub-hypotheses, which are H3a: service quality reliability has a positive influence on customer decision, H3b: service quality tangibility has a positive influence on service quality, H3c: service quality responsiveness has a positive influence on service quality, H3d: service quality empathy has a positive influence on service quality, and H3e: service quality assurance

has a positive influence on service quality.

The results of testing the hypotheses relating personal factors, marketing strategies and service quality to consumer purchase decisions are shown in Table 5.1 below.

**Table 5. 1** Summary of study hypothesis validation

<b>Question</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Test results</b>
Q1	H1a	Educational institutions themselves have a positive influence on customer decisions	Established
	H1b	Parental age has a positive effect on customer decision making	Not Established
	H1c	Student age has a positive effect on customer decision making	Not Established
	H1d	Parental fertility has a positive effect on customer decision making	Not Established
	H1e	Parental occupation has a positive effect on customer decision making	Established
	H1f	Educational attainment has a positive effect on customer decision making	Established
	H1g	Monthly household income has a positive impact on customer decisions	Established
Q2	H2a	Price has a positive impact on customer decisions	Established
	H2b	Channels have a positive impact on customer decisions	Established
	H2c	Products have a positive impact on customers' online purchase decisions	Established
	H2d	Promotions have a positive impact on customer decisions	Established



**Table 5. 2** Summary of study hypothesis validation

<b>Question</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Test results</b>
Q3	H3a	Service quality reliability has a positive impact on customer decisions	Established
	H3b	Service quality tangibility has a positive impact on service quality	Established
	H3c	Service quality responsiveness has a positive impact on service quality	Established
	H3d	Service quality empathy has a positive effect on service quality	Established
	H3e	Service quality assurance has a positive impact on service quality	Established

Through the analysis of the questionnaire return results, four hypothesis factors of H1 hypothesis hold, which are H1a: educational institution itself has positive influence on customer decision, H1e: parents' occupation has positive influence on customer decision, H1f: education level has positive influence on customer decision, and H1g: family monthly income has positive influence on customer decision, indicating that educational institution itself, parents' occupation and education level and monthly household income have a certain influence on consumers' purchase decision, parents' occupation affects their income level, and consumers will choose the right educational institution according to their income, thus, it is assumed that H1 has a positive influence on customers' decision.

In the H2 hypothesis, four hypotheses hold, namely, H2a: price has a positive influence on customer decision, H2b: channel has a positive influence on customer decision, H2c: product has a positive influence on customer decision, and H2d: promotion has a positive influence on customer decision, according to the H2 hypothesis, it is known that consumers are more concerned about the pricing, marketing and course discount level, and course quality of educational institutions. It is inferred that hypothesis H2 has a positive influence on customer decision.

In the H3 hypothesis, five hypothesis factors hold, which are H3a: service quality reliability has a positive influence on customer decision, H3b: service quality tangibility has a positive influence on customer decision, H3c: service quality responsiveness has a positive influence on customer decision, H3d: service quality empathy has a positive influence on customer decision, and H3e: service quality assurance has a positive influence on customer decision. It can be seen that consumers care whether educational institutions can provide good service quality or not.

The hypothetical results show that both marketing strategies and service quality have an impact on consumers' choice of educational institutions, and consumers' personal factors also positively influence them in making decisions. Originally, people's demand for educational institutions was mainly reflected in whether the price was reasonable, how good the teachers were in their classes, etc. However, given that people's living standards are improving day by day, their own consumption levels and demand for education are driving the rapid development of the education industry, consumers have more choices, and when making purchase decisions, they start to care about diversified services and start to compare which educational institutions can better meet their needs.

### **5.3 Limitations of the study**

The present study has a number of limitations.

1) The sample of this survey is only from well-known educational institutions in Jiangxi Province, which has some limitations. Because students and parents from different regions, cultural backgrounds, and schools in different areas have different characteristics. This study only uses the parents of students from training institutions in a certain region as the survey sample, which has the shortage of cross-school and cross-regional research.

2) This paper uses SERVQUAL to evaluate the service quality of educational institutions, which is a subjective process of evaluating the quality of educational services, and human subjective impressions will have a lot of influence on the research results. Secondly, the subjects of education service quality evaluation include not only parents, but also other stakeholders such as society and students

themselves, and there are shortcomings in this study in terms of evaluation subjects due to the limitation of research time.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Educational institutions are different from public schools. As a non-state funded for-profit organization, the source of survival and development is the consumer. Therefore, a customer-centric philosophy is an important prerequisite for companies to enhance their competitiveness and be invincible in the market. In this section, we will establish a customer experience-optimized teaching process management system by establishing a customer satisfaction-oriented service quality management awareness, strengthening the human resource management of the optimized educational institution team, and marketing services.

Based on the analysis of marketing strategies and service quality of educational institutions in Jiangxi Province, the survival and development of educational institutions can be enhanced from the following aspects.

##### **Human Resources**

**1. Bringing in the right people** The mainstay of an educational institution is the teachers as well as the sales staff. Sales, as an important role in attracting students, requires sufficient marketing knowledge and ability to understand the psychological characteristics of consumers and to be able to perceive their emotions. They can also adjust their marketing plan according to the response characteristics of consumers. And teachers are an important role in retaining students. To be a qualified teacher, one must first have the basic qualities of loving teaching career, loving students, and having very strong patience; secondly, having a rich reserve and accumulation of professional knowledge; again, having the ability to observe students and having a very strong sense of responsibility to find problems and solve them; and finally, having the ability to apply advanced technology. All these conditions are the basic requirements to be a good teaching staff.

**2. Development of training talents** Based on the requirement of service quality improvement of educational institutions, first of all, we need to properly arrange each management position, sales business position and teaching position, and make and

implement the corresponding planning of talent training. For management positions, principals and vice-principals belong to the top management, and the main content is placed on the development of their potential, service concept development and other aspects of the design of training programs. Secondly, the heads of departments such as teaching department and sales department are trained for their organizational skills, coordination and communication skills as well as work planning skills, which can improve the ability to do the job competently. To improve the market position of the institution, it is necessary to broaden the scale of the market, so that the overall level of teaching and service ability of teachers can be improved. It is also important to train marketing consultants in sales techniques and to clarify the scope of business and product content to improve communication and negotiation skills, which is important to increase the conversion rate of potential students. Based on the above measures, it is possible to achieve qualitative improvement for both staff and teachers within the organization. In addition, the company can implement internal job selection or rotation, for those employees with outstanding performance can be given better positions and treatment, so that all employees can develop and improve in an equal environment.

### **Marketing Services**

**1) Clear target customer positioning** When employees communicate with potential new students and parents, they should properly introduce basic information and expectation surveys of new students. For example, fully understand and record the gender, age, study habits, and personality characteristics of potential new students, understand their economic conditions and payment expectations, clarify their tutoring needs and ultimate desired goals, classify customer groups according to the above characteristics, and then develop a plan suitable for that classified customer group.

**2) Improve upward communication mechanism** As much as possible, parents and students should be allowed to tell their feelings, and educational institutions should improve feedback channels and complaint channels to ensure that students receive timely feedback on various issues. Set up a principal's mailbox, a corporate mailbox, etc., and have a special person in charge to organize such feedback cases and report them to senior managers in a timely manner. Organize regular parent meetings to

gain an in-depth understanding of students' needs and the current status of training. Keep abreast of whether there are problems in the various aspects of the service and where the shortcomings of the service provided lie. For example, the reception desk is the first impression of the institution to students and parents, which has a great impact.

**3) Pay attention to the relationship with existing students and parents** Educational institutions must establish a good relationship with students' parents, collect parents' needs and expectations in a timely manner, provide targeted services, and leave a good impression on parents. The recognition of parents can ensure the continuity of existing customers on the one hand, and on the other hand, the recognized parents can help the educational institution to carry out word-of-mouth publicity and referrals, bringing a continuous stream of new customers to the institution.

**4) Improve service remediation mechanism** No matter which industry is involved, there will always be problems of inconsiderate and imperfect service during the service process, which requires them to construct scientific and effective handling mechanisms and processes in advance to meet customers' needs in the shortest possible time and improve customers' recognition and support for them. This is also true for educational institutions, which currently lack a set of sound handling procedures when users make refund requests, as well as no clear responsible departments and personnel, which can make users feel that the service is not good enough, and that the institutions are not informed of the reasons for refunds in a timely manner and do not take remedial measures and efforts in the first place. Therefore, the institution can solve this problem by establishing a customer refund pull list management system, thus improving the satisfaction of students and parents

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