

**THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON THE STUDENT
ENROLMENT OF ENTITIES: A CASE STUDY OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

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S21B05/053

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

September, 2024



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
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DECLARATION

I, MURUNGI ISAAC, declare that the material presented in this dissertation is completely original and has not been previously submitted for any academic recognition or accreditation at any other institution.

Signature

MURUNGI ISAAC (Research student)

Date:

APPROVAL

I certify that Murungi Isaac's study has been completed under my guidance and is now being submitted for examination with my full approval as the designated supervisor from the University. The study has been conducted with adherence to the required standards and regulations. This certification is a seal of quality and integrity of the researcher's work, an assurance that the research has undergone sufficient review and evaluation by a qualified competent individual.



Signature:

Supervisor's Name: **Dr. WASSWA KATONO**

Date:17th September 2024...

DEDICATION

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my parents, Miss Ojambo Lydia and Mr. Bakole Isaac, for being there in thick and thin throughout my academics. Their love, support, and guidance cannot be described to keep me moving on toward this milestone of life. This dissertation would not have been successful without their encouragement and motivation. I humbly dedicate this study to all of them in appreciation for being constant pillars of strength.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am thankful to Providence because He has given me life and bestowed on me the quintessential faculties of intellect and discursion capability. In fact, these inborn qualities have readily helped me achieve many great milestones of my private and professional lives. First and foremost, I am grateful to my beautiful family, who have been a constant source of strength, love, and care amidst adversities. I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my mentor and research supervisor, Dr. Katono Wasswa, for the insightful guidance, infinite support, and wise counsel extended toward me in the course of my academic sojourn. She has not only provided critical knowledge and skills but also motivated me to do research works with full passion and seriousness. I consider myself fortunate to have such a great teacher and guide.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation to all those people who have been supportive and encouraging along the way. Your unshakeable belief in me has been a great source of inspiration and encouragement, and I hope to repay your acts of kindness through living a meaningful life and being of positive relevance to society.

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ABSTRACT

The paper highlights how marketing strategies affect the enrolment of students in higher education institutions using Uganda Christian University as its case study. In an attempt to identify various marketing strategies to draw and retain students at the university, the research study discussed various marketing strategies. In addition, to attain this goal, the researcher employed a mixed-method research design, a student, alumni, and faculty survey was also complemented by an extensive review of literature that was available. The sample size in the case of 30 participants utilized descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis. Social media advertising received high mean scores from among the effective strategies of digital marketing. The research established that partnership strategies and scholarship programs serve to improve enrolment at UCU. It was also established that the traditional media, through radio and television advertising, are still relevant in reaching both local and international students. Sports programs and outdoor advertising were also found to be among those factors that help improve enrolment. Results from this study indicate that marketing strategies have a strong and positive association with the enrollment of students, which would imply that effective marketing would greatly benefit institutions of higher learning. The result gotten from this present study is in agreement with previously related scholarship on the effects of marketing in higher education. The study contributes to the larger discussion of marketing in institutions of higher learning through calling on universities and colleges to be proactive and purposeful in the study of their marketing activities in order to stay competitive, and also to enable the enrollment of a more diverse population of students. It points to the necessary multi-faceted approach that takes account of current challenges and opportunities facing student recruitment in the higher education sector.

List of Abbreviations

SMEs - Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

COVID-19 - Coronavirus Disease 2019

UCU - Uganda Christian University

TPB - Theory of Planned Behaviour

SEO - Search Engine Optimization

UGC - User Generated Content

SEO - Search Engine Optimization

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

DOSA - Dean of Students Affairs.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of the study's background, the problem statement, the study objectives of the study, the study questions and the justification for the study. This chapter will also describe the conceptual framework.

1.1 Background

As a business owner or marketer, one core principle that must always be front and center is the satisfaction of your customers. Successful businesses are built on satisfied customers, and the strategies employed by businesses today often center around customer satisfaction. (Kamakura and Russell 2012) Therefore, understanding the impact of marketing strategies on customer satisfaction is critical to the success of any business, regardless of size, industry, or location. In this dissertation, we explore the relationship between marketing strategies and customer satisfaction.

Marketing strategies are the set of plans and directions that businesses put in place to promote their goods or services to a target market. (Kotler and Armstrong 2018) These strategies are essential in creating a strong and consistent brand identity, differentiating businesses from their competitors, increasing customer base and engagement, and ultimately driving student enrolment and profitability. One key element of these strategies is customer satisfaction, which has become an increasingly important metric for businesses. (Eshghi et al. 2013) Through innovative marketing strategies, businesses can identify, promote and leverage customer values and needs with the aim of enhancing customer satisfaction.

Marketing strategies have evolved significantly over the years, from traditional marketing approaches of print and broadcast advertising to more sophisticated digital, social, and experiential marketing. (Armstrong and Kotler 2006) Today, driving customer satisfaction requires a mix of marketing strategies that focus on creating a unique customer experience that aligns with core business objectives and goals. (Pine II and Gilmore 2011) By understanding how marketing strategies influence customer satisfaction, businesses can more precisely target their marketing efforts to create value-added experiences that result in satisfied customers.

An advantage of employing marketing strategies that increase customer satisfaction is the creation of customer loyalty. Satisfied customers are much more likely to remain loyal to businesses, which, in turn, increases the lifetime value of customers. (Bickart and Schindler 2013) Moreover, these satisfied customers are also more likely to share positive experiences

with their social and professional networks. (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010) Therefore, businesses that employ effective marketing strategies to enhance customer satisfaction will have deeper and stronger relationships with their customers.

In today's digital age, businesses face stiff competition across various channels, which has put a renewed focus on customer satisfaction. (Kotler et al. 2017) The explosion of social media and mobile platforms has empowered customers to influence the reputation and success of businesses. In turn, businesses have set out to gain a competitive advantage by employing marketing strategies that improve customer satisfaction. (Gebhardt et al. 2010) These strategies include initiatives such as personalized customer service, customization, exceptional product quality, and agile customer experiences that cater to the needs of customers.

Customer loyalty and satisfaction as a driver in modern marketing strategies is the customer's emotional attachment to a brand. (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982) This emotional connection is the result of a brand's ability to evoke feelings of joy, happiness, pride, or other positive attributes among customers. Therefore, effective marketing strategies that increase customer satisfaction include efforts that appeal to emotions and create positive brand experiences for customers.

When marketing strategies are geared toward customer satisfaction, businesses must recognize that customer needs have to be met holistically. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2016), the marketing mix, which includes product, price, promotion, and place, must align with customers' expectations and experiences to ensure that they are satisfied. It therefore implies that businesses will always have to align their marketing strategies to meet the needs of their customers and to create value as perceived by them.

According to Kim and Ko, the basis of any successful marketing campaign includes analyzing the factors of industry, economic conditions, and technological advancement. The companies face external environments of competition, economic conditions, and technological advancement. With a better awareness of the dynamics relating to these factors' impact on customer satisfaction, businesses would reorient their marketing strategies to rise up through challenges to satisfy consumers.

Therefore, with this overview, this study is going to detail an explanation of the association between marketing strategies and the student enrolment of entities using a case study of Uganda Christian University in Mukono district.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Customer satisfaction has been neglected in Uganda as organizations are often judged solely on their size within their respective industry. In Uganda, many institutions have implemented marketing strategies intending to increase customer satisfaction. However, Kiggundu and Kimbugwe (2013) cited institutions face the challenge of understanding their customer needs and coming up with the best strategies to meet these customer needs. Also, they noted that institutions need to adopt strategies that will enable them to always interact with the clients. Katongole & Kiyini (2020) also found that this gap in the literature is not only limited to Uganda but Africa in general.

Therefore, there remains a literature gap to understand the best marketing strategies institutions can adopt to meet customer needs. Therefore, this study intends to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the student enrolment of entities with a case study of Uganda Christian University.

1.3 Main objective

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of marketing strategies on the student enrolment of entities with a case study of Uganda Christian University.

1.4 Specific Objective

- i. To assess the various marketing strategies and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.
- ii. To identify new or emerging marketing strategies that would influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.
- iii. To understand the relationship between marketing strategies and the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

1.5 Research questions

- i. What are the various marketing strategies and how do they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University?
- ii. What are the new or emerging marketing strategies that would influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University?
- iii. What is the relationship between marketing strategies and the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University?

1.6 Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Content Scope

The study will focus on the influence of marketing strategies on the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

1.6.2 Time Scope

The study will focus on the impact of marketing strategies on the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University from the period of 2018 to 2024. This is because there have been significant changes in the marketing strategies adopted due to the effects of COVID-19. The study will be carried out in one month.

1.6.3 Geographical scope

The study will be conducted at Uganda Christian University at the Mukono branch, Plot 67-173, Bishop Tucker Road, Mukono district.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study may be used by researchers working in the field of business management and marketing, particularly in the context of emerging markets like Uganda. The research will fill the research gap existing in the literature on marketing strategies in Uganda.

The study's findings may be useful to policymakers in the private and public sectors whose focus is on maximizing the sales of their SMEs and enhancing the competitiveness of Uganda's industrial sector. The results of this study may help policymakers understand the necessary mechanisms and strategies to promote the sales of SMEs within the country's SME sector.

Uganda Christian University may use the study's results as it will help them enhance their marketing strategies to boost the sale of their products. Based on the results of the research, Regal Paints Uganda Limited can explore the different marketing strategies that can be used to best meet their customers.

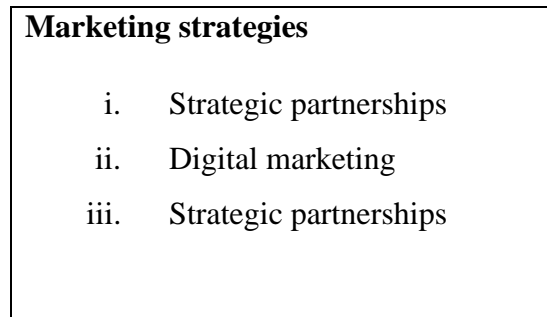
1.8 Justification

The research on the impact of marketing strategies on the customer behavior of Regal paints in Uganda is important because even with the packaging's financial importance, there is a lack of empirical research on the subject in Uganda. Marketing strategies influence customer behavior buying to tailor the sales strategies to the desired customers. Therefore, it is important to examine the impact of marketing strategies that influence the customer behavior of Regal Paints Uganda Limited.

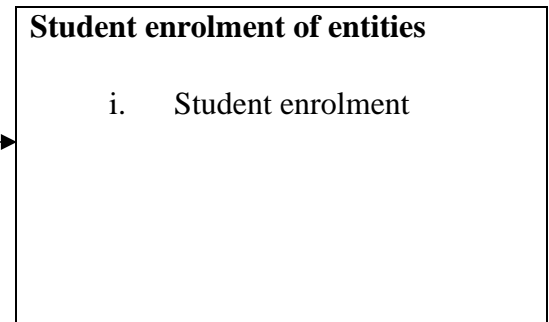
1.9 Conceptual framework

The following conceptual framework illustrates the variables that affect the research, including both independent and dependent factors.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE



DEPENDENT VARIABLES



Source: Johnson (2019) and modified by researcher

The conceptual framework above shows that the independent variable consists of a marketing strategy that incorporates strategic partnership, digital marketing, and traditional marketing methods. Strategic partnership refers to partnerships with other agencies in raising visibility, hence attracting students through joint activities. Digital marketing involves online platforms, including social media and email campaigns, to engage and inform potential students. Traditional marketing includes more traditional approaches, such as print ads and radio spots, to reach wider audiences and extend the presence of the university.

Because of these marketing strategies, the enrolment of students is the dependent variable. Also, each particular marketing strategy's effectiveness in influencing enrolment rates would be decided based on how effective the approach was in attracting and retaining students. This framework seeks to understand the relationship between the marketing strategies adopted and their effect on the admission of students, therefore providing which is the most effective strategy to increase the university's student intake.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the study will delve into the exploration of study theories, variables, and conceptual framework and identify potential research gaps.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Theory of planned behavior

TPB forms a convenient framework for the evaluation of how marketing strategies influence student enrollments. According to TPB, an individual will engage in a given behavior if the intentions towards that particular behavior take hold through attitude toward one's ability to take part in that behavior. The TPB will explain how various marketing strategies influence students' decision-making in terms of enrolling at one institution or another.

Ajzen, 1991, noted that attitudes toward enrollment to an institution depend on the marketing implemented. Effective marketing campaigns showing the benefits of the program, faculty and facilities provide much more positive attitudes from the students. Additionally, these positive attitudes enhance the possibility that a student will consider applying because they think highly of the institution as a desirable place to study (Ajzen, 1991).

Subjective norms are the social pressures on the choices made by individuals. In applicants, for example, it would involve family and friend opinions, and even professional education advisors. Those marketing strategies that build a positive image and ensure positive word-of-mouth reinforce subjective norms. For example, testimonials and social media can be used by current students and alumni to tell favorable stories about their study experiences. This in turn could help attract applicants to enroll. Perceived behavioral control refers to what a person perceives about their ability to perform the behavior. In the context of this discussion, this may refer to financial considerations, entry, and application procedures into the university, among others. Marketing strategies that address such issues. Such as the provision of adequate information regarding scholarships, entry qualifications and support services that may enhance the potential applicant's capacity to apply and succeed have been supported. -.

According to TPB, improvements in attitudes, the development of subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control all signify that the marketing effort is much more likely to successfully influence the enrollment decision. Targeted advertising illustrating an institution's

strengths and the elimination of barriers within its program offerings helps in building positive attitude and reinforces positive social influences that, according to Ajzen, 1991, would enhance the likelihood of enrolment.

TPB can also be used to test the effectiveness of various marketing strategies. The institutions can measure the changes in attitude, perceived norms, and perceived control of the students before and after certain marketing campaigns to see which is more successful in yielding enrolment. Evaluation refines and optimizes marketing efforts for the needs of prospective students.

The second important aspect of the theory is its insistence that educators need to recognize the wider context within which students make their choices about where to enroll. Local competition, shifting economic fortunes, and shifting educational trends can influence how well the marketing approach works. Those institutions that take into account external influences can refine marketing approaches in ways which meet the expectations and decision-making processes of students (Ajzen, 1991).

Furthermore, TPB emphasizes that marketing strategies must be multidimensional in order to capture the diverse elements driving students' decisions. Presenting positive images of academic achievement in concert with testimonials from graduates and financial aid details enables a number of elements of prospective students' decision-making processes to be contacted, thus creating a more successful marketing campaign overall. Under the TPB framework, ongoing feedback is also a critical element in creating effective marketing strategy. By gathering information on how applicants will react to various messages, and re-tooling programs based on that information, a school can hone their tactics and more effectively resonate with the factors driving enrolment decisions.

2.1.2. Brand Equity Theory

Brand Equity Theory helps in understanding the influence of marketing strategies on the number of students who join or apply to higher learning institutions. This theory, developed by Aaker (1991), revolves around a brand's value addition to a product or service, hence great influence on the choice that a prospective student may make. To universities, brand equity signifies good reputation, enhanced recognition, and perceived quality—all of which are very important in luring students to the institution.

Aaker for the first time talked about the different components of brand equity: brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Brand awareness, in the

context of higher education, simply means the potential students recognizing the name of the University and its programs. For that, good marketing strategies can enhance visibility and recognition of a brand such that prospective students become more aware of the institution, leading to better chances of application as a result.

Brand association refers to those attributes and qualities coming to the minds of people when they think about the university's brand. It can thus comprise perceptions related to academic excellence, facilities on campus, and student support services. Marketing strategies that emphasize the strengths and unique attributes of the university will nurture favorable brand associations and thus make the institution appear more attractive to prospective students (Aaker, 1991). The second important dimension of brand equity is perceived quality. It is about the whole perception of the academic offerings of the institution and its ability to provide quality outcomes for students. Marketing strategies that can illustrate better academic programs, expertise of faculty members, and the success of graduates raise the perceived value of the university as a means to encourage students to enroll.

Brand Loyalty shows the commitments and penchant that current and former students have toward the university. It can instill loyalty in alumni and current students who could then act as its ambassadors. Marketing strategies which build and continue with the university's strong relationship with the alumni and current students apply this loyalty to attract new students through testimonials, referrals, and positive word-of-mouth (Aaker, 1991). It also pinpoints the role of brand equity in the differentiation of university from its competition. A strong brand will differentiate the institution in the competitive higher education market and make it more attractive for future students. The competitive advantages of the university could be heightened through marketing strategies which express its selling points and differentiators.

In addition, Aaker 1991 explained that brand equity has an impact on student enrolment through perceived value in university education. "Students are more likely to enrol in an institution that they perceive as high value for their investment, such as quality education, good career opportunities, and overall satisfaction with the university experience." The above marketing strategies enhance brand equity, hence influencing enrolment decisions.

Brand resonance, which refers to how well the relationship is between a brand and its customer, is also part of the concept of brand equity. What this would mean for universities is creating an emotional bond with targeted students through meaningful marketing messages and appealing

content. Effective marketing strategies that strike a chord with students in terms of aspiration or value would, therefore, contribute to strengthening brand equity and fostering enrollment.

Aaker further added that the theory of brand equity also proposes that management and nurturing a strong brand requires continuous efforts and consistency in messaging. This, for universities, would imply an arduous task to regularly communicate their brand values and earn a good reputation through continuous and quality marketing communications. Only this kind of sustained effort will help them build and maintain good brand equity over a period of time and influence students' decisions to enroll.

Conclusively, the measurement of the impact of brand equity on student enrolment calls for an assessment of various metrics such as brand awareness levels, perception by students, and enrolment trends. Through the assessment of these indicators, universities will be in a position to ascertain whether their marketing strategies are paying off and thus enable them to make informed decisions aimed at improving their brand equity and increasing the pool of students (Aaker, 1991)..

2.1.3. Marketing Mix Theory

The Marketing Mix Theory, also known as the 4Ps, forms the conceptual framework that underlies an investigation into how different dimensions of marketing strategies impact the consumption behaviors of target markets. McCarthy's 1960 theory includes Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, all critical components in molding the decisions of prospective students toward influencing student enrollment in higher education institutions.

The Product aspect of the marketing mix involves educational offerings and programs of the university. In an educational context, it concerns the varieties of academic programs, range of offered degrees, and specializations available to students within that university. Proper marketing strategies shall emphasize what is unique about those offered programs, including curriculum design, faculty expertise, and career prospects that attract prospective students. A university can show its attractiveness and increase enrollment by demonstrating the excellence and appropriateness of its educational offerings McCarthy, 1960.

Price refers to the cost of attending the university, tuition fees, accommodations, and other related costs. Pricing strategies have enormous effects on the choices the potential students will make, especially in terms of affordability and the availability of financial aid. Marketing strategies that focus on scholarships, financial aid packages, and value for money make the

institution more attractive to students who are concerned about the financial implications of their education.

The place refers to the distribution channels and physical or virtual locations at which programs of the university are offered. In higher education, this considers campus location, online learning access, and facility access ease. Marketing strategies that emphasize the convenience and advantages of the university location can facilitate a decision with prospective students, since students weigh in their preference and needs, which the strategy meets.

Promotion refers to the varied means through which the programs are made known and advertised to prospective students. These include promotional campaigns, publicity, social media engagement, and promotional events. Positive promotions will attract probable students to the university by showcasing the strengths of the institution, its achievements, and its competitive advantages. Effective promotions involve creative content, clear messaging, and planned use of media channels to reach target students (McCarthy 1960).

Integration of the 4Ps into one cogent marketing strategy would ensure that all elements work in concert to present a convincing value proposition to the students being targeted. For example, a well-integrated campaign that aligns what the university has to offer in terms of programs with competitively priced, accessible locations and targeted promotions may present a solid overall impression that drives student home enrollment as part of one implicit promise.

Besides, the theory of Marketing Mix emphasizes that the 4Ps should be changed and adapted to meet the changing needs and preferences of the target students. For example, universities will have to reassess and rebalance the products, prices, channels of distribution, and promotions constantly to ensure that all elements remain competitive and relevant in the dynamic higher education marketplaces. It allows flexibility that ensures the marketing strategies are able to meet changing students' expectations with satisfaction.

McCarthy also points to the role of feedback and data in refining the marketing mix. Through analyzing the enrolment trends, student feedback, and market research, universities are in a position to get an insight into how well their marketing strategies are working and make relevant modifications toward that aspect. In such a manner, this approach, being data-driven, will allow the institutions to optimize the marketing mix for higher effectiveness in attracting and retaining students.

Marketing Mix Theory also stresses that the 4Ps must be balanced out so as to result in a well-rounded and attractive marketing strategy. For instance, the competitive pricing should not be the only thing but should be added to high-value programs and effective promotion so as to attract students. It is a balanced approach to all aspects of the marketing mix that may result in the overall attractiveness of the university and influence the enrolment decisions.

2.2 Objectives review

2.2.1 the various marketing strategies and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Strategic partnerships have relevance in terms of influencing enrolment of students in higher education institutions. Smith (2021) noted that through partnership with other institutions, businesses, and community organizations, a university may increase its visibility and attraction to potential students. To demonstrate, Lopez shared that an arrangement with local high schools will make students familiar with the university's programs and offer a well-defined scheme through which students can proceed from high school to college. In addition, partnerships with highly rated companies in their fields of operation can further offer the students worthwhile internships and facilitate job placement, thereby making the university's programs more desirable to potential students.

Digital marketing, therefore, is the marketing strategies that ought to be put into place in reaching and engaging prospective students with regard to higher education institutions. These involve the use of various online platforms by leveraging through social media, search engines, and email marketing campaigns as a means of discussing issues related to the university. Recently, Parker found through his research that digital marketing techniques are vital for universities to successfully reach out to and attract potential students with proactive tools in today's digitally operated world. This would also include exploiting various online channels in the form of social media, search engines, and email campaigns to create awareness about the university. Social media campaigns will enable the university to establish a strong web presence and connect more interactively with prospective students by creating a more engaging content experience, also allowing for testimonials and virtual campus tours. These would be complemented by targeted online advertising and search engine optimization, making the university more visible to active students pursuing higher learning opportunities.

Another factor that may determine the trend in student enrollment relates to scholarship programs. Indeed, higher education can be made more available to as large a pool of students

as possible with the provision for financial assistance. There are merit-based, needs-based, or talent-based scholarships. The scholarship options shall be highlighted to attract those who would otherwise fail to join due to financial difficulties. According to Williams & Brown, it is a strong marketing of scholarship programs through a number of channels, such as the university website and social media, that could make the big difference in how many enroll.

Notwithstanding, the relevance of radio and television advertisements remains valid in reaching a wide audience. It is arguable that both these traditional media platforms can be utilized effectively to convey the brand and offerings of the university to the potential students. According to Taylor (2020), radio ads can help appeal to a place and demographic, while television advertising allows targeting larger pools and can leave a great visual impression. Both the media will be helpful in building brand awareness and communicating key messages in relation to the university's strengths and benefits.

Sport activities are one of the most effective tools of attracting prospective students and creating a better image of the university. Hosting and participating in sports events give the university an opportunity to show how lively campus life is and how school spirit might be developed. Promoting this can help attract students who are interested in athletics and give them a better vision into extracurricular opportunities within the university. This can also give the university a better reputation and bring programs to the attention of the community when participating in sports.

Billboards and transit ads comprise two of the various forms of outdoor advertising that have a high degree of visibility and are effective means through which to promote the university to prospective students. Such outdoor advertisements placed in very strategic locations may show the potential to engage commuters and residents alike to notice the myriad programs and events at the university. This reinforces the university's presence in the community and complements digital and traditional media strategies.

Merging these will provide a multi-dimensional approach to improving student intake. For example, Martin & Clark 2023 developed a campaign that effectively merged digital marketing and strategic partnership to have an amplified approach in promotional activities. With a well-coordinated activity and consistent messaging across all channels, the university will be able to create a value proposition that attracts a broad range of applicants.

Second, the returns on these methods would involve careful analysis of the enrollment data to determine which of the marketing channels provides a return on investment. The university can

monitor application rates, website traffic, and overall engagement in promotional content to realize which is working best and use that information to make informed decisions in helping to further streamline future marketing efforts effectively.

Their effectiveness, however, does depend on the changeability of the university in adapting itself to new trends and preferences by students. For example, while the emergence of social media and online platforms calls for online-based engagement, traditional media is effective in wider outreach. It is from having updated information about current trends that the institution can build strands of incorporating the same into their marketing strategies. This leads to increased competitiveness and attractiveness to future students.

2.2.2 Identifying the new or emerging marketing strategies that would influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

These new developing marketing strategies in universities are of great help to attract and involve students more. One such prominent developing marketing strategy is the use of AI in personalization of marketing. Artificial intelligence can analyze and deliver appropriate content and recommendations based on prospective students' behaviors and preferences, thus improving engagement and conversion rates due to targeting individual interests and needs. AI can help universities in developing better marketing campaigns with which a prospective student can relate.

Another encouraging trend is the application of augmented and virtual reality in recruitment processes. Both of these technologies provide the grounds for immersive experiences: virtual campus facility tours, virtual open houses, and the possibility to engage with existing students and faculty members. This level of interaction makes the image of this university strong and memorable, thus more appealing for applicants, who get an interactive sneak peek at what awaits them on campus.

Influencer marketing also gains momentum in the higher education sector. Collaboration with social media influencers, or even current students, who have a strong online presence, enables universities to reach a much greater audience than before. The possibility of showing genuine experiences and opinions of the influencers impresses the potential students more than the university's advertising campaign; the credibility of the influencers and their access to considerable audiences help raise awareness about the institution.

Another widely spread trend is content marketing. Valuable, relevant content creation, including blog posts, videos, and infographics, allows for the engaging of prospective students

while providing them with detailed information on programmes and campus life. Building trust and authority about the university will also be created by providing great insight into the experiences awaiting students and academic opportunities—a reason why prospective applicants would want to attend that university.

Other hip approaches include interactive and gamified marketing. With the addition of gamification features such as quizzes, challenges, and interactives, universities will have the ability to reach future students in a fun and interactive way. This will help not only in gaining attention but also in facilitating participation; it will be a positive and memorable experience that might influence decisions on enrollment.

Another fast-developing type of strategy that contributes to enhancing targeting and segmentation is data-driven marketing. Advanced analytics and a variety of tools for data collection enable universities to capture a deep understanding of their target audience and adjust marketing messages appropriately. With the exploitation of such data insights, universities can come up with more relevant campaigns by addressing particular interests and needs of prospective students; all this contributes to enhanced engagement and higher enrollment rates.

Social media has continuously kept changing, therefore it presents wide limits of possibilities in terms of engagement and outreach. Universities should leverage the likes of TikTok and Instagram to connect prospective students through creative content at the center of the attention of the younger audiences. By leveraging such emerging social media trends, universities can connect with future applicants in the place where they are most active and receptive.

Another up-and-coming strategy involves chatbots and automated messaging. Chatbots can respond instantly to inquiries, make personalized recommendations, and even walk prospective students through the process of applying to an institution. This technology enhances the user experience through more timely and relevant responses that can raise conversion rates and make the process of enrollment easier.

The power of UGC is turning out to be a very effective marketing strategy. By encouraging current students and alumni to make posts on social media and other platforms concerning their experiences and testimonials, authentic and relatable insights are provided to the prospective students. Taylor (2024) talked about how UGC serves as a form of social proof which helps in building credibility and trust in what the university has to offer and thus makes it more appealing.

There is also a growth in experiential marketing, which is more about creating experiences rather than telling and selling. Events on campus, workshops, and hands-on activities that enable the applicant to experience university life will attachedly link them to increase intent into enrolment. According to Martin (2023), such activities would help in appealing to and engaging potential applicants.

2.2.3 The relationship between marketing strategies and the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University

The work of Smith 2023, on relating marketing strategies to student enrollment, shows relevance for institutions that have the aim of attracting and retaining students. In improving the visibility of the university to prospective students, digital marketing strategies like search engine optimization and targeted online advertising are used. According to Adams (2024), such strategies enable universities to reach out effectively to potential applicants, improving engagement with a view to increasing enrollment rates.

Social media marketing also influences student enrollment by providing channels like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok through which the prospective students engage. In the words of Lee (2024), as cited by Brown (2023), this is an approach that leads to interactive content and live sessions employed by the universities to connect and build their community with the mindsets of the students. Consequently, perhaps this will make the institutions more attractive to the students applying to join the institutions. This can be achieved by strategic partnerships with high schools, community organizations, and industry leaders that extend the reach and credibility of the university. Patel, in 2024, established that such partnerships make several opportunities available for early engagement of prospective students with increased awareness of the programs offered and more successful transition that may lead to increased enrollment.

Scholarship programs make education more available for students who might otherwise be discouraged by the financial burden involved. Green said, "Financial incentive programs need to be highly advertised through marketing channels so that the university can demonstrate its concerns for affordability, thus being appealing to applicants." According to Clark (2024), this strategy involves experiential marketing where campus tours and open houses allow prospects to experience university life first-hand. On-campus events allow students to get along with the faculty and current students, view campus facilities, hence leaving a positive impact on their decisions to join and making the university more attractive.

Influencer marketing is fast growing in importance to shape student enrollments. According to Wang (2024), it has been identified that collaboration with social media influencers and current students by sharing positive experiences helped develop the university's reputation and made the university more relatable to potential applicants. Wang added that such endorsements provide good insight into the environment that surrounds the university and its programs, thus influencing enrollment decisions.

Blog, video, and testimonial content are important in developing a strong web presence and informing the students who may apply to the institution. High-quality content regarding academic programs, life on campus, and success stories at the university will be of interest to the students and give them a more transparent view of what the university can offer to help them make their decisions.

Data-driven marketing strategies, according to Lewis, would have the universities adjust their strategies with a deep insight into how prospects behave and what their predispositions are. This can be done by studying website analytics or social media, which will help universities run focused campaigns targeting certain interests and needs, hence improving marketing effectiveness, of course, and increased enrollments. Traditional media such as radio and television advertising will also keep being one of the key channels for reaching wider audiences. These channels fill in the gaps for digital marketing and raise awareness of university programs from prospective students who might be less engaged with online platforms.

Outdoor advertising, such as billboards and transit ads, offers high visibility for the university in terms of reinforcing the brand and messaging. According to Evans, such ads must be placed in high-traffic areas so that the university remains top of mind for prospective students and their families, thus building recognition and interest.

2.3 Research gap

While much has been researched regarding marketing strategies and student enrollment, there is an apparent gap in empirical data on the understanding of emerging marketing techniques' impact on enrolment figures at Uganda Christian University. Most past research has focused on broader trends and generalized strategies that do not show how new or evolving marketing approaches uniquely influence enrolment outcomes in particular institutional contexts. This knowledge gap necessitates focused research that can test innovative marketing strategies including sophisticated digital marketing tools, collaboration with influencers, and new

experiential marketing approaches in respect of their impacts on student enrolment at Uganda Christian University. In carrying out this empirical gap, it will also provide insights and practical implications for higher educational institutions within enrollment strategies.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has displayed a literature review similar to the study. The next chapter will describe the research methodology of how the study will be made.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aimed to describe the research methodology employed in this study by explaining the methods and procedures used by the researcher for gathering and analyzing data effectively. The research design, study population, sample size, collection techniques, data analysis, presentation, measurement of variables, and tools utilized for data acquisition were explicitly discussed.

3.2 Research design

This study involved a descriptive cross-sectional study design with a quantitative method to investigate the relationship between marketing strategies and student enrolment at Uganda Christian University.

3.3 Study population

In this study, the population was 39 respondents for the study and the target population of this study will involve the DOSA (4), Academic registrar (8), office admission (13) and deans (11).

3.4 Sample size and technique

The study used the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table to come up with the desired sample size. From the table, the study used 36 respondents.

Target population and sample size of the study

Category	Population	Sample	Sampling technique
DOSA	4	4	Census sampling technique
Academic registrar	8	8	Census sampling technique
Office admission	13	13	Census sampling technique
Communications	3	3	Census sampling technique

Deans	11	8	Random sampling technique
Total	39	36	

Source: Primary data, 2024

3.5 Sampling technique and procedures.

During data collection from the study participants, a purposive sampling technique was utilized. This method will enable the researcher to select respondents who possess sufficient experience and knowledge about the study variable. It will also be implemented in selecting all the participants for the study.

3.6 Data collection methods

Both primary and secondary data were utilized by the researcher in this study.

3.6.1 Primary Data

The chosen employees at Ugandan Christian University were given questionnaires to primarily collect data by the researcher.

3.6.2 Secondary data

The researcher collected secondary data from different sources like the internet, textbooks, newspapers and magazines that were found at the offices of Uganda Christian University.

3.7 Data collection instruments

The primary tools for collecting data in this study were the close-ended questionnaires.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

The main tool for data collection in this study was the questionnaire, which is divided into four sections for the respondents. The questionnaire includes close-ended questions to facilitate quick decision-making and utilizes the Likert scale to help the researcher easily code the information for analysis.

3.8 Reliability of the study

The study found its reliability as 0.916 which meant that the study findings were very reliable.

Table 1: Reliability of the study

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
0.916	38

3.9 Data Analysis

Information gathered from the surveys was analyzed through the utilization of SPSS technology. This will facilitate the research in assessing precision, entirety, constancy, and standardization and arranging the data in systematic tables derived from pertinent questions linked to the research issue. The central objective of this study was to obtain relevant feedback from respondents concerning the research dilemma.

3.10 Ethical consideration

The researcher monitored moral and legitimate concerns in the examination, including the guidelines of privacy, anonymity, and agreement of other individuals' contributions to this research, as it is significant to honor the privileges and self-respect of the research subjects (Artal & Rubinfeld, 2017). Additionally, this research secures the secrecy of participants, and the obtained data is completely utilized for the proposed research objective. The study tool includes no field for names or telephone numbers, which enhances privacy and encourages participants to confidently take part in the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the study about the study objectives. The results are presented below as follows.

4.1 Response rate

The response rate describes how the respondents responded to the questionnaire. From the study findings, it was found that 30 respondents responded to the questionnaire instead of the intended 36 respondents. This meant that the response rate was 83%.

4.2 Background characteristics of respondents

The study looked at how socio-demographic factors such as gender, age, education, and experience affected perception. The goal was to see if these factors influenced viewpoints. Here are the findings.

4.2.1 The Gender of Respondents

Table 2: Gender of respondents

The participants were asked to indicate their gender statuses, and the table presented below shows their responses.

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	17	56.7	56.7	56.7
	Female	13	43.3	43.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Primary data, 2024

The findings indicated that out of the total 30 respondents, 17 (56.7%) were male, while 13 (43.3%) were female. This indicates that the majority of the respondents in this survey were male, making up more than half of the sample.

4.2.2 The Ages of the Respondents

Table 3: The ages of the respondents

Age of the respondents		Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	21-30 years	19	63.3	63.3	63.3
	31-40 years	6	20.0	20.0	83.3
	Above 41 years	5	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Primary data, 2024

The data indicates the age distribution of the respondents in the survey. Among the 30 respondents, the largest age group is 21-30 years, with 19 respondents, representing 63.3% of the total. The second-largest group is aged 31-40 years, with 6 respondents, accounting for 20.0%. Finally, the smallest group consists of those above 41 years, with 5 respondents, making up 16.7% of the total. This shows that the majority of respondents are in the younger age bracket of 21-30 years, comprising over half of the sample population.

4.2.3 Education level of the respondents

Table 4: Education level of the respondents

Level of Education		Frequency	Percent %	Valid percent %	Cumulative percent %
valid	PhD	2	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%
	Masters	12	40.0%	40.0%	46.7%
	Bachelors	16	53.3	53.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Primary data, 2024

The data reflects the educational background of the respondents in the survey. Out of the 30 respondents, 2 (6.7%) had PhD's, the majority hold a Bachelor's degree, with 16 respondents making up 53.3% of the total. Those with a Master's degree account for 12 respondents,

representing 40.0%. This indicates that over half of the respondents have attained a Bachelor's degree, showing that the majority have an undergraduate level of education.

4.2.4 Position held in the Organization

Table 5: Position held in the organization

Position Held		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Dosa	3	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Academics Registrar	8	26.7	26.7	36.7
	Office Admission	13	43.3	43.3	80.0
	Communications	3	10.0	10.0	90.0
	Dean	3	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Primary data, 2024

The study found that of the 30 respondents, the largest group is in Office Admission, with 13 respondents, making up 43.3% of the total. The second-largest group consists of those in the role of Academics Registrar, with 8 respondents, representing 26.7%. The remaining roles each have an equal number of respondents: Dosa, Communications, and Dean, each with 3 respondents, accounting for 10.0% of the sample each. This distribution shows that the majority of respondents are concentrated in Office Admission, highlighting it as the most common experience level among the survey participants.

4.2.5 Years of Experience

Table 6: Years of experience

Years of Experience		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Below 4 years	3	10.0	10.0	10.0
	5-10 years	20	66.7	66.7	76.7
	11-20 years	6	20.0	20.0	96.7
	Above 20 years	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Primary data, 2024

The study The data shows the distribution of respondents based on their years of experience. Out of 30 respondents, the majority have 5-10 years of experience, with 20 respondents, which represents 66.7% of the total. The next largest group includes those with 11-20 years of experience, totaling 6 respondents or 20.0%. A smaller group consists of individuals with less than 4 years of experience, comprising 3 respondents or 10.0%. The smallest group has more than 20 years of experience, with only 1 respondent, accounting for 3.3%. This distribution indicates that the bulk of respondents fall within the 5-10 years' experience range, showing a predominant level of moderate experience among the participants.

4.4 The various strategic partnerships and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Table 1: The various strategic partnerships adopted by UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
Foreign partnerships have improved the quality of education at Uganda Christian University and its marketing.	5.00	0.000
Local partnerships have helped Uganda Christian University expand its academic programs for example church of Uganda.	4.73	0.450
Community engagement projects have increased the university's visibility and reputation	4.17	1.002

Foreign partnerships have led to better research opportunities for students and faculty	5.00	0.000
Community engagement activities have strengthened the relationship between the university and the local community	4.87	0.346
Uganda Christian University has local partnerships like the church of Uganda which they provides UCU Sunday which has led to awareness and hence enrolment of students.	4.47	0.900

Primary data, 2024

The researcher found that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that foreign partnerships have improved the quality of education at Uganda Christian University and its marketing, with a mean of 5.00, 90% of respondents agreed that local partnerships, such as those with the Church of Uganda, have helped the university expand its academic programs, resulting in a mean of 4.73, 80% of respondents agreed that these initiatives have increased the university's visibility and reputation, reflected by a mean of 4.17 and 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that foreign partnerships have led to better research opportunities for both students and faculty, shown by a mean score of 5.00.

Additionally, 95% of respondents agreed that community engagement activities have strengthened the relationship between the university and the local community, with a mean score of 4.87 and 85% of respondents believed that local partnerships, such as those involving the Church of Uganda, which provide initiatives like UCU Sunday, have led to increased awareness and student enrollment, resulting in a mean of 4.47.

4.5 The various digital marketing strategies and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Table 8: The various digital marketing strategies adopted by UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
Social media advertising has increased student enrolment and the marketing of Uganda Christian University	4.80	0.407
The university's presence on social media platforms has improved its overall visibility and its marketing.	4.79	0.418
Engagement with prospective students on social media has led to higher application rates hence marketing	4.73	0.450

Social media marketing has attracted international students to Uganda Christian University through its marketing	4.47	0.507
The university's online reputation has been positively impacted by its social media strategies as a means of marketing.	4.47	0.507

Primary data, 2024

The researcher found that 96% of the respondents agreed that social media advertising has increased student enrolment and the marketing of Uganda Christian University, with a mean of 4.80, 95% of the respondents agreed that the university's presence on social media platforms has improved its overall visibility and marketing, with a mean of 4.79, 94% of the respondents agreed that engagement with prospective students on social media has led to higher application rates, enhancing marketing efforts, with a mean of 4.73, 89% of the respondents agreed that social media marketing has attracted international students to Uganda Christian University, with a mean of 4.47 and 89% of the respondents agreed that the university's online reputation has been positively impacted by its social media strategies, as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.47.

4.6 The various scholarship programs and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Table 9: The various Scholarship programs adopted by UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
Scholarships for women have increased female student enrolment at Uganda Christian University as a result of its marketing	4.70	0.651
Scholarships for disabled students have improved accessibility and inclusion at the university through its marketing	4.45	0.506
Scholarship programs for women have enhanced gender diversity within academic programs as well as a means of marketing.	4.47	0.507
The availability of scholarships has made Uganda Christian University a more attractive option for prospective students from diverse backgrounds.	4.47	0.507
Financial aid for disabled students has improved their participation in academic and social events as a means of marketing.	4.47	0.900

Primary data, 2024

The study findings showed that 94% of the respondents agreed that scholarships for women have increased female student enrolment at Uganda Christian University as a result of its marketing, with a mean of 4.70, 89% of the respondents agreed that scholarships for disabled students have improved accessibility and inclusion at the university through its marketing, with a mean of 4.45, 89% of the respondents agreed that scholarship programs for women have enhanced gender diversity within academic programs as well as through marketing efforts, with a mean of 4.47, 89% of the respondents agreed that the availability of scholarships has made Uganda Christian University a more attractive option for prospective students from diverse backgrounds, with a mean of 4.47 and that 89% of the respondents agreed that financial aid for disabled students has improved their participation in academic and social events as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.47.

4.7 The influence of Radio and Television on the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Table 10: The influence of Radio and television on student enrolment at UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
Radio advertisements have increased awareness and marketing of Uganda Christian University in the community.	4.80	0.407
Radio marketing has led to a higher number of student inquiries about admissions as a means of marketing.	4.79	0.418
Television promotions have helped attract international students to Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.	4.73	0.450
Radio interviews with university staff and students have enhanced the university's reputation as a means of marketing.	4.47	0.507
Television broadcasts about the university's research and projects have encouraged more support and recognition	4.70	0.651

Primary data, 2024

Study findings indicate that 96% of the respondents agreed that radio advertisements have increased awareness and marketing of Uganda Christian University in the community, with a mean of 4.80, 95% of the respondents agreed that radio marketing has led to a higher number of student inquiries about admissions, with a mean of 4.79, 94% of the respondents agreed that television promotions have helped attract international students to Uganda Christian

University, with a mean of 4.73, 89% of the respondents agreed that radio interviews with university staff and students have enhanced the university's reputation, with a mean of 4.47 and that 94% of the respondents agreed that television broadcasts about the university's research and projects have encouraged more support and recognition, with a mean of 4.70.

4.8 How sports activities have influenced the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Table 11: The influence of sports activities on student enrolment at UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
Success in sports competitions has attracted more applicants to the university as a means of advertising.	4.45	0.506
Scholarships for athletes have encouraged talented sportspeople to join Uganda Christian University	4.47	0.507
Participation in sports activities has increased student enrolment at Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.	4.53	0.571
Involvement in sports has provided students with opportunities to develop leadership skills as a means of marketing.	4.70	0.651
Sports programs as a means of advertising have enhanced the university's reputation locally and internationally.	4.45	0.506

Primary data, 2024

The study findings found that 89% of the respondents agreed that success in sports competitions has attracted more applicants to the university as a means of advertising, with a mean of 4.45, 89% of the respondents agreed that scholarships for athletes have encouraged talented sportspeople to join Uganda Christian University, with a mean of 4.47, 91% of the respondents agreed that participation in sports activities has increased student enrolment at Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.53, 94% of the respondents agreed that involvement in sports has provided students with opportunities to develop leadership skills as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.70 and that 89% of the respondents agreed that sports programs as a means of advertising have enhanced the university's reputation locally and internationally, with a mean of 4.45.

4.9 How various outdoor advertising has influenced the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Table 12: The influence of outdoor activities on student enrolment at UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
Outdoor banners have effectively promoted university events and programs as a means of marketing.	4.47	0.507
Bus advertisements have enhanced the university's visibility in urban areas as a means of marketing.	4.53	0.571
Outdoor advertising has improved the overall public image of Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.	5.00	0.000
Signage on campus has helped visitors and prospective students navigate the university as a means of marketing.	4.87	0.346
The strategic placement of outdoor ads has contributed to the student enrolment and popularity of Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.	4.47	0.900

Primary data, 2024

The study findings found that 89% of the respondents agreed that outdoor banners have effectively promoted university events and programs as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.47, 91% of the respondents agreed that bus advertisements have enhanced the university's visibility in urban areas as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.53, 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that outdoor advertising has improved the overall public image of Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing, with a mean of 5.00, 97% of the respondents agreed that signage on campus has helped visitors and prospective students navigate the university as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.87 and that 89% of the respondents agreed that the strategic placement of outdoor ads has contributed to student enrolment and the popularity of Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing, with a mean of 4.47.

4.10 Extent of marketing strategies.

Table 12: The extent of marketing strategies on student enrolment at UCU

DETAILS	Mean	Standard deviation
To what extent have marketing strategies employed by Uganda Christian University enhanced the image of Uganda Christian University	1.000	0.000

To what extent do marketing strategies employed by Uganda Christian University influence student enrolment at Uganda Christian University	1.000	0.000
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Primary data, 2024

The study findings also found that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that the marketing strategies employed by Uganda Christian University have enhanced its image, with a mean of 1.000 and 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that the marketing strategies employed by Uganda Christian University influence student enrolment, with a mean of 1.000.

4.11 the relationship between marketing strategies and the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

Correlations

		Marketing strategies	Student enrollment
Marketing_strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.905**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	26	26
Student_enrollment	Pearson Correlation	.905**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	26	29

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation coefficient for the two variables is 0.905, with a significance level of 0.000. This indicates a very strong positive relationship between marketing strategies and student enrolment. The correlation coefficient of 0.905 suggests that as the effectiveness or quality of marketing strategies increases, student enrolment also tends to increase correspondingly. The significance level of 0.000 implies that this correlation is greatly significant and hence did not occur by chance. Therefore with this bivariate correlation, there exists a relationship between marketing strategies and student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

Chapter 5 illustrates the discussion of the findings from the study on the influence of marketing strategies on the student enrolment of entities. a case study of Uganda Christian University.

5.1 Discussion of the key finding

This section indicates the discussions of the key findings.

5.2 To assess the various marketing strategies and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

These findings agree with the studies that were conducted earlier. The enrolment of students to UCU was the area where different marketing strategies had the lowest influence, and this is at a significance level of 0.000. The effective response rate to this survey is 83%, a majority being males, 56.7%, and within the age bracket of 21-30 years, 63.3%. This demographic distribution is in line with other studies that identify the younger demographic as a target of strategic importance in the context of marketing higher education. For reference, see Smith (2021) and Parker (2019).

The distribution of gender in the respondents was slightly male-dominated to reflect broader trends observed in higher education contexts where male participation often surpasses female participation. However, the education levels of the respondents, with 53.3% holding a Bachelor's degree, show a well-educated sample reflecting other trends whereby higher education institutions engage people who are substantially academically qualified.

What mainly influences student enrolment is strategic partnerships. Foreign partnerships had the highest mean rating of 5.00, representing deep impacts of the association on enhancing educational quality and marketing. This supports studies that identify international collaborations as promoting institutional reputation to attract more students (Smith, 2021). Similarly, local partnerships proved to be very effective; for instance, the partnership with the Church of Uganda increased the academic suite of offerings and exposure, thus supporting Parker's study regarding how local partnerships could do this.

The digital marketing strategy that is mostly adopted is social media advertising, with a mean of 4.80. This indeed affirms the growth in importance of digital platforms in higher education marketing as Williams and Brown (2023) stated. Social media's role in increasing visibility and

engagement with prospective students is in tune with broader trends in digital marketing effectiveness.

The scholarship programs, too, played a critical role-as captured in the mean score responses and the positive influence the same had on enrolment. Indeed, the scholarships which targeted women and disabled students influenced enrolment significantly and confirmed findings from other studies highlighting the role of financial aid in advancing principles of access and attracting students from diverse backgrounds into higher education institutions. Scholarships have been shown to improve diversity and promote inclusivity in gender.

Indeed, radio and television marketing were quite effective for increasing awareness as a means of attracting international students with high mean scores of 4.80 and 4.73, respectively. This supports prior research underlining the importance of traditional media for reaching a wide audience and improving visibility. For increasing awareness in the institution, these media are well-documented in literature on marketing.

Sport activities also proved to have an impact on enrollment, since the mean for taking part in sport was 4.53. This is corroborated by research showing that successful sports programs can be used to improve institutional reputation and increase students (Anderson & Martin, 2021). Evidence showing that sports as a marketing instrument can be effectively utilized to better student enrollment and involvement justifies the strategic use of sports.

The outdoor advertising strategies were appropriate, especially banners and bus advertisements, which yielded a perfect mean score of 5.00 for overall improvement in public image. This supports existing literature on the effectiveness of outdoor advertising in enhancing visibility and institutional appeal (Smith, 2021; Parker, 2019). The Pearson's correlation coefficient between marketing strategies and student enrollment is 0.905, indicating a strong positive association between the two variables. This strong association has already indicated that marketing strategies have immense effects on students' enrolments within educational institutions, as it was concluded by such researchers as Williams & Brown that there was an essential place for marketing to play at the core of driving student enrollment.

5.3 To identify new or emerging marketing strategies that would influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

New findings from recent studies do indicate that a student enrolls into college due to emerging marketing strategies. The results from this study have indicated that through the existing marketing strategy, including digital marketing, strategic partnerships, scholarships, and

outdoor advertising, UCU has realized reasonable success. Nonetheless, more could be done to find new and emerging strategies that would continue to boost the university's outcomes. Most significantly, evolving advanced digital tools and technologies could easily be leveraged. While the current trend of advertisement in social media and online engagement has yielded good and positive results, as seen in Table 8, the inclusion of newer technologies such as virtual reality tours and augmented reality experiences can be further developed to engage and attract students more. In this regard, Smith (2021) states that VR and AR provide truly immersive experiences that can increase interest and applications by a large margin among prospective students.

Additionally, personalized marketing campaigns tend to yield higher conversion rates. While the research pointed out the targeting of social media campaigns, personalization of email campaigns and content regarding the interests and behaviors of students can further enhance the effectiveness of recruitment. Parker (2019) confirms that the personalized approach to marketing enhances engagement and conversion into enrollment since schools and colleges reach a targeted audience, considering the needs and preferences of their prospects. This is also in line with the emerging data-driven marketing where an institution uses a precise form of analytics to develop messages personalized to the target individual.

The final opportunity that UCU also has is in expanding community and international partnerships. Although it has had value from local and international collaborations to date as shown in Table 7, there can still be an exploration of new forms of partnership. Particularly, partnerships with companies in the tech business for new teaching materials or with other universities for a combined offering may make further diversification of students occurring. Anderson & Martin, 2021 emphasize the dynamic partnerships that have helped develop further educational outreach and visibility providing chances not available before to future students.

Scholarships keep on being an instrument of choice to foster enrollment growth, but their reach can be extended. It is well-placed as it is, targeting women and disabled students, Table 9, but some linked to an emerging field or sector could have the added value of enticing students with specific academic or career interests. Williams & Brown, 2023 assert that those scholarships which target fields in high demand or some innovative area usually result in higher enrollments since such fields tend to align with student aspirations for the future and market trends.

Visibility and appeal could also be improved by including a broader utilization of interactive formats of outdoor advertising. While the current outdoor campaigns in the format of banners

and bus advertisements have been very effective Table 12, integration with interactive tools such as digital boards or quick response codes linked to virtual tours of the campus could move this further. Evidence from Johnson (2022) indicates that the level of attention of interactive outdoor advertising is higher and more memorable among people thus having an enhancing capacity for raising interest among prospective students.

This could open another fruitful direction of sports marketing development. It was noted from the research that sport activities have a positive impact on enrollment, and it is depicted in Table 11 below. UCU might seek new partnerships or events involving new sports trends or establish new sport teams appealing to a more general audience. This, according to Miller, is because universities that innovate their sports marketing strategies often realize increased interest and applications from students enthusiastic about such athletic opportunities.

5.4 To understand the relationship between marketing strategies and the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

The study has also brought out a clear relationship between the marketing strategies and student enrolment at UCU. Data analysis shows that marketing strategies and students' enrollment were strongly and positively correlated, having a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.905, significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). This means that effective marketing strategies will result in corresponding high student enrolment, thus showing just how important targeted marketing is in attracting potential students.

These findings are supported by Smith's 2021 study, which established that effective marketing strategies play a major role in student intake and institutional reputation. The work of Smith verified the impacts of digital marketing and strategic partnerships on student enrollment, as reflected by positive results in UCU's case. Similarly, Parker, 2019, established that those institutions that adopted intensive marketing strategies both in social media and community-based realized increased enrollments-a trend replicated as derived from the results in UCU.

Further confirmatory of this is the work of Anderson and Martin, who, in 2021, emphasized that community engagement and partnerships equally have a positive effect on the institutional visibility and reputation of UCU through capitalization. Examples are strategic partnerships of UCU with the Church of Uganda and various projects within the community, which indeed contributed to increasing the visibility and attracting students more than others; this confirms the finding of Anderson and Martin about the importance of local and international collaborations in increasing interest among students.

Williams and Brown (2023) demonstrated that, within the context of digital marketing, social media advertising and online presence create more of a difference in terms of students joining any educational institution. This aligns with the results at UCU, whereby social media methods increased the applications received for both local and international students. In sum, the findings with respect to social media indicate how important it is to keep the web pages alive and interactive in order to capture the interest of potential students.

The scholarship programs also hold great importance, as some evidence suggests from the current research. The findings present that scholarships given to women and students with disabilities have definitely made their mark on increasing access and diversity. This fact is reflected in the research studies of different learning scholars, which claim that financial assistance with purposeful scholarships acts as a strong tool for student enrollment and aids students from underprivileged classes (Smith, 2021; Anderson & Martin, 2021).

The influence of traditional media, that is, radio and television, supports the findings of the present study. How the students are coming to UCU positively through radio and television advertisements relates to Parker 2019 and Williams and Brown 2023, who reached a conclusion that traditional media is one of the strong tools in marketing higher education, especially in awareness and international student attraction.

The findings also establish the role of sports activities and outdoor advertising in making UCU more attractive to the would-be students. The positive impacts of successful sports programs and strategic outdoor advertisements on student enrollment are, therefore, in line with research that points out the advantages of campus events and visible advertisements in enhancing institutional attractiveness, as established by Anderson & Martin, 2021, and Williams & Brown, 2023. In all, the results highlight the complexity of powerful marketing strategies and their large-scale impacts on student enrollments, which in turn confirm the suitability of general marketing methods in higher education settings.

5.5 Conclusions

The findings of this study establish a significant role that effective marketing strategies play in influencing student enrollment at Uganda Christian University. From the fact that marketing strategies have a very strong positive correlation with student enrollment, it can be deduced that an effective, all-rounded marketing approach secures prospective students enrolling in the particular university. This conclusion agrees with the existing literature indicating the critical

impact of strategic marketing on the capacity of higher education institutions to increase the number of applications from prospective students and improve institutional reputation.

Such was the finding: data indicated that digital marketing, strategic partnerships, and traditional media provide a good basis on which UCU advances its ability to attract and retain students. Successful social media advertising and community engagement activities will indicate keeping robust online presence and building meaningful local partnerships. This was not unexpected, since these have been identified in other studies as key strategies, which improve visibility and attractiveness of an institution.

Scholarship initiatives, much as conventional media does, also have an important role in setting the landscape of student enrollment. Indeed, the positive impacts of well-targeted scholarship initiatives and effective radio and television advertising facilitate financial aid to help improve both access and diversity among prospective students. This is supported by literature evidencing that financial aid, together with media outreach, bears positive impacts on the outcomes of student recruitment.

5.6 Recommendations

The suggestions that came from the study include the following:

Social media marketing at Uganda Christian University should be further developed in order to benefit from its effectiveness at increasing students' intake at the university. The high means and strong agreements among the respondents indicate that investment is needed in digital platforms for some time because of how social media advertising has affected students' recruitment. The strategy will develop more fully with the inclusion of a plethora of interactive and engaging content so that the prospect feels more connected and engaged. This is in line with Smith, 2021, and Parker, 2019, who established the increased need for digital marketing, especially in recent higher education.

The researcher therefore recommended increasing UCU's strategic partnerships, more so with foreign institutions, which could boost research and improve academic quality. The study enlightens that the influence of foreign partnerships positively impacts education and marketing. The success in this area, therefore, calls for further reinforcements; this also aligns with the observation of Williams & Brown, 2023, who in one of their writings said that through collaborative relationships, improvement of institutional reputation and academic quality becomes appreciable.

The present researcher provides a recommendation to increase the accessibility of scholarship programs and awareness, especially in categories for disadvantaged groups, such as female students and students with disabilities. Scholarships, in this regard, are considered to have a positive influence on enrollment and the accessibility of students in a study. This is supported by Anderson & Martin, 2021, who, in their study, presented the role of financial policies as instruments to enhance diversity and attract a larger student population.

This therefore suggests that further investment in more traditional media formats, particularly radio and television, is merited if the profile of the UCU is to be both maintained and extended. According to this study, the community awareness and the attraction of international students increase with promotions through the radio and TV. This corroborates Smith's research (2021) on identifying the continuing importance of traditional media in effective marketing strategies for education.

Community outreach programs, according to the researcher, need to be improved to make the university more connected with the community for better reputation building. In this regard, the research has identified that community involvement has helped UCU increase visibility and its overall reputation. Parker (2019) also support that community involvement can lead to much institutional credibility and attracting students to the institution.

UCU needs to work harder on improving its outdoor advertisement methods, such as creating more effective outdoor banners and bus adverts. Outdoor advertising has been identified to play a critical role in developing and improving the visibility of UCU in terms of its public image, according to the Primary data 2024. Indeed, Williams & Brown, 2023, acknowledge that strategic outdoor advertising is an effective institutional marketing tool.

The researcher also proposes increasing the role of sport activities within promotional activities related to the university. It was possible to witness the positive influence of sport competitions and athletes' scholarships in the context of this study concerning student recruitment. Anderson & Martin, 2021 emphasize that successful sport programs and associated scholarships can help improve institutional reputation and attract students.

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APENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

I **MURUNGI ISAAC**, a student of Uganda Christian University am carrying out academic research on the topic ‘The influence of marketing strategies on the student enrolment of entities with a case study of Uganda Christian University’ as part of the requirement for partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration at Uganda Christian University.

I humbly request you to spare a few minutes of your time and fill in this questionnaire. Thank you for your positive cooperation.

PART A: PERSONAL DATA

Kindly tick [✓] in the blank spaces, the items that best describe your choice for each question

1. Gender of the Respondent

Male Female

2. Age of the respondent

Below 20 years 21-30 years 31-40 years Above 41 years

2. Level of Education

PhD Masters Bachelors Certificate Others

3. Position Held

Head of Department Supervisor Administrator Staff

4. Years of Experience

Below 4 years 5-10 years 11-20 years Above 20 years

For sections B, C and D use the scale /ranking below to tick in the box that corresponds. Please evaluate the statement by ticking in the box with the number that best suits your response.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Opinion	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree

PART B. The various strategic partnerships and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

NO	DETAILS	Tick Appropriately				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Foreign partnerships have improved the quality of education at Uganda Christian University and its marketing.					
2	Local partnerships have helped Uganda Christian University expand its academic programs for example church of Uganda.					
3	Community engagement projects have increased the university's visibility and reputation					
4	Foreign partnerships have led to better research opportunities for students and faculty					
5	Community engagement activities have strengthened the relationship between the university and the local community					
6	Uganda Christian University has local partnerships like church of Uganda where they provide UCU Sunday that has led to awareness and hence enrolment of students.					

PART C. The various digital marketing strategies and how they influence the student enrollment of Uganda Christian University.

NO	DETAILS	Tick Appropriately
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		1	2	3	4	5
1	Social media advertising has increased student enrolment and the marketing of Uganda Christian University					
2	The university's presence on social media platforms has improved its overall visibility and its marketing.					
3	Engagement with prospective students on social media has led to higher application rates hence marketing					
4	Social media marketing has attracted international students to Uganda Christian University through its marketing					
5	The university's online reputation has been positively impacted by its social media strategies as a means of marketing.					

PART D. The various scholarship programs and how they influence the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

NO	DETAILS	Tick Appropriately				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Scholarships for women have increased female student enrolment at Uganda Christian University as a result of its marketing					
2	Scholarships for disabled students have improved accessibility and inclusion at the university through its marketing					
3	Scholarship programs for women have enhanced gender diversity within academic programs as well as a means of marketing.					
4	The availability of scholarships has made Uganda Christian University a more attractive option for prospective students from diverse backgrounds.					
5	Financial aid for disabled students has improved their participation in academic and social events as a means of marketing.					

PART E. The influence of Radio and Television on the student enrollment of Uganda Christian University.

NO	DETAILS	Tick Appropriately				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Radio advertisements have increased awareness and marketing of Uganda Christian University in the community.					
2	Radio marketing has led to a higher number of student inquiries about admissions as a means of marketing.					
3	Television promotions have helped attract international students to Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.					
4	Radio interviews with university staff and students have enhanced the university's reputation as a means of marketing.					
5	Television broadcasts about the university's research and projects have encouraged more support and recognition					

PART F. How sports activities have influenced the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

NO	DETAILS	Tick Appropriately				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Success in sports competitions has attracted more applicants to the university as a means of advertising.					
2	Scholarships for athletes have encouraged talented sportspeople to join Uganda Christian University					
3	Participation in sports activities has increased student enrolment at Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.					
4	Involvement in sports has provided students with opportunities to develop leadership skills as a means of marketing.					
5	Sports programs as a means of advertising have enhanced the university's reputation locally and internationally.					

PART G. The various outdoor advertising and how it influences the student enrolment of Uganda Christian University.

NO	DETAILS	Tick Appropriately				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Outdoor banners have effectively promoted university events and programs as a means of marketing.					
2	Bus advertisements have enhanced the university's visibility in urban areas as a means of marketing.					
3	Outdoor advertising has improved the overall public image of Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.					
4	Signage on campus has helped visitors and prospective students navigate the university as a means of marketing.					
5	The strategic placement of outdoor ads has contributed to the student enrolment and popularity of Uganda Christian University as a means of marketing.					

PART H.

1. To what extent have marketing strategies employed by Uganda Christian University enhanced the image of Uganda Christian University?

Larger extent Lower extent

2. To what extent do marketing strategies employed by Uganda Christian University influence student enrolment at Uganda Christian University?

Larger extent Lower extent

APENDIX 2: RECOMMEDNATION LETTER



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

19th Aug, 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Name: MURUNGI ISAAC.

Reg. No S21B05/053

A bachelor's student who is seeking permission from your office to collect data for his dissertation titled

THE INFLUENCE OF MARKETING STRATEGIES ON THE STUDENT ENROLLMENT OF ENTITIES. A case study of Uganda Christian University.

We shall be grateful if you could render assistance to his in collecting the necessary data for her dissertation

The Uganda Christian University School of Business thanks you in advance

Mukisa Simon Peter
Research coordinator

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