

Theses of Doctoral (Ph.D.) Dissertation

**THE ROLE OF MARKETING IN THE ELIMINATION OF PZB GAPS
OF THE HUNGARIAN HIGHER EDUCATION**

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The situation of Higher Education (HE) has changed radically by the end of the 20th century. Due to mass education, the ever increasing number of students, HE had to leave its narrowly defined academic role and had to become an organic part of the economic environment (Polónyi 2006). HE institutions did not only have to improve scientific knowledge but also had to act as service providers, trying to satisfy consumer needs at the highest level possible. This change resulted in the implementation of different management tools, among others the ones of quality management and marketing.

In the recent decades, competition between HE institutions and HE systems became increasingly fierce. One reason for this phenomenon was that the number of enrolled students multiplied in the last decades¹ followed by the increase in the number of HE institutions. Besides, foreign HE institutions also entered the Hungarian HE market however; Hungarian institutions could enroll foreign students as well. Hungary's situation is special. Demographic data show that the number of students to be enrolled is going to decrease in the following years and decades (Polónyi 2004) while Berács (2008) points out that the competitiveness of the Hungarian HE system – especially the ability to “export” students – is plummeting (Berács 2008 pp.36). Under these circumstances special emphasis is being laid on high quality education services, quality assurance systems and communication towards students.

1. Motivation and Analytical Framework

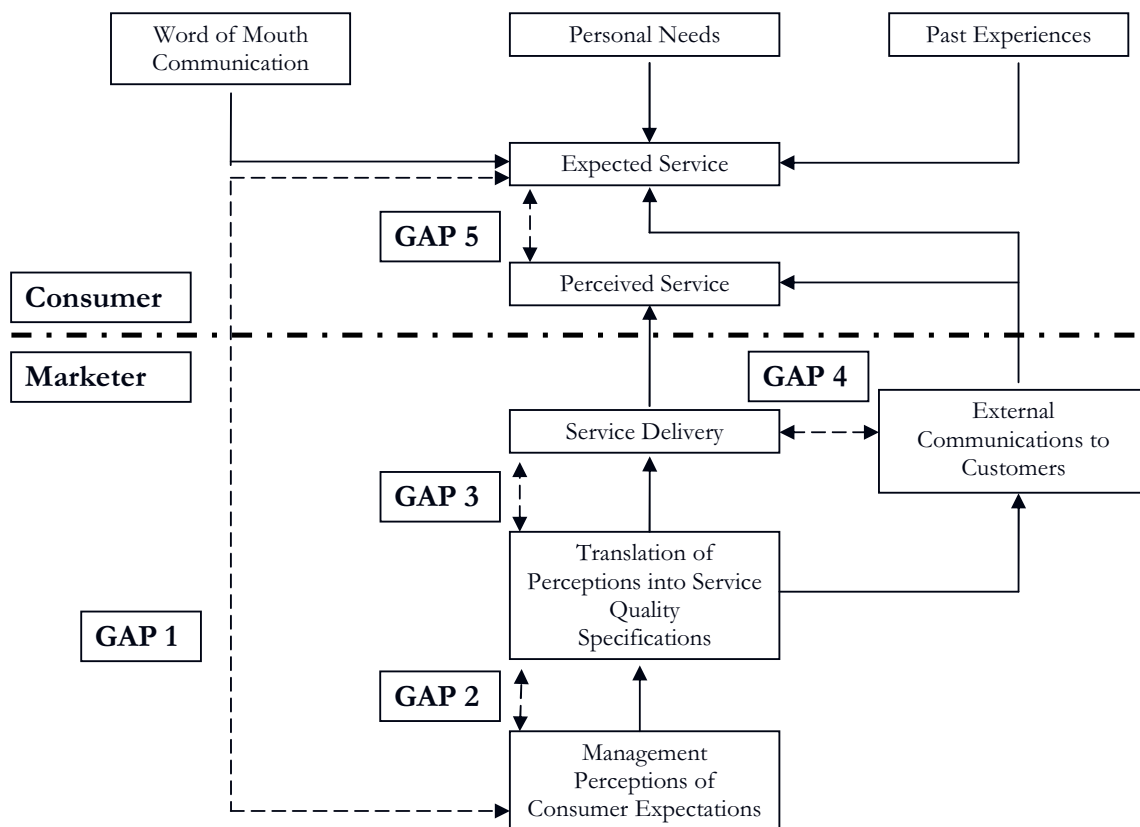
The Hungarian HE and the situation of HE institutions are utterly interesting. Our universities and colleges were founded on the ‘Humboldt’ structure of the previous decades and centuries educating a limited number of students in the classic ‘elite’ way. The HE system reacted on the change in 1989 with extensive growth; increased the number and capacity of institutions. However, there was no real transformation although it was obvious that the increased number of students cannot be educated at the previous level of quality. The Bologna transformation offered a solution to this problem but the process did not deliver the results expected; the quality of education did not increase but more and more professors kept complaining having nostalgic feelings to the previous system (Hrubos 2008).

¹ The increase was even more prevalent in the post-socialist countries like Hungary where the number of students quadrupled in not 50 but 15 years (Polónyi 2008).

Now that the increase in the number of students seems to stop the question arises: how to act in the demand market? What can we promise and what cannot? And how can we market a service in which's superior quality we do not really believe either?

HE is a service so it can be discussed within the context of service marketing. Service quality is a part of service marketing. One of the best known models of service quality theories is the GAP-model by Parasuraman et al. (1985) extended by Zeithaml et al. (1988).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Service Quality



Source: Parasuraman et al. (1985)

The model was made to determine where gaps (discrepancies) are in delivering service quality which, in sum, count for the discrepancy between the perceived and expected quality, in other words, the extent to which the consumer is satisfied or disappointed. The overall goal is to minimize disappointment (GAP5), which can be managed by the tools specified in the extension of Zeithaml et al. (1988).

It is not obvious whether the model originally created for traditional services can be applied to the special service of HE and if it can, what limitations are there in the use of the it? What happens, if we apply the model to the institutional environment of the Hungarian HE system? Does the Hungarian HE system possess of any characteristic that has a special implication according to this model?

Including some mechanisms and limitations of the information processing systems of students enables us to have a more detailed view of the model and helps us answer the final question: Can marketing tools help minimize GAP5?

My work does not aim at renewing the GAP-model or at measuring anything with it. I use the model as “glasses”, as an analytical framework through which I can observe the Hungarian HE and come to conclusions in which perspectives of the Hungarian HE, services marketing, quality theories and consumer information processing theories are alike present and can help HE actors reach higher student satisfaction due to higher perceived education quality.

2. Structure of the Dissertation

The *introductory* chapter of the thesis presents the basic problem, the research questions and theses which are supported by the findings of the following chapters. The next, *second* chapter presents various quality definitions and the most important quality concepts. The *third* chapter presents the structure and function of the consumer information processing system and the decision-making heuristics that are employed for assessing perceived quality images and that constrain rational decision making. The *fourth* chapter presents services and their marketing implications. The *fifth* chapter presents the GAP-model of Parasuraman et al. (1985), a marketing focused approach to services quality. The same chapter presents the extended model as well as a special emphasis on aspects that are important for consumer decision making. The *sixth* chapter is dealing with the general questions of HE marketing. It presents the evolution of HE from the medieval ages until now with special emphasis on the Bologna transformation process and its consequences. The *seventh* chapter analyses HE from a marketing perspective pinpointing the most important aspects for the GAP model. The *eighth* chapter examines the Hungarian HE system in scope of the GAP-model and under the

previously presented institutional and consumer perception constraints. This synthesizing chapter includes the results of the dissertation as well. Using the conclusions of the previous chapters I draw my general conclusions and present my theses. In the final, *ninth* chapter I answer my research questions.

3. Research Questions

The general research question of my dissertation is:

What role can marketing have in the elimination of the PZB gaps of the Hungarian HE?

The general research question can be divided into 3 sub-questions:

1. Under what limitations can we use the PZB model in the special case of the Hungarian HE?
2. What kind of distinct characteristics does the Hungarian HE have in the scope of the PZB model?
3. What possibilities does marketing have in the improvement of perceived service quality of the Hungarian HE?

4. Theses of the Dissertation

4.1. Expected service – Management Perceptions of Consumer Expectations

One reason for the existence of the gap between the expected and perceived service quality is that there is a gap between the expected service and the management perceptions of consumer expectations.

This discrepancy might have several reasons. First, students are average consumers with limited information processing capacity, while members of the academics have the same constraints and act contraproductively due to institutional reasons.

On behalf of the students, limited cognitive capacity is first to emphasize. HE is a complicated service with many relevant parameters for the students that contribute to the general quality perception. The system – like in the case of most services – is only partially accessible for them so they have no idea about the majority of the service parameters provided and even if they had, due to the high complexity of the system they would not be able to evaluate it accurately (Bettman 1979).

The second problem is that whatever expectations students might have they are not able to express them in a properly parameterized way. Quality is namely a construct with high abstraction level (Ahtola 1984) and for HE is quite a complex service students tend to simplify even more so the need for parameterization and the rather abstract evaluation of students are even more difficult to harmonize.

Even if students wanted to they cannot express their expectations as much parameterized as HE leaders would require. Besides, hardly anyone ever asks them. The Hungarian HE system had a long history of not paying real attention to student requirements.

In the classic Humboldt structure, there was no real incentive to shape the activity of universities according to student requirements to any extent. Education and research have been organized according to the insights of leading professors whose decisions have never been questioned because their professionalism has been accredited by the academics, the most important quality assurance body.

In the classic “elite” education of universities supply was limited so students were probably satisfied with being merely university citizens. Limited supply and a relatively static external environment made the system fairly efficient satisfying the needs of the country for well-educated people including the assurance of its own academic supply. From an output perspective we can observe that both the needs of the students and the labor market have been satisfied so students had no reason to formulate a request and the academics had no incentive to take any of these into account.

With the introduction of the socialist planned economy the Humboldt structure remained so universities were run by relatively sovereign organizational units, leading professors, while education remained narrow scoped. The number of students remained low due to several

administrative constraints set by different political and economic guidelines. Due to system rigidity by relative sovereignty and central planning student requests were still neglected.

After the change in 1989 in Hungary the number of enrolled students started to increase while academic freedom was about to consolidate. This situation had two relevant consequences. The increase in the number of students was not followed by the increase in the number of institutions immediately so until the end of the decade the excess demand remained. The academia having just consolidated its sovereignty and former Humboldt type education system was not motivated to take student expectations into account in any way.

In 1999 the transformation of HE according to Bologna principles started. As any change, this also resulted in institutional resistance. The reasons are diverse. The basic problem was that the Hungarian government tried to act as an eminent student by transforming the HE system quickly, leaving little time for the development of new programs. Institutions had to come forward with results soon and they often chose the most convenient way by inserting the content of former programs into the new structure. Simple renaming of former programs served also for maintaining status quo (Polónyi–Siklós 2008).

The mere process of changing the education structure could have incorporated consideration of students' and employers' interests at the development of new programs but because of the lack of time and unpredictability of changes institutional leaders had other priorities.

The programs originally developed for a narrow-scoped educational approach survived in a structural environment that is basically inappropriate to host these programs especially given the increased number of enrolled students. It's no wonder that professors overladen by low-efficiency work do not consider student expectations to be important. For HE programs are not going to be altered due to accomplished accreditation student expectations are not going to be considered in the future either.

1st thesis: The main reason for the existence of GAPI lies basically in the institutional structure. In the Humboldt era there was no tradition for considering student expectations at all. During the Bologna transition process mainly former programs were inserted into the new structure partly because the lack of money and time and partly because of maintaining

status quo. For accreditation process is completed there is little chance for the newly established programs to be altered.

4.2. Management Perceptions of Consumer Expectations – Translation of Perceptions into Service Quality Specifications

The second reason for the existence of the gap between the expected and perceived service quality is that there is a gap between the management perceptions of consumer expectations and the translation of these perceptions into service quality specifications.

This discrepancy has multiple reasons too. First, university leaders might not want to build on these expectations when specifying service attributes. The first thesis explains this phenomenon. Student expectations traditionally play little role in the planning of education in Humboldt-type systems (Tóth 2001). Considering that present university leaders spent most of their professional career in that era, it is understandable that they do not feel the urge of considering these expectations. The Bologna transition has not changed the situation either for in most institutes the former programs remained, although inserted into the new framework.

Second, considering student expectations is sometimes not feasible. Students often act on their subjective short-term interests when expressing themselves on the question of expected HE services. Taking these interests seriously and incorporating them into HE programs would not only harm the institution but also the society and even the student in the long run. Students are namely not the only target group for HE (Bay-Daniel 2001). When making a decision on HE interests of all target groups must be taken into consideration in a way that the welfare of the whole society increases and not only the one of individual groups.

Another reason why including student expectations into service specifications is sometimes not suitable is because these can modify parameters that are disadvantageous in case of quality assurance evaluations. In case of accredited programs there is little room for modifications and meeting the prerequisites of accreditation have priority over student expectations so there is little chance for the latter being seriously considered.

The third reason why student expectations can only be taken into consideration up to a certain level is that the HE service's adaptability is very limited. Most HE institutions – as stated before – conduct mass education with an unsuitable program embedded into a structure that is unsuitable for it. One of the goals of the Bologna process would have been to make HE more adaptive and flexible and if programs and methods would have been adjusted to the new system there would be some chance for adaptation. However, the Hungarian HE preserved the former system – embedded into a new structure – and all these, together with the increasing number of enrolled students diminish the possibility of student expectations being taken into consideration.

The fourth reason is the lack of commitment from the side of university leaders. If they are not committed to the issue they will never take any measures to reach this goal and there will be no chance for the situation to be changed.

2nd thesis: The limited range of possible decisions is the main reason for the HE system not being able to significantly reduce GAP2. Constraints are the expectations of stakeholders other than students: labor market, state, parents, and broadly speaking the whole society. The state means a particularly strong constraint because it can enforce its expectations directly by administrative means.

4.3. Translation of Perceptions into Service Quality Specifications – Service Delivery

The third reason of the existence of the gap between the expected and perceived HE service quality of the Hungarian HE system is that there is always a difference between incorporation of consumer expectations into service quality specifications and the actual service delivery.

Parameterizing service characteristics provides constant control during service provision because the provider can constantly compare its performance to the previously set standards and make corrections if necessary. This incentive is especially strong if deviation from standards is sanctioned (Chevaillier 2003).

For the HE system of Hungary this kind of control is provided by compulsory accreditation and constant quality assurance. In a mere theoretical and technical way, the Bologna process

is a success story in the reduction of GAP3 because it forced external control on the otherwise quite heterogeneous system keeping the institutions at planning their operation according to European standards and then sticking to them permanently.

The phrases ‘theoretical and technical’ are in the previous paragraph for a reason. Every quality assurance system is just as good as much actors stick to it. But as execution and data provision is the task of the institutions some questions arise.

Every quality assurance system limits organizational autonomy so it induces more or less resistance among members of the organization. This is especially true if the existence of the system puts excess burden on the shoulders of those members. Another problem is that benefits of the system can be perceived only in the long run and indirectly while disadvantages – like excess workload – can be perceived directly and almost immediately. Because of all these stakeholders tend to consider the system an unnecessary liability and handle it with negligence – e.g. entering statistical data on random.

Intentional modification of data is a more serious form of fraud. The underlying reasons are similar to the previous case with one difference: in this case, benefits can be perceived immediately while disadvantages – like punishment for the illegal activity – apply only later on, if ever (e.g. because there is no real sanction).

The Hungarian HE is not free from these problems either. One reason is that running quality assurance systems and providing appropriate data is in many cases not the only and not even a priority task for employees. Another reason is divided responsibility. There are many people running the system and a single data unit is often the result of the cooperation of several departments and people so it is extremely hard to determine whose fault it is if inappropriate data get into the system (Bálint 2008).

Quality assurance systems only measure deviation from the standard but take standards as given. During the Hungarian Bologna transformation practically all institutions accredited its former programs hardly feasible for mass education in a new structure and since then, they stick to these standards. That is the explanation for the phenomenon of HE institutions complying with standards yet experiencing deteriorating education quality.

The problem of role conflicts also has to be mentioned. An established quality assurance system can only work efficiently if it applies to everyone, without exception. On the macro level it means that every institution has to stick to its standards and on the micro level it means that rules apply to all employees. If any actor on any level gets allowance, the basic idea of quality assurance gets compromised.

3rd thesis: With the Bologna transition process special emphasis has been laid on GAP 3. Meeting the standards however – according to the specialties of the Hungarian transition – does not automatically mean higher quality. The specialty of the Hungarian Bologna transition is that the problems of mass education have been treated using a suitable framework filled with unsuitable content remaining from the previous era and standardized with the act of accreditation. The Hungarian HE faces problems at maintaining a quality assurance system that – contrary to its original goal – rather deteriorates education quality.

4.4 Service Delivery – External Communications to Consumers

The fourth reason for the existence of the gap between the expected and perceived service quality is that there is a gap between service quality specifications and their communication towards consumers.

Communication is crucial in the perception of service quality by both consumers and staff because quite often it is the only point of reference due to the intangibility of services.

HE is a special kind of service. It is special in a sense that besides students several other stakeholders are affected by its output, like the state, the labor market, the relatives of the students and in a broad sense the whole society. It is also special because the decision about service consumption has a long-term effect; investment will only return in several decades' time and labor market trends must be foreseen by years to make a rational decision.

From a marketing point of view HE is an experience good because the service has little tangible form and – aside from extreme cases – the consumer is unable to determine service quality in a more or less objective way.

HE being an experience good makes communication even more important. Consumers perceive service characteristics through two channels: through the service delivered and through communication. The less information the consumer gets from the service delivered the more dependent it is on communication.

But it does not mean we can create an arbitrary – e.g. extremely positive – image. Consumers evaluate both sources simultaneously and if the discrepancy is too big they will consider the service provider to be not trustworthy. But in case of a certain – still believable – discrepancy it will substitute missing information with available one – in this case the one of promotion.

The problem is we do not know where that “limit” is. Consumers are very heterogeneous concerning this trait. But if the service provider – in this case a HE institution – makes a mistake by creating an excessively positive image exceeding the differential threshold² of the present or prospective consumer, the student is going to share its disappointment with others too who – because HE services only have a few tangible elements – cannot confute the information themselves. The GAP model makes this problem clear. Expected service depends largely on information coming from other consumers who already consumed the service in question.³ Negative word of mouth decreases the level of expected service which should not be a problem on its own because a lower level is easier to reach or exceed but if it sinks below a certain – and very variable thus unforeseeable – level the consumer will refuse to consume making it impossible to the service provider to improve its own reputation by exceeding expectations.

Students formulate different ideas about the same stimulus (e.g. lecture) due to their different CIP⁴ systems so perceived service quality will be different as well. But in this case service providers are basically unable to differentiate their services.⁵ If the provided service will be compared to communication there will necessarily be some discrepancy between the two elements.

² The minimal difference between two stimuli (in this case the perceived service and communication) where the stimuli can already be perceived as separate.

³ And the more important the other person is to the consumer the stronger it affects him.

⁴ Consumer Information Processing.

⁵ Certainly, in STP marketing there is a possibility to target differentiated services accurately but HE especially in times of mass education has serious problems with service customization.

A solution of this problem is to communicate by service provision making even more service elements tangible.⁶ In an optimal case the consumer will not experience any bad ‘surprises’.⁷ The consumer will be involved into the service provision process and will experience the idea of services quality himself, which would be hard to define through traditional communication channels due to its abstract and subjective nature.⁸

With this solution we seemingly eliminate the communication component from our model and by doing so we also eliminate GAP4. However, this change is only illusory. We do not eliminate communication but rather use a part of the service provided as communication.⁹ In case of HE prospective students cannot entirely consume the service because they theoretically cannot attend seminars, use the electronic systems, or consult professors.¹⁰ When consuming the service entirely there will be elements communication did not prepare them for so GAP4 remains, although it is expected to shrink compared to traditional communication. The main reason for all this is diminishing selective interpretation because difference between interpretation of a part of a service and interpretation of the entire service is probably smaller than interpretation of the communication about a service and interpretation of the entire service especially because traditional communication only has limited capabilities to transfer messages with high abstraction level.

4th thesis: Reification has a major role in diminishing GAP4. By reification communication credibility can be improved by partly eliminating some discrepancies based on selective interpretation strengthened by contrast effect. Because if – in an extreme case – we eliminate all foreign elements from communication, interpretation of communication will be done by the same mindset and abstraction level as the interpretation of the real service. This is important because today’s HE is a service that has multiple consumers and is hard to customize so its traditional way of communication – and its interpretation – is hardly aligned with the interpretation of the real service later on and the discrepancy is bigger than in the previous case. The bigger discrepancy is the result of traditional communication being the

⁶ Open days seem to be good means for solving the problem above. Certainly not in the usual form of formal briefings but with real contact to faculty e.g. at a lecture or spectacular lab work.

⁷ Certainly, in the real life there will always be some ‘surprises’.

⁸ Mind that this statement is based on the logic of traditional services management but also complies with Vargo-Lusch’s (2004) service-centered view stating that the consumer should be involved into the value creating process as much as possible!

⁹ In case of softwares demo versions act the same way.

¹⁰ Lectures, on the other hand, would be excellent for this task, unfortunately no one ever visits them except of enrolled students.

interpretation of a mindset other than the one of the consumer on one hand and on the other hand its abstraction level is too low for the one of the consumer.

4.5. Expected Service – Perceived Service

Any consumer – including HE students – evaluates service quality by comparing perceived service with expected service. If they experience positive discrepancy so perceived service exceeds expected service they have a positive disconfirmation and evaluate service as one of high quality. If they experience negative discrepancy so perceived service falls short of expected service they have a negative disconfirmation and evaluate service as one of low quality. If expected and perceived service are more or less aligned the consumer remains neutral and evaluates service as adequate (Boulding et al. 1999). The consumer's subjective evaluation plays thus a major role in the process. The task of HE marketing is to minimize this discrepancy. It can either be done by approaching expected service with perceived service or the other way round.¹¹

Perceived service has two components. One of them is service delivery evaluated by the CIP system of the consumer usually on a high level of abstraction. The other one is communication also processed and evaluated by the consumer.

At services there are only a few tangible characteristics providing a point of orientation for consumers so they have to substitute them with other sources e.g. messages from communication. Here, the problem of credibility arises. If the discrepancy between perceived service and perceived communication is too big the consumer will experience disappointment and consider the service provider as not trustworthy. So GAP4 cannot be too wide.

The idea of expected service is formulated of four components. The first one is word of mouth communication. The second is the personal needs of the consumer. The third is the past experience of the consumer concerning the particular service. The fourth one is communication as discussed earlier.

¹¹ Or we can do both at the same time. If we do so we have to consider the constraints of both cases.

Communication affects consumer evaluation at two areas parallel but not with the same intensity.

If communication suggests higher quality than the actual quality of the service, it raises expected and perceived quality as well. However, service delivery is hard to change because of reasons explained in the 2nd thesis so it is almost irrelevant what information we get from our students – as we could observe this information is not necessarily reliable – we can hardly change the service delivered especially, because it would require activity according to new standards that is only possible in a very limited way, as we saw in the 3rd thesis. So the model is – in the case of the Hungarian HE ‘jammed at the bottom’.

Let us take a look at the ‘top’. Word of mouth communication, personal needs and past experience are exogenous elements with no possibility to change.¹² The only tool we have left is communication. The only question is: what to communicate?

According to the 4th thesis the object of the communication is mainly perceived service communication. In this case the system is congruent because if we communicate what we offer, consumers are going to expect what we offer so $GAP5=0$. Certainly, there will be some discrepancy in the reality due to the reasons discussed in the 4th thesis.

Why shouldn’t we communicate anything else but what we can offer?

Let us assume we keep increasing GAP4! Until the differential threshold of the consumer perceived service level increases and expected service level increases as well though faster so GAP5 increases.¹³ The increase in the perceived service level is slower because a service delivery is a part of it and as we noted at the 2nd thesis it can hardly be modified while – in this case – expected service is only affected by communication. If we reach the differential threshold, the consumer recognizes the inconsistency and will not give credit to communication.

We can observe that communication is the only way to affect the opinion of the consumer. It affects perceived and expected service level simultaneously and parallel and expected service

¹² Certainly, in the long run even these elements can be changed – e.g. with years, many satisfied graduates make excellent word of mouth for a university – but we cannot take these into consideration in our current case.

¹³ This is only true if we do not consider the autonomous elements of the model. If we do, we cannot draw conclusions on GAP5.

is easier to influence with a certain message so approaching perceived service with expected service should be preferred when decreasing GAP5.

5th thesis: Today, in the Hungarian HE the only possibility for minimizing GAP5 is to minimize GAP4. The underlying reason is that the service delivered is very hard to modify due to reasons discussed in the 2nd and 3rd theses. Communication is thus the only solution for minimizing GAP5. Its effect is twofold: it affects expected and perceived service and its effect on the former one is stronger so approaching perceived service with expected service should be preferred when decreasing GAP5.

5. Conclusion

To sum up the findings of my dissertation, my research questions can be answered as follows:

Under what limitations can we use the PZB model in the special case of the Hungarian HE?

The model can be used with minor limitations.

We have to specify the product of the service delivery process. I specified the graduated student with a diploma so the process has both tangible and intangible result. HE offers several other possibilities such as dormitory accommodation or sports facilities which in some particular cases can be even more important than education. I assumed that students get enrolled for the development of their knowledge and the tangible diploma.

The extent to which state authorities regulate the activity of HE institutions depends on the country. In Hungary HE institutions are quite strictly regulated with quality assurance measures due to the Bologna transition process as I stated in my 2nd thesis so there is little chance to modify the product. In other countries the situation might be different. But if it really is, the analysis gets complicated because both product and communication is to be changed then. From this point of view the Hungarian institutional environment provided me a convenient framework.

What kind of distinct characteristics does the Hungarian HE have in the scope of the PZB model?

First and most important characteristic is that GAP2 is fixed due to institutional reasons. Consequently, GAP1 is almost indifferent (there is not much we can do even if we know the expectations of the students) and GAP3 gets a special role. It is important for assuring that HE activities comply with the previously set standards but it also conserves the structure which is suboptimal for mass education. GAP4 is utterly important because under these circumstances communication is the only tool we have but possibilities are limited because of the 2nd thesis. For the service provided is not to be changed any more it is dangerous to modify perceived service with communication because the differential threshold of the students is easy to reach.

What possibilities does marketing have in the improvement of perceived service quality of the Hungarian HE?

Unfortunately, there are not many possibilities. Under the institutional framework of the Hungarian HE there are two strategies we should focus on.

The first one is reification; providing students with as many tangible service elements as possible and involving them into the service delivery process to minimize the chances for a negative disconfirmation.

The second one is credibility. We should communicate through all channels what the service – in this case the institution – can provide. Not more and not less. We approach expected service to perceived service because the former can be modified quicker. If the goal is GAP5 to be minimized, communication must be credible.

For further research it would be worth examining the possibilities and constraints of using this model in the institutional framework of other countries. When communication and service parameters can be modified as well, it would be also possible that in some cases it is worth modifying the service itself and risking contrast effects with the modification of communication. The question is where that limit is and whether it can be identified at all.

Another possibility is to examine the effect of differentiation. In my analysis I assumed an undifferentiated strategy with every (prospective) student getting the same message. Among others, it would be interesting to know how messages intended for other target groups affect members of a specific target group and to what extent its negative effect (if there are any) can be compensated by the more positive attitude of other target group members.

Finally, it seems to be an interesting field of research to examine how the spread of new communication channels – primarily the internet – affects perceived quality according to this model. The gaps discussed in my dissertation exist because of communication deficiencies. The question arises whether the internet which is allegedly an efficient communication tool can really make communication of HE quality more efficient and will it affect the corresponding discrepancies in a favorable way. Which online communication tools are most suitable for the task? How much emphasis should be laid on traditional homepages and how seriously should we consider upcoming social network sites? Examining these questions based on the aspects of my dissertation might help answering these questions.

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7. Publications of the Author

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