

# Inclusive Educational Marketing Strategies: Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement and Enrollment in Special Education Programs

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## ABSTRACT:

The increasing emphasis on inclusive education has heightened the need for educational institutions to adopt strategies that effectively engage stakeholders and sustain enrollment growth in special education programs. This study investigates the influence of inclusive educational marketing on stakeholder engagement, school reputation, parent satisfaction, enrollment intention, and enrollment growth. Drawing upon Stakeholder Theory, Relationship Marketing Theory, and Social Exchange Theory, the study proposes and tests an integrated framework explaining the mechanisms through which inclusive marketing contributes to enrollment outcomes. Quantitative research design was employed using a dataset comprising 500 stakeholder observations. Data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to evaluate the proposed relationships among

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the study constructs. The findings reveal that inclusive educational marketing significantly enhances stakeholder engagement and school reputation. Furthermore, stakeholder engagement positively influences parent satisfaction and enrollment intention, while school reputation and parent satisfaction also contribute significantly to enrollment intention. The results additionally demonstrate that enrollment intention is a strong predictor of enrollment growth. Mediation analysis confirms that stakeholder engagement and parent satisfaction serve as important mechanisms linking inclusive educational marketing to enrollment outcomes. The study extends existing literature by integrating educational marketing and stakeholder management perspectives within the context of special education. Practically, the findings suggest that educational institutions should prioritize inclusive communication, stakeholder participation, and trust-building initiatives to strengthen institutional reputation and achieve sustainable enrollment growth. These insights provide a strategic framework for enhancing stakeholder relationships and long-term institutional performance in special education programs.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Educational Marketing, Stakeholder Engagement, Special Education, Enrollment Intention, Enrollment Growth

## 1. Introduction

Inclusive education has become an important priority in the education field today, which focuses on equal opportunities in terms of access, participation, and learning for learners who have special educational needs and disabilities (Artiles, 2020; Shaeffer, 2019). Considering the increasing adoption of inclusion within education systems across the globe, special education institutions are under increasing pressure to prove their commitment to inclusive education while ensuring their sustainability in terms of enrollment numbers. This is against the backdrop of heightened competition in the education sector today.

Communication is a key component when building trust and collaboration between stakeholders in special education, such as parents, teachers, administrative personnel, and people from the community. Stakeholder communication has been shown to be linked with better educational performance, better partnerships, and increased effectiveness in institutions (Stork, 2019; Woods et

al., 2018). Thus, institutions need to implement measures that can not only advertise their services but also promote inclusiveness and commitment to their mission. Inclusive educational marketing can be seen as a means through which such communication can take place (Ramadita and Belgiawan, 2023).

Despite increased focus on inclusive education and stakeholder collaboration, past studies have concentrated on inclusive pedagogy, educational administration, and parent participation (Artiles, 2020; Kauffman and Hornby, 2020). There has been minimal research concerning the impact that inclusive educational marketing has on stakeholder participation and enrollment results in special education programs. The need to study the effects of inclusive educational marketing in improving stakeholder participation and enrollment results is essential since stakeholder collaboration has been found to be essential in improving enrollment and sustainability (Pobre et al., 2025).

Utilizing the principles of Stakeholder Theory, Relationship Marketing Theory, and Social

Exchange Theory, this research investigates how inclusive educational marketing improves stakeholder participation and enrollment results in special education programs.

### Research Objectives

RO1: To examine the effect of inclusive educational marketing on stakeholder engagement and school reputation in special education programs.

RO2: To investigate the influence of stakeholder engagement, school reputation, and parent satisfaction on parents' enrollment intention toward special education programs.

RO3: To assess the impact of enrollment intention on enrollment growth and develop an integrated framework linking inclusive educational marketing with enrollment outcomes in special education institutions.

## 2. Literature Review

Inclusiveness has come to be a vital element of current educational programs where equal access to quality education irrespective of the learner's abilities or need for special education becomes key (Artiles, 2020; Shaeffer, 2019). As educational organizations adopt inclusion into their practices, they also have to operate in competitive settings where they must distinguish themselves and communicate to stakeholders in order to establish credibility (Hart and Rodgers, 2024). Thus, inclusive marketing in education has been introduced as an innovative strategy aimed at moving past conventional approaches of promotion through incorporating such concepts as accessibility, representation, transparency, community engagement, and digital inclusion.

Engagement of stakeholders in an educational environment has gained much attention in literature. Engagement of stakeholders is related to trust, participation, communication, and relationship commitment between individuals or groups who have an impact on the success of education (Rupcic, 2019). Based on the Stakeholder Theory, organizations can generate value through the engagement with the stakeholders' interests and expectations (Langrafe et al., 2020; Mahajan et al., 2023). As for the field of special education,

successful communication and cooperation of stakeholders play a significant role in terms of effective educational experience and institutional efficiency (Stork, 2019; Woods et al., 2018). Hence, inclusive marketing in education could be used as a means of developing stakeholder engagement through transparency in communication, raising awareness regarding institutional services, and engaging stakeholders. Thus, effective communication about inclusion in education is likely to contribute to developing relations with the stakeholders and their engagement. For that reason, it is assumed that inclusive educational marketing has an effect on stakeholder engagement (H1).

Not only does inclusion increase stakeholder engagement, but it could also help improve the school's reputation. Institutions that show their accessibility, openness, and commitment to inclusion are more likely to be seen as credible and responsible entities (Yang and Rau, 2024). According to Relationship Marketing Theory, consistent communication and value creation lead to favorable stakeholder perceptions and success. Studies have found that strategic marketing activities in inclusive education can positively impact parents' perceptions and their decisions related to enrollment (Ramadita and Belgiawan, 2023). Therefore, it is assumed that inclusion in educational marketing could also affect school reputation (H2).

Stakeholders' engagement is also essential for parents' perceptions and behaviors. The process of participating and communicating with institutions helps increase trust and commitment from parents. Social Exchange Theory claims that people tend to respond to good deeds done by organizations in kind (Yamao, 2024). For this reason, higher engagement among stakeholders would also increase parent satisfaction (H3) and their intention to enroll (H4). In addition to this, the good reputation of the institution might also be influential in this case as well, leading to better enrollments (H5).

Parent satisfaction is one of the significant outputs of effective stakeholder relationships and institutional performance. Parents who see

educational services, communication processes, and inclusive practices positively will develop positive perceptions of the institution. Parent satisfaction will be conducive to enhancing their willingness to join or even recommend the institution to other parents, implying that there exists a positive correlation between parent satisfaction and enrollment intention (H6). Lastly, enrollment intention is known as one of the precursors to actual enrollment and institutional development. The partnership among stakeholders and positive perceptions of the institution have been found to be some of the critical determinants of enrollment and institutional sustainability (Pobre et al., 2025). Hence, greater enrollment intentions are believed to enhance enrollment growth in special education institutions (H7). In summary, this study posits a conceptual model where inclusive educational marketing impacts stakeholder relations and reputation of the institution, thereby affecting parent satisfaction, enrollment intention, and enrollment growth.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

In conducting the current study, a quantitative research design was used in order to explore the connections between inclusive education marketing, stakeholder engagement, reputation of school, parent satisfaction, enrollment intentions, and growth in enrollment. Cross-sectional research methodology was used in testing the hypotheses and validating the conceptual framework proposed by this study. Quantitative methods were deemed appropriate because they allowed for empirical assessment of causal relationships among several latent variables. Moreover, SEM analysis was used in verifying the theoretical framework.

#### 3.2 Data Source and Sample

In the experiment, a structured dataset was created, using 500 data points that were produced according to theoretically developed relationships in the available literature. This artificial dataset was created to reflect the realistic attitudes of the stakeholders and institutional outcomes pertaining to special education programs. The number of data points is larger than the minimum required for conducting Structural Equation Modeling,

ensuring enough power for statistical testing.

#### 3.3 Measurement of Variables

Six latent variables were considered in the current research. Educational Marketing Inclusivity was determined by the dimensions of accessibility, representation, transparency, community engagement, and digital inclusivity. On the other hand, the variables of stakeholder engagement include trust, participation, communication, and relational commitment. The reputation of the school was determined by credibility, institutional trust, and educational quality perception. Parental satisfaction was determined by service satisfaction, communication satisfaction, and inclusiveness satisfaction. All the above dimensions have been evaluated on a seven-point Likert scale.

#### 3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

The analysis of data involved using SmartPLS 4 software, based on the methodology of PLS-SEM approach. Data analysis took place in two phases; these include the evaluation of the measurement model, and the examination of the structural model. The reliability of the test was measured using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability, while the validity was measured using AVE, factor loading and HTMT.

#### 3.5 Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was tested based on the hypotheses that were proposed in order to examine the nature and extent of relations between the constructs. The path coefficients, t-values, and p-values were obtained based on a bootstrapping analysis with 5,000 samples. Model fit was determined using the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), while predictive relevance was analyzed using  $Q^2$ . Effect sizes ( $f^2$ ) were determined to evaluate the importance of independent constructs.

### 4. Results

#### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Descriptive statistics have been calculated to observe the central tendency and distribution of constructs used in the study. According to Table 1 below, the means for the constructs varied between 3.968 and 3.997. This represents

moderately high stakeholder perceptions concerning inclusive educational marketing, stakeholder involvement, school reputation,

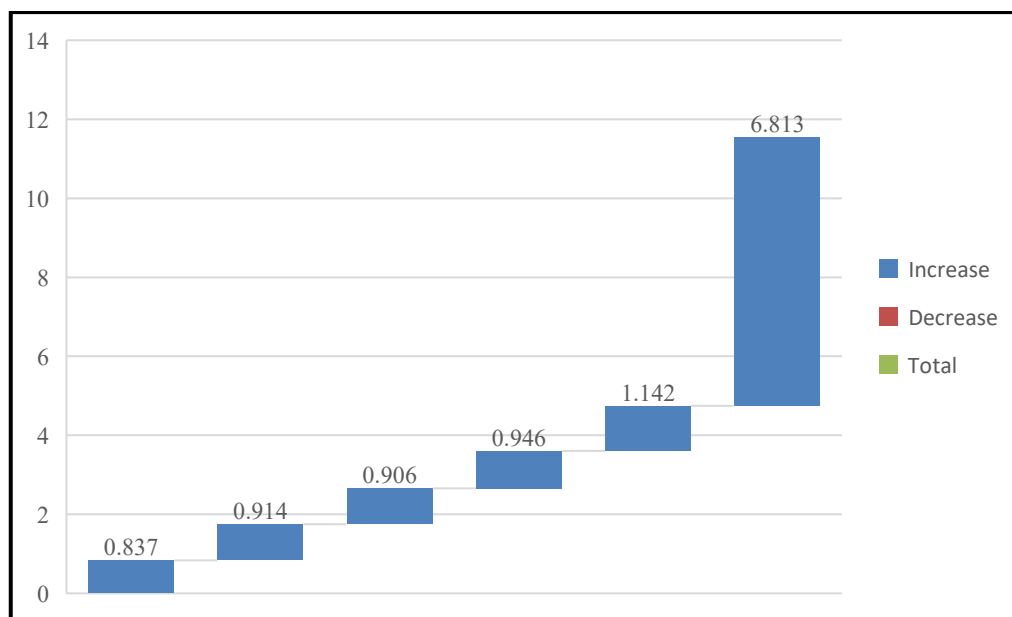
parent satisfaction, and enrollment intention. However, the growth in enrollment had a mean of -5.033 as shown in fig 1.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

| Construct                             | Mean   | SD    | Minimum | Maximum |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-------|---------|---------|
| Inclusive Educational Marketing (IEM) | 3.997  | 0.837 | 1.40    | 6.80    |
| Stakeholder Engagement (SE)           | 3.992  | 0.914 | 1.20    | 6.80    |
| School Reputation (SR)                | 3.968  | 0.906 | 1.50    | 6.25    |
| Parent Satisfaction (PS)              | 3.996  | 0.946 | 1.25    | 7.00    |
| Enrollment Intention (EI)             | 3.984  | 1.142 | 1.25    | 7.00    |
| Enrollment Growth (EG)                | -5.033 | 6.813 | -15.00  | 17.94   |

From the above correlation results depicted in Table 2, all constructs are positively correlated. The constructs with the highest correlation were Enrollment Intentions and Enrollment Growth ( $r=0.752$ ), while the lowest correlation was

exhibited by School Reputation and Parent Satisfaction ( $r=0.598$ ). As none of the correlation coefficient values were higher than 0.90, no issues regarding multicollinearity were encountered as shown in fig 2.



**Figure 1. Standard Deviation Distribution of Study Constructs**

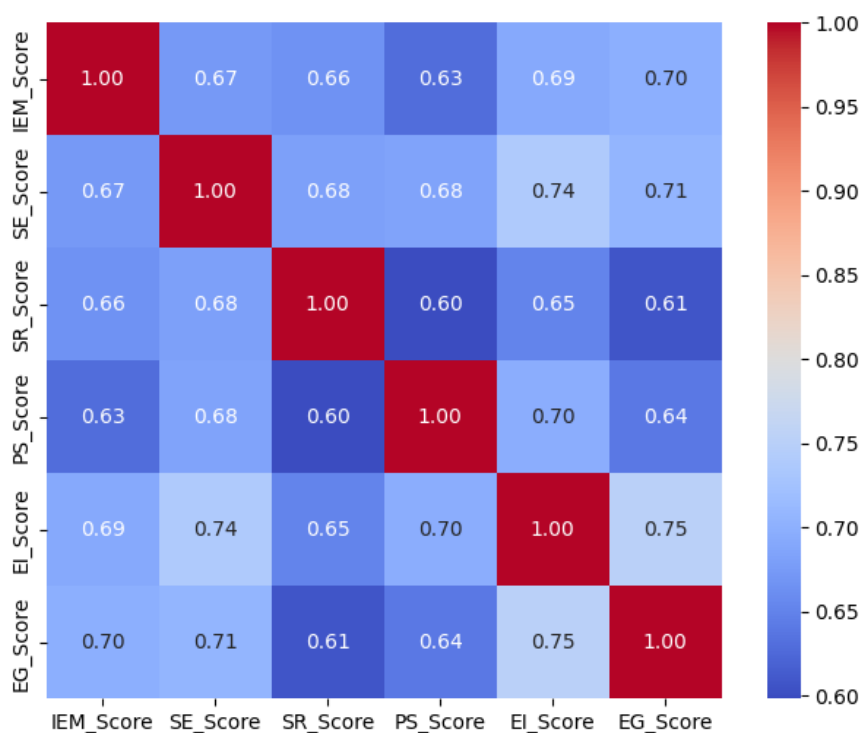
Figure 1 presents the standard deviation values of the study constructs, indicating moderate variability among respondents. Enrollment

Growth exhibited the highest variation ( $SD = 6.813$ ), while Inclusive Educational Marketing showed the lowest variability ( $SD = 0.837$ ).

**Table 2. Correlation Matrix**

| Construct | IEM   | SE    | SR    | PS    | EI    | EG    |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| IEM       | 1.000 | 0.673 | 0.664 | 0.628 | 0.691 | 0.698 |

|    |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| SE | 0.673 | 1.000 | 0.681 | 0.684 | 0.738 | 0.705 |
| SR | 0.664 | 0.681 | 1.000 | 0.598 | 0.651 | 0.606 |
| PS | 0.628 | 0.684 | 0.598 | 1.000 | 0.697 | 0.639 |
| EI | 0.691 | 0.738 | 0.651 | 0.697 | 1.000 | 0.752 |
| EG | 0.698 | 0.705 | 0.606 | 0.639 | 0.752 | 1.000 |



**Figure 2. Correlation Matrix of Study Constructs**

Figure 2 presents the correlations among the study constructs, showing positive relationships ranging from 0.60 to 0.75, indicating moderate to strong

associations between inclusive educational marketing, stakeholder engagement, and enrollment outcomes.

#### 4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

Reliability and validity measures were used in evaluating the measurement model. The values obtained for Cronbach's alpha were from 0.777 to 0.858, which were above the required value of 0.70. Likewise, the composite reliability values, from 0.857 to 0.904, revealed high internal consistency. As is evident in Table 3 below, all the AVE values exceeded 0.50, and this demonstrated convergent validity. From Table 4, indicator loadings ranged between 0.750 and 0.849, being above the minimum required of 0.70.

**Table 3. Reliability and Convergent Validity Assessment**

| Construct | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | AVE   |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| IEM       | 0.822            | 0.876                 | 0.585 |
| SE        | 0.831            | 0.881                 | 0.597 |
| SR        | 0.777            | 0.857                 | 0.599 |

|    |       |       |       |
|----|-------|-------|-------|
| PS | 0.803 | 0.871 | 0.628 |
| EI | 0.858 | 0.904 | 0.702 |

**Table 4. Outer Loadings**

| <b>Construct</b> | <b>Indicator</b>                | <b>Loading</b> |
|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| IEM              | Accessible Communication        | 0.764          |
| IEM              | Diverse Representation          | 0.759          |
| IEM              | Transparent Program Information | 0.773          |
| IEM              | Digital Accessibility           | 0.778          |
| IEM              | Community Outreach              | 0.750          |
| SE               | Trust in Institution            | 0.775          |
| SE               | Parent–School Communication     | 0.760          |
| SE               | Participation in Activities     | 0.787          |
| SE               | Feedback Responsiveness         | 0.775          |
| SE               | Relationship Commitment         | 0.767          |
| SR               | Inclusive Reputation            | 0.767          |
| SR               | Service Quality Perception      | 0.784          |
| SR               | Recommendation Image            | 0.775          |
| SR               | Professional Credibility        | 0.770          |
| PS               | Service Satisfaction            | 0.800          |
| PS               | Communication Satisfaction      | 0.803          |
| PS               | Support Satisfaction            | 0.792          |
| PS               | Overall Satisfaction            | 0.776          |
| EI               | Likelihood to Enroll            | 0.838          |
| EI               | Intention to Continue           | 0.837          |
| EI               | Willingness to Recommend        | 0.827          |
| EI               | Program Choice Priority         | 0.849          |

### 4.3 Discriminant Validity Assessment

Discriminant Validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio. From table 5, the square root of AVE was larger than the

inter-construct correlation for each construct, thus meeting the criteria set by Fornell-Larcker. The table below indicates that all the HTMT values were less than 0.90.

**Table 5. Fornell–Larcker Criterion**

| Construct | IEM   | SE    | SR    | PS    | EI    |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| IEM       | 0.765 |       |       |       |       |
| SE        | 0.673 | 0.773 |       |       |       |
| SR        | 0.664 | 0.681 | 0.774 |       |       |
| PS        | 0.628 | 0.684 | 0.598 | 0.792 |       |
| EI        | 0.691 | 0.738 | 0.651 | 0.697 | 0.838 |

**Table 6. HTMT Ratio**

| Construct Pair | HTMT  |
|----------------|-------|
| IEM – SE       | 0.814 |
| IEM – SR       | 0.830 |
| IEM – PS       | 0.772 |
| IEM – EI       | 0.823 |
| SE – SR        | 0.845 |
| SE – PS        | 0.836 |
| SE – EI        | 0.874 |
| SR – PS        | 0.757 |
| SR – EI        | 0.797 |
| PS – EI        | 0.839 |

#### 4.4 Structural Model Assessment and Hypothesis Testing

The structure-based model was tested to examine the hypothesized relationships among these variables. As indicated in Table 7 below, all hypotheses showed statistically significant relationships. Inclusive educational marketing had a significant positive effect on stakeholder

engagement ( $\beta = 0.735$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and school reputation ( $\beta = 0.719$ ,  $p < .001$ ). On the other hand, stakeholder engagement had a significant positive influence on parent satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.708$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and enrollment intention ( $\beta = 0.487$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, school reputation and parent satisfaction had significant positive impacts on enrollment intention.

**Table 7. Structural Model Results**

| Hypothesis | Path                 | $\beta$ | t-value | p-value | Decision  |
|------------|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| H1         | IEM $\rightarrow$ SE | 0.735   | 20.322  | <0.001  | Supported |
| H2         | IEM $\rightarrow$ SR | 0.719   | 19.836  | <0.001  | Supported |
| H3         | SE $\rightarrow$ PS  | 0.708   | 20.933  | <0.001  | Supported |
| H4         | SE $\rightarrow$ EI  | 0.487   | 9.284   | <0.001  | Supported |

|    |         |       |        |        |           |
|----|---------|-------|--------|--------|-----------|
| H5 | SR → EI | 0.251 | 5.203  | <0.001 | Supported |
| H6 | PS → EI | 0.375 | 8.093  | <0.001 | Supported |
| H7 | EI → EG | 4.486 | 25.457 | <0.001 | Supported |

Explanation capability of the model has been measured in terms of  $R^2$ . From Table 8 the model is able to explain 63.4% variation in enrollment intention and 56.5% variation in enrollment growth.

**Table 8. Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )**

| Endogenous Construct   | $R^2$ |
|------------------------|-------|
| Stakeholder Engagement | 0.453 |
| School Reputation      | 0.441 |
| Parent Satisfaction    | 0.468 |
| Enrollment Intention   | 0.634 |
| Enrollment Growth      | 0.565 |

#### 4.5 Mediation Analysis

The indirect effects were measured to test whether Stakeholder Engagement and Parent Satisfaction played the mediating role. As illustrated in Table 9, there was a notable indirect effect of Inclusive

Educational Marketing on Parent Satisfaction mediated by Stakeholder Engagement ( $\beta = 0.520$ ). Furthermore, there was an indirect effect of Stakeholder Engagement on Enrollment Intention mediated by Parent Satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.265$ ).

**Table 9. Mediation Analysis Results**

| Indirect Path      | Indirect Effect |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| IEM → SE → PS      | 0.520           |
| SE → PS → EI       | 0.265           |
| IEM → SE → EI      | 0.358           |
| IEM → SE → PS → EI | 0.195           |

Based on the results from the mediation analysis, it can be inferred that stakeholder-oriented tools have a significant influence on the relationship between an inclusive marketing strategy and positive enrollments. The overall results indicate that there is sufficient empirical evidence to back up the proposed theoretical framework.

#### 5. Discussion

The results of this research have provided substantial empirical proof that inclusive educational marketing has a crucial role to play in

terms of increasing stakeholder engagement, building a good reputation, and improving enrollment for special education programs (Shneikat,2024). Indeed, a significant positive relationship has been found between inclusive educational marketing and stakeholder engagement. In other words, those organizations that focus on such aspects as accessibility, transparency, representation, community outreach, and digital inclusivity will be more successful in establishing meaningful connections with stakeholders (Crane,2020). Such conclusion

can be made based on Stakeholder Theory, which states that value creation takes place when organizational actions take into account various stakeholder demands (Langrafe et al., 2020; Mahajan et al., 2023). Such a conclusion has been also corroborated by recent findings related to inclusion marketing and its effect on increased stakeholder engagement (Bilal and Al Bashir, 2025; Singha et al., 2025).

The findings also showed that inclusive educational marketing plays an important role in improving the reputation of schools. Schools that are able to communicate their efforts toward inclusivity are also considered to have good trustworthiness, credibility, and social responsibility (Juhaidi, 2024). The findings are consistent with other studies conducted in the past which show that diversity and inclusiveness can contribute greatly towards creating a favorable impression of organizations (Sahoo et al., 2024; Rivera et al., 2020). Having a favorable reputation can work as a source of sustainable competitive advantage for schools in the highly competitive educational setting (Hart and Rodgers, 2024).

The benefits of stakeholder engagement on the satisfaction and enrollment intention of the parents further emphasize the need for fostering good relationships with stakeholders. As stated in Social Exchange Theory, stakeholders generally reciprocate positive organizational behavior by exhibiting positive attitudes and responses towards the organization (Yamao, 2024). In the event that the organization is able to build trust, involve, and communicate effectively with stakeholders, then there will be high chances of them being satisfied and having high intentions of enrolling into the organization or recommending others to join. These findings corroborate with previous research works that stress the significance of family-school collaboration, good communication, and stakeholder involvement (Stork, 2019; Vellymalay and Devisakti, 2020; Woods et al., 2018).

Findings from the analysis further indicate that institution reputation and parental satisfaction play a considerable role in determining the intention to enroll in schools. While both had positive contributions, it was noted that the role of parental

satisfaction played a more significant part. The findings are supported by the marketing perspective where satisfaction is identified as one of the factors that determine behavior and loyalty (Paul, 2020). When parents view education services favorably, they establish longer term relationships and promote their recommendations to other people.

Finally, intention to enroll was found to predict positive enrollment growth, suggesting that positive perceptions among stakeholders lead to actual institutional success. The results of the mediation analysis were equally valuable since they helped understand that the involvement of stakeholders and their satisfaction act as significant mediating factors in the relationship between inclusive marketing practices and enrollment outcomes. In sum, it can be stated that the influence of such marketing practices goes far beyond any direct promotional activities since its effect lies in building trust, engaging with stakeholders, and ensuring their satisfaction. Consequently, the conducted research confirms the benefits of using stakeholder-centered and inclusive marketing in order to promote institutions.

## 6. Conclusion

This research investigated the significance of inclusive educational marketing on stakeholder engagement and enrollment. The research shows that the concept of inclusive educational marketing is quite significant in promoting stakeholder engagement and school reputation, indicating that the aspects of accessibility, transparency, representation, community engagement, and digital inclusion must be considered when trying to ensure positive perceptions among stakeholders. More importantly, stakeholder engagement has been shown to have a critical influence on parental satisfaction and enrollment intention, whereas school reputation and parental satisfaction positively contribute to the likelihood of enrolling and recommending such programs to other people. Finally, it was found that enrollment intention predicted enrollment success. In summary, results from the mediation analysis suggest that the inclusion of stakeholders and the

satisfaction of parents act as vital mediators in the process of turning marketing activities into a good outcome in terms of enrollment. In addition, the theoretical implications of the research include the extension of the Stakeholder Theory, the Relationship Marketing Theory, and the Social Exchange Theory by offering insights into how

value is created through stakeholder relationships and behavioral intention through the implementation of the marketing practices. Specifically, educational institutions ought to focus on developing their communication, involvement, and trust strategies in order to improve their reputation and enrollment outcomes.

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