**Services Marketing**

**December 2023 Examination**

**Q1. You are the owner of a retail chain. You currently have consumer durables, groceries and private label clothing range for kids, men, and women. The price point is low and the quality you offer is fantastic. You have more than eighty percent repeat customers. In most of the customer, surveys that you have conducted with market research agencies have pointed this unique feature of your store. You have successfully operated your business in Delhi. You have about 15 stores operating across the state. During the last five years, you have spread your offerings to the other northern states, and you have seen a wonderful response. You are encouraged, and you decide to take this down south.**

**You have encouraged about twenty five percent of your best staff member to open the first store in Bangalore. (With a salary hike) They are your top performers. The vacant positions in the north will be filled up temporarily and the staff members deputed would be called back after 3 years from the start of the operation. Thestore opens as scheduled. The initial response is good, but within six months, you see a plethora of complaints coming in and customers are unhappy with theiroverall experience. Your cash counters seem to become empty with footfalls and profits coming down.**

**This comes to you as a big shock as you had not expected this to happen. You are unwilling to give up and you need to understand why? Is it the mindset of the people, a consumer whom you have never encountered before, or is it the issue of training your people and re designing of your service offerings? But will you be able to turn this around?**

**Do you feel that there is a difference in consumer mindset in the South vis a vis the North? Can you point some of them? What data do you need to reach to a conclusion and what steps should you take to plug the footfalls? (10 Marks)**

**Ans 1.**

**Introduction**

The vastness and diversity of India not only exist in its topography and culture but also in the business landscapes and consumer behaviors across regions. While establishing a business in a particular region, one reaps benefits from understanding and adapting to local nuances, which significantly impacts business success. When a retail chain, thriving in the northern regions with a focus on consumer durables, groceries, and private-label clothing, expands its operations to the south, it steps into an environment where the cultural, social, and economic dynamics might be distinct. The premise is built around the sudden surge of complaints and

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**Q2. You have worked in the industry for a decade, and you are now fed up with the boring work environment around you. The entrepreneurial bug has bitten you and a food business is in your mind. There are numerous challenges, however. In your city, the working population is large enough to sustain the business, disposable incomes are high, and you feel that there is a niche offering that needs to be created for your restaurant, for example a Japanese or a Korean cuisine. The problem however with a niche is adoption to local tastes, preferences, and the biggest challenge of whether customer would be interested in them. The next big challenge would be for you to reach out to the right set of customers. This might take you some time, and your biggest fear is that the initial buzz that you may create at the start may not sustain after a point. Also, if you are successful, there may be copycatscoming in. You are therefore considering a second alternative of ‘tiffin services’ to people around you. This may not have the glamour but will make you cash bells ringing from day 1 if your product is right. There may not any need for branding or the need to position yourself. It is a dilemma that you are facing.**

**How would the service offering be different in case of a restaurant vis a vis tiffin service? (7Ps) and how would you plan to market the service offerings? (restaurant vis a vis tiffin service) (10 Marks)**

**Ans 2.**

**Introduction**

The decision to launch a food business, especially after a decade in a monotonous industry, is a thrilling venture. With a bustling working population and high disposable incomes in the city, both niche restaurants and tiffin services offer distinct potential. A niche restaurant, like Japanese or Korean cuisine, brings forth the excitement of offering a unique culinary experience. Conversely, tiffin services, while less glamorous, have the advantage of assured demand if the product is right. Each has its own set of challenges, from adoption of new tastes to the simpler logistical challenges of a tiffin service. The primary question is how

**Q3. Trail Blazers academy is a coaching academy, providing training, coaching, and counselling services for students. Their primary revenue source is from the coachingthey do for medical and JEE. Established a decade ago, it is now a well-known brand, but faces sever competition from the crowded market of the coaching space. The quality of the students passing out are well know and many candidates are able to crack the JEE and medical exams. However, in the last couple of years, the company has tried to expand using the franchise model. This was possibly the best model available. But with tremendous amount of competition happening online and offline, the pricing model of the academy has changed. The fees for the course are on the brochure but is charged variably. There are no standardizations followed. Many of the franchisees charge whatever they want to, essentially to maintain a minimum threshold of students flowing into the organisation. Sometimes the center heads of the franchise encourage existing students to bring in new candidates, there by incentivizing them. Some of the hard negotiators are able to settle down at a lower price point that what others are paying. In many cases, students were allowed just with a token money with more than the usual EMIs. Everything seems to be as per the flexibility of the center managers. While some of the franchises are happy, others are not. The location of the center, number of enrolments drive the pricing. The parents are unhappy with this mechanism and there are complaints floating in the social media about Trail Blazers. The franchises are incentivized on the total revenue they add to the parent group. Many of them therefore have started the recent practice of creating fake candidates, thereby making themselves eligible for more incentives.**

**Trail Blazers have also realized that due to competitive pressure, they are unable to make good margins in the business and wants to expand their offerings. They are now planning to start a HR recruitment consulting firm. The CEO can drive this, because of his previous experience in this area. He also has a team, which is capable enough. The CEO has invited you, as a consultant. They are in a dilemma on whether they should use the Trail Blazers brand name to the recruitment consulting firm or use a new name. Trail Blazers sound to be a great name for the consulting firm and matches with the nature of work that they intend to do. However, many of the other managers opine that these two businesses are different and not related and therefore the brand extension is not suitable for the newofferings. Even if they use the same name, how would they position themselves?**

**a. How do you price their services better? (5 marks)**

**Ans 3a.**

**Introduction**

Trail Blazers Academy has successfully carved a niche for itself in the coaching industry over the past decade. Despite its reputation for quality outcomes, it grapples with challenges, especially in its pricing structure and franchise model. As they contemplate diversifying into HR recruitment consulting, the core question arises: Should they carry their established brand name forward or chart a new course? Additionally, optimizing their current pricing structure

**b. Is venturing into a new service offering a sensible proposition for Trail Blazers? What are the potential benefits and challenges that you see as a consultant (5 marks)**

**Ans 3b.**

**Introduction**

Trail Blazers Academy, despite its commendable track record in the educational coaching sector, now contemplates diversification into HR recruitment consulting. Venturing into a different industry is fraught with both potential and peril. It's crucial to weigh the advantages and potential roadblocks of such a decision to gauge the sensibility of this move.

Expanding one's business purview demands not just an assessment of potential rewards but