



A STUDY OF PERCEPTION TOWARDS PERUSING HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF KALYAN CITY.

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Abstract :

This research aims to identify which category of students try for employment and which are planned for higher education. This paper also reveals information about the source of information for higher education. The study aims to understand students' perceptions while selecting institutions for higher education. This research is based on primary data. Information from 216 students from Kalyan City is collected Towards their perception of higher education. Data is collected through a structured questionnaire method. Primary data is analysed using SPSS software. For the analysis of data, statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, Cronbach Alpha validity test, and Chi-square test are applied. Results of the study indicate students with excellent or good academic performance are intended for higher education. Source of information about higher education institutes is Mainly websites and social media. The most influencing factor in selecting an institution is the institution's brand.

Key words: *Students Decision, Perception, Higher Education, Influencing Factors*

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Introduction :

Student demographics in higher education are constantly changing. Higher education is now an industry operating in a global market. The advent of new technologies has changed the traditional model of higher education, where physical presence is no longer necessary. Studying while working is much easier, and therefore, more mature students now have the opportunity to study towards a graduate or postgraduate degree. All these developments have increased the potential for profit; however, it also requires a huge amount of money to be invested in new technologies and all kinds of infrastructures and resources. Perception is critical while understanding a student's behavior because every student perceives differently in the development of his career. Perception is the process by which the information is getting selected, received, analyzed, and approached to make meaningful decisions and actions. Usually, the student's perception of higher education is based on the family's financial support. The potential of academic performance also plays an important role in deciding on higher education.



Review of Literature:

1. **Sandra du Plessis (2018)**, To fully integrate men and women in all professions, it is necessary to remove both gender-specific and gender-neutral barriers. SLPA is a female-dominated profession. Overall, males have a lot of potential. They can add significant value to SLPA to both adult and paediatric clients.
2. **In this exploratory study, Vivek Roy, Chandan Parsad (2017)** looked at MBA students' elective selection from a social network perspective. To be more specific, our sample outlined the governing role of network effects in affecting elective selection. phenomena. We also explained why improving MBA requires recognising the Elective selection is a big deal. So we proposed that efficacy largely a student's academic interests and the courses he or she chooses MBA.
3. **Tuula Keinonen, et al. (2016)**, Students in three Nordic-Baltic countries ranked lack of clean water as the most serious environmental issue. Students also mentioned local issues in the media. like the Baltic Sea's demise. Even though it dominated the environmental news students read, climate change was not seen as the same. The media has influenced students' environmental perceptions. When Students viewed a problem as serious and media information as serious.

Objectives of Study:

- To understand the perception of undergraduate respondents about their future plan.
- To study and understand the interests and actions taken by the undergraduate respondents for their future plans of higher studies.
- To study and understand the source of information and the important factors for selecting institutions for higher education.

Research Methodology :

Primary information regarding the research study on “**Perception of undergraduate students towards higher education in Kalyan city**” is collected through a structured questionnaire. There are total 216 respondents considered as primary data for this study. The required information collected via Questionnaire is classified and presented in the table

Secondary Data: Gathered from Government official websites, Published reports, Research papers, electronically delivered data

Data Analysis:

Demographic factors:

The primary data relevant to the study consists of demographic factors such as Gender, Stream of education, Year of study, Grades, family income and future plans of the respondents. For further investigation, demographic information on these 216 respondents is as follows:



Demographics		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	67	31.0
	Female	149	69.0
Stream of Education	Commerce	185	85.6
	Science	29	13.4
	Arts	2	0.9
Year of study	Second year	142	65.7
	Third year	74	34.3
Grades secured	Grade O	58	26.9
	Grade A	151	69.9
	Grade B	6	2.8
	Grade C	1	0.5
Family Income	Up to Rs 2.5 lacs	141	65.3
	Rs 2.5 to Rs 5 lacs	48	22.2
	Rs 5 to Rs 10 lacs	19	8.8
	Above Rs 10 lacs	8	3.7
Future plans after graduation	Taking higher education	154	71.3
	Not decided	62	28.7

The above table indicates that out of 216 respondents, 67 are male while 149 are female respondents. Among these respondents, 185 are from commerce stream, 29 from science stream and 2 from Arts stream. 142 student respondents are from Second year, while 74 are Third year students. 58 students have received 'O' grade, 151 have received 'A' grade, 6 have received 'B' grade and 1 student have received 'C' grade in their last examination. 141 have a family income of up to Rs 2.5 lacs, 48 have Rs 2.5 lacs to Rs 5 lacs, 19 have family income of Rs 5 lacs to Rs 10 lacs and 8 have family income above Rs 10 lacs. 154 respondents stated that they want to take up higher education, while 62 are not decided.



Cronbach's alpha test:

To validate the scale in this study Cronbach Alpha test is applied for all 154 respondents whose responses were recorded for question 13A(Important source of information) and 14A (Important factors for institute selection). The Cronbach Alpha value is 0.859 and 0.790 respectively for both the questions under consideration. It is more than the required value of 0.700. Hence the test is accepted. Conclusion is scale is reliable and accepted.

Objective 1: To understand the perception of undergraduate respondents about their future plan.

Null Hypothesis H_{01} : There is no significant association between Gender, Stream, Grade and Family Income of respondents and their future plans after graduation.

Alternate Hypothesis H_{11} : There is a significant association between Gender, Stream, Grade and Family Income of respondents and their future plans after graduation.

To test the above Null Hypothesis chi square test is applied. The p-value is calculated and is shown in the below table:

Demographics	p-value	Result
Gender	0.121	Not Significant
Stream of Education	0.072	Not Significant
Grade obtained in recent exams	0.009	Significant
Family Income	0.742	Not Significant

Gender:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.121. It is more than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is accepted. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected for Gender of respondents.

Conclusion: There is no significant association between the Gender of respondent and their future plans after graduation. This can be observed in the table as follows:

2. Gender of student * 8. Future Plan Crosstabulation

		8. Future Plan		Total
		Take higher education	Not decided	
Male	Count	43	24	67
	% within Gender of student	64.2%	35.8%	100.0%
Female	Count	111	38	149
	% within 2. Gender of student	74.5%	25.5%	100.0%
Total	Count	154	62	216
	% within 2. Gender of student	71.3%	28.7%	100.0%



The above table indicates that there are 43 male students (64.2 %) and 111 female students (74.5 %) who stated they would be opting for higher education, while 24 male respondents (35.8 %) and 38 female respondents (25.5 %) who were undecided. This implies that the difference in percentage of male and female respondents intending to take higher education after graduation is not significant according to the p-value.

Stream:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.072. It is more than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is accepted. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected for Stream of education of respondents.

Conclusion:

There is no significant association between the Stream of education of respondent and their future plans after graduation. This can be observed in the table as follows:

3. Stream of Education * 8. Future Plan Crosstabulation

3. Stream of Education		8. Future Plan		Total
		Take higher education	Not decided	
Commerce	Count	132	53	185
	% within 3. Stream of Education	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Science	Count	22	7	29
	% within 3. Stream of Education	75.9%	24.1%	100.0%
Arts	Count	0	2	2
	% within 3. Stream of Education	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	154	62	216
	% within 3. Stream of Education	71.3%	28.7%	100.0%

The above table indicates that there are 132 students from Commerce stream (71.4 %) and 22 students from Science stream (75.9 %) who stated they would be opting for higher education, while 53 students for Commerce stream (28.6 %) and 7 students from Science stream (24.1 %) who were undecided. This implies that the difference in percentage of students from Commerce and Science streams intending to take higher education after graduation is not significant according to the p-value.

Grades in recent exams:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.009. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted for Grades of respondents.



Conclusion:

There is a significant association between the Grades of respondent and their future plans after graduation. This can be observed in the table as follows:

5. Which grade you got in last exam * 8. Future Plan Crosstabulation

5. Which grade you got in last exam	8. Future Plan		Total
	Take higher education	Not decided	
Grade O Count	42	16	58
% within 5. Grades in last exam	72.4%	27.6%	100.0%
Grade A Count	111	40	151
% within 5. Grades in last exam	73.5%	26.5%	100.0%
Grade B Count	1	5	6
% within 5. Grades in last exam	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
Grade C Count	0	1	1
% within 5 Grades in last exam	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total Count	154	62	216
% within 5. Grades in last exam	71.3%	28.7%	100.0%

The above table indicates that there are 42 students who obtained 'O' grade (72.4 %) and 111 students who obtained 'A' grade (73.5 %), but only 1 student who obtained 'B' grade (16.7 %) who stated they would be opting for higher education, while 16 students who obtained 'O' grade (27.6 %) and 40 students who obtained 'A' grade (26.5 %), but 5 student who obtained 'B' grade (83.3 %) who were undecided. This implies that the students with higher grades opt for higher education after graduation.

Family Income:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.742. It is more than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is accepted. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected for Stream of education of respondents.

Conclusion: There is no significant association between the Family Income of respondent and their future plans after graduation. This can be observed in the table as follows:


6. Family Income * 8. Future Plan Crosstabulation

6. Family Income		8. Future Plan		Total
		Take higher education	Not decided	
Up to Rs 2.5 lacs	Count	99	42	141
	% within Family Income	70.2%	29.8%	100.0%
Rs 2.5 lacs to Rs 5 lacs	Count	35	13	48
	% within Family Income	72.9%	27.1%	100.0%
Rs 5 lacs to Rs 10 lacs	Count	13	6	19
	% within Family Income	68.4%	31.6%	100.0%
More than Rs 10 lacs	Count	7	1	8
	% within Family Income	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	Count	154	62	216
	% within Family Income	71.3%	28.7%	100.0%

The above table indicates that there are 99 students with family income up to Rs 2.5 lacs (70.2%), 35 students with family income between Rs 2.5 to Rs 5 lacs (72.9%), 13 students with family income between Rs 5 to Rs 10 lacs (68.4%), and 7 students with family income above Rs 10 lacs (87.5%) who stated they would be opting for higher education, while 42 students with family income up to Rs 2.5 lacs (29.8%), 13 students with family income between Rs 2.5 to Rs 5 lacs (27.1%), 6 students with family income between Rs 5 to Rs 10 lacs (31.6%), and 1 student with family income above Rs 10 lacs (12.5%) who were undecided. This implies that the difference in percentage of students from family income background and intending to take higher education after graduation is not significant according to the p-value.

Objective 2: To study and understand the interests and actions taken by the undergraduate respondents for their future plans of higher studies.

Since there are only 154 student respondents who intend to take higher education after graduation, to investigate the above objective, these 154 responses are considered.

Null Hypothesis H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the observed and expected responses for the courses of interest and courses for admission by respondents for their higher education.

Alternate Hypothesis H_{12} : There is significant difference in the observed and expected responses for the courses of interest and courses for admission by respondents for their higher education.

To test the above Null Hypothesis chi square test is applied. The p-value is calculated and is shown in the below table:

Factors	p-value	Result
Courses of Interest	0.000	Significant
Course for admission	0.747	Not significant



Courses of Interest:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted for Course of interest of the respondents for higher education.

Conclusion: There is a significant difference in the observed and expected responses for the courses of interest of respondents for their higher education. This can be observed in the table as follows:

postgraduate course of interest			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
M.Com/ M.A/ M.Sc	42	30.8	11.2
MBA	73	30.8	42.2
MMS	3	30.8	-27.8
PGDM	5	30.8	-25.8
None	31	30.8	.2
Total	154		

The above table indicates that there are 42 students who stated that they are interested in M.Com/ M.A/ M.Sc courses for higher education, 73 students stated that they are interested in MBA for their higher education. These responses are higher as compared to the expected responses. Also, there are 3 students interested in MMS and 5 interested in PGDM. These responses are lower than the expected responses. This implies that there is a significant difference in the observed and expected number of responses for the courses of interest of the respondents for admissions to better colleges. This finding is also supported by the p-value result.

Course for admission:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.742. It is more than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is accepted. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected for Course done by respondents for admission of postgraduation course.

Conclusion: There is no significant difference in the observed and expected responses for the courses done for admission by respondents for their higher education. This can be observed in the table as follows:

course for better college			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	79	77.0	2.0
Yes	75	77.0	-2.0
Total	154		



The above table indicates that there are 75 students who stated that they pursuing a course for admission in better college, while 79 students did not opt for any course for admission in better college. These responses are similar to the expected number of responses. This implies that there is no significant difference in the observed and expected number of responses for the courses done by the respondents for admissions to better colleges. This finding is also supported by the p-value result.

Objective 3: To study and understand the source of information and the important factors for selecting institutions for higher education.

Null Hypothesis H_{03} : All sources of information and factors for selecting higher educational institutions are equally important.

Alternate Hypothesis H_{13} : All sources of information and factors for selecting higher educational institutions are not equally important.

To test the above Friedman test is applied. The p-value is calculated and is shown in the below table:

Factors	p-value	Result
Source of information	0.000	Significant
Selection factors	0.000	Significant

Source of Information:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted for Course of interest of the respondents for higher education.

Conclusion: There is a significant difference in the most important and the least important source of information about higher educational institutions. This can be observed in the table as follows:

Ranks		
Ques no.	Source	Mean Rank
Q13A.1	Faculty of college	3.69
Q13A.2	Friends and relatives	3.07
Q13A.3	Professional counsellors	3.89
Q13A.4	Newspaper and Magazine	3.12
Q13A.5	Social Media /WhatsApp/Facebook	3.10
Q13A.6	Internet/Websites	4.12

The above table indicates that the source of “Internet/Websites” is the most important source of information of all as it has the highest rank of 4.12, while the least important source is “Friends and relatives” as it has the lowest rank of 3.07. This verifies our conclusion.



Selection factors:

The above table indicates that the p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, Chi square test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted for Course of interest of the respondents for higher education.

Conclusion: There is a significant difference in the most important and the least important selection factor while selecting higher educational institutions. This can be observed in the table as follows:

Ranks		
Que no	Important factors	Mean Rank
Q14.1	Brand of Institute	3.17
Q14.2	Campus Placement by institution	3.15
Q14.3	Course fees	2.85
Q14.4	Infrastructure of Institute	2.70
Q14.5	Curriculum of course	3.13

The above table indicates that the factor of “Brand of Institute” is the most important factor of all as it has the highest rank of 3.17, while the least important factor for selecting institutions is “Infrastructure of Institute” as it has the lowest rank of 2.70. This verifies our conclusion.

Findings and suggestions:

From the analysis of data following key observations are noted:

1. There is no significant difference in the students intending to take up higher studies after graduation, with respect to Gender, Stream of education and family income. But students with higher grades are more likely to take up higher studies as compared to the peers with lower grades.
2. Most students who intend to take up higher studies after graduation also show interest in studying courses like M.com/ M.A/ M.Sc or MBA.
3. It is observed that students generally explore information related to better institutions on Internet or website. It is suggested that if the students get this information from the college faculties or from professional counsellors it would be highly reliable. Also, if such arrangements are made by the colleges for such counselling, it would be much helpful for the students.
4. Responses on Important factors while selecting institutions also show that students are greatly aware of the Brand on Institutions. It would be very helpful for the awareness of students to understand and if such institutions conduct placement in the college campus itself.


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