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# HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENT'S PREFERENCE FOR COLLEGE LEVEL EDUCATION - A RESEARCH STUDY IN COIMBATORE CITY

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## ABSTRACT

This study looks at the factors influencing Coimbatore City students' choices of higher education providers. More colleges offer different academic programmes, thus educational planners and lawmakers must understand the key elements of student choice. Among the significant factors the study identifies are institutional reputation, placement opportunities, faculty competence, infrastructure, and quality of education. The study indicates that although students consider affordability and accessibility, by means of a structured questionnaire and analysis of responses from a sample of students across several colleges, they give academic success and career possibilities top priority. The findings aim to enable educational institutions to fit their offerings to student expectations, therefore enhancing student happiness and institutional growth.

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## INTRODUCTION

A Tier II city in Tamil Nadu, Coimbatore has become an educational hub attracting students from all over because of its diverse institutions and vibrant environment. This article aims to look at the variables influencing school children's preferences for higher education institutions in the city. Important factors are academic offerings, infrastructure, placements, and peer, social media, and parental influences. The findings will enable insightful analysis for schools and lawmakers to fit their strategies with the evolving needs of students and support to reinforce India's higher education system. .

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

As education becomes more commercialised, it is vital that students have access to affordable or free education. This research of significant factors—such as academics, cost, location, and infrastructure—that influence their choice of higher educational institutions will help higher secondary students in Coimbatore become more aware. Although the impact of outside influences like parents and peers is unknown, ignorance and disparity between student expectations and institutional offerings affect satisfaction and enrolment.

## OBJECTIVE

- To study the awareness among students regarding higher education.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The study selects higher secondary students in Coimbatore using purposive sampling. With an 80% confidence level and 5% margin of error, a population of 4,170,000 calls for a required sample size of 164. Books, periodicals, government records, and questionnaires and interviews (primary data) supplied information; secondary data came from these sources as well. Statistical methods including weighted average analysis, chi-square test, and percentage analysis helped to identify key factors influencing students' choice of higher education institutions.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

<sup>1</sup>Aithal, Rao, and Kumar's 2015 Increasing University Competitiveness through Infrastructure and Student Participation. Journal of Institutional Research Aithal, Rao, and Kumar's 2015 paper looks at how university quality and competitiveness are enhanced by infrastructure, curriculum, student

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<sup>1</sup> Aithal, P. S., Rao, A., & Kumar, P. M. (2015). Enhancing University Competitiveness through Infrastructure and Student Engagement. *Journal of Institutional Research*

involvement, and governance. Examining SIMS as a case study, they find that digital technologies, student participation, transparency, and creative ideas improve educational quality. Value-based learning and collaboration with industry help to improve institutional standing.

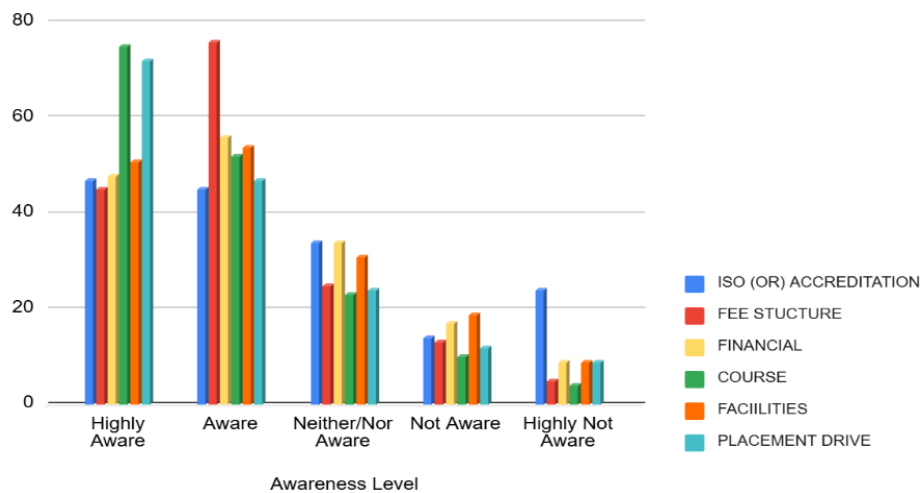
<sup>2</sup>Lerro et al. (2019) examined Millennials' Opinions on Corporate Social Responsibility in the Food Industry. Consumer Research JournalLerro et al. (2019) looked at Millennials' opinions on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the food industry and discovered a clear wish among this generation to support companies with robust CSR initiatives. Trust and loyalty mostly determined consumer backing for such initiatives.

## PROFILE OF THE STUDY

Higher colleges in the competitive education sector of today are brands that attract students by means of calculated marketing. Among the key factors influencing college choice are branding, digital presence, placements, and campus facilities. A significant educational hub in South India, Coimbatore is home to several different institutions that promote enrolment through student participation, digital outreach, and low cost.

### AWARENESS LEVEL ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

Awareness Level	Iso (Or) Accreditation	Fee Structure	Financial	Course	Facilities	Placement Drive
Highly Aware	47	45	48	75	51	72
Aware	45	76	56	52	54	47
Neither/Nor Aware	34	25	34	23	31	24
Not Aware	14	13	17	10	19	12
Highly Not Aware	24	5	9	4	9	9



The graph shows that students are rather aware of fee structure, financial aid, and placement drives. Awareness of ISO accreditation and facilities, however, is low, indicating more efficient communication in these areas is needed.

### CHI-SQUARE TESTS

The calculated Chi-Square value (19.3483) at the 5% significance level exceeds the table value (15.507). The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is therefore rejected, implying a significant relationship between type of admission allocation and profession.

At the 5% significance level, the table value (21.026) exceeds the computed Chi-Square value (17.60). Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted, implying no significant relationship between location and job.

The calculated Chi-Square value (41) at the 5% significance level surpasses the table value (21.026). Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, implying a significant relationship between campus setting and profession. .

### WEIGHTED AVERAGE

The weighted average analysis shows Career Opportunity (4.21) as the top factor influencing students' choices, followed by Personal Interest (3.97) and Fees Structure (3.95). Word of Mouth (3.55) had the least impact.

<sup>2</sup> Lerro et al. (2019). Millennials' Attitudes Towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the Food Industry. *Journal of Consumer Studies*

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## CONCLUSION

The study reveals that career opportunities, personal interest, and fee structure are key factors in students' college choices in Coimbatore. External influences, digital education, financial aid, and campus environment also play a crucial role in shaping preferences.

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## SUGGESTIONS

- Focus on career-based courses, industry tie-ups, and clear fee structures.
- Emphasize practical learning and flexible, tech-driven courses.
- Promote sports, cultural, and extracurricular activities.
- Provide stress-free, student-friendly learning environments.
- Ensure transparency in admissions, rankings, and placements.
- Be honest in advertisements and placement records.
- Support research, innovation, and entrepreneurship with funding and guidance.
- Build real-world skills and better career opportunities through quality education.

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