

## Helping Students Making Better Future: Factors Affecting College of Business Selection

**Dr. Hammad Alshammari**

Assistant Professor, Department of Management  
University of Hail, Saudi Arabia

**Dr. Abhishek Tripathi**

Assistant Professor, Department of Management  
University of Hail, Saudi Arabia

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to identify the factors that motivates students to join a degree college in the university. The study was conducted at College of Business, University of Hail, Saudi Arabia. Various tools and techniques applies to identify the motivational factors. Four important factors such as academic influence, family and peers influence, personal factors and job opportunities were identified through factor analysis which plays a pivotal role for the students to join the college. ANOVA was also used to know the significant impact of these four factors across gender. It has been found that personal factors, family and peers influence and job opportunities has a significant impact while selecting a college. However, Academic influence was not significance to students when selecting colleges and based on this results recommendations were given.

**Keyword:** Parental influence, Counseling, College choices, Higher education, Business

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Every student once in a lifetime make a decision for his or her selection of the college which not only affect the student during the joining, but even after its completion [17]. The decision is very important because it will decide the future of the student. Once a wrong college decision will affect him or her throughout the life. Thus it is imperative to give thoughtful consideration to the decision [12]. There are academic and non-academic influences which motivate students to join a degree college [12]. Students select their college on the basis of their interests [17], expect earnings [13] and Job availability [4]. There are other factors such as parents, friends, high school counselors, and professors who influence a student's decision to select a particular major by providing information, inspiration and sharing opinions [14, 16].

Cultural beliefs about gender are argued to bias individuals' perceptions of their competence at various career-relevant tasks, controlling for actual ability. The extent that individuals than act on gender-differentiated perceptions when making career decisions, cultural beliefs about gender channel men and women in substantially differently career directions [6]. Whereas, the top reasons for selecting a business major identified that the most influential variables are career interest, job opportunities and high pay [9, 13].

Another study indicate that the choice of education is driven by the students' appreciation for creativity and people skills and their own interests and abilities, but the students' school advisor (at college or school) has significant influence as well [3]. Parents are considered the first mentors of their children and they have a significant role in developing a persona of their

child. Researcher claims that parental education affects parenting style, which, in turn, affects children's academic success [8]. Family influences are another personal issue that students deal with when selecting a college [11]. Some students expect to take over the family business [10]. In addition to this, it was revealed that, major and career decisions were influenced much more by the family than by the academic advising [19].

Besides this, friends and former students tend to encourage students to attend a university [1]. The longitudinal study examines that only 4 per cent of students were influenced by their parents, only 6 per cent said they were influenced by teacher or counselors, 9 per cent said that recommendations from 14 friends influenced them and 10 per cent chose a major because it was similar to their parents [2]. In addition to this, it is reported that parents are deeply involved and influential to their high-achieving children's college choices. The report also found open houses, dialogue with college friends, alumni, and admitted-student programs are extremely influential to students. The report claimed these sources are not well known, but very powerful to student's decision making for their college. The study also found 26 per cent of sampled students paid a specialist or advisor during the college decision process [7]. Students may look to their peers to help aid in their major selection process [5]. Inside Higher education, faculty in particular play an important role in college decisions [15]. At the right stage in the process, key faculty can be really influential in a student's choice of college and their major [15].

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The survey was administered at College of Business, University of Hail, Saudi Arabia. Descriptive Research Design is used to know the factors which motivates and influence preparatory year students to join a Business college. Quota sampling was used and data was collected from 205 students in the first year of Business college. A self-developed structured questionnaire considering above mentioned literature was considered to developed with 20 statements using 5 point Likert scale ranging from No Influence to Major influence considering above mentioned literature reviews. The Cronbach's alpha of 0.744 was used for the further analysis and Construct and Convergent validity was used to validate the questionnaire.

#### Descriptive Statistics

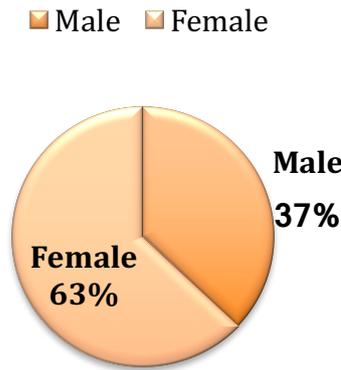
The objectives and tools of the study are divided into three parts. In the first part Descriptive statistics tools such as mean, frequency, percent and standard deviation has been used. Second part has the key factors which motivates or influence preparatory year students to join School of business. In first part twenty statements have been identified and factor analysis has been used to identify key dimensions of motivational factors. The third section is used to know the significant difference between factors across Gender and parents qualification ANOVA technique has been used.

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### Descriptive Statistics:

Table 1: Gender			
Gender	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	76	37.1	37.1
Female	129	62.9	100.0
Total	205	100.0	

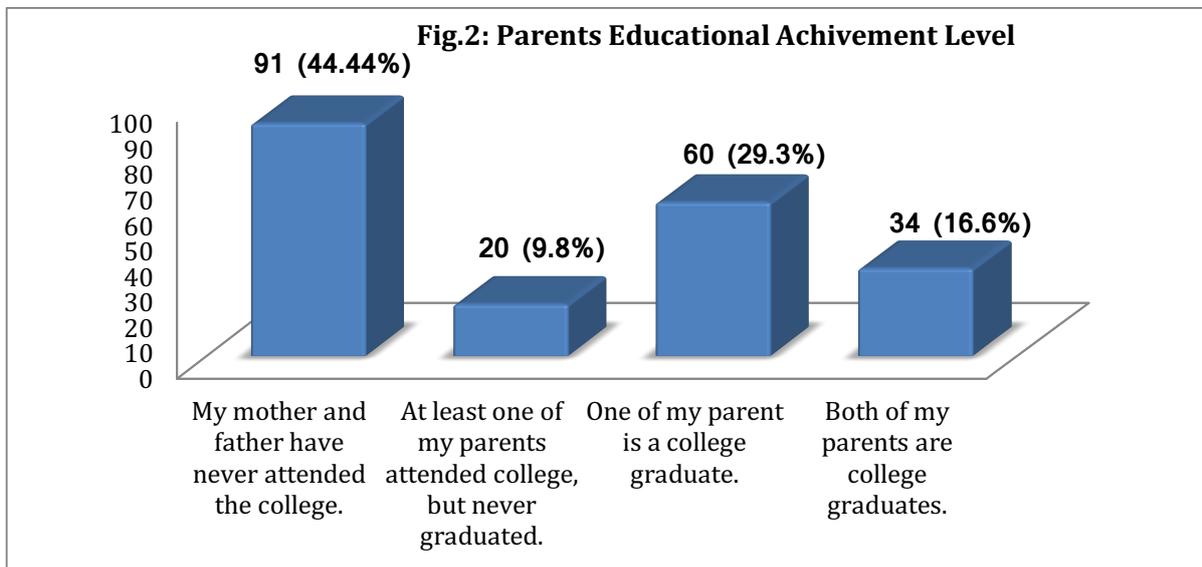
**Fig. 1- Descriptive Statistics**



**Table 1 and Fig. 1** shows that out of 250 students, 37 per cent i.e. 76 students are Male and 63 per cent i.e. 129 students were female.

**Table 2- Parents’ educational achievement level.**

Statements	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
My mother and father have never attended the college.	91	44.4	44.4
At least one of my parents attended college, but never graduated.	20	9.8	54.1
One of my parent is a college graduate.	60	29.3	83.4
Both of my parents are college graduates.	34	16.6	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100.0</b>	



**Table 2 and Fig. 2** shows that out of 250 students, 44.44 per cent i.e. 91 students responded that their parents have never attended the college, 9.8 per cent i.e. 20 students responded that at least one of the parent attended the college, 29.3 per cent i.e. 60 students responded that one of the parent is a college graduate and 16.6 per cent i.e. 34 students responded that both of the parents are college graduate.

<b>Factors (Overall)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Academic Influence	205	2.35	0.78	Minor Influence
Job Opportunities		3.49	0.97	Somewhat Minor Influence
Family/Peers Influence		2.17	0.85	Minor Influence
Personal Factors		3.04	1.05	Somewhat Minor Influence

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of 250 respondents. With respect to Academic Influence (Average Mean= 2.35; SD=0.78) and Family or Peers Influence (Mean= 2.17; SD=0.85) were Minor influence whereas, Job opportunities (Mean= 3.49; SD=0.97) and Personal factors (Mean= 3.04; SD=1.05) were Somewhat Minor Influenced regarding selection of the Business College.

### **Factor Analysis**

A study of correlation matrix, anti-image correlations and MSA for individual variables showed that data was amenable to factor analysis. Overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of Sampling Adequacy was found to be 0.692 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant ( $\chi^2 = 936.584$ ,  $df = 190$ , Significance = 0.000) indicating the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Thus, all of these examinations revealed that data was fit for factor analysis.

**Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

Factors	Statements	Component				Reliability
		1	2	3	4	
<b>Academic Influence</b> 28.53 %	I heard that quality of teaching is good in this college	.824				<b>0.60</b>
	Presentation or career counseling session organized by the college influence my decision	.812				
	Discussion with other students	.760				
	Recommendation from Advisor or counselor in preparatory college	.731				
	The reputation of the college motivates me to join this college	.648				
	Faculty in preparatory college motivates me to join this college.	.559				
	Physical Appearance of the college	.360				
<b>Family and Peer Influence</b> 15.26 %	My parents or guardians advise me to join this college		.842			<b>0.60</b>
	My parents are the ones who are choosing my college		.795			
	My friend's choice of school affects my decision in choosing a college		.595			
	My friends guide/inspire me to join this college		.576			
	Our family business is a factor in my choice of college in college		.486			
<b>Personal Factor</b> 14.40%	I think that I am motivated by learning			.867		<b>0.731</b>
	I preferred this college because of my "childhood dream" work			.796		
	I believe that it is easy to get admission in this college			.737		
	My preference of selecting this college is connected to my favorite subject			.722		
	My preference of this college is related to my personal choice			.601		
<b>Job Opportunities</b> 5.25%	Programs available in this college provides me an opportunity of getting well-paying job.				.734	<b>0.62</b>
	I believe that this college helps me in improving quality of life.				.609	
	Programs provided by the college is having diverse position in the market				.471	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

**Factor 1- Academic Influence**

The Academic Influence refers to the impact of the role of advisors, faculty on students. The goal is to know the important motivational factors in the academic environment which motivates students to join this college. The factor emerged as the most important one explaining 28.53 per cent out of the total variance explained. Seven statements load in this factor. Highest factor loading is for the statement 'Heard that quality of teaching is good' (.824) followed by 'Presentation or career counseling session organized by the college' (.812), 'Discussion with other students' (.760), 'Recommendation from Advisor or counselor in preparatory college' (.731), 'Reputation of the college' (.648), 'Faculty in preparatory college motivates me to join this college' (.599), and 'Physical Appearance of the college' (.360). As these statements reflect the impact of teaching quality, reputation, physical appearance and role of advisor. Therefore, it has been named as 'Academic Influence'. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha for this factor is 0.60. Role of teachers is considered to be one of the important role of teachers inside or outside the classroom is to provide guidance and counseling training for the teachers (20).

### **Factor 2- Family and Peers Influence**

Five statements load in this factor and the factor explained 15.26 per cent out of the total variance. The factor reflects the role of family and peers which motivates them to join this college. Therefore, it has been named as 'Family and peers influence'. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha for this factor is 0.60.

### **Factor 3- Personal Factors**

There are five statements load in this factor and the factor explained 14.40 per cent out of the total variance. The factor reflects the personal factors on the basis of which students' select the college of business.. Therefore, it has been named as 'Personal Factors. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha for this factor is 0.731.

### **Factor 4- Job Opportunities**

The goal is to know the important factors which motivates students to join business college considering the job prospects. The factor emerged explaining 5.25 per cent out of the total variance explained. Three statements load in this factor. Highest factor loading is for the statement 'Programs available in the college will provide opportunity for getting well-paying job' (.734) followed by 'believe that college will improve quality of life' (.609) and 'Programs provided by the college have diverse position in the market; (.471). As these statements reflect the role of programs and perception of the students to get well-paying job. Thus, , it has been named as 'Job Opportunities'. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha for this factor is 0.62.

**Thus all the four factors overall contribute 63.43 per cent to the study**

### **ANOVA Results**

**Table 5: Motivational Factors on the basis of Gender**

ANOVA							
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
<b>Academic influence</b>	Between Groups	67.495	1	67.495	2.231	.137	Non-Significant
	Within Groups	6141.754	203	30.255			
	Total	6209.249	204				
<b>Family and Peers Influence</b>	Between Groups	124.304	1	124.304	7.004	.009	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	3602.886	203	17.748			
	Total	3727.190	204				
<b>Personal Factors</b>	Between Groups	101.106	1	101.106	4.080	.045	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	5030.699	203	24.782			
	Total	5131.805	204				
<b>Job opportunities</b>	Between Groups	222.001	1	222.001	30.102	.000	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	1497.102	203	7.375			
	Total	1719.102	204				

### **Hypothesis**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference in Academic Influence, Job opportunities, Family and peers influence, personal factors across Gender.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant difference in Academic Influence across Gender..

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is significant difference in Job opportunities across Gender..

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is significant difference in Family and peers influence across Gender..

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There is significant difference in personal factors across Gender..

**Table 5** show the output of ANOVA analysis, whether there is statistically significant difference in academic influence, Job opportunities, Family or peers influence and Personal factors across Gender. **We can see that the statement having F value = 2.231, significance level is 0.137 (p = .137), which is more than 0.05 therefore, thus there is statistically no significant difference. Hence it accept null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in Academic influence across gender whereas, others factors i.e. Job Opportunities (F=30.102, p = .000), Family and Peers influence (F=7.004, p = .009), and Personal factors (F= 4.080, p = .045) are significant difference across Gender, hence it fails to accept null Hypothesis. Thus it will be concluded that all others factors except academic influence are significant different across gender.**

Perceived quality of instruction, department reputation, departmental course requirement may or may not have much impact on the choice of the study (18).

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The study identified four factors which influence students on selecting a college degree. These are academic influence, job opportunities, family and peers influence and personal factors. These four factors overall contribute 63.43 per cent to the study. It will also be concluded that all factors except academic influence are significant different across gender. Thus, it has been found that the college has a less influence on students towards the selection of a college which shows that there will be less interaction between the college of business and the students who are studying in the preparatory college. In addition to this, the faculty in the preparatory year do not motivate students to join a business college.

Thus, it becomes vital for the college of business to organize career counseling sessions and discuss the courses offered and their career future which help them to motivate students to join the college of business. Additionally, it has also been found that the college itself does not have any preparatory college which misguide the student. There is also an urge to have an interaction between college of business students and preparatory students which help to spread good word of mouth about the college. University should provide proper workshop or training to the preparatory year faculty about the number of courses offered in the university, so that they can provide best academic counseling to the students which help them to provide ample number of opportunities and benefits of the colleges.

Job opportunities contributes only 5 per cent among all the factors, but significant across gender. Still there is a need for the students to be well aware towards the opportunities available in the market. Thus, it suggested that all the degree colleges should arrange seminar, presentations at the preparatory year college which gives insight to the students to know about the job opportunities available in the market. Organizing job fairs, guest lectures from various industries will also increase the reputation of the college.

### FURTHER RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study can be conducted at University level considering all the colleges with in Saudi Arabia or samples from each provinces will be selected to identify the clear picture of the study. The present study had the following limitation. First, the survey was focus only in the College of Business. Further research could also involve students from the other colleges would be beneficial for the study. The questionnaire was distributed in medium of English, but it has been found that students are comfortable in understanding Arabic language.

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