

## STUDYING THE PULL AND PUSH FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' DECISIONS IN SELECTING A COLLEGE

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### **Abstract:** -

**Purpose:** The aim of this study was to examine the most influential push and pull factors during the selection of a college among students

**Methodology:** For this research, online questionnaire used to collect the data from 105 students who studying in Mumbai. And online independent t-test calculator are used to analysis of data.

**Findings:** The findings of the study show that the reputation of the college, job opportunities provided by the college, and campus environment are the main pull factors influencing students' decisions, while the college environment is the most influential push factor among location, parents and relative impact, and overall costs in selecting a college.

### **Keywords:**

pull factor, push factor, influencing, college students.

### **1. Introduction:** -

The education market is getting tough and highly competitive, its difficult to attract students towards college to take admission. The concept of “pull” (Leone 2009), (Wut, T.-M. 2022) factors are those where the student attracted to a certain college due to academic or personal reason, on other hand “push” (Leone 2009), (Mazzarol 2002) factors are those that force students towards their not preferred choice of college. Factor such as location, cost, faculty profile, reputation, size of the programme, social pressure could be pull-push elements.

Choosing the right college is a significant milestone in students' academic and personal lives, and it involves a complex decision-making process that is influenced by various factors. This decision can be influenced by a range of factors, including academic reputation, location, cost, job opportunities, campus culture, and availability of scholarships, among others. These factors can be broadly categorized as "pull" and "push" factors.

Pull factors are the positive attributes or features that attract students to a particular college. These factors may include academic reputation, faculty quality, research opportunities, the availability of specific programs, campus location, campus culture, social activities, and other amenities. These pull factors create a positive image of the college in the student's mind, and they motivate the students to enrol in the college.

On the other hand, push factors are also has attributes or features that make students avoid certain colleges. These factors may include high costs, parental force, inadequate financial aid, safety concerns, or distance from home. Push factors made students to take admission forcefully in particular college.

Understanding the pull and push factors that influence students' college decision-making process is crucial for colleges to attract and retain students as well as helps to plan marketing strategies. This research aims to explore the various pull and push factors that influences students selecting a college.

### **2.Literature review-**

**Leone. (2009)** in his research paper titled “Push vs pull: Factors influence student retention” studied a significant issue faced by universities in 2009, the retention of students was highly competitive. He has collected data using a questionnaire from 122 students from the Amercian colleges. He used two paired t-tests for data analysis.

He emphasized on four variables viz., Degree program, Financial aid, Location, and Campus life, including Food service. His study concluded that if a college cannot satisfy the academic needs of students, they will leave the college. Students under 20 were more attracted to campus life, degree programs, and location, which are push factors, while those aged 26 and above were more concerned about financial aid."

**Mazzarol. and Soutar. (2022)** in their research paper titled “ “push-pull” factors influencing International Student Destination Choice”. The study aimed to examine the push and pull factors that influence students to select a country for their education. Data collected from 2,485 students across four countries - India, Australia, Indonesia, and Taiwan - who migrated to another country for education.

This study found that social and economic forces in the home country are the main reasons that 'push' students to seek education in another country. On the other hand, when selecting a host country, students consider various factors such as the campus, comfortable climate, and so on. After studying both factors, the researchers suggest that the host country's government and education institutions need to consider the vital role of 'pull-push' factors that influence students' choice of study destination."

**Chen, L (2007)** in his research paper titled “East-Asian students' choice of Canadian graduate schools” The researcher developed a synthesis model to explain the student's decision-making process and used the pull-push model to understand the relation among factors that influence the selection of country, institution, and city. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data from 140 students - qualitative data was collected through personal interviews, and quantitative data was collected through a mailed questionnaire.

The findings of the research show that both institutional characteristics, such as academic and administrative, have the strongest influence on students in their selection of an institution."

**Aldosary and Assaf. (1996)** in their research paper titled “Analysis of factors influencing the selection of college majors by newly admitted students” explain the variables which impact the decision making of students in college selection. This study was conducted on newly admitted students at King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, with a sample size of 412 students and an additional 35 students who selected a major in the College of Environmental Studies.

The study found that the most important factors for students in selecting colleges were placement opportunities, prospective salary, and social status. Family and peer pressure had less influence on students' decisions. The researchers suggested that universities should focus on programs where student enrolment is low and invest more in advertising to attract students for those programs. "

**AL-MANDIL and AL-KHATHLAN (1990)** in their research paper titled “A study of the majors selection process at KFUPM”. The study examined the factors that influence students' selection of majors and was conducted at King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM) in Saudi Arabia. Prior to enrolling in various degree programs, students participated in a one-year orientation program. At the end of the year, a formulated questionnaire was distributed among the orientation students, and based on the data collected, the researchers reached a conclusion. The study found that the main factors that influence the selection of majors are the offer of better job placements with good salaries and good geographical locations."

**Briggs, S. (2006)** in his research paper titled “An exploratory study of the factors influencing undergraduate student choice: The case of higher education in Scotland. The study aimed to identify the factors that influence the decision-making process of undergraduate students when choosing universities in Scotland. The researchers collected data from 651 students in two undergraduate disciplines, namely Engineering and Accountancy, across six universities in Scotland.

The study found that the decision-making process for students is complex and influenced by multiple factors. The researchers identified ten major factors, and after examining them, they found that 'academic reputation,' 'distance from home,' and 'location' are the three most critical factors when Scottish students choose universities for undergraduate entry.

**Rose W. and Christine Kinyua (2017)** conducted a research paper titled "Pushed or Pulled? Factors that Influence Students' Choice to Study Food and Beverage Management Program". They collected data from 120 students in four selected colleges in Eldoret Town using a questionnaire survey method. The purpose of the study was to investigate the push and pull factors that influence students in selecting a food and beverage management program in the hospitality industry, and to determine which factors are most influential based on gender.

The study concluded that the most influential push factor for students is an increase in chances of promotion, while job opportunities are the most influential pull factor. Mean method was used to reach the results, and an independent variable t-test was conducted to identify the most influential factor by gender.

### 3.Objective and Research model:-

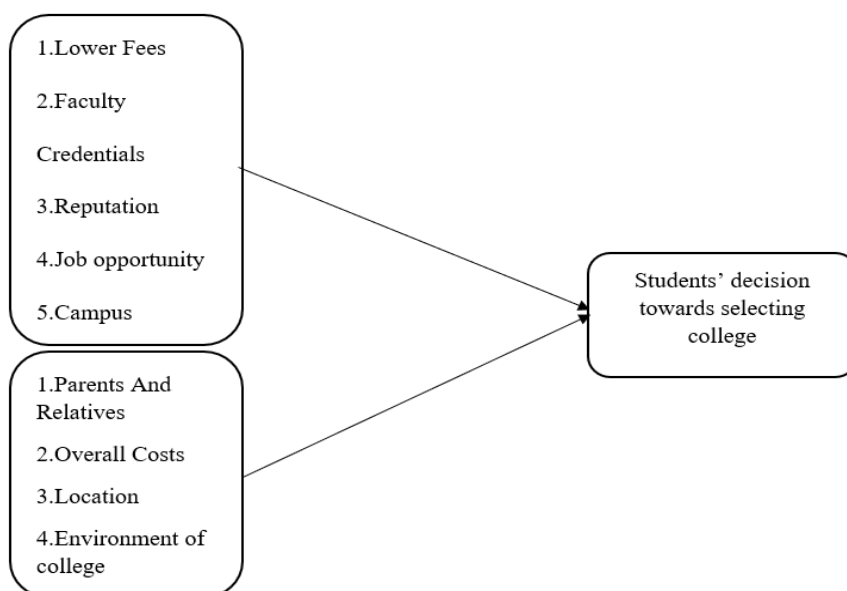
#### 3.1 Objective:-

To study most influencing push factor for students in selecting the college

To study most influencing pull factor for students in selecting the college

To identify the most influencing factors by gender.

#### 3.2 Research Model:-



### 4. Research Methodology:-

This study was originally designed to understand which pull and push factors influence students to select an institution.

Data was collected through an online mode, specifically a Google Form. The sample comprised college students pursuing their bachelor's or master's degrees.

#### 4.1 Questionnaire Development:

For data collection, a 5-point Likert scale was used, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

#### 4.2 Sampling Size and Sampling Method:

Data collected from a sample of students across Mumbai city, with the sample size 105. Non-probability method of convenience sampling used for data collection.

#### 4.3 Data Analysis tool:

For analysis of data, used central tendency mean percentage method and statistical software used to do independent t-test test.

<https://www.graphpad.com/quickcalcs/ttest1.cfm>

**5. Data Analysis and Results:-**

**5.1 Descriptive Analysis:-**

**Table no.1:- Descriptive analysis by Gender:-**

Descriptive Analysis	Item	Subject	
		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	55	52.04
	Female	50	47.06

**Table no 2:- Descriptive analysis by qualification:-**

Descriptive Analysis	Item	Subject	
		Frequency	Percentage
Education	Undergrade	56	53.03
	Post grade	38	36.02
	Others	10	11.05

**5.2 Pull and Push Factors analysis table:-**

**Table no.3:- Influence pull factors analysis table:-**

Factor	No Influence		Neutral		Great Influence	
	Total no	Percent	Total no	Percent	Total no	Percent
Lower Fees	28	26.66	21	20	56	53.33
Faculty credentials	12	11.42	24	22.85	69	65.71
Reputation	11	10.47	20	19.04	69	65.71
Job opportunity	09	08.57	23	21.90	73	69.52
Campus	13	12.38	21	20	71	67.61

The study found that job opportunity (69.52%) was the most significant pull factor for students in selecting a college, followed by campus (67.61%), reputation (65.71%), faculty credentials (65.71%), and lower fees (53.33%). The high percentage of students who selected campus as a pull factor suggests that students prioritize their physical surroundings and overall college experience when making their decision. This may include factors such as campus culture, location, student activities, and quality of facilities.

On the other hand, while lower fees were still selected by more than half of the respondents, it was the least influential pull factor. This may indicate that students are willing to pay a higher tuition fee if other factors, such as campus and job opportunities, are more favourable. Additionally, it is noteworthy that job opportunities, reputation, and faculty credentials were closely ranked in terms of influence on students' decisions.

**Table no.4:- Influence of Push factors analysis table :-**

Factor	No Influence		Neutral		Great Influence	
	Total no	Percent	Total no	Percent	Total no	Percent
Parents And Relatives	35	33.33	28	26.66	42	40
Overall Costs	17	16.19	27	25.71	61	58.09
Location	13	12.38	33	31.42	59	56.19
Environment	07	06.66	24	22.85	74	70.47

The data analysis indicates that environment (70.47%) is the most significant push factor for students when deciding on a college. The percentage data suggest that affordability is a major concern for students and their families when selecting a college. The second most important push factor is overall cost (58.09%), indicating that students prefer colleges with a good campus environment, adequate

facilities, and an excellent learning atmosphere. Colleges that focus on creating a welcoming and conducive environment may have an advantage in attracting students.

Location (56.19%) is also an important push factor for students, with the data indicating that students prefer colleges that are conveniently located and accessible. Colleges located in areas with good transportation links, close to residential areas, or public transport facilities may have a competitive advantage in attracting students. The influence of parents and relatives' force (40%) on students' college selection decisions was found to be relatively low. However, this does not diminish the role of parental influence in the decision-making process.

### 5.3 Most influencing factor by gender:-

Table no.5:- Independent sample t-test result table for influential factor by gender:-

Variable	Male Students	Female Students	t-value	p-value
Lower Fees	3.58	3.46	0.481	0.632
Faculty Credentials	4.05	3.62	1.952	0.052
Reputation	4.11	3.92	-0.915	0.362
Job opportunity	4.09	4.06	0.144	0.885
Campus	4.13	3.96	0.793	0.429
Parents And Relatives	2.91	3.32	1.649	0.102
Overall Costs	4.00	3.70	-1.521	0.137
Location	3.64	3.44	-0.852	0.39
Environment of college	4.16	3.96	1.071	0.286

The independent sample t-test was used to compare factors that influence the selection of a college for higher studies. The results showed that there was no significant difference in the influence of lower fees on male students ( $M=3.58$ ,  $SD=1.27$ ) and female students ( $M=3.46$ ,  $SD=1.31$ );  $t(113)=0.481$ ,  $p=0.632$ . The same was true for faculty credentials, parents and relatives, overall costs, and environment of the college, as there was no significant difference in influence on male and female students.

On the other hand, the results showed that there was a significant difference in the influence of reputation, location, and job opportunity on male and female students. For job opportunity, the mean score was 4.09 ( $SD=1.11$ ) for male students and 4.06 ( $SD=1.08$ ) for female students;  $t=0.144$ ,  $p=0.855$ . For reputation, the mean score was 4.11 ( $SD=1.07$ ) for male students and 3.91 ( $SD=1.05$ ) for female students;  $t=-0.915$ ,  $p=-0.915$ . For location, the mean score was 3.64 ( $SD=1.18$ ) for male students and 3.44 ( $SD=1.18$ ) for female students;  $t=-0.852$ ,  $p=0.39$ . These differences were found to be significant in the influence of male and female students

### 6. Conclusion and suggestion: -

As per the study, it was found that the job opportunities provided by a college is the most significant pull factor that influences students in selecting a college for their education, while the college environment is the most significant push factor among youngsters. This suggests that students place significant weight on factors that could potentially impact their career prospects and the perceived quality of education at a college. Overall, these results highlight the complex decision-making process that students go through when selecting a college, and emphasize the importance of a well-rounded approach to attracting them. Colleges and universities must recognize the importance of effective

communication with prospective students and their families to address any concerns and provide necessary information.

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**Appendix:-**

Variable	Indicator
Pull Factor	
Lower fees	Fee is less compare to other colleges
Faculty credentials	Faculty profile Helpful faculty
Reputation	College has good rank College followed government regulation
Job opportunities	Offer placement in well known Job in hand before final semester
Campus	Campus is spacious and clean Good environment to study
Push Factor	
Parents And Relatives	Force
Overall Costs	Transpiration etc Stationery etc
Location	Near to residential Near to publication transport
Environment	Safe environment Good for study