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Exploratory Factor Analysis of Factors Influencing Employers in Choosing an Institute for Campus Selections

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Abstract

Problem – Not all employers choose all institutes for campus selections and not all conduct centralised recruitments. Hence, it is essential to find what brings employers to an institute for selecting students irrespective of their sector. The study highlights the most critical variables of the 12 MBA students employers consider when choosing an institute for campus placements. It presents the reduction of 12 into three factors using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).

Objectives – To identify and explore factors influencing employers in choosing an institute for selecting students.

Findings – This research reveals that 'Performance and Image of Previous Employees, Previous Year student results and NAAC Grades and NBA Ratings' are the most critical variables in the eyes of employers. At the same time, they select an institute for campus selection. EFA resulted in the formulation of 3 factors, named 'Accreditation and Rankings, Past Results – Academic and Extra Curricular, Student Fitness, Environment Friendliness of Institute and Its location.'

Originality – Employers are secondary customers, and it is essential to find out what they consider necessary in an institute while choosing an institute for campus selection. This study is the first of its kind to study the preferences of employers of MBA students in Rajasthan. The results of EFA can help the MBA institutes of Rajasthan to formulate a strategy to attract employers to campus.

Keywords: Campus Selections, Sustainability, Quality Management, Corona Positive Record, Performance and image of previous employees

Introduction

A product or service's success depends on whether its customers like it. An educational institute which renders educational services has two types of customers: students as primary customers and employers as secondary customers as written in (Chaturvedi Joohi, 2015). Students and their parents are customers at the entry stage of an institute, and employers are customers at the exit stage. If an institute can attract students to procure its educational services, then only the question of attracting Employers emerges. Else. The institute's existence and journey to develop budding students might not last long, as evident in Figure 1. There may be a strong correlation between the number of Employers visiting an institute for campus selections and the number of students enrolled.



Figure 1 Declining Number of MBA Institutions in RTU(Source: (2020, 2020) (2019, 2019) (2018, 2018))

Figure 1 exemplifies Charles Darwin's theory of Survival of the fittest, which means that the institutes that cannot attract students are not fit enough to survive in this competitive world. Employers have two selection criteria: the first is for selecting the institute for conducting campus selections, and the other is to select students. It is believed that the institutions that deliver high-quality education will be able to survive. Quality, as defined by Mr Joseph Juran, is fitness for purpose (Thakkar, 2022), and most students enrol in Higher Educational Courses like an MBA to get a good job offering a decent salary. Employers are looking for a lucrative combination of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes in students, which is required for suitable job profiles in their organisation.

Literature Review

The variables considered for factor analysis were the dominant factors concerning the Quality of the institute, Sustainable practices used by the institute, Access of industry to the talent available in the institute and health of the students from the pandemic perspective, and these were picked from guidelines of assessment standards and approved after content validation by experts. No research papers were found about an employer's criteria for choosing a campus for selecting students. The variables used in the questionnaire are described below.

1. NAAC Grades" – According to (Team N., NAAC/Home/Info for Institutions/AQAR) National Accreditation and Assessment Council grades the institute based on seven parameters, which include parameters related to Governance, Teaching Learning and Evaluation, Research, Infrastructure, Governance and Curricular aspects and Student Support and Progression.

2. NBA Rating stands for National Board of Accreditation grades and, according to (Team N., 2019), rates the institutes which run courses related to 6 disciplines, including Engineering, Management, Architecture, Pharmacy, Computer Applications and Hospital and Tourism Management, as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Levels of Programs Accredited by NBA in Different Disciplines (Source: (Team N. , 2019))

3. World Rankings –Different World Rankings include (team, 2021), (Unit) and (Russian Federation), ((CWUR)) etc. Scoring a good rank in the world rankings indicates that the institution's systems are working well.

4. National Institutional Ranking Framework - (National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), 2017) is released by the "Ministry of Human Resource Development", and every year, the rankings are released for the institutes who apply for same.NIRF has

criteria on which institutes are judged based on the teaching-learning processes, placements and higher educational admissions, measures related to promoting women's diversity, etc.

5. Previous Year Student Results, as mentioned in (Team N.,

naac.gov.in/resources/publications/manuals/revised manual for universities/5.2.3, 2019), include the academic performances of the students when they take exams on the tests designed based on the syllabus designed by their institute or university.

6. (R.Covey, 2012) disclosed "Sharpening the Saw " as one of the seven habits of highly effective people, which means investing in the most significant asset that you own, and that is yourself, and that is through the all-round development of intellectual or mental social/emotional, physical, spiritual and **Previous year achievements in extracurricular activities** contribute in all of the above.

7. Previous year Sports Achievements, which is a point in (Team N. , naac.gov.in>Resources>Publications>Manuals>revised manual for universities>5.3.1, 2019) contribute to the physical development of students. These also contribute to developing skills like team building, strategy development, stress management, etc.

8. The distance of the institute from the industry location indicates the ease of access to the talent of students studying there. It is a point which emerged during brainstorming: if an institute is close to the industry, the ease of access is greater, and if it is far away, it is vice versa.

9. Green campuses, which are also rewarded under (Team A. , 2020) are generally symbolic of the Environment-Friendly Practices that institutes exhibit where they focus on utilising renewable sources of energy, using biodegradable products and focusing on initiatives like reducing, reusing and recycling as waste management in itself results in efficient utilisation of energy. According to (Team W. G., 2022) green campuses preserve natural resources and positively impact the natural environment, hence focusing on sustainability.

10. With the emergence of pandemic across the globe **Corona positive record** indicates adherence to the covid appropriate behaviour as shown in (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare). Better adherence to COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour will result in the selection

of candidates likely to be free from COVID-19, and there will be a lesser risk of the industry shutting down due to the spread of COVID-19 from selected students.

11. Performance and image of previous employees selected from the same institute is a variable which indicates the number of students selected from an institute over the years, and the success and work ethics practised by these selected students is a measure of their performance and image.

12. Previous year placement percentage indicates the percentage of students out of the total intake by an institute in a program who got jobs or placements, which is also an indicator (Development, 2021).

Research Gap

None of the studies that emphasised variables considered and factors influencing employers' selection of an institute for selecting MBA students studying in Rajasthan from campus were found.

Objectives of Research

1. To identify and explore factors influencing employers in choosing an institute to select students from campus.

Research Methodology

The sampling frame was "Employers of MBA students studying in various MBA institutes of Rajasthan ".

Forty-eight employers based on the above-predefined criteria participated in the study, and a non-random sampling technique of quota type was used; the survey questionnaire was sent using LinkedIn, and the contact details are given in the Self Study Reports of recently NAAC accredited MBA institutions.

The primary data was collected, and it is a descriptive kind of research design and type. The **inductive approach** was used for data collection and analysis, formulating some theory or conclusions.

Exploratory factor analysis was used to reduce the variables into factor groups .5. A 5-point Likert Scale was used to understand employer opinion. The first step in Exploratory Factor Analysis is called **Data Purification and Cleaning, according to** (Kastia, 2020) . The 48 responses to the question "Which variables do employers consider as crucial while choosing an institute for selecting students?" are summarised in Figure 3.1. The response was empty and hence was not considered in further analysis. Out of the 564(47 employers*12 variables) cells containing Employer Responses, nine cells were empty, which were filled during **data purification (editing and coding)** and cleaning by filling the mean value of each column based on (Nayak J. K., Courses>Management>NOC:Marketing Research and Analysis-II (Video) >Lec :17-20, 2018) . The scope of the study is defined as Employers of MBA students studying in various institutes in Rajasthan.

The reliability of the questionnaire was 0.770 and was checked using the Chronbach alpha test.

Content validity was checked by experts with vast experience from different domains, and their contribution is acknowledged in the acknowledgements section.





The participating employers belonged to different sectors, as evidenced by Figure 3.

Figure 3 Sector-wise distribution of participating Employers in percentage (Source: (Chaturvedi & Rai, 2020))

6. Findings and Data Analysis

1. The Employers expressed their opinions about different factors and their importance while choosing an institute for campus selections using a 5-point Likert Scale, as evident in (Chaturvedi RaiFigure 4).





Figure 4 Importance Given by Employers to Factors for Choosing an Institute for Campus Selections (Chaturvedi & Rai, 2020)

2. Exploratory Factor Analysis was applied to reduce the 12 factors into 3 or 4 factor groups with included variables having high correlation.

2.1 Step 1 of EFA, according to (Kastia, 2020), is finding the missing data, and the results showed that there were no observations with missing data in step 2; it was found that all standard deviations were more significant than zero. The standard deviation of 47 individual employer responses was checked, and it was observed that for two employers, the standard deviation was zero, so it was a possibility that these employer's responses were part of a non-sampling error as employers might have filled the questionnaire without interest, and their responses were not actual responses. So, the two responses with zero standard deviation were deleted, and the remaining data consisted of data from 45 employers. The mean of the 12 variables showed that 9 out of 12 variables had a mean greater than 3, meaning that the employers were considered essential, and three variables were unimportant as having a mean less than 3.

2.2 Formulating Correlation Matrix and Testing for Appropriateness of Factor Analysis

A correlation matrix was plotted between all variables, and "Bartlett's Test of Sphericity" was applied as shown in (K.Malhotra & Das, Factor Analysis, January 2015). It was evident in Table I below that the diagonal elements have the value 1, and the other elements have

values ranging between -1 and 1 and are not 0. Table II shows the results of Bartlett's Sphericity Test, where the observed Chi-Square is greater than the critical Chi-Square; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected, and an alternate was accepted. The null hypothesis states that no correlations between variables differ significantly from 0, and the alternate states that at least one of the correlations linking variables differs significantly from zero. Table III shows "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin(KMO)", which measures sampling adequacy. It compares the observed correlation coefficients to the magnitudes of partial correlation coefficients. The Overall KMO value was more significant than 0.5, so the factor analysis is an appropriate technique (K.Malhotra & Das, Factor Analysis, January 2015). Small values of KMO indicate that other variables and factor analysis cannot explain the correlations linking pairs of variables, which may not be appropriate.

Variables	NAAC Grades	NBA Rating	World Rankings	NIRF Rankings	Previous year Placeme nt %	Previous year student results	Previous year achieve ments in extra curricular activities	Previous year Sports Achieve ments	Distance of institute from industry location	Green Campuse s	Performa nce and image of previous employe es selected from same institute	Corona positive record
NAAC Grades	1	0.818	0.581	0.580	0.338	0.173	0.081	0.098	-0.121	0.154	0.242	0.171
NBA Rating	0.818	1	0.703	0.761	0.340	0.045	-0.011	0.022	-0.127	0.228	0.260	0.243
World Rankings	0.581	0.703	1	0.833	0.408	0.259	0.016	-0.102	0.022	0.370	0.283	0.264
NIRF Rankings	0.580	0.761	0.833	1	0.382	0.161	0.064	0.059	0.089	0.415	0.202	0.317
Previous year												
Placement %	0.338	0.340	0.408	0.382	1	0.359	0.129	-0.091	-0.027	0.100	0.124	-0.010
Previous year student												
results	0.173	0.045	0.259	0.161	0.359	1	0.385	-0.047	0.128	0.017	0.276	0.067
Previous year												
achievements in extra												
curricular activities	0.081	-0.011	0.016	0.064	0.129	0.385	1	0.271	0.231	0.052	0.119	-0.121
Previous year Sports												
Achievements	0.098	0.022	-0.102	0.059	-0.091	-0.047	0.271	1	0.401	0.274	0.037	0.280
Distance of institute												
from industry location	-0.121	-0.127	0.022	0.089	-0.027	0.128	0.231	0.401	1	0.637	0.074	0.300
Green Campuses	0.154	0.228	0.370	0.415	0.100	0.017	0.052	0.274	0.637	1	0.074	0.354
Performance and												
image of previous												
employees selected												
from same institute	0.242	0.260	0.283	0.202	0.124	0.276	0.119	0.037	0.074	0.074	1	0.191
Corona positive record	0.171	0.243	0.264	0.317	-0.010	0.067	-0.121	0.280	0.300	0.354	0.191	1

Table I Correlation Matrix (Source: EFA)

Table II Bartlett's Sphericity Test (Source: EFA)

Chi-square (Observed value)	228.088
Chi-square (Critical value)	85.965
DF	66
p-value (Two-tailed)	< 0.0001

alpha	0.050

Table III Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (Source: EFA)						
NAAC Grades	0.722					
NBA Rating	0.719					
World Rankings	0.792					
NIRF Rankings	0.763					
Previous year Placement %	0.861					
Previous year's student results	0.516					
Previous year achievements in extracurricular activities	0.497					
Previous year Sports Achievements	0.554					
Distance of institute from industry location	0.595					
Green Campuses	0.682					
Performance and image of previous employees selected from the						
same institute	0.754					
Corona positive record	0.718					
КМО	0.706					

2.3 On analysing anti-image correlation according to (Kastia, 2020), which is the individual KMO of each variable, it was observed that only one variable, the previous year's achievements in extracurricular activities, was less than 0.5, and the value was 0.497. According to (Kastia, 2020) if values are less than 0.6 then that variable can be excluded from factor analysis but in (K.Malhotra & Das, Factor Analysis, January 2015) 0.5 is cut off value so 0.5 is used for this analysis.

Table IV shows the factor loadings. Table V shows the commonalities, which are the sum of the correlation squares between factors and variables for each variable horizontally, and the values should be greater than 0.5. If communality values are lower than 0.5, then they should be removed after examining the rotated component analysis according to (Nayak J. K., Courses>Management>NOC:Marketing Research and Analysis-II (Video)>Lec 51-53, 2018)

. Table VI shows the Eigen Values: the amount of variance represented by factors and the Cumulative percentage variation shown by factors. Figure 5 shows the scree plot.

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	F1	F2	F3
NAAC Grades	0.768	-0.266	-0.043
NBA Rating	0.843	-0.289	-0.213
World Rankings	0.868	-0.175	-0.067
NIRF Rankings	0.882	-0.065	-0.149
Previous year Placement %	0.512	-0.234	0.376
Previous year's student results	0.331	0.039	0.750
Previous year achievements in			
extracurricular activities	0.146	0.299	0.721
Previous year Sports Achievements	0.129	0.663	-0.024
Distance of institute from industry			
location	0.168	0.860	0.055
Green Campuses	0.487	0.624	-0.233
Performance and image of previous			
employees selected from the same			
institute	0.399	0.028	0.266
Corona positive record	0.415	0.422	-0.343

Table IV Correlation between variables and factors or Factor Loadings (Source: EFA)

Table V Communalities (Source: EFA)

	F1	F2	F3	Communalities
NAAC Grades	0.591	0.071	0.002	0.663
NBA Rating	0.711	0.083	0.045	0.840
World Rankings	0.753	0.031	0.005	0.788
NIRF Rankings	0.778	0.004	0.022	0.805
Previous year Placement %	0.262	0.055	0.142	0.458
Previous year's student results	0.109	0.002	0.563	0.674
Previous year achievements in				
extracurricular activities	0.021	0.089	0.520	0.631
Previous year Sports Achievements	0.017	0.440	0.001	0.457
Distance of institute from industry				
location	0.028	0.740	0.003	0.772

Green Campuses	0.237	0.389	0.054	0.681
Performance and image of previous				
employees selected from the same				
institute	0.159	0.001	0.071	0.231
Corona positive record	0.172	0.178	0.117	0.468

Table VI Eigen Values and Cumulative Variability Percentage (Source: EFA)

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Eigenvalue	3.84	2.08	1.54	0.99	0.98	0.69	0.59	0.42	0.36	0.25	0.16	0.10
Variability (%)	31.993	17.357	12.873	8.283	8.127	5.714	4.911	3.530	2.966	2.059	1.329	0.857
Cumulative %	31.99	49.35	62.22	70.51	78.63	84.35	89.26	92.79	95.75	97.81	99.14	100.00



Figure 5 Scree Plot (Source: EFA)

2.4 The methods used to find out the number of factors according to (K.Malhotra & Das, Factor Analysis, January 2015) include "The **Priori Determination Method** (prior knowledge)", "**Eigen Values Method** (EV>1)", "**Scree Plot Method** (Eigenvalues are plotted against the number of factors)", "**Percentage of Variance Method** (Extracted Factors should represent at least 60 per cent of the variance)", "**Split Half Reliability Method** (Factors are split in half and on each half the factor analysis is performed, Factors with high correspondence of factor loadings across the two subsamples are retained)" are **Significance Test Method** (Determines the statistical significance of the separate Eigenvalues and retains only statistically significant factors).

No theory is available based on which an employer selects an institute for campus placements. However, in promoting environment-friendly practices, an employer might

prefer a green campus (campuses that practice environment-friendly practices) or maybe an institute promoting sports for overall development. Out of the five methods, values based on three methods, Eigen Values, Scree Plot method, and Percentage of Variance, are available using XLSTAT, and the number of factors extracted is 3,4,3, respectively.

2.5 Varimax rotation was applied to better distribute factor loadings or avoid 1 factor loading into 2 to 3 factors. Table VII and Table VIII show the variance after Varimax rotation and the rotated component matrix, and it highlights that factor D1 is highly correlated with "NBA Rating", factor D2 is highly correlated with "Distance of institute from industry location", and factor D3 is highly correlated with "Previous year achievements in extracurricular activities". The variables "Previous year Placement %" and "Performance and image of previous employees selected from the same institute" are not significantly correlated with any of the factor components as highlighted in yellow and hence should be deleted.

Table VII % of variance after Varimax Rotation (Source: EFA)

	D1	D2	D3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12
Variability (%)	29.666	18.363	14.195	8.283	8.127	5.714	4.911	3.530	2.966	2.059	1.329	0.857
Cumulative %	29.666	48.029	62.224	70.507	78.634	84.348	89.259	92.789	95.754	97.814	99.143	100.000

Table VIII Correlation linking variables and factors after varimax rotation (Source:

EFA)

Variables	D1	D2	D3
NAAC Grades	0.805	-0.020	0.119
NBA Rating	0.916	0.016	-0.028
World Rankings	0.872	0.099	0.133
NIRF Rankings	0.866	0.223	0.074
Previous year Placement %	0.474	-0.150	0.459
Previous year's student results	0.143	-0.025	0.808
Previous year achievements in			
extracurricular activities	-0.107	0.171	0.768
Previous year Sports Achievements	-0.093	0.662	0.100
Distance of institute from industry			
location	-0.137	0.841	0.211

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Green Campuses	0.292	0.771	-0.015
Performance and image of previous			
employees selected from the same			
institute	0.306	0.085	0.360
Corona positive record	0.314	0.585	-0.165

2.6 Table IX and Table X show that the null hypothesis is rejected as the p-value in the case of Bartlett's Sphericity Test is less than 0.05, and the KMO value is more significant than 0.6, so factor analysis can be used as a technique for analysing the revised correlation matrix.

Table IX Revised Bartlett's Sphericity Test after deletion of 2 variables (Source: EFA)

Chi-square (Observed value)	210.946
Chi-square (Critical value)	61.656
DF	45
p-value (Two-tailed)	< 0.0001
alpha	0.050

Table X Revised Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy after deletion of 2variables (Source: EFA)

NAAC Grades	0.694
NBA Rating	0.708
World Rankings	0.769
NIRF Rankings	0.758
Previous year's student results	0.416
Previous year achievements in extracurricular	
activities	0.459
Previous year Sports Achievements	0.539
Distance of institute from industry location	0.593
Green Campuses	0.679
Corona positive record	0.726
КМО	0.679

2.7 The factor loadings after the deletion of 2 variables were obtained. NAAC Grades, NBA rating, Previous year achievements in Extra extracurricular activities, Green Campuses, and the Corona positive record were loaded in multiple factors. After the deletion of 2 variables, the commonalities table showed that for variables named "Previous Year Sports Achievements "and "Corona Positive Record ", commonalities are less than 0.5 and hence will be considered for deletion if these variables are not loaded into different factors after varimax rotation. Table XI and Table XII show Eigenvalues and % variability for ten variables before and after varimax rotation, which led to the interpretation that three factors will explain 69.55% of the variation.

Т	ah	ole	XI	Е	igenva	alues	and	%	variability	after	deletion	of 2	variables	(Source:	EFA')
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	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10
Eigenvalue	3.51	2.05	1.40	0.96	0.77	0.44	0.36	0.25	0.16	0.11
Variability	35.13	20.48	13.95	9.58	7.69	4.38	3.65	2.48	1.61	1.07
(%)										
Cumulativ	35.13	55.60	69.55	79.13	86.8	91.20	94.85	97.33	98.93	100.00
e %					2					

Table XII Eigenvalues and % Variability for10 variables and after varimax rotation

(Source:	EFA)
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	D1	D2	D3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10
Variability										
(%)	33.128	21.828	14.596	9.577	7.693	4.377	3.648	2.481	1.607	1.065
Cumulative										
%	33.128	54.956	69.552	79.129	86.822	91.199	94.847	97.328	98.935	100.000

2.8 Table XIII shows that "NAAC Grades", "NBA rating", "World Rankings", "NIRF Rankings" load into 1st factor, "Previous year student results" and "Previous Year achievements in extracurricular activities" load into 3rd factor and "Previous year sports achievements", "Distance of institute from Industry Location", "Green Campuses" and "Corona positive record" load into the 2nd-factor component and none of the variables are distributed in more than one factor.

	D1	D2	D3
NAAC Grades	0.825	-0.042	0.124
NBA Rating	0.923	-0.003	-0.045
World Rankings	0.881	0.098	0.077
NIRF Rankings	0.878	0.218	0.047
Previous year's student results	0.188	-0.016	0.765
Previous year achievements in			
extracurricular activities	-0.036	0.147	0.858
Previous year Sports Achievements	-0.076	0.644	0.158
Distance of institute from industry			
location	-0.129	0.854	0.193
Green Campuses	0.289	0.785	-0.048
Corona positive record	0.300	0.584	-0.223

Table XIII Correlation between variables and factors after final Varimax Rotation(Source: EFA)

Conclusion

1. The First Factor is called "Accreditation and Rankings ",2nd factor is named "Past Results – Academic and Extra Curricular ", and 3rd factor is named "Student Fitness, Environment Friendliness of Institute and Its Location", as shown in Figure 6.

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Figure 6 Model after Exploratory Factor Analysis (Source: EFA)

2. The reliability of the three factors was evaluated using the Chronbach alpha method, and it came out to be 0.907 for factor 1, 0.556 for factor 2, and 0.689 for factor 3. Hence, the slightest variation in the opinion of employers was observed in factor 1, followed by factor 3 and then factor 2.

3. The top 5 variables that affect the Employer's opinion in choosing an institute for campus selections are shown below in Figure 7 and "Performance and Image of previous employees", "previous year student results", "NAAC Grades", "NBA Ratings" and "Previous Year Placement %", "NIRF" and "World Rankings" matter more to employers.



Figure 7 Score Reflecting Importance Given by Employers in Choosing an Institute for Campus Selection (Source: (Chaturvedi & Rai, 2020))

Implications

1. The study can be used to formulate a strategy by an institute to attract employers to campus by improving the institute's performance in formulated factors Accreditation and Rankings, Past Results – Academic and Extra Curricular, Student Fitness, and Environment Friendliness of the Institute. Location cannot be changed easily as huge investments are required, so the institute can focus on marketing its achievements and building relations to attract employers.

2. The factors also address the issue of Environment Friendliness through the variable Green Campuses and New World Order after the pandemic through the variable Corona Positive Record. A smaller number of COVID-positive cases indicates robust demonstration and adoption of COVID-19-appropriate behaviour by the institute, and a reduction in CO2 emissions indicates a Green Campus.

Future Research Directions

1. Sector-wise, each employer requires a different set of skills. Hence, it will be interesting to map the sector-wise variation in the importance factor given by employers while choosing an institute for campus selection. Different factors contribute to different development (physical, social, mental, and spiritual).

2. Discovering the factors influencing Job Profile and Employer Size will be interesting. For example, large, small, and medium-sector employers expect their employees to hold different job profiles, which blend different responsibilities and require different skills.

3. Confirmatory factor analysis should be done to approve the model and spread it worldwide for use.

4. EFA can also be done to determine which factors influence MBA students in choosing an institute for studying an MBA program.

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