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Perception of Students towards Institute

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ABSTRACT

The perception towards academic institution is a major variable which propels the academic authenticity and credibility of any engineering institution. The present study aims to examine the perception that develops over the years between students of engineering college and their university. The survey was carried out in India selecting 70 students (40 boys and 30 girls) from engineering colleges and category specific sets of questionnaire were provided and the results were interpreted on the basis of the responses provided. The independent variable chosen here are the academic and educational services that are provided by the university whereas the dependent variable was taken is the perception and change-inducing ability about the academics observed in engineering students. Also, it was observed whether the students who wish to change reforms in the method of instruction and other university avenues would themselves be willing to impart the same changes in their own contribution to their alma mater.

Keywords: *Perception, Engineering Education, Students' Participation, Educational Intervention*

Students are direct receivers and participators for the higher education service and the study of their activities influence their perception and satisfaction to the educational quality. The dynamics of student's perception towards their institute and the bi-lateral relationship between the educational setup and students' participation is a vital component to enhance teaching learning pedagogy. This research paper studies the probable participatory control, perception, and students' execution in making the educational institute more holistic in nature.

The engineering school has a particular set of academic, administrative, and research variables which directly influence the perception of its students towards their alma mater. Infrastructure, facilities, avenues for self-growth, enhancement of technical aptitude, peer learning and cognitive bond with alumni are major components which result into positive perception. The

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perception of engineering students is of prime importance for not only creating a conducive environment for teaching-learning pedagogy but also for enhancing the credibility of an institute. In this study, the researchers investigated whether classroom methods and alumni association are significantly associated with student satisfaction in the campus.

Alf Lizzio et al. (2010) in their article titled "University Students' Perceptions of the Learning Environment and Academic Outcomes: Implications for theory and practice" focused on whether classroom behaviours and course curriculum are significantly associated with student learning and satisfaction in the campus. It is described that cohesive and hand-in-hand working represent professors' attempts to reduce the social distance between themselves and their students. While their study found that classroom interaction and behaviours were positive predictors of student learning and course satisfaction, such other factors as student attitudes toward learning, method of instruction, and prior student and professor interaction on online portals were also significant predictors. Their findings suggest that both course curriculum and interaction with professor beyond classroom lessons merit attention for practical-incentivised courses to successfully deliver undergraduate engineering education.

Richardson et al. (2003) in their article "Examing Social Presence in Online Courses in Relation to Students' Perceived Learning and Satisfaction" have demonstrated that social presence affects not only student but also instructor satisfaction. Teacher immediacy behaviours and the presence of others are especially important issues for those involved in delivering online education. The study explored the role of social presence in online learning environments and its relationship to students' perceptions of learning and satisfaction with the instructor. The study found that students with high overall perceptions of social presence also scored high in terms of perceived learning and perceived satisfaction with the instructor. Students' perceptions of social presence overall, moreover, contributed significantly to the predictor equation for students' perceived learning. Gender accounted for some of the variability of students' overall perception of social presence, while age and number of college credits earned did not account for any of the variability.

The present study tries to signify the perception of various channels of learning present in the undergraduate university system in the engineering students (ranging from 18 to 22 years of age) who were enrolled in the university in the previous three years. It tries to examine the connection between the students' motivation and their desire to change the perception for the coming batches. It also categorises the avenues provided by the university; whether it is the method of instruction or the facilities provided and availed by the students for enhancing positive connect. This study presents questionnaire to the survey-takers and finally the results are shown on the Likert-scale options chosen by the students in the specific categories. Through studying the effects of students' activities to their satisfaction, the researchers establish the college student

satisfaction and perception in engineering college and can suggest improvements that could lead to a better and positive perception among the students.

To try and understand the factors which influence student perception in undergraduate education, as well as consequences of it, this study features a Likert-scale questionnaire. The questionnaire was tested through the utilisation of online survey websites and showed that the variable which has the most influence in student satisfaction in undergraduate education is–"Returns on investment of time image" followed by "value" and afterwards "quality perceived".

METHODOLOGY

Before conducting the survey, pilot study was conducted to examine the probable variables influencing bi-lateral process of students' perception. This was done to check the reliability and validity of the questionnaire which was found to be appropriate. The study was conducted on 70 undergraduate students (Male-40, Female-30) of various engineering colleges. The questionnaire was uploaded on an *online-form-creation-website*. The questionnaire consisted of 42 questions– 18 questions with Likert-scale options: Strongly Agree, Partially Agree, Neutral, Partially Disagree, and Strongly Disagree, and remaining 24 with 'Yes', 'No', and 'Not Available' options. The questionnaire focused on outlook of an engineering student towards following four categories-

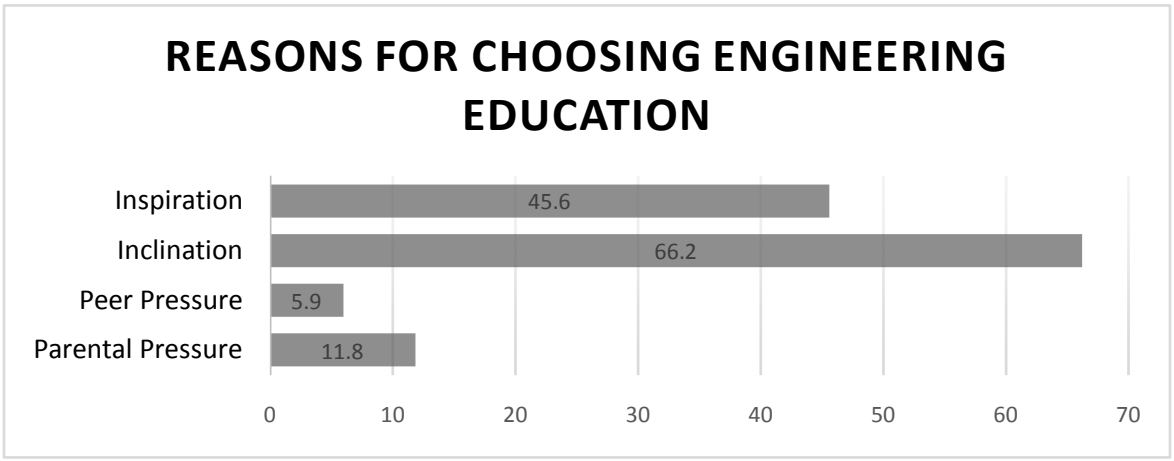
i. Technology as a Form of Instruction
ii. Interaction with Alumni
iii. Learning Experience
iv. Self-Perception

Privacy of the student was maintained as no personal information besides age and gender were mandatorily asked.

DATA ANALYSIS

The following table1 compares the primary motivation of student while choosing Engineering as a field of Undergraduate study.

Table 1: Reasons for choosing engineering education



The above table depicts major reasons for which the students were asked to rate priority wise reasons for joining an engineering school. They were asked to tick one or more variable for giving their opinion. From the above table, it can be seen that majority of students opined that *personal inclination* was the most important reason for joining engineering discipline. Next was the *inspiration*, followed by *parental pressure*. Whereas peer pressure was the least preferred variable which might have influenced the decision of the students to choose engineering.
The following table 2 compares percentages of the options chosen by the participants.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of cardinal expectations and assertions

Particulars	**Strongly Agree**	**Partially Agree**	**Neutral**	**Partially Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
There is a need to reorient engineering education and lab work using active learning theories	51.4%	38.6%	5.7%	4.3%	0%
Teachers will now act as "facilitators of student learning" instead of "imparter of knowledge"	24.3%	30%	24.3%	11.4%	10%
Would you like to have Alumni with work experience as a mentor who will guide you in choosing better career options?	74.3%	22.9%	2.9%	0%	0%
Do the Departmental Alumni meets help in the selection of courses and internships?	31.9%	17.4%	31.9%	8.7%	10.1%
Are your Engineering courses useless and irrelevant in practical life?	7.1%	28.6%	15.7%	32.9%	15.7%
I feel a sense of belonging to my college	60%	24.3%	12.9%	0%	2.9%

From the table 2, it is seen that the students were not in favour of current education mechanisms, evident from the statistic; 90% asserting to reorient class work and lab experiments. Further, students also liked the proposition of having an alumnus as a career mentor for strong interpersonal bond and to receive exposure of corporate world of work. But on the contrary it was observed that for perception about engineering courses, 28.6% of the participants agreed that the courses were not relevant to the contemporary industrial work. Further, 48.6% of the students had a neutral and positive perception about the relevance and usefulness of their academic coursework. For the variable *sense of belonging* to the university, 97.2% students were either neutral or positive. When asked whether new education system would tone down to ‘facilitators’ instead of ‘imparters’, the participants were evenly distributed on the Likert-scale matrix. The following table 3 compares student participation in the activities provided by the college.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of participation in university activities

Particular of items	Yes	No	N.A.
Do you think remedial classes serve their purpose?	68.3%	17.4%	18.8%
Would you take remedial classes for your junior batches?	49.3%	44.3%	5.8%
Do you take Courses or Projects under the guidance of professors of another department?	38.6%	37.1%	24.3%
Do you participate in Live Projects in your college?	47.1%	26.5%	26.5%
Would you recommend admission in your college to your siblings?	77.9%	10.3%	11.8%
Do you take audit courses?	50.7%	33.3%	15.9%
Do you attend lectures in another department out of unmitigated interest?	18.6%	64.3%	17.1%
Have you published any research paper or review paper?	4.3%	84.3%	11.4%
Are you a part of any social club outside campus?	25.7%	70%	4.3%

The findings from the table 3 are peculiar and throw light on the bi-lateral perception towards institute and its academic interventions. The researchers got substantial evidence about the opportunities available inside the campus and the number of students actually making prudential use of the said opportunities. Only one-third of the students took courses or projects under the guidance of professors of another department. The researchers also found that more than 50% students took non-credit courses. Moreover, 13 out of 70 students attended lessons from another department out of unmitigated and intrinsic interest. 68.3 percent of the participants agreed that remedial classes serve its purpose of additional academic assistance for weak students. However, only 49.3 percent students liked the idea of taking remedial classes for juniors.

DISCUSSION

The results state that the comparison between expectation from university and its perception is based on the student motivation and desire to change conventional methods. Students are direct receivers and participators for the higher education service, and their study activities would influence their perceptions and satisfactions to the educational quality. Perception of students towards institute is a vital component to enhance the academic acumen of any engineering school. In the contemporary state of art educational commercial hub, favourable perception plays an important role to enhance the continuous flow of students to a particular engineering school and also betterment of the institute for the academic pursuit.

Contrary to popular belief, *Inclination* and *Inspiration* are significant factors in choosing an undergraduate degree in Engineering. This statistic helps to answer more questions about Perception towards Institute and devise ways to find common ground to improve the of students' motivation and to brainstorm ideas and projects that improve the overall experience. Further, it can be seen that students are aware about the overall changes taking place in an engineering schools and want their institute to adopt more modern and proactive interventions. Students are aware and can enthusiastically participate in the state of are engineering education where

technology, online courses, computer simulation, live projects, skype interviews with entrepreneurs and appropriate software will enhance the functional utility of engineering education. Interaction with alumni was also given prime importance wherein engineering students perceived alumni as an interface between and institute and industry. Self-perception and cognitive abilities play important role to get appraised about the various intervention strategies adopted by an institute which results into either positive or negative opinion about the engineering institute.

CONCLUSION

From the above-performed analysis the researchers conclude that *inspiration* and *inclination* are found to be primary motivators for joining engineering. On the basis of the obtained data, it can be concluded that the learning experiences and teaching methodology are the most significant factors to determine students' perception towards engineering institute. The analysis showed that the students' perception could be further improved by the following intervention techniques–

i. Better understanding of students' needs and requirements.
ii. Frequent, direct, and active interaction with alumni of the college.
iii. Collective student and teacher participation in multi-level academic and research projects.

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