SOURCES OF INFORMATION INFLUENCING STUDENTS' SELECTION OF B-SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

In the context of higher education especially Business Management education in Rajasthan, a noticeable trend has been the increasing competition among B-Schools to attract the students. Various competitive strategies have been used to attract the students. The study is aimed to identify the various sources of information that influences a student's selection of a B-School in Rajasthan. Data was collected from the students from the five major cities of Rajasthan (Jaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Kota and Udaipur). A sample of 201 students was surveyed for the present study. F- Test ANNOVA was used to find the association/non association between the variables.

Keywords: Management Institutes, B-Schools, Return on investment.

INTRODUCTION:

Management education is in great demand especially after the change towards liberalization, privatization and globalization. India being a part of the global linkage after the WTO agreement is becoming a technology focused/influenced society. Nearly one lakh management graduates pass out every year in India, providing a tremendous potential to contribute to the creation of know ledged society. There is also a need that the dependence on foreign literature and techniques could be minimized and management teaching and thinking could be based upon practical experiences deriving strength from Indian ethos. Management education needs to be made value based, rather than based on money.

Determination of an applicant's desired MBA program outcome is not easy or direct. Therefore, multiple approaches should be used to find the various criteria of expected benefits and in determining how different choices measured. Investing in an MBA experience involves huge costs to students who have high expectations for appropriate paybacks in career success. The choice to undertake an MBA and the choice of which MBA program to undertake could change one's life dramatically. Therefore, it might be expected that the potential MBA students should invest far more effort in choosing a business school than do high school students choosing where to study for their undergraduate degree. However, there is little research done on the MBA selection process and development of successful marketing strategies according to market needs. What benefits outcomes do applicants seek and what set of benefits outcomes do they see in the MBA brands of different institutions? What sources of information a student looks for while taking admission in an MBA Programme? The study addresses this issue in the context of the students to whom the various sources of information is helpful and guide them in taking admissions in MBA programmes. In order to identify the sources of information influencing the students' selection of an MBA programme the following criteria was established and identified:

- Criteria a student looks for while selecting or short listing B-Schools.
- Sources of knowledge a student trusts for ranking and other information about B-Schools.
- Important sources of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA Course.

Criteria a student looks for while selecting or short listing B-Schools were identified from the following variables:

1. Ranking of the B-school as per different business magazines and survey agencies
2. Ranking of the B-school as per different management education related websites
3. Recommendations given by coaching classes
4. Recommendation by friends
5. Recommendation by peers
6. Recommendation by parents
7. Brand recall due to advertisements of B-schools
8. Fees
9. Location convenience
10. Placement records
11. Reputation of the faculty
12. Uniqueness of the course content
13. Return on Investment in terms of job placements
14. Academic infrastructure like library, classrooms etc
15. Infrastructure facilities like sports, hostel etc

Sources of knowledge a student trusts for ranking and other information about B-Schools were identified from the following variables:

1. pagalguy.com
2. mbauniverse.com
3. mbaskool.com
4. TCYonline.com
5. Business standard B-school rankings
6. Others
7. Outlook standard B-school rankings

The most important sources of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA Course were identified from the following variables:

1. Opportunity to organize college fests and events
2. Knowledge base of the faculty
3. Alumni interaction with the B-school

4. Teaching pedagogy which includes field assignments and case studies
5. Interaction with industry experts
6. Conferences and workshops
7. Textbooks and reading material
8. Peer Interaction
9. Online databases (e.g. Ebsco, Proquest, etc)
10. Opportunity to take part in college fests and competitions

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

(Neelankavil, 1994) identified the problems facing MBA programmes, the type of executives sought by businesses, and the roles academic and business institutions need to play in developing the next generation of managers. To raise the quality of MBAs, schools need to cover material relevant to client firms, to incorporate new materials into existing courses that stress written and oral communication. He also studied that faculty and executives should forge links to evaluate graduates and update classroom material and states that faculty should be encouraged to undertake business internships. Corporations have an additional role - they must identify MBAs with potential for senior level management and train them, focusing on leadership negotiating skills, and long-term planning. **(Steven Pharr, 2007)** *found that* efficacy of the admission standard decreased for the students following the introduction of the new curriculum. While adequate for all students taking the traditional business course, it was a much less effective predictor of success for transfer students under the new curriculum. A modified admission standard for transfer students could restore the efficacy to previous levels.**(Tünde Varga-Atkins, 2004)** summarised the results of a study, the recent higher education curriculum shift towards a more learning-centred approach and an emphasis on independent learning meant that the information skills were far more fundamental to a student's survival and success. No significant difference between the information skills of UK and other international students was found. The majority of students feel negative or neutral towards library and information skills – with international students having a more positive attitude than home students. One of the main sources of negative attitudes cited was the inability to find information without help. **(Litten, 1982)** identified the differences and similarities in the conduct of the college selection process and examined various types of students. Several implications of some of the observed differences for colleges' recruiting activities and some areas for further research were suggested. **(Hanushek)** found that the relationship between school resources and students' achievement was studied and was found controversial, in a large part because it calls into question a variety of traditional policy approaches. Close to 400 studies of student achievement demonstrated that there was no strong or consistent relationship between student performance and school resources, at least after variations in family inputs were taken into account. These results were also reconciled with meta-analytic approaches and with other investigations on how school resources affect labour market outcomes. Simple resource policies held little hope for improving student outcomes. **(Stephen J. Ball, 2010)** reported first that the processes, concerns, resources and outcomes of 'choosing' differ among the minority ethnic students in relation to social class. Class differences were more apparent and significant than minority ethnic similarities and second for a large minority of these students, 25 of the 65, the 'ethnic mix' of higher education institutions was one factor, among others, that influenced their choice. 'Ethnic mix' was examined and discussed in the article in relation to ethnic identity. **(Goddard, 2001)** used student- and school-level data from a sample of urban elementary schools. Consistent with social cognitive theory, mastery experience was found to be a significant predictor of differences between schools in teachers' collective efficacy perceptions. In addition, after controlling for student demographic characteristics and prior achievement, collective efficacy was positively and significantly related to differences among schools in student achievement. Finally, the consensus among faculty members regarding collective efficacy perceptions was found not to be a significant predictor of student achievement, nor was it significantly related to school socioeconomic status or minority concentration. **(Irvine Clarke III)** *investigated how various educational tools affect MBA students 'perception of overall learning. The findings reveal that students have differing opinions, by country, on the impact of these instructional activities. Pedagogical ideas were provided to help instructors maximize teaching effectiveness in global locations.***(Kusumawati, 2010)** found that the motivating factors for students in choosing a university had undergone change also and the role of marketing in student recruitment had increasingly become important. The findings indicated that universities need to market their institution and establish a unique difference in order to highlight their strengths and to give the students a reason to choose a university. Previous researches also revealed that university choice factors varied. A useful way to understand these recruitment markets is to have a clear perspective of the choice and decision making process that students use to select a university.

(Dierdorff) investigated the relevancy of MBA curricula in relation to managerial competency requirements. The results showed that behavioural competencies indicated by managers to be most critical were the very competencies least represented in required MBA curricula. The findings further indicated that institutional factors such as media rankings and mission orientation had no effect on the alignment of MBA curricula with critical managerial competencies. **(Frank Acito, 2008)** reviewed several significant trends affecting the future of business education and shared the success principles that he believed were most applicable to thriving in the new world that was on their doorstep. (**Nawaz Ahmad, 2011**) assessed the attitudes of undergraduate students, graduate students, faculties and corporate executives towards leading business schools of Karachi as per the standard of Higher Education Commission (HEC). Conclusively, his study presented a three dimensional view of the attitude of students, institutes and corporate organizations. The result of the research work was equally beneficial for the entire corporate community and helped them to identify grey areas in business education and aspirations of the pertinent stakeholders.**(Bodo B. Schlegelmilch, 2011)** *found that* business schools in general and MBA programs in particular were set to survive the coming decade. However, there was an urgent need to rebalance the curriculum in order to produce graduates who combine analytical capabilities, managerial skills and attention to ethics and CSR. The study suggested that key institutions such as AACSB, EQUIS, AMBA and GMAC need to take a fresh look at the future role of business schools in an increasingly globalized context.**(D'Arcy Becker, 2011)** examined the marketplace for online MBA and addressed the challenges of competing for MBA students in the dynamic online arena. **(Patricia M. Raymond, 2006)** drew on the data from a 2-year qualitative study of Chinese students enrolled in an English-medium Masters in Business Administration in a Canadian university. The study showed that students adapted their reading and writing strategies to cope with assignments in the MBA program. The study also suggested how historically inscribed academic practices might mitigate against students' ability to appropriate relevant literacy resources. **(Glover, 1986)** outlined the conceptual framework, design, and implementation plan for building a decision-support system (DSS) for enrolment management at the college level in a private, comprehensive university. Research designs and application-development strategies were reviewed to illustrate the potential of the DSS approach to enrolment management. **(George F.Dreher, 2000)** investigated the relationship between students' prior work experience and subsequent success during the first year in an MBA program. Taking these results and other existing empirical studies into account, there was little support for the view that previous work experience (as assessed by typical admission procedures) leads to higher levels of academic achievement. Implications for admissions policy, hiring companies, and those considering graduate study in business were discussed. **(John Nicholls, 1995)** concluded that, whether the "customer" was an individual student or a company, a greater understanding of buyer behaviour was needed; business schools should improve their marketing or stand accused of not practising what they preach. **(Piotr Bielecki, 2012)** discussed the supply side of the Master of Business Administration, i.e. of the international postgraduate management education (IPME) sector in Poland. First, they introduced the demand side: the IPME sector with its transnational credentials appeared as an important determinant of the new social stratification: it provided a "meritocratic" solution to recruitment into the new managerial elite. Then they traced the development of MBA in Poland primarily in terms of key variables: number of programmes, diversification in types of programmes and modes of delivery, quality control (accreditations and rankings), internationalisation, and programmes' promotion and advertising. They summarized by discussing the importance of MBA in Polish management education indicating that market saturation was the more likely hypothesis explaining the slower dynamics in the 21st century. **(Skousen, 1994)** accused management education of being irrelevant and unresponsive to today's rapidly changing business environment. A major rethinking of the business curriculum was necessary. Marriott School of Management (MSM), based in Brigham Young University, had risen to this challenge by revolutionizing its curriculum to consider the future needs of corporate America. Based on the responses of students, faculty, alumni, administration and external supporters, MSM formulated a mission statement that emphasized ethics, leadership, relevant skills, research and service to society. MSM also streamlined its undergraduate program, composed of business management and accounting tracks, and established an integrated master's degree in accounting program that emphasized management issues. Centers of excellence had also been put up that revolved around the core areas of entrepreneurship, international management, ethics, free enterprise and retail management. **(Chaudhary, 2011)** presented a conceptual framework in the context of growth of management education and major problems which hampered the quality of management education and what steps were required to improve its quality. The students' community in changing India not only wanted education in modern emerging fields but they wanted education, which was of quality. Moreover they did not want to be deprived of opportunities because of their social or economical backgrounds. Management education needed expansion and strengthening

in its infrastructure and therefore greater in puts. It was a struggle between maintaining the quality while satisfying the needs of the masses.

RESEARCH GAP:

There have been a number of valuable studies on the various sources of information influencing students' selection of B-school. It was found by various researchers how various information sources helped the students in getting admission in well-known and properly managed B-Schools, from where students could get the desired level of professional skills which were needed to survive the competitive and dynamic work environment and the student could get all of his/her returns on investment. It had also been found how various B-Schools could develop themselves to attract students and improve their education pattern. However none of these studies provide a picture of the perception of students in Rajasthan regarding various sources of information that influenced a student's decision related to selection of a B-school. The study is focused on the students of Rajasthan pursuing MBA or pursuing a bachelor's degree in management.

Objective of study:

The broad objective of the study were to identify and examine the important factors considered by students before getting enrolled in B-schools.
- To study the criteria looked for by the students selecting or short listing B-Schools.
- To study the sources the students trust for ranking and other information about B-Schools.
- To study the important sources of knowledge assimilation during the MBA course.

HYPOTHESIS FRAMED FOR THE STUDY:

Table 1

Test	Hypothesis
$H_{01(a)}$	There is no significant association between gender and the criteria a student looks for while selecting or short listing B-Schools.
$H_{01(b)}$	There is no significant association between the city of residence and the criteria a student looks for while selecting or short listing B-Schools.
$H_{02(a)}$	There is no significant association between gender and knowledge sources a student trusts for ranking and other information about B-schools.
$H_{02(b)}$	There is no significant association between the city of residence and knowledge sources a student trusts for ranking and other information about B-schools.
$H_{03(a)}$	There is no significant association between gender and the most important source of knowledge assimilation for a student during an MBA Course.
$H_{03(b)}$	There is no significant association between the city of residence and the most important source of knowledge assimilation for a student during an MBA Course.

METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE STUDY:

The sample of the study included 250 students in Rajasthan pursuing MBA or a bachelor's or a post graduate degree in Management. The samples were selected from all the five different geographical locations in Rajasthan i.e. Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Ajmer, and Udaipur.
A total of 50 management students from each city were selected for the study. 10 students from each management institution in the cities selected for the study were taken. The cities selected were the 5 most important cities of Rajasthan and most of the students across Rajasthan moved to these cities for education and all of them had 5 or more existent management institutions. Of these 250 students only 201 students had given their responses properly and their responses were used for the study. Students were contacted via email requesting their participation in this study. These email assured the individuals of their anonymity, reminded them that participation was strictly voluntary.
The Cronbach's alpha values were found to be .62, .672, .571 and .683 and the overall Cronbach's alpha value was .798 indicating the relevancy of the data used for the study. F- Test ANNOVA was used to find out the association/non- association between the variables.

RELIABILITY TEST FOR THE VARIABLES IDENTIFIED:

Table 2

Outcomes	Alpha Values	Total
The criteria students' looks for while selecting or short listing B-Schools.	.620	
Knowledge sources the students trust for ranking and other information about B-schools.	.672	.798
The most important sources of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA Course.	.683	

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Table 3 (Demographic profile of the respondents)

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	102	50.7
	Female	99	49.3
	Total	**201**	**100.0**
Place	Jaipur	36	17.9
	Jodhpur	37	18.4
	Kota	34	16.9
	Ajmer	35	17.4
	Udaipur	46	22.9
	Others	13	6.5
	Total	**201**	**100.0**

INTERPRETATION:

Males and Females are more or less equal in number. As equal numbers of questionnaires were distributed in the selected cities, the responses from the sample area were also more or less equal in number.

CRITERIA STUDENTS' LOOKS FOR WHILE SELECTING OR SHORT LISTING B-SCHOOLS:

$H_{01 (a)}$: - There is no significant association between the gender and the criteria students' look for while selecting or short listing B-Schools.

Table 4 (ANNOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ranking of the B-school as per different business magazines and survey agencies	Between Groups	5.712	1	5.712	5.591	.019
	Within Groups	203.30	199	1.022		
	Total	**209.01**	**200**			
Ranking of the B-school as per different management education related websites	Between Groups	1.039	1	1.039	1.386	.241
	Within Groups	149.15	199	.749		
	Total	**150.18**	**200**			
Recommendations given by coaching classes	Between Groups	1.845	1	1.845	1.977	.161
	Within Groups	185.71	199	.933		
	Total	**187.56**	**200**			
Recommendation by friends	Between Groups	.894	1	.894	1.122	.291
	Within Groups	158.47	199	.796		
	Total	**159.37**	**200**			
Recommendation by peers	Between Groups	.091	1	.091	.093	.761
	Within Groups	194.29	199	.976		
	Total	**194.38**	**200**			

Recommendation by parents	Between Groups	.107	1	.107	.150	.699
	Within Groups	141.78	199	.712		
	Total	**141.89**	**200**			
Brand recall due to advertisements of B-schools	Between Groups	2.810	1	2.810	3.885	.050
	Within Groups	143.91	199	.723		
	Total	**146.72**	**200**			
Fees	Between Groups	2.056	1	2.056	2.358	.126
	Within Groups	173.53	199	.872		
	Total	**175.59**	**200**			
Location convenience	Between Groups	.843	1	.843	1.478	.226
	Within Groups	113.48	199	.570		
	Total	**114.32**	**200**			
Placement records	Between Groups	.172	1	.172	.223	.637
	Within Groups	153.51	199	.771		
	Total	**153.68**	**200**			
Reputation of the faculty	Between Groups	.988	1	.988	1.451	.230
	Within Groups	135.50	199	.681		
	Total	**136.48**	**200**			
Uniqueness of the course content	Between Groups	2.002	1	2.002	2.534	.113
	Within Groups	157.25	199	.790		
	Total	**159.25**	**200**			
Infrastructure facilities like sports, hostel etc	Between Groups	.878	1	.878	1.090	.298
	Within Groups	160.32	199	.806		
	Total	**161.20**	**200**			
Academic infrastructure like library, classrooms etc	Between Groups	.064	1	.064	.092	.762
	Within Groups	138.03	199	.694		
	Total	**138.10**	**200**			
Return on Investment in terms of job placements	Between Groups	1.476	1	1.476	1.717	.192
	Within Groups	171.07	199	.860		
	Total	**172.54**	**200**			

INTERPRETATION:

From the above we could interpret that in almost all the cases, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that the gender of the respondents had nothing to do or had no influence on the criteria looked for while selecting or short listing B- Schools. It if there was found to be any influence, it was only be chance. But ranking of the B-Schools as per different magazines and surveys was affected by gender.

$H_{01\ (b)}$: - There is no significant association between the city of residence and the criteria students' look for while selecting or short listing B-Schools.

Table 5 (ANNOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ranking of the B-school as per different business magazines and survey agencies	Between Groups	4.543	5	.909	.867	.505
	Within Groups	204.472	195	1.049		
	Total	**209.015**	**200**			
Ranking of the B-school as per different management education related websites	Between Groups	6.789	5	1.358	1.846	.106
	Within Groups	143.400	195	.735		
	Total	**150.189**	**200**			
Recommendations given by coaching classes	Between Groups	1.934	5	.387	.406	.844
	Within Groups	185.628	195	.952		
	Total	**187.562**	**200**			
Recommendation by friends	Between Groups	4.330	5	.866	1.089	.368

	Within Groups	155.043	195	.795		
	Total	**159.373**	**200**			
Recommendation by peers	Between Groups	3.715	5	.743	.760	.580
	Within Groups	190.673	195	.978		
	Total	**194.388**	**200**			
Recommendation by parents	Between Groups	4.431	5	.886	1.257	.284
	Within Groups	137.459	195	.705		
	Total	**141.891**	**200**			
Brand recall due to advertisements of B-schools	Between Groups	1.655	5	.331	.445	.817
	Within Groups	145.071	195	.744		
	Total	**146.726**	**200**			
Fees	Between Groups	1.084	5	.217	.242	.943
	Within Groups	174.508	195	.895		
	Total	**175.592**	**200**			
Location convenience	Between Groups	1.574	5	.315	.544	.743
	Within Groups	112.755	195	.578		
	Total	**114.328**	**200**			
Placement records	Between Groups	1.210	5	.242	.309	.907
	Within Groups	152.472	195	.782		
	Total	**153.682**	**200**			
Reputation of the faculty	Between Groups	6.331	5	1.266	1.897	.097
	Within Groups	130.157	195	.667		
	Total	**136.488**	**200**			
Uniqueness of the course content	Between Groups	1.081	5	.216	.266	.931
	Within Groups	158.173	195	.811		
	Total	**159.254**	**200**			
Infrastructure facilities like sports, hostel etc	Between Groups	4.587	5	.917	1.142	.339
	Within Groups	156.617	195	.803		
	Total	**161.204**	**200**			
Academic infrastructure like library, classrooms etc	Between Groups	4.453	5	.891	1.299	.266
	Within Groups	133.647	195	.685		
	Total	**138.100**	**200**			
Return on Investment in terms of job placements	Between Groups	5.406	5	1.081	1.261	.282
	Within Groups	167.142	195	.857		
	Total	**172.547**	**200**			

INTERPRETATION:

From the above we could interpret that in all the cases, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that the city of residence had nothing to do or had no influence on the criteria looked for while selecting or short listing B-Schools. If at all there was any association it was only be chance.

KNOWLEDGE SOURCES THE STUDENT TRUSTS FOR RANKING AND OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT B-SCHOOLS:

$H_{02\ (a)}$:- There is no significant association between the gender and knowledge sources the student trusts for ranking and other information about B-schools.

Table 6 (ANNOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
pagalguy.com	Between Groups	.134	1	.134	.144	.705
	Within Groups	186.02	199	.935		
	Total	**186.15**	**200**			
mbauniverse.com	Between Groups	3.226	1	3.226	2.152	.144

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Within Groups	298.32	199	1.499		
	Total	**301.55**	**200**			
mbaskool.com	Between Groups	2.210	1	2.210	2.518	.114
	Within Groups	174.66	199	.878		
	Total	**176.88**	**200**			
TCYonline.com	Between Groups	1.451	1	1.451	1.652	.200
	Within Groups	174.75	199	.878		
	Total	**176.21**	**200**			
Business standard B-school rankings	Between Groups	3.528	1	3.528	5.149	.024
	Within Groups	136.36	199	.685		
	Total	**139.89**	**200**			
Business Outlook B-school rankings	Between Groups	3.069	1	3.069	6.276	.013
	Within Groups	97.33	199	.489		
	Total	**100.48**	**200**			
Others	Between Groups	.988	1	.988	1.430	.233
	Within Groups	137.50	199	.691		
	Total	**138.49**	**200**			

INTERPRETATION:

From the above we could interpret that in almost all the cases, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that the gender of the respondents had nothing to do or had no influence on the knowledge sources which the students trust more for ranking and other information about B- Schools. We find the null hypothesis was rejected only in case of ranking by the Business standard and Outlook indicating that the ranking by these journals had an impact on the knowledge sources the students trusts more for ranking and other information.

$H_{02(b)}$: - There is no significant association between the city of residence and knowledge sources the student trusts more for ranking and other information about B-schools.

Table 7 (ANNOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
pagalguy.com	Between Groups	2.857	5	.571	.608	.694
	Within Groups	183.30	195	.940		
	Total	**186.15**	**200**			
mbauniverse.com	Between Groups	17.937	5	3.587	2.467	.034
	Within Groups	283.61	195	1.454		
	Total	**301.55**	**200**			
mbaskool.com	Between Groups	12.407	5	2.481	2.942	.014
	Within Groups	164.46	195	.843		
	Total	**176.87**	**200**			
TCYonline.com	Between Groups	14.153	5	2.831	3.406	.006
	Within Groups	162.05	195	.831		
	Total	**176.20**	**200**			
Business standard B-school rankings	Between Groups	4.421	5	.884	1.273	.277
	Within Groups	135.46	195	.695		
	Total	**139.89**	**200**			
Business Outlook B-school rankings	Between Groups	2.188	5	.438	.869	.503
	Within Groups	98.210	195	.504		
	Total	**100.39**	**200**			
Others	Between Groups	.454	5	.091	.128	.986
	Within Groups	138.03	195	.708		
	Total	**138.48**	**200**			

INTERPRETATION:

From the above we could interpret that in almost all the cases, the null hypothesis was accepted indicating that the city of residence had nothing to do or had no influence on the knowledge sources which the students trust more for ranking and other information about B- Schools. We find the null hypothesis was rejected in three cases; these are ranking by mbauniverse.com**,** mbaskool.com, and TCYonline.com indicating that the city of residence had a significant impact on the perception towards these websites.

MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ASSIMILATION FOR A STUDENT DURING THE MBA COURSE:

$H_{03\ (a)}$: - There is no significant association between the gender and most important source of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA Course.

Table 8 (ANNOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Knowledge base of the faculty	Between Groups	.000	1	.000	.000	1.000
	Within Groups	230.667	199	1.159		
	Total	**230.667**	**200**			
Alumni interaction with the B-school	Between Groups	5.134	1	5.134	5.787	.017
	Within Groups	176.548	199	.887		
	Total	**181.682**	**200**			
Teaching pedagogy which includes field assignments and case studies	Between Groups	.975	1	.975	1.497	.223
	Within Groups	129.691	199	.652		
	Total	**130.667**	**200**			
Interaction with industry experts	Between Groups	.005	1	.005	.005	.942
	Within Groups	180.324	199	.906		
	Total	**180.328**	**200**			
Conferences and workshops	Between Groups	1.078	1	1.078	1.323	.251
	Within Groups	162.126	199	.815		
	Total	**163.204**	**200**			
Textbooks and reading material	Between Groups	1.351	1	1.351	2.176	.142
	Within Groups	123.554	199	.621		
	Total	**124.905**	**200**			
Peer Interaction	Between Groups	1.009	1	1.009	1.501	.222
	Within Groups	133.717	199	.672		
	Total	**134.726**	**200**			
Online databases (e.g. Ebsco, Proquest, etc.)	Between Groups	.293	1	.293	.329	.567
	Within Groups	177.299	199	.891		
	Total	**177.592**	**200**			
Opportunity to take part in college fests and competitions	Between Groups	1.661	1	1.661	2.073	.151
	Within Groups	159.394	199	.801		
	Total	**161.055**	**200**			
Opportunity to organize college fests and events	Between Groups	1.078	1	1.078	2.201	.140
	Within Groups	97.460	199	.490		
	Total	**98.537**	**200**			

INTERPRETATION:

The null hypothesis was accepted in almost all the cases indicating that the gender of the respondents had nothing to do or had no influence on most important sources of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA Course. The null hypothesis was rejected in case of the Alumni interaction with the B-school indicating that Alumni interaction has been considered to be an important source of knowledge assimilation for students during their studies in an MBA course.

$H_{03\ (b)}$: - There is no significant association between the city of residence and the most important source of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA Course.

Table 9 (ANNOVA)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Knowledge base of the faculty	Between Groups	7.480	5	1.496	1.307	.263
	Within Groups	223.187	195	1.145		
	Total	**230.667**	**200**			
Alumni interaction with the B-school	Between Groups	2.826	5	.565	.616	.688
	Within Groups	178.856	195	.917		
	Total	**181.682**	**200**			
Teaching pedagogy which includes field assignments and case studies	Between Groups	6.623	5	1.325	2.082	.069
	Within Groups	124.043	195	.636		
	Total	**130.667**	**200**			
Interaction with industry experts	Between Groups	6.080	5	1.216	1.361	.241
	Within Groups	174.248	195	.894		
	Total	**180.328**	**200**			
Conferences and workshops	Between Groups	11.361	5	2.272	2.918	.015
	Within Groups	151.843	195	.779		
	Total	**163.204**	**200**			
Textbooks and reading material	Between Groups	6.664	5	1.333	2.198	.056
	Within Groups	118.242	195	.606		
	Total	**124.905**	**200**			
Peer Interaction	Between Groups	2.043	5	.409	.601	.700
	Within Groups	132.683	195	.680		
	Total	**134.726**	**200**			
Online databases (e.g. Ebsco, Proquest, etc.)	Between Groups	6.098	5	1.220	1.387	.231
	Within Groups	171.494	195	.879		
	Total	**177.592**	**200**			
Opportunity to take part in college fests and competitions	Between Groups	4.746	5	.949	1.184	.318
	Within Groups	156.309	195	.802		
	Total	**161.055**	**200**			
Opportunity to organize college fests and events	Between Groups	1.250	5	.250	.501	.775
	Within Groups	97.287	195	.499		
	Total	**98.537**	**200**			

INTERPRETATION:

There is a significant association between the city of residence and the perception that conferences and workshops is an important source of knowledge assimilation in an MBA course. In all the other cases no significant association was found.

CONCLUSION:

Investing in an MBA programme involves enormous costs to students who have high expectations for appropriate paybacks in career success. The choice to undertake an MBA and the choice of which MBA program to take can change one's life dramatically. The study aims at identifying the various sources of information that influences students' decision of selecting B-Schools.

It is found from the study that in most of the situations Gender of the respondents did not affect the criteria a student looked for while selecting or short listing B-Schools, Knowledge sources he trusted more for ranking and other information about B-schools, Criteria he emphasized on while taking final admission to a particular B-School, and the most important source of knowledge assimilation for a student during the MBA. Personal preferences have a significant role to play.

It was found that ranking of different B-Schools in different magazines and survey agencies was an important criterion a student looked for and was valued across gender and the city of residence. Different management institutes in different cities have to adopt different strategies and get them ranked in different business magazines and survey agencies.

The students of different cities dependent upon different knowledge sources for ranking and other information on B-Schools mbauniverse.com, mbaskool.com, and TCYonline.com were the various sources on which the MBA aspirants depended upon for taking admission. The students emphasize a lot on the Business Standard and Business Outlook B-School rankings to take admission and the trust bestowed on these rankings is different across the cities of residence.

Alumni interaction with B-Schools has proved to be an important criterion the students emphasize on while taking final admission to a particular B-School. The cities of residence of the students have an important role in the perception that conferences and workshops are the most important source of knowledge assimilation during the MBA course.

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

The study could prove useful to the management aspirants and management students. The management institutions can clearly understand the sources of information or the criteria that a student looks for and can advertise and target the aspirants accordingly. The institutions could also understand the various sources of information a student looks for and the criteria that he/she has in mind before taking admission.

Similarly the study could also be useful for the management students and management aspirants. From the various knowledge sources the students can get the information regarding various management institutions. These sources also provide the ranking of the management institutions, which will help the students in taking their decision regarding the admission in a particular B-School and setting their priorities. The important knowledge assimilation sources are helpful for the students which they could use before getting enrolled with any B-School. The students will get aware of the various criteria's which the other students take care while taking admission to a particular B-School and they could use these criteria's as basis in their decision related to B-School admission.

In all the study is very helpful for both the management students and management institutions. If the criteria's and sources of information regarding various B-Schools are taken into consideration by students then they could get admission in a well-known and reputed B-School. If the criteria's and sources of information which a student emphasizes on while taking admission in a B-School are taken into consideration by Management institutions then they could attract large number of students.

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